

## Epilogue to the Second Edition

Beginning in the late 1970s, the United States entered a period of educational reform as tumultuous as any in American history. Across the nation reformers sought to revitalize public education through a series of initiatives ranging from restructuring school finance to toughening state and local graduation requirements. In some places, reformers went even further in introducing such bold experiments as school-based management, local school governance councils, state takeovers of urban districts, school-business partnerships, content and performance curriculum standards, and the use of tax money to pay tuition for students at private and/or parochial schools.

How did this great wave of educational reform affect Detroit? Which of these reforms took root in the Motor City, and what impact have they had on the quality of education for the city's children? What political and educational patterns have persisted in the Detroit Public Schools? What has changed? This epilogue to the second edition addresses these questions by briefly examining key events that have taken place in the Detroit system since 1981.<sup>1</sup> In many ways, this analysis highlights a central theme in the first edition of this book; namely, that Detroit still provides an excellent site for examining the changing nature of urban education in the United States. As in the past, national educational reform efforts continue to play out in dramatic fashion in Detroit. Indeed, examples of almost every element of recent reform efforts influenced education in the Motor City.

Specifically, this epilogue focuses on the formation and the rapid collapse of a campaign in the late 1980s and early 1990s to radically restructure the Detroit public schools. Analysis of this experiment illuminates both the persistence of historical trends in the school district and the possibilities for change. Most importantly, events in Detroit point to a need to reassess what

has been the main idea motivating many, if not most, urban educational reformers—that the key to improving education in our great cities lies in sweeping structural change. Recent developments in Detroit, both negative and positive, point in a different direction, arguing instead that by concentrating more narrowly on improving what goes on in the classroom educators can produce modest but nonetheless significant improvements in urban schools. Changes that focus more on pedagogy than politics may be the most important and the most hopeful legacy of the current reform era.

### **Continuity and Subtle Change in Detroit's Social and Educational Context**

Until quite recently, the downward spiral that gripped Detroit and its schools since the late 1960s seemed to be continuing unabated. A reporter for the *Toronto Star* who visited the city in 1993 described it as “a ghost town. The utter desolation takes your breath away.” The reporter described large sections of the city as decaying into wilderness and quoted one urbanologist who stated that Detroit was “past the point of no return.”<sup>2</sup>

During the 1980s, the city's population continued its precipitous decline. At its peak in 1950, Detroit had almost 1.9 million people. Over the next 40 years, the city lost almost 47 percent of its population, registering just over 1 million inhabitants in the 1990 census. One consequence of that massive population loss was increasing racial and social class homogenization. Due to an almost unrelenting exodus of whites since the 1950s, by 1990 over three-quarters of Detroit's inhabitants were African American, most of whom lived in racially isolated neighborhoods. According to Reynolds Farley and William Frey, in 1990 Detroit ranked as “the most segregated” of the 47 cities in the United States with populations of a million or more.<sup>3</sup>

Detroit also remains very poor. Since the 1970s, the city has become a classic case of deindustrialization with a massive loss of manufacturing jobs. Not surprisingly, it has suffered from chronically high rates of unemployment. As late as 1992, unemployment in the city stood at over 15 percent, more than double the U.S. average. Due to the growing national economy, in 1997 the jobless rate in Detroit fell to under 8 percent, still comparatively high but considerably improved over the past. Despite such gains, the long-term effects of deindustrialization remain. A recent report by New Detroit, Inc., noted that “[p]er capita income of Detroit residents is less than one-half that of surrounding suburbs.”<sup>4</sup>



No group has been affected more profoundly by the economic deterioration of the city than Detroit's children. According to a study done by the Children's Defense Fund, in 1990 over 46 percent of Detroit's children were living in poverty, one of the highest rates in the nation. Ominously, that figure represented an almost 50 percent *increase* over what it was ten years earlier. According to recent estimates, over two-thirds of the approximately 170,000 children in the public schools come from families living below the poverty line.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout the 1980s, educators in Detroit struggled to find ways to provide a decent education for these children. Following the 1981 recentralization election, the schools were run by an eleven-member board of education, seven members elected from districts and four elected at large. The board, however, did not have full control over the schools. Due to the *Miliken v. Bradley* case the system remained under the supervision of a federal judge until 1989, at which time the experiment with court-ordered busing quietly ended. Yet the divisiveness of the busing controversy left a lasting legacy for the Detroit schools. As numerous commentators have pointed out, busing was a key factor behind white flight from the city and the subsequent steep drop in school enrollments. In 1966, when the system hit its peak enrollment, it served almost 300,000 students who were about evenly divided between black and whites. Twenty-four years later, approximately 90 percent of the district's 170,000 students were African American.<sup>6</sup>

Despite difficult circumstances, educators in Detroit were able to take some positive steps in the 1980s. Elementary students, for example, gradually improved their performance on the California Achievement Test and the Michigan Educational Assessment Program tests.<sup>7</sup> Similar gains, however, did not occur in the secondary schools, which except for Cass Tech and Renaissance High remained troubled institutions. Generally, students in Detroit high schools performed at a level that the chair of the federal court monitoring commission called "deplorable." Throughout the 1980s, the high school dropout rate ranged from 41 to at times 57 percent. Yet even graduating seniors lacked the basic reading and math skills necessary to succeed in the modern workplace, a situation illustrated by the scores of Detroit students on the American College Test (ACT). In 1987, the average ACT score in Detroit was about 14, more than four points below the national average. A *Detroit News* survey found that Detroit high school students had the lowest average ACT and SAT scores of the ten largest school districts in the nation.<sup>8</sup>

Contributing to the ongoing failure of the high schools were contin-

uing problems of order and discipline and declining academic standards. A 1984 study by the federal monitoring commission found that fatal shootings or stabbings in or around schools, assaults on students and teachers, and a ready supply of weapons and drugs on school grounds all remained frighteningly common in Detroit high schools. Three years later a survey found that over half of Detroit teachers reported that violence was a “frequent—if not daily” part of their school experience.<sup>9</sup> The consequences of this climate of violence for education were inevitable. The 1987 survey of teachers noted that “the victims of the troubled system are the vast majority of good students who are denied a quality education because a few create an atmosphere of danger and disorder.”<sup>10</sup>

The pattern of declining academic standards in the high schools that began in the 1930s also continued unabated well into the 1970s. However, in the early stages of the current educational reform movement when the states and school districts across the nation raised graduation requirements, Detroit seemed to follow suit. School leaders increased the total credit hours for graduation from 160 to 200 and increased the number of academic courses needed to graduate (e.g., the math requirement rose from one to two years). Unfortunately, at the same time, school leaders also doubled the credit hours granted for a host of nonacademic courses that effectively neutralized the impact of the increases in academic subjects. Moreover, the system created a number of new “academic” courses that focused mainly on very basic skills and knowledge. For example, Detroit students could take a four-year math sequence—Freshman Math, Junior Math, and Math Competency 1 and 2—which amounted to simply four years of general math. In 1983, the system put into place a basic skills competency test that when passed allowed students to graduate with an “endorsed,” but not a regular, high school diploma.<sup>11</sup>

By the late 1980s, a group of prominent civic leaders had become concerned enough about all these problems in Detroit’s high schools to take action. Inspired generally by the national attention to educational reform and specifically by a local strategic plan that called for greater community efforts to better secondary education, leaders from the business community, organized labor, and the public schools created the Detroit Compact that had at its core boosting academic achievement and improving the educational atmosphere in the high schools. The Compact “was designed to guarantee academically successful students who participate in the program, four-year tuition scholarships at Michigan’s public universi-



ties or interviews for career-track jobs if they maintain minimum grade requirements, test and attendance standards.”<sup>12</sup>

In many ways, the Detroit Compact was typical of the reforms galvanized by *A Nation at Risk*. The Detroit business community, including the Chamber of Commerce and Detroit Renaissance (an organization of corporate CEOs), played a major role in promoting and funding the program due in large part to business leaders' concerns about the quality of workforce. Moreover, as with many reforms in the 1980s, the Compact focused mainly on implementing educational and behavioral standards that schools could readily adopt rather than on making major governance or structural changes in the system. The educational and behavioral standards included attendance requirements (no more than ten days absent per year), minimum Grade Point Averages (2.0 for the job readiness program or community college scholarships, 3.0 for four-year college scholarships), minimum standardized test scores (40th percentile or better on the California Achievement Test for the job readiness program or community college scholarships, 21 or better on the ACT for four-year college scholarships), and no major and only three minor violations of the Student Code of Conduct. The program also demanded firm commitments from parents, teachers, and students prior to implementation.<sup>13</sup>

Between 1989 and 1994, the program steadily grew from 2,700 students in five high schools to over 20,000 in twenty-seven schools. However, its actual effect during those years was modest with 214 scholarships awarded and 4,216 jobs found.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, the program signaled one important change in Detroit's social and educational context, namely that contending groups including business and labor leaders, educators, community activists, parents, and students could join together for meaningful educational reform. Unfortunately, during the very time that the Detroit Compact was generating some successes, the city and the schools were convulsed by more dramatic educational developments that were rooted in the fiscal problems of the school system. If the Compact represented a subtle change from previous developments, the struggle over district finances signaled the persistence of long-standing historical trends.

