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# A Study of the Elements for Effective Implementation of a Full-Day Kindergarten Program at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School

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A Study of the Elements for Effective Implementation of a  
Full-Day Kindergarten Program at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School

BY

Jamie Ann Dorsey

**Field Experience**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF

**SPECIALIST IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION**

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

**1999**

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS FIELD EXPERIENCE BE ACCEPTED AS  
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## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the effective elements needed to implement a full-day kindergarten program at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School, a rural district located in northwestern Vermilion County. It was designed by first looking at how to implement change in a system. After the steps for change were determined, the elements for effective implementation were incorporated into the change process. These elements were established by analyzing the related literature and research.

It was determined that to introduce change within a system a three-step process was needed. These steps are mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization. All three steps are examined in the review of the literature and research and are considered integral components of the change process. The first step, mobilization, is relevant to information to answer the objective of this study which is: What elements are necessary in a full-day kindergarten program that are likely to enhance effective implementation in its initial year?

The mobilization process includes several key elements necessary for implementation. These elements are (a) identifying the need for change, (b) marshaling support, (c) assessing the political climate, and (d) developing strategies for implementation. Developing strategies for implementation was divided into developing a systematic philosophy and addressing administrative issues. A step-by-step process was given for each of the elements in the mobilization process.

One conclusion made was the selection of the study committee would need to be diverse and would need to present a final report looking at the impact of implementing a full-day program. Another conclusion was the need to update the current curriculum in order to provide a stronger program. Other key elements to consider when implementing

a full-day kindergarten program were (a) staff consideration, (b) room location, (c) health and nutritional issues, (d) cost analysis, and (e) staff development plan.

Armstrong-Ellis Grade School needs to consider implementing a full-day kindergarten program to help strengthen the total educational system. As this process is put into effect, Armstrong-Ellis Grade School will also need to continue to analyze the other two steps as each are completed. Finally, other practitioners may want to further study these two other components of the change process.

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## Chapter 1

### Overview of the Problem

#### Background

Armstrong-Ellis Grade School, a rural district located in northwestern Vermilion County, is in the process of studying how to implement a full-day kindergarten program. Since the district is in the initial stage of this process, there are many questions regarding what are the most appropriate elements needed to help implement this program. By obtaining research on other successful full-day kindergarten programs, a process for implementation was developed for presentation to the Armstrong-Ellis Board of Education.

#### Statement of the Problem

Full-day kindergarten has the potential to enhance student learning for the children in the Armstrong-Ellis Grade School District. The district has previously studied full-day kindergarten and will implement the program within the next two years. The researcher (a teacher in the district) believes that criteria for effective implementation of a full-day kindergarten program are likely to increase the probability of success in its initial years. The specific problem addressed by this study was: What elements are necessary in a full-day kindergarten program that are likely to enhance effective implementation in its initial year?

#### Objective

The specific objective of this study was to determine the elements of a full-day kindergarten program critical to effective implementation in a program's initial years. This study produced criteria that can be utilized to evaluate the extent to which a full-day kindergarten program is being effectively implemented in its initial year.

### Assumptions

It is assumed that once the Armstrong-Ellis Board of Education is presented with the process of implementation, it will proceed with implementing the full-day kindergarten program presented. It is also assumed that a majority of parents will support the process for implementation of a full-day kindergarten program.

### Delimitations

This study was delimited to the analysis of information pertaining to the implementation of full-day kindergarten programs. The researcher chose not to visit other school districts because of the uniqueness of Armstrong-Ellis Grade School regarding its size and location.

### Definitions of Terms

Terms relevant to this study are presented here.

#### Full-day Kindergarten Program (FDKP)

Students attend for the same time period as students in the other grade level in the building or district.

#### Mobilization

Part of the process of change that includes identifying the need for change, marshaling support, assessing political climate, and developing strategies for implementation (Rust, 1989).

#### Implementation

This is the time period when an innovation is tried and used in a school system (Rust, 1989).

#### Institutionalization

The final phase in the change process when the system's use of the innovation is

thought of as an integral part of the day-to-day operation of the system (Rust, 1989).

### Uniqueness of the Study

Previous to this study, minimal work has been done at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School to create elements needed to enhance the likelihood of effective implementation of a full-day kindergarten program. This study produced those elements.

