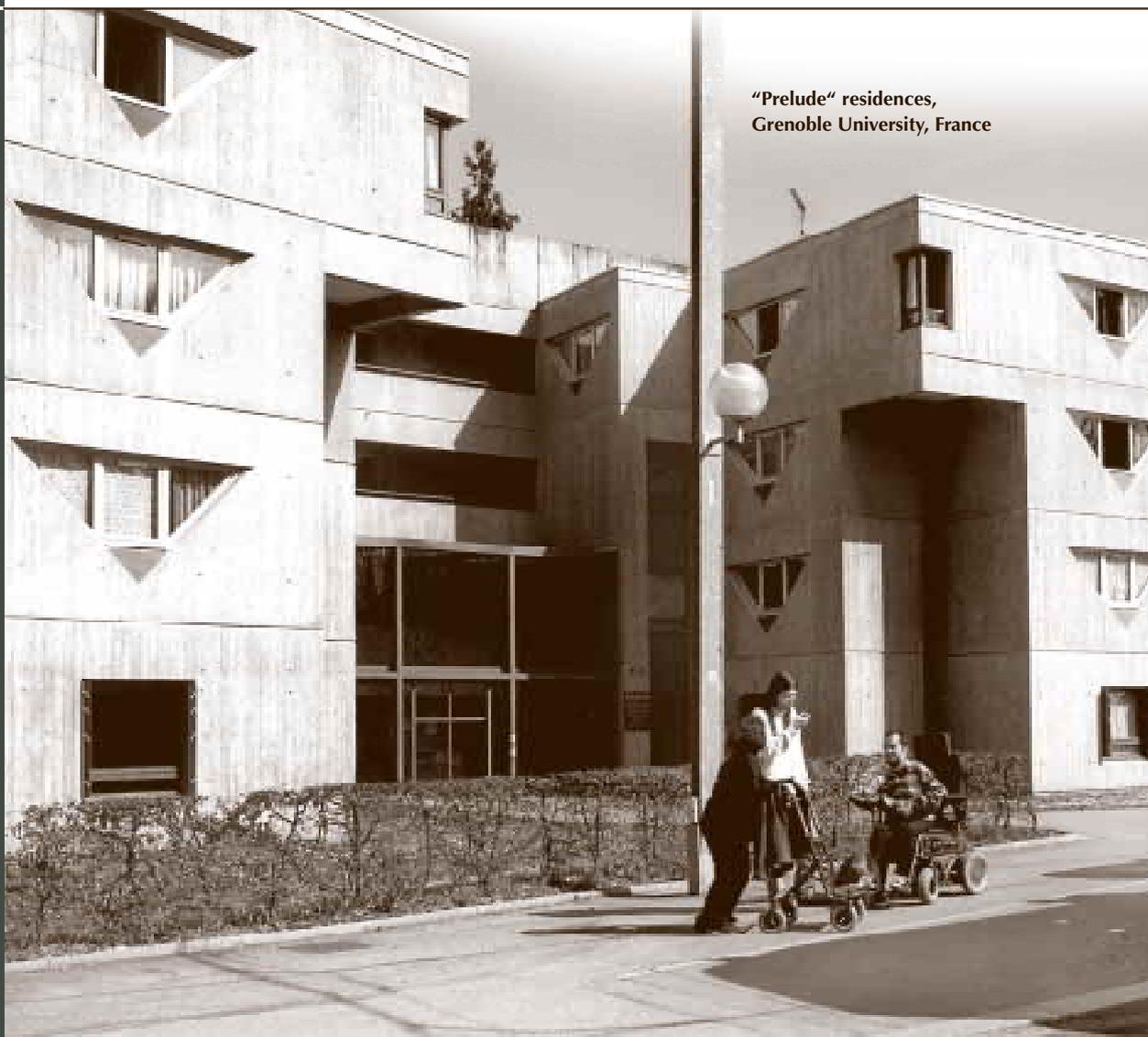


PEB *EXCHANGE*

THE JOURNAL OF THE OECD PROGRAMME ON EDUCATIONAL BUILDING

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ISSUE 37 JUNE 99



"Prelude" residences,
Grenoble University, France

The OECD Programme on Educational Building (PEB)

The Programme on Educational Building (PEB) operates within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). PEB promotes the international exchange of ideas, information, research and experience in all aspects of educational building. The overriding concerns of the programme are to ensure that the maximum educational benefit is obtained from past and future investment in educational buildings and equipment, and that the building stock is planned and managed in the most efficient way.