### **The Ongoing Fiscal Crisis**

The fiscal problems that had been plaguing the Detroit schools for decades were directly related to the serious economic and social conditions afflicting

the city at large and were certainly one of the contributing factors to the poor performance of the schools. During the 1980s, the financial and political woes that had brought the system to the brink of bankruptcy in the early 1970s—a shrinking tax base, the continuing exodus of manufacturing jobs and middle-class families, declining state and federal aid, and increasing costs for salaries and other necessities—now combined with several additional elements to create a new series of dire fiscal emergencies.<sup>15</sup>

First, the recession of the early 1980s—in which “the U.S. auto industry experienced an economic slide unparalleled since the Great Depression”—had a devastating impact on Detroit and Michigan. Unemployment rose to double-digit levels in the city and remained at those levels into the 1990s. As in the Great Depression, these conditions strained the ability of the school system and the state to provide adequate funds for education.<sup>16</sup>

Second, the board’s ability to address its financial problems remained severely constrained. For most of the 1980s, the system was monitored by the federal court, and the state wielded increasing power over local educational decisions. Moreover, during the 1980s, the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) gradually emerged as the single, most important interest group in educational politics in the city. As in the late 1960s and 1970s, teachers continued to see the DFT as an island of stability and as a source of protection in the turbulent educational environment of the Detroit school system. Rank and file teachers generally united behind union leaders, giving those leaders considerable influence in the political arena. Although the DFT did not win all its battles with the board, it became increasingly clear in the 1980s that nothing could be accomplished either financially or educationally without the commitment of the union.

Third, the nature of racial politics in the city, region, and state changed in subtle but significant ways. In 1981, John Elliot took over as president of the Detroit Federation of Teachers, becoming the first African American to hold that position. From that point on, virtually every major figure in local educational politics—the school board president, the superintendent of schools, the union president, and the mayor—were African American. This change in leadership reflected the new political reality of Detroit. Since the mid-1970s, African Americans had become a voting majority in the city, a phenomenon that had a dramatic impact on leadership and more generally on politics in the city. For example, millage elections that often had pitted whites against blacks in the 1960s and 1970s became calmer and quieter affairs in the 1980s. Not only did the elections



become less contentious, they also became more predictable. Black Detroiters had consistently supported higher taxes for the schools since the 1940s, and that support did not waiver as the century wore on. Consequently, between September, 1977, and November, 1985, Detroit voters approved eight out of nine requests by the board for tax renewals or tax increases. The only defeat, of an August, 1980, request for a 3.5 mill tax increase, was reversed three months later when it reappeared on the November ballot.<sup>17</sup>

These changes in leadership and politics did not mark the end of the financial problems of the schools. Nor did they mean that race had disappeared as a factor in the issue of school finance in Detroit. They did, however, indicate that the influence of race on educational issues had become less overt than in the 1960s and 1970s. Whites still controlled powerful institutions such as the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce and the two daily newspapers, indeed almost every major media outlet in the city. Above all, whites played a dominant role in state government.<sup>18</sup> The power of all these institutions *especially* in the area of school finance was considerable. During the 1980s, for example, the state government provided between 50 to 60 percent of the total budget of the system, a situation that gave state level political and educational leaders enormous leverage over the school system particularly during periods of financial crisis.<sup>19</sup>

Unfortunately for Detroit, in the 1980s all these factors came into play as the school system suffered from a series of chronic financial problems. The deteriorating economic situation in the city and state in the early 1980s led to reduced property values, lower local tax revenues, and less state aid. Consequently, in 1978 the system began running annual budget deficits that ranged from a low of \$10 million in mid-decade to a high of almost \$160 million in 1989. The board was hampered in its ability to respond to this situation by the limited amounts of money it could raise through tax increases (and the negative consequences of those increases) and by the power of the unions in regard to which policies and actions it would support.<sup>20</sup>

In 1982, for example, the board attempted to reduce a \$37 million deficit by asking the unions to accept salary and fringe benefit concessions. The DFT rejected the request stating that the board should not expect teachers to bear the full burden of reducing the deficit. Following fruitless negotiations, the teachers walked off the job for seventeen days. Binding arbitration produced a contract in which the DFT agreed to \$20 million in concessions set up as a loan to the board. These concessions, however, failed to end the deficit, causing the board to freeze salaries for the 1983–84

school year. Unfortunately, even that freeze did not reduce the shortfall, which by August, 1984, was estimated at over \$43 million. The only solution to the problem was another tax increase.<sup>21</sup>

In November, 1984, Detroit voters approved a 4 mill increase in their school taxes, the third increase in seven years. But the benefits of this boost in revenues were short-lived. Having made salary concessions to the board during hard times, concessions that had caused the salaries of Detroit teachers to slip further behind those of suburban teachers, DFT leaders were in no mood to compromise when they sat down to negotiate the 1985–86 contract. Seeing the funds raised by the tax increase as money that would bring them closer to parity with suburban teachers, the DFT threatened to strike again unless Detroit teachers got substantial raises. This was not a frivolous demand. DFT leaders realized that unless Detroit teachers received salaries at least equal to those in the suburbs, it would be increasingly difficult both to attract and to retain talented teachers. Why would good teachers come to Detroit if they could find better working conditions *and* far better salaries in the suburbs? Such arguments and the unity displayed by the teachers behind their leaders ultimately compelled the board to grant a 10 percent increase for 1985–86 and a 7 percent increase for 1986–87. Rather than being magnanimous in victory, DFT president John Elliot further exacerbated tensions between the union and the board by declaring, “We got every dime they had.” These raises made it virtually impossible for the board to reduce the deficit without major layoffs or school closings, actions it was unwilling to take.<sup>22</sup>

Over the next two years the deficit gradually rose, a trend that set the stage for an even more serious confrontation between the union and the board in the fall of 1987. In many ways 1987 seemed like a replay of all the developments of the previous five years. Now facing a \$27 million shortfall the board announced a no-raise budget and called for other concessions from the teachers in order to pay off the debt. Carol Thomas, vice president of the DFT, angrily responded that “[t]he board’s priorities are misplaced. The teachers should come first on that budget and everything else next.” Negotiations with the board went nowhere, and, on September 2, the DFT set up picket lines. The strike lasted three weeks and ended with a contract that gave the teachers a 6.5 percent raise for 1987–88, 7 percent for 1988–89, and the promise of 6 percent for 1989–90.<sup>23</sup>

This time, however, several new factors entered the political mix producing the most volatile political situation the schools had faced in two decades. Throughout the strike, allegations of malfeasance and misuse of



funds dogged the school board. Since the early 1970s, board members had been criticized for their use of chauffeur driven cars and exorbitant travel expenses that often included first-class airfare—criticism that sharpened during the 1986 school board election. As the 1987 financial crisis worsened, these criticisms grew into howls of protest particularly after a front page exposé in the *Detroit News* reported that the chauffeurs made more than the average Detroit teacher, that the board had spent nearly \$500,000 on chauffeurs in the previous seventeen months, and that board members had spent \$70,000 in out-of-state travel during the 1986–87 school year. These expenses symbolized for many Detroiters a board that was more interested in perks and privileges for its members than in rescuing the financially strapped school system from its plight. The president of New Detroit, Inc., declared that “It appears that the board members place their own well being ahead of the children. The trips and chauffeured cars in the face of layoffs are outrageous.”

Several board members rejected this assessment and charged that the criticisms were racially motivated. They argued that when whites controlled the board no one questioned the expenses. Board member Alonzo Bates defended his first-class travel declaring, “We as blacks don’t have positions young people aspire to. We have blacks in sports as performers but we don’t have managers or executives. I want young people to see me traveling first class and say ‘This is a position I want to be in.’”<sup>24</sup>

More important than these battles over symbolism (eliminating the travel expenses would hardly have made a dent in the deficit) was the fact that the board simply could not pay for the raises it had granted the teachers. Within days of announcing the new contract, school leaders warned that the agreement would lead to a \$50 million deficit by June, 1988. A year later, they projected that the deficit would surpass \$150 million, equal to almost 20 percent of the system’s operating budget. With an impending financial catastrophe looming, the board began to look at layoffs, school closings, and another tax increase, actions that only further outraged parents and community leaders. In October, 1987, some Detroiters began circulating petitions to recall all eleven board members.<sup>25</sup>

In desperation, the board asked the state to approve the sale of a series of short-term bonds to keep the system afloat. This request, however, created new problems. In a scenario reminiscent of the confrontation in the 1930s between the board and the Stone committee, state treasurer Robert Bowman refused to approve the sale of the bonds until the board accepted certain conditions, specifically bringing its travel policies in line

with those of state employees and ending its use of chauffeurs. Board members responded angrily to what they saw as an attempt by the state to usurp their prerogatives. They were, after all, not state employees but elected officials. Nevertheless, like their predecessors in the 1930s, the board members ultimately accepted the terms dictated to them.