## Chapter 2

### Review of the Literature and Research

#### The Process of Change at the Early Education Level

When contemplating change in an existing program, a likely question to arise is: What is the best way to implement change within that program? By implementing a full-day kindergarten program, a major change is introduced within that system. An overall view of historical factors, routines, and image of the school determine the success of this change (Rust, 1989). In addition, the change process is not always manageable. Numerous factors characterize a successful process for change. According to Rust (1989) a three-stage process is needed for successful implementation of change—mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization.

#### Mobilization

The first step in the process of educational change is mobilization. According to Rust (1989), “Studies of educational change identify mobilization as the single most important stage in the change process” (p. 456). This process needs time in order for it to work. Issues addressed during this step are identifying the need for change, marshaling support, assessing the social process, and developing strategies (Rust, 1989).

#### Identifying the need for change

There are numerous reasons why school districts seek a change in kindergarten programs. These reasons may include concerns about instruction, conclusions from program evaluation, or outside pressures (Hills, 1985). When expectations are not met in a program, school districts may seek other means for operating the program.

As soon as the need for change is identified, there are several steps that are suggested to determine the action for change. Hills (1985) indicates that district

personnel follow several steps for a needs assessment. These steps include (a) review and clarify current objectives, (b) examine outcomes from the current program, (c) identify the kind and extent of any discrepancies, and (d) select the methodology for gathering the data required.

This course of action takes time, needs to be planned out well using a variety of resources, and needs to be scheduled carefully. Without these considerations, the current program could be jeopardized, and the success of the change in program implementation could be threatened (Hills, 1985).

### Marshaling support

In the mobilization process for change, the main goal is to get all parties involved and moving in the same direction. The purpose is to get everyone to support the change in order to make it successful. With this in mind, it is important to include as many different people as possible from the beginning (Rust, 1989).

One of the first groups to include in the decision-making process is parents. Parental support enhances the likelihood of successfully implementing the program.

Another group of participants who should be involved from the beginning is staff. This should include the kindergarten teachers and primary grade teachers. When planning a kindergarten program, it is “important to establish continuity between kindergarten and first grade” (NAEYC, 1991, p. 33). The kindergarten should not be a watered-down first grade but should have the same philosophical base as first grade. Including other primary teachers will enhance continuity.

School board members and administrators will need to be included in this process of change. As the issue is brought to the attention of the school board, the request for a study committee may be addressed. An administrator could be put in charge of this study

committee composed of a variety of members. Some of these members may include:

1. Kindergarten and first grade teachers.
2. A reading specialist and curriculum coordinator.
3. A principal or assistant superintendent.
4. Parents of current, future, and past kindergarten pupils.
5. School board members.
6. Other members of the school community (Hills, 1985, p. 40).

The study committee may divide into several sub-committees in order to develop in-depth information on different aspects of the issue. A sub-committee may be responsible for one of these areas:

1. An overview of the existing program.
2. Summarizing conclusions of research and demonstration programs.
3. Reports on visits and interviews.
4. Any other parts of the planned report to the school board (Hills, 1985, p. 42).

#### Assessing the social process of change

Through assessing the social process of change, the mobilization process confronts the past, present, and future in implementing change. Rust noted that “Increasingly, educational change is understood as a social process in which participants negotiate strategies and outcomes over a period of time” (p. 459). Through this social process, House (as cited in Rust, 1989) identifies three parts of change—technological, political, and cultural. The technological change is “conceived of as a relatively mechanistic process” (Rust, 1989, p. 459). House considers the political process as groups with conflicts making compromises. The cultural change is viewed by House as a process that can take more than a generation for beliefs to change (Rust, 1989). By

incorporating the scope of all three views, House suggests these views “act as interpretive frameworks for understanding the change process” (as cited in Rust, 1989, p. 460).