Eighteen OECD Member countries and nine associate members currently participate in the Programme on Educational Building. PEB's mandate from the OECD Council to advise and report on educational facilities for students of all ages runs until the end of 2001. A steering committee of representatives from each participating country establishes the annual programme of work and budget.

PEB Members

Australia	Mexico
Austria	Netherlands
Czech Republic	New Zealand
Finland	Portugal
France	Spain
Greece	Sweden
Iceland	Switzerland
Ireland	Turkey
Korea	United Kingdom

PEB Associate Members

Albania Education Development Project
A.R.G.O. (Belgium)
<i>Ministerium der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft</i> (Belgium)
Province of Quebec (Canada)
<i>Regione Emilia-Romagna</i> (Italy)
<i>Regione Toscana</i> (Italy)
<i>Service général de garantie des infrastructures scolaires subventionnées</i> (Belgium)
Slovak Republic
Tokyo Institute of Technology (Japan)

PEB AND OECD ACTIVITIES

PEB WELCOMES MEXICO

The OECD Programme on Educational Building (PEB) is happy to welcome Mexico as its latest member. Manuel Jiménez, Director General of Mexico's Administrative Board of the Federal School Construction Programme (CAPFCE), described the decision to become an active member as "an important step in the federalisation process we are now carrying out, since [joining] would allow us to have access to more and better information, and to share other countries' experiences".

Details on educational building and decentralisation in Mexico are available in the February 1999 issue of *PEB Exchange*. PEB extends its thanks to the Mexican Delegation to the OECD, in particular Ambassador Francisco Suárez Dávila and Oscar Villarreal, for their involvement. Mexico's membership took effect as of the beginning of 1999.

CONFERENCE IN PORTUGAL

PEB and the Portuguese Ministry of Education are organising an international seminar entitled "Designing Schools for the Information Society: Libraries and Resource Centres", which will take place in Lisbon, Portugal, 16 to 18 June.

Different approaches to the provision of libraries and resource centres will be presented, analysing current trends in OECD countries and identifying the issues which need to be addressed. Case studies will include presentations on Australia, Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Portugal and Scotland.

A report on the conclusions of the seminar will be published by the OECD, and its release will be announced in forthcoming issues of *PEB Exchange*. This report will be available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

TERTIARY EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE SEMINAR

"The Changing Infrastructure of Tertiary Education" is the theme of an upcoming PEB seminar in Canada to focus on the provision and management of facilities for post-secondary education. Each day of the four-day event will offer presentations and workshops on one of the follow topics:

- trends in tertiary education and their impact on infrastructure;
- adapting buildings to changing demands;
- the influence of the built environment on learning and behaviour;
- property management.

There will be an in-depth look at the Quebec tertiary education system with study visits to Laval University, in Quebec City, and the University of Quebec at Montreal, among others. The *Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec* (Quebec Ministry of Education) and the Association of Institutional Property Managers (AGPI) are organising this international event with PEB and the OECD Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education. The dates are 25-28 October 1999, with optional study visits through the 29th. A report will follow. For further details, contact the PEB Secretariat.

SCHOOL MAINTENANCE SYMPOSIUM

On 30-31 October 1999 PEB will co-host a symposium with the American Institute of Architects' Committee on Architecture for Education and the CEFPI Urban Educational Facilities Northeast Chapter. The purpose is to share experiences and investigate international developments in maintenance and renewal along with the "invention" or "rebirth" of educational facilities. The event also aims to provide recommendations for action to serve the special immediate and future needs of children in inner city, principally poor areas. Participants will examine the impact of social patterns on education and facilities, strategies for managing infrastructure, the creation of learning environments for the future and improving the effectiveness of facilities. The symposium, entitled "Invention, Maintenance and Renewal of Urban Educational Facilities: Global Challenges and Community Solutions", will take place in two urban high schools in Baltimore, Maryland, USA. The findings will be published. For more information, contact the PEB Secretariat.