The furor over first-class travel and chauffeurs made great copy in the newspapers and on TV. However, by focusing so narrowly on the allegations of misuse of funds, the media made it appear that the board alone was responsible for the financial plight of the system. This was neither entirely fair nor accurate. The continuing economic decline of Detroit and the shrinking local tax base would have made balancing the school system's budget a painful task for even the most cost conscious civic leaders. Moreover, the demands of the DFT, legitimate as they were, kept the school leaders from ever being able to put the deficits to rest. Similarly, rather than merely lecturing the board on its misplaced priorities, the state could have provided more support for the beleaguered system than short-term loans. Criticism of the board was clearly warranted, but other participants who were thrashing about in this swamp hardly came away with clean hands. Nevertheless, amid the growing financial crisis the mood of large numbers of Detroiters and leaders of major civic organizations turned sharply against the board and coalesced into a powerful movement for change—the HOPE campaign.<sup>26</sup>

### **The HOPE Years, 1988–93**

In many ways the diverse coalition that sought control of the Detroit school board in 1988 was similar to the Progressive Era consensus that shaped educational politics in Detroit in the 1920s.<sup>27</sup> The HOPE campaign had the backing of a wide variety of interest groups including the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce, the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, the Detroit Federation of Teachers, civic organizations such as New Detroit, Inc., and a number of grass-roots community organizations. Both daily newspapers and the other major media outlets endorsed the HOPE group. A prominent local Republican donated \$1,000 and the DFT contributed \$5,000 to their campaign. Moreover, the campaign issues that the HOPE candidates stressed echoed those that dominated Progressive politics in Detroit in the 1910s and 1920s—the moral integrity of the reformers, their desire to restore public confidence in the school board through their commitment to the wise stewardship of funds, their ability to get the school



system's fiscal house in order, their promise to run the schools more efficiently and effectively, and their plans to introduce corporate structural and management innovations.<sup>28</sup>

The backgrounds of the HOPE candidates themselves indicated the remarkable diversity of the coalition. The group included Frank Hayden, an African-American city employee who served as chair of the School-Community Relations Organization; David Olmstead, a white corporate attorney and who was a former member of the Michigan School Finance Commission; Lawrence Patrick, a black Republican and an attorney who cochaired the Group of Organized Detroiters for Quality Education; and Joseph Blanding, an African American who worked as an international representative of the United Auto Workers. Several of them had been active for some time in developing an interracial coalition to take over the school board and to introduce dramatic reforms into the system.<sup>29</sup>

The 1988 school board campaign was one of the most highly publicized in the history of the school system. Mayor Coleman Young supported the incumbents who included Alonzo Bates and Clara Rutherford, two veteran board members. While the most pressing problems facing the system were the financial crisis, the continuing violence in the high schools, and the poor performance of the students, much of the attention in both the primary and general election campaigns, as in the Progressive Era, focused on the moral character of the board members and their challengers. The HOPE group denounced the profligate spending of the incumbents on chauffeurs and travel, repeating allegations that such spending showed an utter lack of commitment to fiscal responsibility. The incumbents responded by stressing the challengers' lack of experience and accusing them of being tools of white suburbanites, the media, and business interests.<sup>30</sup>

The election provided a clear choice to the voters. The incumbents ran on their records rather than on proposals for change. They responded to the looming deficit by presenting the voters with a "financial rescue plan" that included a 6 mill tax increase and a \$160 million bond issue. These proposals appeared on the same November ballot as the school board election. In contrast, the HOPE group offered an "education revolution." Although vague about how they would address the deficit, the reformers assured voters that they would bring financial stability to the system. These assurances were strengthened by the support they received from the business community, David Olmstead's experience with school finance on the state level, and their image as outsiders unsullied by allega-

tions about misspent funds. The major educational components of HOPE's "revolution," empowering local schools and creating schools of choice, received considerably less attention during the campaign than did the budget problems. At the time, that lack of attention did not appear to be troublesome. Eventually it would play an important role in the difficulties the HOPE team faced in implementing its reforms.<sup>31</sup>

The election was a stunning success for the reform candidates. All of them received over 100,000 votes, 20,000 more than the closest incumbent. The voters did not just vote the incumbents out of office; they sent a strong message of disgust with the system by rejecting the incumbents' financial rescue plan, defeating both the 6 mill tax increase and the \$160 million bond issue. In all, as the *Detroit News* education reporter put it, "The defeat of four incumbents combined with the defeat of the tax increase and bond issue was the biggest shake up of Detroit school leadership in at least two decades."<sup>32</sup>

Beyond that, the election marked a sharp break with previous trends in municipal and educational politics in Detroit. Coleman Young was one of the most powerful big-city mayors in the nation and a proven master at using racial issues to galvanize support from his overwhelmingly African-American constituents.<sup>33</sup> Although Young's support of the incumbent board members and allegations that the HOPE team was strongly tied to white interests, Detroit voters opted for change. As much as anything, the 1988 school board election signaled that Detroiters were neither content with the status quo in the schools nor with politics as usual in the city.

Despite HOPE's apparent mandate and Lawrence Patrick's election as president of the school board, the reformers experienced an awkward transition period in which they had to fend off numerous attacks including a call by Mayor Young to abolish the board and put control of the schools in his hands.<sup>34</sup> However, by August, 1989, the initial conflicts were resolved. Bowing to state pressure, the reformers appointed John Porter as interim superintendent of the school system. Having served as the president of Eastern Michigan University and as state superintendent of schools (the first African American to hold that position), Porter proved to be an inspired choice. He quickly fashioned a plan for rescuing the system from its chronic financial problems, obtained strong political support for the plan, and negotiated a new contract with the DFT.<sup>35</sup>

Porter's rescue plan was quite similar to the one that the previous board had offered the voters in November, 1988, namely a 6 mill tax



increase to pay for operating expenses (particularly raises promised to the teachers) and a \$150 million bond issue (equal to another 1.5 mill tax increase) to pay off the deficit. The difference, of course, was that the public had confidence in the new HOPE-led board. This confidence was reflected in the fact that a number of civic organizations that had opposed the 1988 tax increases—the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce, the Detroit Association of Black Organizations, Black Parents for Quality Education, and New Detroit, Inc—all backed the increases on the September, 1989, ballot. Due to this strong support both measures won with over 60 percent of the vote, a fact that convinced the HOPE team that the public was solidly behind its leadership and reform efforts. As a result of this election, the Detroit schools were fiscally stable for the first time in a decade, and with that stability came the opportunity to plan for educational reform without the fear that recurring budget crises would overwhelm new initiatives.<sup>36</sup>

The two major reform efforts that the HOPE team sought to implement were “empowered schools” and “schools of choice.” Support for school empowerment, initially viewed as a form of school-based management, was one of the key reforms, which the DFT had agreed to in its 1989 contract. Creating “empowered schools,” however, took longer than expected due to the system’s financial problems and because the HOPE team had to consolidate its power. Eventually, reformers gained control of ten of the eleven board seats, and from that position of strength they began a quest for dramatic educational change.<sup>37</sup>

Efforts began in earnest in July, 1991, when Deborah McGriff replaced John Porter as superintendent (Porter stated clearly when he took the interim position that he did not want to become general superintendent). McGriff had been deputy superintendent in Milwaukee and was a strong supporter of both empowered schools and school choice. Moreover, she was the first African-American woman to serve as superintendent of the Detroit schools and the first “outsider” to take the position of general superintendent in over two decades. Secure in their control of the board and led by a superintendent who fully backed their reform efforts, in 1991 the HOPE team began their campaign to transform the character of the Detroit schools.<sup>38</sup>

Few aspects of HOPE’s reform agenda more clearly embodied the spirit of 1990s governance and structural reform than did their plan for school empowerment. In their 1988 campaign literature, the HOPE team

described empowered schools as ones that received “greater decision-making authority through a process in which the principal establishes regular and meaningful opportunities for representatives of students, parents, community administrators, instructional and non-instructional staff to have input into the selection of areas and/or problems which are addressed and to suggest the solutions and strategies to be used.” Ultimately, this concept of empowered schools went beyond simply shifting authority from the central administration to local schools. Uniting ideas from corporate restructuring, site-based management, privatization, changes in union-management work rules in the auto industry, and the experiments in educational decentralization then underway in Chicago, Miami, and Rochester, the Detroit reformers fashioned a dramatic plan for reforming the schools.<sup>39</sup>

Once the principal, 75 percent of the teachers, 55 percent of the support staff, 55 percent of the parents, and 55 percent of the students voted in favor of the change, their school became “empowered.” The board then allocated 92 percent of the district’s per-pupil allocation (about \$4,000 per pupil in 1992) to the school for it to spend as it wished (nonempowered schools received only about 70 percent of the per-pupil allocation). Run by a School Empowerment Council composed of the educators and parents, these schools were free to determine faculty assignments, how funds should be spent, how classes and schedules should be configured, the nature of the curriculum, even the length of the school year, indeed virtually every aspect of providing education for their students.

The relationship between the schools and the central administration also changed. The main role of the central administration shifted simply to monitoring the empowered schools and insuring that they balanced their budgets and met districtwide achievement standards. Additionally, the empowered schools were free from oversight by central administration. For example, unlike other schools in the district, the empowered schools did not have to get their services from the central office. If private suppliers with better prices could be found, empowered schools could contract with them. The central administration became one of many vendors with whom the schools could contract for supplies, maintenance services, even in-service training for teachers and staff. The HOPE team was convinced that this arrangement put school-level policy and financial decisions into the hands of the people who knew best how to make them—the people who actually worked with students. Moreover, they were convinced that this arrangement would transform the central school bureaucracy itself by



forcing it to offer better, more efficient services or, failing that, by forcing it to close down noncompetitive operations.<sup>40</sup>

The second initiative, creating schools of choice, was equally bold. Expanding on the success of the citywide magnet high schools, Cass Tech and Renaissance, the HOPE team sought to expand choices for younger children by creating a series of magnet elementary schools. Ideally these schools would stimulate competition for students throughout the city, competition that ultimately would lead to improved schools throughout the system. By 1993, a number of different models existed for these schools of choice including professional development schools that had partnership agreements with area universities, schools modeled after James Comer's successful reform projects in New Haven, Connecticut, and several Afrocentric academies. Of these, the most successful during the HOPE years were the Afrocentric academies—the Marcus Garvey, the Malcolm X, and the Paul Robeson schools. These schools were established as magnet elementary schools that would offer a highly structured, African centered education. The schools required parental involvement, enforced dress codes, and maintained strict discipline. Committed teaching staffs set high academic and behavioral standards. Like the magnet high schools, Cass Tech and Renaissance, these magnet elementary schools have led the district in standardized test scores.<sup>41</sup>

Almost from their inception, the schools of choice and the empowered schools were controversial. The first conflict erupted over the Afrocentric academies because the board initially designated them as all-male institutions whose purpose was “to address the unique problems of urban males.” The American Civil Liberties Union and the National Organization of Women attacked the all-male status of the schools as gender discrimination and filed a successful lawsuit against the schools. Settling that case, however, did not end criticism of the schools of choice. Denouncing these “boutique schools,” parents and community activists accused the board of elitism and claimed it was diverting funds from neighborhood schools to support schools of choice.<sup>42</sup>

As contentious as were the debates about the schools of choice, they were nothing in comparison to the outcry that began in late 1991 over empowered schools. Unlike the Afrocentric academies, initially there was little controversy about empowerment. Observers believed that all fifteen of the newly empowered schools (about 6 percent of those in the district) had gotten off to promising starts. Nevertheless, throughout the 1991–92 school year, opposition to this initiative grew. In December, 1991, with

thirty more schools ready to vote on empowerment, the DFT issued an "embargo" on empowerment, in essence forbidding its members to continue the process of empowering schools.