Rust analyzed the failure of a school district to implement a full-day kindergarten program. By looking at the three levels of social change, Rust determined the failure of this process rested not on the technological or political level but with the cultural level. Rust (1989) concluded with the need to address the following:

1. Parental concerns about type of program, fatigue, length of day, curriculum, socialization, and nurture.

2. Administrative concerns about cost and management.

3. Focus the discussion on what a good early childhood program looks like and not on whether to have one.

4. Starting off with input from the broad spectrum of participants, not just colleagues.

5. Developing and articulating a sound rationale for early childhood programs that will have credibility to administrators, school boards, and parents (p. 461).

By developing a sound rationale, taking into consideration all participants, focusing on the social process, and addressing parental concerns, the possibility of implementing a successful full-day program will increase.

#### Developing strategies for implementation

After identifying the need for change, marshaling support, and assessing the social process, the groundwork has been laid to continue with the process of change. The final stage in the mobilization process is to develop strategies for implementation. These strategies can be divided into two main groups: (a) developing a systematic philosophy and (b) addressing administrative issues.

Developing a systematic philosophy. The subcategories for the systematic philosophy include children's growth and development and the broad goals of what children should learn, including curriculum (Decker & Decker, 1984, p. 19). By thoroughly examining these two aspects of a systematic philosophy, a school district will have a sound basis for a full-day kindergarten program.

When developing a systematic philosophy for a full-day kindergarten program, several points regarding children's growth and development need to be kept in mind. Five-year-old children come into the kindergarten setting with a variety of needs that are very different from the regular school program. Many of these children have already been exposed to a full-day childcare setting. When developing a systematic philosophy, attention should be given to these differences.

Another issue to be considered when developing a systematic philosophy for a full-day kindergarten program is to focus "the timing and pacing of activities and routines associated with three major areas of development" (Hills, 1985, p. 29). These areas include physical, language and cognitive, and social development.

While developing a systematic philosophy, the broad goals of what children should learn, including curriculum, should be predetermined. At this point, school districts need to examine thoroughly the type of curriculum it is seeking for its full-day kindergarten program. According to Fromberg (1995):

The full-day kindergarten program is not a stepping-stone to first grade. It is not a traditional first grade—begun one year earlier, nor is it an extended nursery school. Ideally, it is a unique time with its own distinct knowledge bases and practices that adjust to children's diverse personal cultures (p. 243).

There are numerous types of program models that can be used for a kindergarten

program. The Office of Early Child Development group early childhood programs into the following models: (a) preacademic models, (b) discovery models, and (c) cognitive discovery models (as cited in Decker & Decker, 1984, p. 22). Other goals included:

1. Children will grow in their self-esteem, cultural identity, curiosity, independence, and individual strengths.
2. Children will continue to develop a love of learning.
3. Children will gain increasing control of their large and small muscles.
4. Children will engage in interesting, appropriate experiences that integrate their social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development.
5. Children will use written and spoken language in concrete, meaningful ways.
6. Children will use mathematical concepts and mathematical symbols under positive adult guidance.
7. Children will continue to develop control of their own behavior through positive adult guidance.
8. Children will become increasingly self-motivated, cooperative, and able to resolve problems among themselves with minimal adult direction (NAEYC, 1991, p. 38).

Addressing administrative issues. Administrative issues that should be addressed include (a) staffing considerations, (b) location and equipping of classroom, (c) scheduling, (d) providing nutrition and health services, (e) working with parents, (f) financing and budgeting, and (g) designing staff development activities (Decker & Decker, 1984). Staffing consideration needs to be one of the most important aspects to be considered when introducing a new program in a school district. It would be beneficial if the teachers assigned to a new full-day program were enthused and open-minded about it. According to Hills (1985), "If a teacher is firmly opposed to a

lengthened day and sincerely believes it would not be beneficial to children, it is probable that this prophesy will be self-fulfilling in some way” (p. 33).

Regarding the location and equipping of a classroom, there are many issues that need addressed. An important issue is the location. In considering location a school district needs to refer to the philosophy and objectives of the program. A classroom for an academically oriented kindergarten would have a different appearance from a classroom for a discovery kindergarten (Decker & Decker, 1984, p. 247).

