

File

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White House Task Force on Education

PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATION OF THE DISADVANTAGED
(Interview with Bill Rioux by Herbert Jasper)

1. Functions of Staff

Rioux has just been named Deputy Director of this program and efforts are still underway to recruit a Director at GS-16. As indicated by the attached Memorandum of Agreement between the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and Office of Education, the program operates as a staff element of both agencies. The principal OEO programs are those under the Community Action Program (CAP) which, on the basis of programs approved to date, as much as forty-five percent will be education-related efforts.

Prior to enactment of P.L. 89-10, the joint staff effort had existed for about a year. Insofar as OE programs, it sought to orient all OE programs toward serving the needs of disadvantaged persons. Thus, the staff has been heavily involved with all parts of OE, such as, the library program, the college work study program, and the vocational education program. The Economic Opportunity Act indicates that preference should be given in other agencies' programs to activities which are part of approved Community Action Programs. The staff effort, to date, has been low-key in attempting to assure such preference, but as the number of CAP's increases, the preference provision will become more difficult to administer.

The staff is already heavily involved in the development of plans and regulations for implementing 89-10, especially Titles I and III. Title I of 89-10 provides more than \$1-billion just for education efforts concerning the disadvantaged. In addition, the supplementary centers authorized under Title III should be related primarily to the disadvantaged.

2. Problems Encountered

- a. The program is severely handicapped by the absence of a director whose status would probably be helpful in pressing the staff's views within OEO. Within OEO, this gap has caused fewer difficulties. It also appears that the onset of 89-10 will reveal significant deficiencies in the numbers of staff working in this area. The present staff of eighteen may have to be increased

by about half to cope with the additional work expected. Rioux believes that, for the foreseeable future, a separate staff office reporting to the Commissioner will be required. This is due, in part, to relationships with and within OEO, but is also dictated by the necessity to stimulate, coordinate, and badger the several Bureaus in OE.

- b. Rioux is generally satisfied with the Bureau and staff office structure. In regard to the field, he believes the program could well use additional help from the field, but has not yet figured out how to accomplish this. He emphasizes that OEO field staff who are in place are less likely to develop rapport with educators.

Rioux believes the basic working relationships between OE and OEO are satisfactory. In fact, the arrangement has worked out far better than he expected it could. The second attachment to this memorandum indicates that Project Head-Start is scheduled to terminate at the end of this summer. However, present OEO staff plans call for the continuation of this project into the school year and during subsequent years. If this occurs, serious coordination problems will develop between OEO and OE programs. If not, the coordination problems between the CAP programs and those of OE should not be severe. As noted in the same attachment, Rioux has not found the Civil Rights Act to be a problem in the past months but expects its provisions to cause substantial difficulties as we move ahead.

3. New Legislation.

As noted above, ^{no}foresee problems principally in connection with the number of staff required for his program.

4. Recommended Changes.

No suggestions.

Attachments: (2)

cc: Mr. Ink
Mr. Oganovic

Subject: PFEOD
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