The problem was the board's demand that the union agree to a revised set of policies that would give empowered schools even greater flexibility in operating. These policies included the right to waive provisions of the union contract without seeking the approval of the union, providing higher salaries to "lead teachers" in the empowered schools, and authorizing the schools to select their own teachers. Such policies ran directly into long-standing DFT concerns about decentralization, concerns about arbitrary dismissals of teachers and the sanctity of the union contract. In 1973, similar fears had precipitated the worst strike in the history of the school system. In 1992, every union in the system joined the DFT in condemning empowerment because of concerns about "job security, privatization of some school services, and transfer of staff."<sup>43</sup>

Negotiations between the DFT and the board broke down just before school was scheduled to start, and, on August 31, 1992, the union again went on strike. Empowerment was the key issue in the walkout. Arguing that granting waivers to empowered schools would essentially "gut the contract in those schools," DFT president John Elliot declared, "We will not even allow that possibility." Elliot argued that empowerment ran counter to the attitudes of most Detroit teachers who he claimed preferred a centralized school system in which work rules and procedures were the same for everyone. Beyond that, he maintained that teachers in empowered schools would have no protection from "vindictive administrators" who might transfer them for personal or arbitrary reasons and, once transferred, these teachers had no guarantee they would be placed in another school. Such a practice would in essence eliminate tenure.<sup>44</sup>

The DFT received strong support from the Organization of Schools Administrators and Supervisors (OSAS), the administrators' union, which argued that forcing principals to deal with such issues as purchasing supplies and negotiating with contractors reduced their ability to be educational leaders. Helen Martelock, president of OSAS, declared, "I'm not certain that paying the light bill, buying toilet paper, and arranging for garbage pickup and snow removal have a whole lot to do with schools." OSAS also feared that empowerment would lead to outsourcing in which the board would cut supervisory jobs in the central office. Like the DFT, OSAS questioned the effectiveness of school-based management generally, noting accurately that the practice had not produced great results in other school



systems. Indeed, both the DFT and OSAS utterly dismissed empowerment as “a management strategy, not a tool for improving education.”<sup>45</sup>

Faced with such determined opposition the HOPE team desperately tried to convince the unions and the public that its proposals were neither anti-union nor impractical. David Olmstead dismissed the DFT’s allegations about gutting the contract and the loss of job security as “a parade of imaginary horrors.” Rather than being anti-union, he argued that the board’s proposals were akin to those accepted by United Auto Workers in its negotiations with auto makers in which the union still bargained for wages and other large, systemic issues but allowed each local to negotiate work rules at individual plants. Olmstead declared, “I truly believe this board is more strongly in favor of teachers than the union is.” This dispute, he declared, was “about whether the union or the teachers will be in control.” Lawrence Patrick was more direct. Pointing out that the board was not *mandating* any reforms, that the decisions to seek empowerment were entirely voluntary on the part of administrators and teachers, Patrick questioned whether John Elliot really spoke for his members. “If nobody wants to do it,” he asked, “then what is he afraid of?”

In response to union arguments that teachers preferred the traditional centralized system and that these reforms were just a “management strategy,” one ally of the board stated bluntly that the old system had failed and that new strategies had to be tried. Put simply, “bureaucracy has not worked which is exactly why the board wanted empowerment.” Critics of the unions noted that they were offering nothing more than business as usual, a situation that had helped make the Detroit school system one of the worst in the nation.<sup>46</sup>

The strike lasted for twenty-seven days punctuated by increasingly angry exchanges between the board and the union, especially after the board went to court and obtained a back-to-work order that teachers overwhelmingly ignored. When the two sides finally settled, the union triumphed once again. The final contract contained a face-saving provision for the board to increase the number of empowered schools to forty-five but the terms of empowerment were minimal—the contract provisions that empowered schools could waive were only in “noncontroversial” areas such as parent-teacher conferences, selecting textbooks, and choosing testing materials. The contract also included salary increases for the next two years that again threatened to throw the district’s budget out of balance.<sup>47</sup>

The agreement and the return to work by the teachers did not reduce tensions. The four HOPE board members were running for reelection in

November, and the emotions and controversies that had raged during the strike spilled over into the campaign. Unlike 1988 when the Detroit AFL-CIO and the DFT strongly had supported the HOPE candidates, in 1992 the unions actively campaigned against them, accusing them of using empowerment as a tool for “union busting.” Joining organized labor in their opposition to the HOPE group were many community activists who denounced the HOPE candidates as elitists because of their support for schools of choice.<sup>48</sup>

The board members tried to run on their record—four years of a balanced budget, improved tests scores, and a lower dropout rate. “For people to judge us based on what happened [during the strike] would be unfair to us, and to what we accomplished,” Frank Hayden declared. The voters, however, failed to respond to these appeals. As David Olmstead noted, “[b]eing called anti-union is the political curse of death in this town.” In the November election three of the four HOPE candidates were defeated. Of the original HOPE team, ironically, only Lawrence Patrick, the black Republican, was reelected.<sup>49</sup>

Despite the losses, allies of the HOPE team still had a majority on the board, and they were committed to pushing on with the reforms. Indeed some of their efforts began paying dividends after the November defeat. One example was the announcement that the Skillman Foundation would provide \$17.5 million to encourage the development of Comer model schools.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, the wind was very much out of the reformers’ sails by 1993. A parents’ organization began a recall effort against four of the remaining proreform board members. Progress on even the scaled-back version of empowered schools was painfully slow largely due to a new embargo placed on the process by OSAS and by budget cuts (due in part to the new contract) that eliminated \$1.3 million set aside by the board to keep the process going. In October, Deborah McGriff, whose term as superintendent had been marked by almost continuous conflict and whose reappointment was now uncertain, announced her resignation. David Snead, the principal of Cass Tech, and a veteran Detroit educator replaced her. Many commentators saw Snead’s appointment as a signal that the old order had returned to power and that the HOPE period had ended.<sup>51</sup>

### **Assessing the HOPE Initiatives**

The postmortem analysis of the HOPE movement began almost as soon as the election results were announced. The critiques were as wide ranging as



they were contradictory. Some observers such as Thomas Bray, editor of the *Detroit News*, argued that the reformers moved too slowly on their educational revolution. He claimed that they squandered their electoral mandate by focusing too much of their initial attention on the budget and not enough on choice and empowerment. Many other critics took the opposite position, claiming that the HOPE team and Superintendent Deborah McGriff moved too quickly on the educational changes and did not give teachers and administrators enough time to accommodate to them. As one board member who supported the HOPE team put it, "We all pleaded with them to slow down. It was not what they wanted to do. It was how they did things, not the mission, where the reform group split up on the board." Other opponents of the reformers, particularly, community activists, were less disturbed by the pace of change than by its content. These activists branded the HOPE team as elitists committed to schools of choice at the expense of neighborhood schools.

In that vein, other detractors argued that the HOPE initiatives were too akin to corporate-style restructuring and to Republican educational policies to have had any chance in a city so strongly committed to unionism and the Democratic party. The president of OSAS, for example, dismissed the entire reform process as a "Bush initiative." Mayor Coleman Young blasted the empowered schools as a "concept from conservative circles" whose ultimate purpose, he claimed, was to "privatize" the schools.<sup>52</sup>

Certainly many of the factors cited by critics had a significant impact on the failure of the movement. But several other aspects of this situation seem to have played as large or larger a role. As noted earlier, the HOPE reformers drew some of their inspiration for empowered schools from the decentralization and school-based management experiments in Chicago, Miami, and Rochester. But the HOPE initiative differed from these experiments in one very important way—unlike them it did not draw its power or authority from a stable, dependable base. The Chicago reforms were "top-down," mandated by the state legislature, while those in Miami and Rochester were "bottom-up," initiated mainly by the union. The Detroit reformers, on the other hand, drew their power and authority from more volatile sources; namely, the political coalition that backed them in the 1988 election and the popular support of the voters who put them in office. In essence, the HOPE team believed that they could build reform based upon their broad-based coalition and their convincing electoral victory. That belief was flawed in two ways.

First, the HOPE team interpreted its electoral mandate too broadly.

The issues that had dominated the 1988 election were the financial crisis and the allegations of profligate spending by the incumbent board members. While the HOPE candidates promised an educational revolution and passed out literature describing school empowerment, voters were much more fixed upon the financial issues than on the promised changes. Certainly, the organizations that joined the HOPE coalition and many Detroit voters agreed that the school system needed to be changed; but it is far less certain that either a majority of the organizations in the coalition or the voters supported the specific changes the reformers introduced. By relying on their coalition and their electoral victory rather than on more stable forms of change such as revisions of state law, the reformers constructed their revolution upon a very shaky foundation.