The following are suggested points to consider when planning the location and equipping of a kindergarten classroom:

1. Generally a southern or eastern exposure is better than a western exposure.
2. Thirty-five square feet per child as the minimum square footage is recommended.
3. Many building planners recommend covering the floor space with furniture and equipment; good space organization is found where the surface is between one-half and two-thirds covered.
4. The needs of handicapped children should be considered when a room is being arranged.
5. The recommended ceiling height should be ten to eleven feet.
6. If program planners desire to minimize the adult's presence, they should include fewer walls.
7. Shelves or racks should be placed near the area in which they will be used. If children have to walk across the room to get supplies or equipment, there will be many temptations along the way.
8. Depending on the type of kindergarten program, planners should consider

areas for interest centers (Decker & Decker, 1984, p. 249).

Going from a half-day to a full-day schedule will take time to plan. The timing and pacing of activities should be carefully considered in regards to the three major areas of development. These areas include physical, language and cognitive, and social development (Hills, 1985). As the schedule is being developed, the special needs of five-year olds should be taken into account.

When implementing a full-day kindergarten program, providing nutrition and health services is an issue that should be considered. Most of the children coming into a full-day kindergarten program have never before experienced a school cafeteria. A kindergarten child may find the commotion of the cafeteria overwhelming, or may become so engrossed in the social aspect of the cafeteria that the child does not eat. The following are strategies teachers have found to be beneficial at lunch time for full-day kindergarten students:

1. Providing space in the classroom for lunch so that children are not mixed with large numbers of older children whose size and behavior may seem intimidating.
2. If providing alternative space is not possible, combining the kindergarten children with older children, for example fifth graders, who can help them and relate in big brotherly and sisterly ways. This can be beneficial to both the younger and older students.
3. Altering expectations for cafeteria behavior for these younger children, in terms of both the time allotted for eating and the amounts of food they are expected to consume. Serving sizes and eating times designed to meet the needs of the oldest elementary school children cannot reasonably be expected to apply to the youngest ones (Hills, 1985, p. 31).

Fatigue of pupils is a health issue planners of a full-day kindergarten program need to address. Many five-year-olds are in the habit of taking a rest or nap. Attending a full-day program may increase the need for a rest time. The following are strategies teachers have found to be useful with this issue:

1. Providing a rest period which allows children to sleep or rest quietly, looking at a book, for example.
2. Permitting variation in the length of the rest period for individual children, especially during the first weeks of the school.
3. Phasing in the full-day participation of children who seem to tire easily or whose parents request it.
4. Beginning with a shorter schedule for all the children and gradually extending it to the full-day over the first month or two (Hills, 1985, p. 30).

As mentioned previously, parents need to be involved in the planning aspect of a full-day kindergarten. They also need to be an integral part of the implementation process. The following are suggested ways to include parents in this process:

1. Including them in the needs assessment phase of planning.
2. Surveying their attitudes toward proposed changes of kindergarten scheduling.
3. Collecting follow-up information on their attitudes after the program has been implemented.
4. Arranging for flexibility in a child's participation on the basis of strong parental requests, for example, phased-in entry, optional participation, and the like (Hills, 1985, p. 32).

Financing and budgeting of a new program is of special interest to the

administration, school board, and taxpayers. Several factors to consider in the budgeting and financing of a full-day kindergarten program include:

1. Changes in bus services.
2. Projected class sizes and enrollment patterns.
3. Available supplementary funding.
4. Teacher assignments.
5. Start-up costs (i.e., availability of rooms, equipment, and furnishings).
6. Additional instructional materials.
7. Program evaluation design (Hills, 1985, p. 36).

When determining the cost of a full-day kindergarten program, a school district needs to look at both the short-term and long-term costs and benefits. A cost analysis needs to be done to make a determination of these factors.

Designing staff development activities is an important component of implementation. Hills surveyed the needs of teachers when implementing a full-day kindergarten program. Teachers responded by stating they wanted current information about scheduling and curriculum. Teachers also wanted new ideas for learning activities (1985). Hills went on to ask, “what would have helped to enhance their competence and confidence in their new assignment?” (1985, p. 62). Teachers responded:

1. Administrative support for planning and preparation.
2. Visits to all-day kindergartens and discussions with teachers of such programs.
3. Inservice training to prepare for the change and to provide support during the first years of the assignment (Hills, 1985, p. 62).

The mobilization process of change takes time to plan and research. By fully planning the four components of the mobilization process, a school district implementing

a full-day kindergarten program has a sound basis for the implementation process.