Second, the HOPE team underestimated the power of the DFT and overestimated the union's commitment to change. Since 1973 when the DFT struck over the issue of decentralization, it was clear that no educational changes could be introduced in Detroit without DFT support. By the 1990s, the power of the DFT was probably greater than it had been at any time. After the 1992 strike, one Detroit church leader declared, "I think probably the strongest influence on the Detroit Public Schools system is the teachers union . . . they've demonstrated that they're in charge. The system is in the hands of the professionals, the unions."<sup>53</sup>

On first glance, however, the HOPE team's expectations that the union would support empowerment seemed quite reasonable given the strong backing the DFT had given the group in the 1988 election. Moreover, the reformers had reason to believe that the union agreed at least in principle to the idea of empowered schools. After all, American Federation of Teachers (AFT) president Albert Shanker was a strong supporter of the idea, other AFT locals in Miami and Rochester had led the movement for school-based management, and the DFT itself had agreed to support empowerment in the first contract signed with the HOPE dominated board.

The events of the early 1990s, however, revealed that the DFT was not interested in following the lead of its visionary national president, its fellow locals, or its original commitments. From a strictly economic perspective, one could interpret the union's initial support for the HOPE team as simply a strategy for restoring public confidence in the school board, a development that the union saw as necessary for restoring the financial health of the system. Without such confidence, union leaders may have reasoned, the public would have continued to defeat tax increases which



would have eliminated future raises and would have made the prospect of a state takeover of the system more likely. From that perspective, once the HOPE team resolved the system's financial problems, the DFT had no further use for it and its proposed educational changes.

Even if one takes a more multifaceted view of the union's actions—that the DFT started out genuinely committed to school-based management but became disillusioned with the reform when it appeared to threaten the contract and job security—one still has to ask why it responded so negatively to a process that rested on teachers themselves requesting empowerment. Moreover, why was it possible for other AFT locals in cities engaged in decentralization to resolve the issues that so bedeviled the DFT?<sup>54</sup>

Part of the reason for the failure of the union and the board to find common ground was related to the political and educational context of Detroit. As the birthplace of industrial unionism, as a city with a proud sense of its strong union tradition, but also as the scene of fierce and occasionally violent union-management battles, Detroit has developed what one business leader termed a “dysfunctional civic infrastructure.” “People don't know how to talk with one another on the basis of the problem,” this individual continued, “. . . the civic language of Detroit is the old style of labor negotiations. I mean in your face, side deals, don't trust anybody, you know, what can I get for myself, and the only way I can get for myself is by pushing somebody else down—very, very win-lose, very dysfunctional.”<sup>55</sup>

Seen from within the old paradigm of labor-management conflict and mistrust, John Elliot's claim during the strike that Detroit teachers opposed empowerment because they were comfortable with a highly centralized system makes more sense. Such an arrangement enabled the union to interact with the board on a stable predictable basis much like industrial unions had once interacted with large manufacturers. All workers in all plants were to be treated exactly the same way. But like other aspects of the mass production model of schooling that remain so deeply entrenched in large urban systems, one wonders whether this form of union-administration relations has outlived its usefulness. Certainly the vast problems facing urban schools demand ingenuity, flexibility, and willingness to apply knowledge and skill sensitively and imaginatively to new situations. In other words, urban educators need to seek greater professional space in which they can operate. From that perspective, David Olmstead was accurate when he characterized the union's opposition to empowerment as the “antithesis of professionalism.”<sup>56</sup>

However, Olmstead and his fellow reformers did not totally discard the old paradigm either. By dismissing as “imaginary horrors” the union’s concerns about the possible loss of tenure and the potential for arbitrary dismissals of teachers (the very issues that set off the 1973 strike), the board ignored not only the lessons of history but also very legitimate fears that restructuring—whether in industry or school systems—would mean job losses and weakened unions. Moreover, as the process developed, the HOPE reforms looked increasingly like a “top-down” initiative that the board was trying to impose on the union and the teachers. Regardless of whether teachers’ unions are strong as in Detroit or weak as in other parts of the country, it is clear that no major reforms can be implemented without the support of teachers. Given this fact and given the approach the board took to reform, the failure by the board to bring large numbers of rank and file teachers into the process was a serious political error. In the end, however, *none* of the educational leaders, neither those on the school board nor those in the union, shifted the terms or categories of the debate to the issue of improving the quality of education in Detroit. Rather, both sides faced each other as representatives of labor and management locked in a bitter struggle in which ultimately the union had the upper hand.

Neither the HOPE team nor the DFT seemed to realize that for cities and their public schools to survive and, more importantly, to improve in the twenty-first century, every stakeholder has to recognize a public interest that is something greater than the sum of group interests. Writing in the *Nation* about recent developments in New York City, David Callahan articulates this idea well. Callahan argues that there are two “simple truths” and one simple bargain everyone concerned with urban revitalization must recognize. First, the vast social and economic problems of cities demand “an activist government that provides an extensive safety net.” Second, “the city will not be an attractive place to live if taxes are too high and basic municipal services are neglected.” Given that great increases in state or federal aid are unlikely, he states “progressive reformers must figure out how to provide better government for less money. *At the center of any reform agenda must be a simple bargain: Everybody has to contribute [emphasis added].*” What that means for municipal unions specifically is learning to live with limits on wages and changes in work rules. For municipal leaders this new situation demands sensitivity and respect for unions’ concerns about security and contracts while at the same time promoting dramatic changes in how union members deliver vital services.<sup>57</sup>

Probably no group of municipal workers needs to recognize that



simple bargain more than teachers. Good public schools are vital for livable cities, and the commitment of teachers to improving educational quality is crucial for positive changes to occur in big city school systems. However, teachers' unions, as recent events in Detroit demonstrate, are often quite resistant to change. Yet maintaining the status quo is untenable. Unless big city teachers' unions become more flexible, and teachers themselves assume greater professional responsibility, there is every possibility that they will be subject to actions that will certainly weaken if not destroy them. In Chicago, for example, when the state legislature partially "recentralized" the school system in 1995, it insured the "cooperation" of the Chicago Teachers Union by banning teacher strikes in the city for eighteen months.

More ominous for teachers' unions is that African Americans, particularly in large cities, are increasingly supporting calls for educational choice. A 1993 poll, for example, found over 60 percent of African Americans supporting choice, and a more recent local study found similar percentages among black Detroiters. Teachers unions and other supporters of public education cannot blithely dismiss these data as evidence of conservative political mischief or right-wing plots. Urban public schools remain the worst in America, and black parents who see vouchers and other forms of school choice offering better educational alternatives for their children are hardly dupes of conservative political or educational leaders. Unless urban schools improve, the pressure from poor and minority families for options that will allow them to move their children to better schools will only increase. Given the centrality of teachers to the success of any educational reform, teachers' unions must be part of, if not the leaders of, efforts to improve urban schools.<sup>58</sup>

### **Reforming Urban Schools for Success in the Twenty-first Century**

One overarching question remains unanswered: Even if teachers' unions join with school administrators, business leaders, parents, and community members in reforming school governance and restructuring schools, can urban schools dramatically improve the quality of education they provide? The answer to that is only a qualified "yes." As I argued in the epilogue to the first edition, many of the problems facing urban schools are directly related to the economic and social problems in our cities. The good news of the 1990s is that these economic and social problems have lessened to some extent during the past few years. In many major cities, downtown business

and commercial districts and some neighborhoods are thriving in ways that seemed impossible in 1980. Nevertheless, even during the current economic boom, major American cities still are losing jobs at a prodigious rate. Since 1990, Los Angeles County lost 300,000 jobs and New York City lost 200,000. Detroit, whose job base fell by 116,000 jobs (20 percent of the base) in the 1980s, has dropped another 18,000 since 1990. Vast areas of these cities remain wastelands of poverty, despair, crime, and social alienation. Clearly revitalizing urban economies remains a central factor in any effort to improve city life and city schools.<sup>59</sup>

As important as such revitalization must be, it is only one piece of a larger effort that must be made. Many of the reforms the HOPE team advocated are desperately needed in Detroit and in most urban school districts. Primary among these are stabilizing and increasing the flow of funds to urban schools, as the HOPE team and John Porter did in their first year. Urban school systems cannot thrive if they continue to lurch from funding crisis to funding crisis. But these schools also cannot thrive if money continues to be spent in traditional ways. As Eric Hanushek has argued, we must shift from asking if money makes a difference in education to identifying *where* money makes a difference and, once we have identified those areas, directing funds to them. Decentralization can be an important part of that process since it enables “front-line” educators to determine where new funds might be spent and it gives them the ability to address immediate problems.<sup>60</sup>

Yet as important as are stabilizing and improving funding, directing money to where it can have the best effect, and granting administrators and teachers greater control over their schools, ultimately these efforts are insufficient for improving urban public education. They reflect what might be called, with apologies to David Tyack and Larry Cuban, our passion for “restructuring toward utopia.” Since at least the Progressive Era, educational reformers have been committed to the idea that if we can only find and implement the right form of governance and the most effective structure for urban schools they will improve on their own. Yet the fact is none of the governance reforms or restructuring in the last three decades—whether moving from highly centralized to highly decentralized to somewhat recentralized school systems—has *dramatically* improved the quality of urban education.

The restructuring reform du jour is giving big city mayors control of urban public schools. Advocates of this reform look to Chicago as their model and point to modest improvements in achievement by that city’s ele-



mentary school students following the passage of a state law that gave the mayor substantial authority over the schools in 1995. The law authorized the mayor to appoint a five member school board whose policies would be carried out by a powerful chief educational officer (CEO). Without question the policies implemented by Paul Vallas, CEO of the system, such as the elimination of social promotion and mandatory summer school for students who failed to master the knowledge and skills necessary for promotion, have contributed to better achievement by Chicago's elementary school students.<sup>61</sup>

In light of these improvements other states and cities, most recently Michigan and Detroit, have looked to similar structural changes as the way to fix urban education. Early in 1999, Governor John Engler's campaign to replace Detroit's elected board of education with a board appointed by the mayor received strong support from the legislature. Despite initially opposing the plan, Mayor Dennis Archer endorsed it as did many business and church leaders, New Detroit, Inc., and the Detroit Urban League. However, the Detroit chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and many Detroit legislators have hotly denounced the plan as a scheme to disenfranchise the city's voters and more ominously as a mechanism for whites in the legislature to impose their will on blacks in the city. Despite such accusations, polls of Detroiters taken in February found 70 percent having little or no confidence in the elected board and about 54 percent favoring a mayoral takeover. Less than a third of those polled opposed the measure outright.<sup>62</sup>

In late March, after a deeply contentious debate (in which one Detroit legislator predicted the reform would lead to civil unrest), the Michigan House and Senate approved a bill creating a new seven member board composed of six members appointed by the mayor and one, the state superintendent of schools, who is appointed by the governor. Governor Engler signed the bill into law on March 26. The new appointed board, composed of civic and business leaders from the Detroit area and the state superintendent of schools, was sworn in on March 31.<sup>63</sup>

Giving Mayor Archer control over the board of education *may* have a positive affect on the Detroit schools. As in Chicago, it could be a powerful jolt to the system that might lead to important educational change. But there is no guarantee that such a development will take place. Indeed, as some of the critics of the bill noted, there is nothing in the structural change that will assure improvement. The success of Chicago's experiment with this reform has as much (if not more) to do with the political skills

and educational wisdom of Mayor Richard M. Daley, the board members he appointed, and CEO Vallas than it has to do with the structural changes introduced in 1995. Moreover, one need only look briefly at the broader history of the Chicago schools to see that mayoral control of the school board has hardly been an educational panacea. Actually, prior to the 1988 law that decentralized the school system (the law that partially inspired the failed decentralization efforts of the HOPE reformers), the mayor of Chicago already had the power to appoint the members of the school board. The 1988 law reduced that power to some degree and the 1995 law essentially restored the power that had been lost. The most obvious difference between the situation in 1999 and, say, 1979 is that the mayor now appoints a five person rather than an eleven person board. In any case, Chicago's pre-1988 experience with an appointed school board is hardly an endorsement for that form of governance. From the Progressive Era to the mid-1980s, the Chicago school board and the school system it ran was characterized by consistent political manipulation, bureaucratic stagnation, financial chaos and, by the 1970s, massive educational failure. In the context of Detroit, the importance of who the mayor is and fears about political manipulation of the schools by the mayor can be seen simply by recalling that Governor Engler did not rush to give control of the Detroit schools to Coleman Young even after Young explicitly called for such power. There is nothing in the Chicago model, either the old model of strong mayoral control of the schools or the new one, that assures quality education for urban children. It is just the latest attempt to restructure toward utopia.<sup>64</sup>

What this reform effort and all the others that center overwhelmingly on structural change ignore are curriculum and teaching, the basic stuff of educational life. As important as changing urban educational politics and economics surely are, our preoccupation with these efforts tends to overwhelm discussions of what goes on in classrooms. Yet such discussions are essential for improving the quality of urban education and for insuring genuine educational progress. Even well-funded, restructured schools will not improve urban education if teachers are not well educated and certified in the subjects they are supposed to teach, if what is taught in the classrooms is low level and undemanding, and if teachers believe that urban children cannot learn rigorous academic content. Urban school reform must begin with teachers who know their subjects, substantial changes in curriculum, the firm belief that urban children can meet high standards, and the creation of strategies to help students succeed in that effort.



Such reforms are crucial largely because they focus on classrooms and students. Grand structural changes invariably concentrate on the adult actors in the educational process, for example, providing better salaries or more authority for educators. As necessary as such actions may be, we cannot assume that such positive steps alone will translate into better educational outcomes for children. What is needed are reforms that will specifically focus on the academic experiences students encounter, curricular changes in terms of both content and methods that affect what goes on in the classroom, and policies and practices that can dramatically improve the educational climate in urban schools.

Here, despite the failure of the HOPE campaign, Detroit offers an example of two modest reforms that offer some reason for hope. The first of these is the Detroit Compact, which demonstrates that when key interest groups and stakeholders in the city and the schools collaborate promising educational change is possible. Although affecting only a small (but growing) percentage of high school students, the Compact has produced steady gains in some educational outcomes. It indicates that a project sharply focused on academic performance and student behavior that also delivers tangible and meaningful rewards for students can have a positive educational impact. Whether members of the Compact will maintain their commitment to the program and whether the program will continue to show favorable results remains to be seen. But the Compact offers a more hopeful prospect for school improvement in Detroit than do many other urban educational reforms.<sup>65</sup>

The story of curricular change in Detroit in the late 1980s and 1990s has gotten less attention than the Compact, but here too we can find some modest success. By going "back to basics" on the elementary level and toughening coursetaking requirements for high school graduation (as with the Compact, areas where the board, administrators, and teachers could agree), in 1993 the scores of Detroit students on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests began to rise. For example, in 1992 only 19.2 percent and 16.5 percent of Detroit's fourth graders scored in the Satisfactory level of the math and reading MEAP tests respectively. In 1995, these percentages had climbed to 40.5 and 36.3 percent respectively. Similar increases also were found in those two areas among seventh graders. Indeed, in almost every grade, test scores rose, although the increases on the high school level were usually smaller than those in the lower grades. While the percentages of Detroit students scoring at the Satisfactory level remain far below what they should be, the trends are in the

right direction. Since these results show that even modest curricular change can make a difference in achievement, bringing questions of educational quality and curriculum to the fore might inspire new and positive changes.<sup>66</sup>

I ended the first edition of *Rise and Fall* declaring that the decline of urban education is the greatest educational disaster this country has experienced in the twentieth century. I remain convinced of that assessment. Much of what occurred in Detroit during the last fifteen years does not inspire hope that the school system will provide a decent education to all its students any time soon. Nevertheless, political and educational changes taking place in some other major cities leave open possibilities that new alliances and coalitions can be formed that may improve urban schools. Moreover, in some cities including Detroit modest programs such as the Compact and curricular and course-taking reforms indicate that common educational ground can be found between contending groups and that such programs can produce important, positive changes in educational achievement and outcomes. These are significant developments and they make me more hopeful than I was in 1993.

The damage done to our great cities and to their schools is serious but repairable. Creating urban schools that offer all their students access to the best possible education, an education that will enable them to claim their birthright of full participation in American life, will not be easy, but it remains possible. An increasing number of educational researchers including James Comer, E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Jeff Howard, and Robert Slavin, whose work largely focuses on what goes on in classrooms, are pointing the way for successful urban educational reform. Their projects demonstrate that good urban schools are within our reach. Realizing that possibility in every school in every major American city must become the most important educational commitment that we make in the new century.

#### NOTES

1. Sections of this epilogue appear in "After the Fall: Continuity and Change in Detroit, 1981–1995," *History of Education Quarterly* 38 (1998): 237–67. Copyright by the History of Education Society, reprinted by permission. I would like to thank Richard Altenbaugh, David Angus, Frank Pajares, Wayne Urban, and Maris Vinovskis for their helpful comments on and criticisms of various versions of this piece. They, of course, are not responsible for any errors or inaccuracies.

2. Linda Diebel, "Devolution of Detroit," *Toronto Star*, 7/11/93.

3. Sidney Glazer, *Detroit: A Study of Urban Development* (New York: Bookman, 1965),



129; Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, "Community Profile for Detroit" (Detroit: The Council, 1997), 3; Wilbur C. Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics: The Failure of Reform in Detroit, Gary, and Newark* (New York: Garland Press, 1996), p. 21; Reynolds Farley and William H. Frey, "Changes in the Segregation of Whites from Blacks during the 1980s: Small Steps Toward a More Integrated Society" *American Sociological Review* 59 (February 1994): 23–45.

4. Wes Smith, "Detroit Builds for a Revival," *Chicago Tribune*, 7/23/97; Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), 184; Fred Siegel, *The Future Once Happened Here: New York, DC, L.A. and the Fate of America's Big Cities* (New York: The Free Press, 1997); New Detroit, Inc., "The Face of Difference," *Coalition* 1, no.1 (Spring, 1997): 1. The aggregate unemployment figures mask how devastating the problem was for black youth whose jobless rate in the 1980s may have been as high as 50 percent. Martha Hindes, "Major Firms' Employment Down in '83," *Detroit News*, 1/8/84; Joseph Radelet, "Stillness at Detroit's Racial Divide: A Perspective on Detroit's School Desegregation Court Order, 1970–1989" *Urban Review* 23, no. 3 (September, 1991): 189.

5. The Children's Defense Fund study is cited in Valerie E. Lee, Robert G. Croninger, and Julia B. Smith, "Parental Choice of Schools and Social Stratification in Education: The Paradox of Detroit," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 16, no. 4 (Winter, 1994): 438.