### Implementation

Implementation is the part of the change process where the innovation is decided, tried, and used in a system. This step, like mobilization, takes time and the end product is not always predictable (Rust, 1989, p. 457). There are three possible outcomes with the implementation process: (a) rejection of the innovation, (b) superficial incorporation of the innovation in their daily routine, or (c) adoption of the innovation.

One important component to this process is to include teachers starting from the beginning of the mobilization stage. Rust concludes that “Where teachers have been integral to planning and decision making, are prepared to use the innovation, and know they can count on continued support, innovations are adopted” (1985, p. 458). Another significant component to implementing a successful innovation is to include community involvement and support from the beginning of the process (Rust, 1985).

Decker and Decker identified several different studies on curriculum models for full-day kindergarten programs (1984, p. 35). From a study done by David Weikart on comparison of teacher-directed, language-based curriculum, a cognitive-discovery curriculum, and a unit-based curriculum, Weikart concluded “that different curricular approaches, if there is high-quality implementation, will have essentially the same impact” (cited from Decker & Decker, 1995, p. 35). From this conclusion, implementation should be considered a critical stage in the process of change.

### Institutionalization

Institutionalization of an innovation is defined as the final phase in the change process when the system’s use of the innovation is thought of as an integral part of the day-to-day operation of the system. This process depends on “the way things are

done, the degree of the commitment from the district (including financial commitment), and the level of involvement of various participants during the mobilization and implementation phases” (Rust, 1985, p. 459). This stage is heavily dependent on the implementation of the other two stages to determine success of the innovation.

### Summary of the Literature Review

The mobilization stage of change is essential to planning the implementation of a full-day kindergarten program. To successfully complete the process of change, implementation and institutionalization are also integral components. The first stage, mobilization, is relevant to information to answer the objective of this study which is: What elements are necessary in a full-day kindergarten program that are likely to enhance effective implementation in its initial year?

## Chapter 3

### Design of the Study

This was a qualitative study conducted for the purpose of developing criteria that are critical to effectively implementing a full-day kindergarten program. This chapter explains the steps taken to identify effective elements for implementing a full-day kindergarten program. The objective of this study was to identify elements critical to effectively implementing a full-day kindergarten program.

Information was compiled by conducting an ERIC search of the related literature and research. This study was designed by first looking at how to implement change in a system. After the steps for the change process were determined, the elements for effective implementation were incorporated into the change process. These elements were established by analyzing the related literature and research.

Information from chapter 2 was utilized to identify elements necessary for effectively implementing a full-day kindergarten program in its initial years. These elements for effective implementation are listed in the literature as the mobilization process.

#### Mobilization Process

The mobilization process is the first part of the process of change that includes several key elements. Those elements are (a) identifying the need for change, (b) marshaling support, (c) assessing the political climate, and (d) developing strategies for implementation.

#### Identify the need for change in a full-day kindergarten program

Identifying the need for change was determined by following a four-step process. This process included (a) reviewing current objectives, (b) determining method for

gathering data and what kind of data, (c) examining the outcomes, and (d) identifying discrepancies between objectives and outcomes.

#### Marshaling support for a full-day kindergarten program

A study committee was developed in order to process information of full-day kindergarten programs and to make a report to the school board about this information. Members selected to serve on this committee were decided by the board of education. After the selection of the committee, sub-committees were organized to study the different aspects of the issue. Some of these aspects were (a) an overview of the existing program, (b) conclusions of research and literature, (c) reports on visits and interviews from successful kindergarten programs, and (d) surveys of parents and community. The study committee presented a final report with recommendations to the school board.

#### Determining the social process of change for a full-day kindergarten program

The social process of implementing a full-day kindergarten program was determined by the development of a rationale by the school board. This rationale was developed from the information provided by the study committee.

After a rationale was developed, information from the study committee and the rationale needs to be presented to parents, staff, and community in an open meeting with public discussion on the issue. The school board's final decision to implement a full-day kindergarten program needs to be addressed.

#### Developing strategies for implementation of a full-day kindergarten program

The development of strategies for implementation was determined by developing a systematic philosophy and addressing administrative issues. The development of each of these strategies is presented here.