6. Don Tschirhart, "Election Will Revamp Detroit's School Board," *Detroit News*, 10/28/82; Radelet, "Stillness at Detroit's Racial Divide," 173–90; New Detroit, Inc., "The Face of Difference," 1. Busing was certainly not the only reason that the Detroit schools lost enrollment. The poor quality of the education in most of the city schools was also a key factor. A 1990 survey conducted by the *Detroit Free Press* found that 14 percent of all African Americans in Detroit (and 25 percent of blacks with incomes over \$20,000) and 43 percent of whites sent their children to private or parochial schools. Brenda Gilchrest, "A Choice That Is Academic: Education System's Curriculum Woes Drive Students Away," *Detroit Free Press*, 12/17/90.

7. According to school leaders, the improvement of scores by elementary students was due mainly to teachers emphasizing the mastery of basic skills. See Mike Wowk, "Students' Test Scores on the Rise," *Detroit News*, 12/6/82; "Students Raise Scores in State Test," *Detroit News*, 12/21/85; Earle Eldridge, "Reading and Math Scores Up in Detroit," *Detroit News*, 12/19/87.

8. Renée D. Turner, "Renaissance High: Detroit's Beacon of Achievement," *Ebony* 63, no. 10 (August, 1988): 64, 66, 68; Mike Wowk, "Panel Rates Detroit School Gain 'Medium'," *Detroit News*, 6/15/82; "Dropouts Join 'Underclass' at Alarming Rate," *Detroit News*, 6/13/85; Laurie Bennett, "41% of Detroit's Pupils Drop Out," *Detroit News*, 5/20/87; Mike Wowk, "Executive Says Grads Lack Skills," *Detroit News*, 2/11/86; Editorial, "A City at Risk," *Detroit News*, 4/7/87. The ACT/SAT survey data are reported in William Snider, "In Backing Tax Proposals, Voters Endorse School Reforms," *Education Week*, September 20, 1989, 1, 12. A 1988 poll found that only 14 percent of the people surveyed believed that graduates of the Detroit schools "were well-prepared to enter careers, while 73 percent disagreed." "Detroit Casts 'No' Vote on Direction of Schools," *Education Week*, November 16, 1988, 12.

9. On the commission's report see, Robert Ankeny, "City Schools Called Lax on Discipline," *Detroit News*, 12/12/84. The survey of teachers is described in Ron Russell, "Amid Disorder, Education Fails," *Detroit News*, 6/7/87. For additional examples see Ron Russell, "Promising Teacher Gives Up after Students Beat Him Twice," *Detroit News*, 5/10/84; "Six Shot at Detroit [high school] Ballgame," *Detroit News*, 10/19/85; Editorial, "Toward Better Schools: Discipline," *Detroit News*, 5/20/87. The mother of a student wounded in a 1984 shooting at Southeastern High School, the third shooting that week in a Detroit high school,

summed up the situation saying, "Things are pretty bad when you send him to school not knowing if he'll come back alive in the afternoon." Don Tschirhart and Linda LaMarre, "Another Detroit Student Shot," *Detroit News*, 10/25/84.

10. Panel Gives Schools 'F' in Discipline," *Detroit News*, 2/24/83; Ron Russell, "Schools 'Tolerate Violence,' Commission Says," *Detroit News*, 7/20/83.

11. For more detail on this see David Angus and Jeffrey Mirel, *Democracy's High School? Equality, Curriculum and the Progressive Legacy, 1890-1995* (New York: Teachers College Press, forthcoming 1999).

12. Richard W. Jelier, Jr. "Challenging Bureaucratic Insularity: A Regime Analysis of Education Reform in Detroit, 1988-1994" (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, Ph.D. diss., 1995), 127. Jelier gives an excellent account of the development and progress of the Compact (126-202). Other sources on the Compact are Ron Russell, "School Board Gets Scolding," *Detroit News*, 9/22/88; Marion Orr, "Urban Regimes and School Compacts: The Development of the Detroit School Compact," *Urban Review* 25, no. 2 (1993): 105-22; Richard C. Hula, Richard W. Jelier, and Mark Schauer, "Making Educational Reform: Hard Times in Detroit, 1988-1995," *Urban Education* 32, no. 2 (May, 1992): 207-11.

13. Jelier, "Challenging Bureaucratic Insularity," 176.

14. Jelier, "Challenging Bureaucratic Insularity," 189-90.

15. Don Tschirhart, "New Education Board to Face Old Problems," *Detroit News*, 8/12/82.

16. The quote on the auto industry is from Joe T. Darden, Richard Child Hill, June Thomas, and Richard Thomas, *Detroit: Race and Uneven Development* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 27.

17. Robert J. Richards, "School Tax Elections," *Detroit News*, 10/30/87. Jelier, "Challenging Bureaucratic Insularity," 116.

18. On race relations during the Young administration see Tamar Jacoby, *Someone Else's House* (New York: The Free Press, 1998), 295-353.

19. In 1984-85, for example, Detroit received 55.2 percent of its revenue from the state, 34.3 percent from local taxes, and 10.5 percent from the federal government. By 1991-92, the schools were getting 60.1 percent of their funds from the state, 28.6 percent locally, and 11.2 percent from the federal government. National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 1988* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988), 88-89; National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 1993* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993), 100. See also Don Tschirhart, "Detroit Teachers Shun Concessions," *Detroit News*, 8/13/82; Darrell Dawsey, "School Budget Allows No Pay Raises," *Detroit News*, 7/2/87.

20. Laura D. Varon, "Red Ink," *Detroit News*, 6/21/88. Between 1974 and 1984, for example, the Detroit schools had fallen from 61st to 119th in per pupil expenditures and from 49th to 135th in average teacher salaries. Ron Russell, "Per-Pupil Spending Drops," *Detroit News*, 3/28/84; Ron Russell, "Inequities in Schools Growing," *Detroit News*, 4/16/85.

21. Tschirhart, "Detroit Teachers Shun Concessions"; Peter Lochbiler, "Teachers Walk Out in Detroit," *Detroit News*, 9/13/82; Don Tschirhart, "Pupils in Class as Strike Ends," *Detroit News*, 8/13/82; Don Tschirhart, "Detroit Teachers' Vote Highlights Weak Law," *Detroit News*, 8/13/82; Ron Russell, "Budget Freezes Pay for Teachers," *Detroit News*, 7/2/83; Mike Wowk, "4-Mill Tax Hike Urged for Schools," *Detroit News*, 8/24/84.

22. Mike Wowk, "Immediate Results Seen from School Millage Hike," *Detroit News*, 11/8/84; Mike Wowk, "Detroit Teachers Get 10% Pay Raise," *Detroit News*, 8/27/85.

23. Dawsey, "School Budget Allows No Pay Raises"; Ron Russell, "Teacher Strike Hits Detroit," *Detroit News*, 9/2/87; Ron Russell, "School Can't Meet Costs of Contract," *Detroit News*, 9/19/87.



24. Ron Russell, "School Board Recall Urged as Classes Resume," *Detroit News*, 9/22/87. The president of New Detroit is quoted in Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*, 38; Bates is quoted in Fred Girard and Norman Sinclair, "School Boards' Junkets, Chauffeurs Rile Teachers," *Detroit News*, 9/2/87.

25. Ron Russell, "Detroit School Deficit Put at \$50 Million," *Detroit News*, 9/24/87; Ron Russell, "School Woes Lure Many 'Mr. Fixits'," *Detroit News*, 6/21/88; Ron Russell, "School Cutback Talk Fuels Recall Drive," *Detroit News*, 10/16/87; Brenda Ingersoll Gave, "Groups Launch School Recall," *Detroit News*, 10/18/87; Ron Russell, "Schools to Lay Off 500, Seek Tax Hike," *Detroit News*, 10/29/87.

26. Charlie Cain, "Rules Set for Loan to Detroit Schools," *Detroit News*, 10/20/87; Ron Russell, "School Board Bows to State on Chauffeurs," *Detroit News*, 5/17/88.

27. The similarity between the old Progressives and several current mayors of major cities has been noted by a number of journalists and commentators, most notably Peter Beinart. In a number of ways the HOPE team fits that categorization as well. See Peter Beinart, "The Pride of the Cities," *New Republic* 216, no. 26 (June 30, 1997): 16–24. Also see David Callahan, "Big Apple Bites Liberalism," *Nation* 265, no. 9 (September 29, 1997): 16, 18, 20; Adam Cohen, "City Boosters," *Time* 150, no. 7 (August 18, 1997): 20–24.

28. Jelier provides an excellent account of the HOPE initiatives in Jelier, "Challenging Bureaucratic Insularity," 204–75. On the HOPE electoral campaign, see Ron Russell, "Vote Called 'Repudiation' of Board," *Detroit News*, 8/4/88; Ron Russell, "Detroit Teachers' Union Backs 4 School Challengers," *Detroit News*, 9/30/88; Editorial, "HOPE for School Board," *Detroit News*, 10/16/88; Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*, 39–40.

29. Editorial, "HOPE for School Board"; Ann Bradley, "Crusaders in Detroit Fight to Keep Board Seats," *Education Week* 12, no. 7 (October 21, 1992): 1, 10; Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*, 39–40.

30. N. Scott Vance, "Young Backs School Millage, Incumbents," *Detroit News*, 10/8/88; "Candidates Deny Funding Charges," *Detroit News*, 10/12/88; Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*, 41–45.

31. Joshua Ravitz, "School Board Panel Favors Tax Boost, Bond Measure," *Detroit News*, 9/2/88. On the campaign pledge to bring about an education revolution see N. Scott Vance and Ron Russell, "Young Again Suggests City Control of Schools," *Detroit News*, 1/6/89.

32. Ron Russell, "Detroit Schools Plan No Big Cuts Despite Defeat of Millage Hike," *Detroit News*, 11/3/88; Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*, 43. The education reporter is quoted in Ron Russell, "New School Board Hopes to Fix Financial Mess without State Help," *Detroit News*, 1/1/89.