Developing a systematic philosophy for a full-day kindergarten program. To develop a systematic philosophy, an analysis of student population entering Armstrong-Ellis Grade School was done. The past three years of students entering kindergarten were examined and divided into two groups—students who were in childcare settings and students who stayed at home. These groups were divided into two subgroups—students attending preschool and students without preschool experience. A determination of the average number for the past three years was taken.

To determine the type of early childhood program that is in place, a survey was done of the primary grade teachers. Kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers were surveyed. Primary teachers examining current goals, revising those goals, and determining additional goals established the broad goals for a full-day kindergarten program. A philosophy was determined by the information provided from the analysis of kindergarten population, survey of teachers, and the development of broad goals for a full-day kindergarten program.

Addressing administrative issues of a full-day kindergarten program. Staffing of the program was determined by identifying the programs that would need staff replaced by the introduction of a full-day program. Another determination of staffing would be who is best suited for the position by qualification and interest.

The best location for a full-day kindergarten program was determined by guidelines provided. The amount of space was determined by taking the average enrollment of students entering Armstrong-Ellis Grade School for the last three years and multiplying by 35. This gives the average space needed for a kindergarten room. Room space was determined by measuring each room and determining the square footage for each room. The results of the average needed space for a kindergarten room and the

square footage are presented here.

The consideration of equipment was determined by taking an inventory of the equipment in the current kindergarten classroom and determining the equipment needed for the new room. One item to consider was mats for naptime.

Determining nutrition and health issues for a full-day kindergarten was a matter of answering questions concerning these issues. Questions that were addressed included:

1. What methods would be used to help kindergarten students adapt to the cafeteria environment?
2. When would a snack be provided?
3. What strategies would be considered for kindergarten students to help ease into a full-time setting at school?
4. How would rest periods be provided during the day?

Parental involvement was determined with parents' participation in the planning aspect of implementing the full-day kindergarten program. Parents were given the option of full-day or half-day kindergarten program.

A cost analysis was done to determine the long-term and short-term effects of implementing a full-day kindergarten. Issues addressed for increased cost included (a) salaries for additional staff, (b) additional instructional materials, (c) start-up costs, and (d) staff development activities. Issues addressed for the district saving money included (a) elimination of a bus route and (b) additional revenue in state aid. The additional revenue in state aid was determined by the following method (a) take the A.D.A minus  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the kindergarten enrollment--this is the adjusted A.D.A., (b) take the state aid for the 97-98 school year and divide it by the adjusted A.D.A.--this is the per day per pupil amount of state aid, (c) multiply that number by  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the kindergarten enrollment for the

97-98 school year—this is the amount of additional state aid that the district would have received for the 97-98 school year if there had been a full-day kindergarten program.

Staff development needs were determined by taking a survey as to what the primary teachers felt would benefit them in implementing a full-day kindergarten. Suggested information surveyed included (a) current data about scheduling and curriculum, (b) new ideas about learning activities, (c) support with planning and preparation, (d) visits to other full-day kindergarten programs, and (e) inservice training before, during, and after the initial year.

## Chapter 4

### Results

#### Overview

Chapter 3 presented key elements for implementation of a full-day kindergarten program in its initial years. This chapter presents results for each element by explaining how each element should apply at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School as its staff prepares to implement a full-day kindergarten program.

#### Mobilization Process

The mobilization process is the first part of the process of change that includes several key elements. These elements are (a) identifying the need for change, (b) marshaling support, (c) assessing political climate, (d) developing strategies for implementation.

#### Identify the need for change in a full-day kindergarten program at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School

This process was accomplished by obtaining current kindergarten objectives, examining those objectives, and presenting these to Armstrong-Ellis School Board. After this the school board will need to determine any further data it needs to pursue the issue. Finally, an identification of any discrepancies between objectives and outcome needs to be determined. This information will be presented to the Armstrong-Ellis School Board to determine the course of action.

#### Marshaling support for a full-day kindergarten program at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School

Selection of a study committee by the Armstrong-Ellis Grade School Board of Education is the next step. The superintendent could make recommendations for this committee. The study committee should then select issues to be addressed. A plan to

study each of these issues would need to be determined. Some of these issues are (a) overview of current program, (b) conclusions of research and literature, (c) reports on visits and interviews from successful kindergarten programs, and (d) surveys of parents and community. After analyzing these issues, a final report will be presented to the board of education with recommendations.

#### The social process of change for a full-day kindergarten program at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School

From the information given to the school board by the study committee, a rationale for implementing a full-day kindergarten program should be developed. A public meeting would need to be held to present the rationale for implementing a full-day kindergarten and presentation of any recommendations the study committee has made. Discussion would then be open to the public. The school board's final decision to implement a full-day kindergarten needs to be made.

#### Strategies for implementation of a full-day kindergarten program at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School

The development of strategies for implementation at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School needs to be determined by developing a systematic philosophy and addressing administrative issues. These strategies developed for Armstrong-Ellis Grade School are discussed below.

Developing a systematic philosophy. The systematic philosophy could be developed by including information from several sources. This information is (a) analysis of student population entering Armstrong-Ellis Grade School for the last three years, (b) survey of the teachers at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School as to the type of program in

place, and (c) the development of broad goals to be implemented in a full-day kindergarten at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School.

Addressing administrative issues about full-day kindergarten at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School. Staffing of this position is the first consideration of the administration and school board. Recommendations could be made by the superintendent about those candidates best qualified for the position.

The best location of a kindergarten room was determined by square footage of a room and determining the amount needed for the average class size. The average class size is 15 with the average square footage needed for a full-day kindergarten program to be 525 square feet. The administration and Armstrong-Ellis Grade School Board of Education will need to determine the best location for the full-day kindergarten program.

An inventory of equipment will need to be taken. Items on this inventory are (a) tables and chairs, (b) cubbies, (c) teacher's desk and chair, and (d) shelving. These need to be considered at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School because the classroom may move from its present location.

Staff and administration at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School need to address the nutrition and health issues. Some issues are (a) methods to adapt kindergarten students to the cafeteria environment, (b) time snacks would be made available, (c) strategies to consider to help kindergarten students into a full-time setting, and (d) rest periods.

Staff and administration also need to determine parental involvement. Some issues concerning parental involvement are (a) survey parents about nutrition and health issues, (b) collect follow-up information on implemented program, and (c) arrange for flexible scheduling for students.

The budget and finance aspect of a new full-day kindergarten program can be divided into additional costs and revenues. Some of the issues for additional costs are (a) making a teaching position from 5/7 to full time, and (b) purchasing additional equipment, and instructional materials. Additional revenues will come from state aid. There will be no savings from the change in bus service because the current kindergarten bus driver is the janitor and is salaried. His salary will not change with the elimination of the kindergarten noon route.

The Armstrong-Ellis Grade School administration will need to take a survey of staff to identify the needs of teachers with the implementation of a full-day kindergarten program. Needs on the survey are (a) visits to full-day kindergarten programs, (b) inservice training before implementation, (c) inservice training during the initial year of implementation, and (d) literature and research about successful full-day kindergarten programs.

## Chapter 5

### Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

#### Summary

Armstrong-Ellis Grade School is in the process of studying how to implement a full-day kindergarten program. The issue was studied and the implementation of a full-day kindergarten program will take place within the next two years. The objective of this study was to determine the elements of a full-day kindergarten program critical to effective implementation in a program's initial year.

The study was conducted by analyzing research and literature of successful full-day kindergarten programs and determining elements effective to implementation. The three stages of change—mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization—were also analyzed. As stated previously, the first stage of change, mobilization, is relevant to information to answer the objective of this study.

The outcome of this study was the elements of effective implementation of a full-day kindergarten program. These elements provide Armstrong-Ellis Grade School a step-by-step process for implementation. The elements are identifying the need for change, marshaling support, assessing the social process, and developing strategies.

#### Conclusions

The specific objective of this study was to determine the elements of a full-day kindergarten program critical to effective implementation in a program's initial years. The elements developed were based on the mobilization phase in the change process.