33. Jacoby, *Someone Else's House*, 295–353.

34. Ron Russell, "Patrick Heads School Board," *Detroit News*, 1/11/89; Ron Russell and Dennis B. Mulqueen, "School Official Wary of State Takeover," *Detroit News*, 1/12/89; Mark Hornbeck, "State Superintendent Calls on City Schools to Solve Deficit," *Detroit News*, 1/24/89; Ron Russell, "New School Chief or No Loan," *Detroit News*, 3/3/89; Russell, "New School Board Hopes to Fix Financial Mess without State Help"; Vance and Russell, "Young Again Suggests City Control of Schools"; Editorial, "Detroit School Discontent . . ." *Detroit News*, 5/10/89; Ron Russell, "Schools Cancel Tax Vote Plans," *Detroit News*, 5/17/89.

35. Liz Twardon, "Porter Gets Interim Job Offer," *Detroit News*, 5/10/89; William Snider, "Detroit Officials See Belt-Tightening Moves as First Steps Along Road to Recovery," *Education Week*, August 2, 1989, 1, 27; Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*, 48–49.

36. Ron Russell, "Teachers Agree to 6 Percent Pay Raise," *Detroit News*, 7/14/89; Ron Russell, "School Tax Vote Called Test of Porter," *Detroit News*, 7/16/89; Snider, "Detroit Officials See Belt-Tightening Moves as First Steps Along Road to Recovery"; Snider, "In Backing Tax Proposals, Voters Endorse School Reforms."



37. Russell, "Teachers Agree to 6 Percent Pay Raise"; Snider, "In Backing Tax Proposals, Voters Endorse School Reforms"; Hula et al., "Making Educational Reform," 211–14.

38. Porter was also an outsider but he had agreed only to be *interim* superintendent. Isabel Wilkerson, "Can Deborah McGriff Save Detroit Schools?" *Ms.* 2, no. 1 (July/August, 1991), 98–99; Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*, 49–50.

39. The HOPE literature is quoted in Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*, 41; Russell, "New School Board Hopes to Fix Financial Mess without State Help"; Hula et al., "Making Educational Reform." Actually, HOPE's empowered schools initiative was something of a compromise between the Chicago's Local School Councils and Dade County's school-based management efforts. On the different forms of urban school decentralization in the 1980s and 1990s see John L. Rury and Jeffrey E. Mirel, "The Political Economy of Urban Education," in *Review of Research in Education*, ed. Michael Apple (Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association, 1997), 89–98.

40. Lynn Olson, "Detroit Board Set to Vote on Plan 'To Empower' Schools," *Education Week*, March 18, 1992, 4; Hula et al., "Making Educational Reform," 211–14, 231.

41. "Detroit's African Centered Academies," *Black Issues in Higher Education*, February 24, 1994, 18–21; Karen Houppert, "Establish Afrocentric, All-Male Academies," *Utne Reader*, January/February 1994, 83–85; Kevin Bushweller, "Separate by Choice," *American School Board Journal* 183 (October, 1996), 34–37.

42. Clifford Watson and Geneva Smitherman, "Educational Equity and Detroit's Male Academy," *Equity and Excellence*, 25, no. 2–4 (Winter, 1992), 90. "Update," *Education Week*, November 13, 1991, 3; Jawanza Kunjufu, "Detroit's Male Academies: What the Real Issue Is," *Education Week*, November 20, 1991, 29; Arthur S. Hayes and Jonathan M. Moses, "Detroit Abandons Plan for All-Male Schools, Citing Bias," *Equity and Excellence*, 25, no. 2–4 (Winter, 1992), 92. Despite the federal court order that girls be admitted, the schools have continued to serve a largely male student body. On the "boutique schools" criticism see Bradley, "Crusaders in Detroit Fight to Keep Board Seats," 10; Hula et al., "Making Educational Reform," 220–22; Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*, 50.

43. The 1973 strike was not the only walkout in which these types of issues played a role. Indeed, the issues of giving teachers greater power and demanding greater accountability from them as a result was part of the 1987 strike as well. In that case also the DFT adamantly opposed the proposals. Ron Russell, "Teachers Offered Raise Tied to New Funds," *Detroit News*, 9/11/87. Hula et al., "Making Educational Reform," 211–12; see also Ann Bradley, "Teachers in Detroit Strike over Proposal for Flexible Schools," *Education Week*, September 9, 1992, 1, 21; Bradley, "Crusaders in Detroit Fight to Keep Board Seats."

44. Elliot is quoted in Bradley, "Teachers in Detroit Strike over Proposal for Flexible Schools," 1, 21.

45. Martelock is quoted in Bradley, "Crusaders in Detroit Fight to Keep Board Seats," 10.

46. Olmstead, Patrick, and the board ally are quoted in Bradley, "Crusaders in Detroit Fight to Keep Board Seats," 10.

47. Ann Bradley, "Detroit Teachers Defy Court's Back-to-Work Order," *Education Week*, September 30, 1992, 9; Ann Bradley, "Contract Accord in Detroit Ends 27-Day Teacher Strike," *Education Week*, October 7, 1992, 13; Bradley, "Crusaders in Detroit Fight to Keep Board Seats," 11.

48. Bradley, "Crusaders in Detroit Fight to Keep Board Seats," 11; Hula et al., "Making Educational Reform," 221; Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*, 50.

49. Hayden is quoted in Bradley, "Crusaders in Detroit Fight to Keep Board Seats," 10. Olmstead is quoted in Peter Schmidt, "Voters Oust 3 Reformers From Detroit Board," *Education Week*, November 11, 1992, 5; Hula et al., "Making Educational Reform"; Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*.

50. Meg Somerfield, "Grant to Implement Comer Model in Detroit Schools," *Education Week*, July 13, 1994, 3; Hula et al., "Making Educational Reform," 215–16.



51. "Detroit Parents Launch Effort to Recall Reformers on Board," *Education Week*, January 20, 1993, 2; Ann Bradley, "Detroit School-Empowerment Plan Suffers Setback," *Education Week*, April 21, 1993, 5; Ann Bradley, "Detroit Superintendent to Join Edison Project," *Education Week*, October 20, 1993, 10; "People," *Education Week*, November 11, 1993, 3; Hula et al., "Making Educational Reform"; Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*.
52. Thomas J. Bray, "There May Not Be Any Hope for HOPE," *Detroit News*, 4/30/89. The unnamed board member is quoted in Hula et al., "Making Reform Work," 218; Young is quoted in Rich, *Black Mayors and School Politics*, 53.
53. The church leader is quoted in Hula et al., "Making Reform Work," 220–21.
54. Moreover efforts at creating new union-management relationship similar to those developed by the United Auto Workers and General Motors in the Saturn Corporation (which in part inspired the HOPE team's efforts) continue to make news as delegations from both the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association (NEA) have toured the Saturn plant, the most recent being led by NEA president Bob Chase in the fall of 1997. See, Jeff Archer, "A Different Kind of Union: What an Innovative Car Company Can Teach Educators about 'New Unionism'," *Education Week*, October 29, 1997, 27–31.
55. The business leader is quoted in Hula et al., "Making Reform Work," 202.
56. Olmstead is quoted in Schmidt, "Voters Oust 3 Reformers From Detroit Board," 5.
57. Callahan, "Big Apple Bites Liberalism," 20.
58. Deborah L. Cohen, "Americans Say Family Life Worse, Survey Find," *Education Week*, December 15, 1993, 6.
59. Merrill Goozner, "The Porter Prescription," *American Prospect*, no. 38 May-June, 1998: 60.
60. Eric A. Hanushek, "The Impact of Differential Expenditures on School Performance," *Educational Researcher* 18 (May 1989): 45–62; Eric A. Hanushek, "Measuring Investment in Education," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 10, no. 4 (Fall, 1996), 9–30. Even with the collapse of the HOPE initiatives, other organizations in Detroit are still continuing to push for structural changes in the system similar to many HOPE efforts. See Robert C. Johnson, "Driving Forces for Change," *Education Week*, 17, no. 17 (January 8, 1998): 180–83; New Detroit, Inc., *Detroit Public Schools System: A Plan for Fundamental Change* (Detroit: New Detroit, 1997).
61. On the Chicago reforms see the article by Anthony Bryk, "Policy Lessons from Chicago's Experience with Decentralization" and the comments on that article by Kenneth Wong and Jeffrey Mirel in *Brookings Papers in Education Policy, 1999*, ed. Diane Ravitch (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), 67–126.
62. Keith Bradsher, "Mayor Is Step Closer to Control of Detroit School," *New York Times*, 3/5/99; Lekan Oguntoyinbo, "NAACP Opposed to School Takeover," *Detroit Free Press*, 2/17/99; Kerry A. White, "Power Shift for Detroit Moves Ahead," *Education Week*, March 3, 1999, 1, 18–19.
63. Greta Guest, "Detroit School Takeover Approved by Senate," *Ann Arbor News*, 3/25/99; "New Board Sworn In," *Ann Arbor News*, 4/1/99.
64. There are many good books on the old model of mayoral control in Chicago. Two of the best are Paul Peterson, *School Politics: Chicago Style* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976) and Julia Wrigley, *Class Politics and Public Schools: Chicago, 1900–1950* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1982).
65. Jelier cogently argues that the success of the Compact was due to its collaborative nature as opposed to the competitive emphasis of the HOPE groups' choice and empowerment initiatives. See Jelier, "Challenging Bureaucratic Insularity," 276–90.
66. Michigan Department of Education, "MEAP District and School Proportions Report, 1995: Detroit Public Schools" (Lansing: The Department, 1996).