Currently, Armstrong-Ellis Grade School is the only school in Vermilion County that does not offer a full-day kindergarten program. Both parents and the community have expressed the need for a full-day program. When making the final decision on this

issue, the Armstrong-Ellis Board of Education will need to consider the current program's instruction, any conclusions from current program evaluation, and consideration of community pressure to implement a full-day program. The school board should not assume that Armstrong-Ellis Grade School is prepared for a full-day kindergarten program. Careful thought should be given on the total impact of implementing a full-day program when making the final decision.

When the selection of a study committee is made, a variety of participants with diverse viewpoints should serve on this committee. Some recommendations are (a) future and former parents' of kindergarten students, (b) primary teachers, (c) reading specialist, (d) school board members, and (e) administrators.

The issues addressed by this committee should include both the positive and negative impact of implementing a full-day kindergarten program. The final report presented to the school board should not only assess the positive impact of a full-day kindergarten but also the negative impact a full-day program may have on other programs at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School.

The final report presented to the school board should be balanced. The issues addressed by the study committee should include both the positive and negative impact of implementing a full-day kindergarten program.

When developing a systematic philosophy, the kindergarten population Armstrong-Ellis is serving, type of program, and broad goals should all be included. In addition to this, the curriculum should be updated and aligned with the state goals for learning. By having the curriculum updated at this time, it will create a stronger program that is more aligned with the other primary grades.

In order to make the implementation of a full-day program effective, one of the

key components is the selection of staff. The teacher of this program needs to be interested and enthused about a full-day program. The staff member also needs to understand the concept of a full-day kindergarten program. The implementation of this program is not just an extension of time; curriculum and teaching techniques will need to adapt and change when the program is implemented.

The best location for the new full-day kindergarten program based on the average class size is the southeast classroom at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School. This room also has access to a sink making it more desirable for a kindergarten room. From the review of the literature, it has been established that consistency of program is important. The southeast classroom is located across the hall from the first grade room thus enhancing the ability to provide consistency within the primary grades.

There are many options kindergarten students may have in regards to health and nutritional issues. The administration may want to provide kindergarten students with a lunchtime that is a few minutes earlier than the other lower grades' lunchtime. This would provide a quiet time for kindergarten students to get their lunches and start eating before the older students come in for lunch. Since the kindergarten students are eating at an earlier time, a snack time might be more appropriate for the late afternoon instead of the morning. By providing a snack in the afternoon, students would not be too full for lunch and also would not be hungry on the way home.

There are several strategies that could be offered to ease kindergarten students into a full-time school setting. One strategy is to have early dismissal for kindergarten students for the first two weeks of school. This would allow students to become adjusted to kindergarten without having the extra pressure of going a full-day all at once. Another strategy is to give parents the option of a full-day or half-day kindergarten program.

Parents are a better judge of their child's needs; by providing this option, parents are given the choice in their child's education.

At Armstrong-Ellis Grade School, there are many considerations to take into account when doing a cost analysis of implementing a full-day kindergarten program. Since the current staff position is 5/7 time, the increase of cost will not be as much as increasing the pay from half time to full-time. Another consideration is the minimal cost savings by eliminating the noon kindergarten route. Cost savings consists of gas and maintenance of the bus. The bus driver is salaried and by eliminating a bus route there will not be any savings from his salary. Finally, there will be an increase in state aid by increasing the kindergarten to full-day.

In the year before implementing a full-day kindergarten program, an organized staff development plan needs to be established. This will enhance the likelihood of successful implementation of the full-day program. Also, this will alleviate any apprehensions primary teachers may have about this new program. Staff development should also be ongoing throughout the initial years of the implementation process. When problems occur during implementation, staff should have available resources, time, and support to solve these problems.

### Recommendations

Armstrong-Ellis Grade School needs to consider implementing a full-day kindergarten program. By properly implementing a full-day program, it will not only better prepare kindergarten students for first grade but will eventually help strengthen the total academic program at Armstrong-Ellis Grade School.

Another consideration to make is the continued need to assess the change process. This study analyzed the effective elements of implementing a full-day kindergarten

program in relation to the change process—mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization. The focus of this study was on the mobilization process of change. Implementation and institutionalization were analyzed in chapter 2 but were not considered in other chapters. As these effective elements of implementation are established, to continue to examine the other steps of the change process would help assure the success of a full-day kindergarten program. In addition to this, other practitioners may want to further study these two other components of the change process.

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