NEW ITALIAN-SPANISH PUBLICATION

Providing a Secure Environment for Learning is now available in Italian and Spanish. This PEB report examines the key issues of security in schools and universities – prevention, protection and partnership – and considers their social and financial implications. To order, contact one of the publications centres on p. 23.

OECD code: 95 98 01 4P, ISBN 92-64-45756-9, 84 pp., FF 110.



HIGHER EDUCATION AND DISABILITY

The OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), in co-operation with the Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) and the French Ministry of Education, Research and Technology jointly organised a seminar in Grenoble in March on higher education and disability. Participants from 13 Member countries discussed a wide range of developments in the inclusion and education of people with disabilities in higher education, covering issues including staff training, financing, employment and technology.

Grenoble was an appropriate venue, as four universities, catering for more than 50 000 students, are co-located at the Grenoble University campus, which is linked by a frequent tram service to the town centre and main railway station. Participants visited one of 20 specially-designed and equipped apartments which enable a small number of wheelchair-bound students to live on campus and share as far as is possible in the life of the student community. The flats are grouped in the "Prelude" residences which are served by a tram stop at the front door. A future issue of *PEB Exchange* will include a fuller description of the facilities.

The keynote speaker, Prof. Berth Danermark from Örebro, Sweden, focused on the difficult issue of the level and concentration of provision. He noted that students with disabilities are not spread evenly throughout the system, and asked whether it was realistic to assume that all universities will be able to provide the necessary infrastructure, technical support, trained counsellors, interpreters and accessibility to all facilities. And if there are only a few students with disabilities at a university, they can become isolated. Would it not be better to provide suitable high-quality facilities in a smaller number of institutions? On the other hand, if concentration is cost-effective and can enable students to form their own networks of support, does it not limit their freedom of choice? Concentration may eventually mean segregation.

Presentations on different aspects of policy and practice came from Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States. Some highlights were:

- Legislation in a number of countries, for example the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the United States, has transformed practice in providing access to services for people with disabilities, making it a right rather than a privilege. However much has still to be done to educate public attitudes, to share good practice and to ensure that those who need it have access to the latest technology.
- In Barcelona a virtual university – the *Universidad Oberta de Catalunya* – has recently been developed and adapted specially to cover the needs of students with disabilities. For instance, some of the illustrative material has been designed in a way that can serve visually-impaired students.
- The University of Central Lancashire in the United Kingdom has acquired a reputation nationally and internationally for its staff training and continuing professional development in order to raise disability awareness among staff, irrespective of their responsibilities.
- In Queensland, Australia, the Tertiary Initiative for People with Disabilities has produced a video “Creative Teaching: Inclusive Learning” which underlines that what is good practice to meet the needs of students with disabilities is also, actually, good practice for all other students.
- The Nordic Council on Disability Policy has chosen Accessibility of Higher Education as a theme for its activities during the current year.

The council has also invited institutions of higher education to a friendly contest to identify which institution is most accessible to students with disabilities. The award will be presented at a conference in December, and a subsequent publication will include examples of good practice and solutions to access-related problems for students with physical disabilities.

Copies of conference papers can be obtained from maree.galland@oecd.org. A publication is planned.

The “Prelude” residences at the Grenoble University campus are specially designed for students with disabilities.



TOP MARKS FOR QUEBEC SCHOOL BOARD MANAGERS

A report published in February indicates a substantial improvement in the management of educational buildings in Quebec and its efficiency in comparison with the municipal and private housing sectors.

Analysis of expenditure between 1990/91 and 1996/97 shows real savings of 69.6 million Canadian dollars. According to the report, commissioned by the *Association des cadres scolaires du Québec* (Quebec Association of Education Managers), effective management is the reason for the 11% increase in productivity.

The research also compares the performance of school facilities with that of the municipal and private sectors on the basis of three expenditure items: energy, servicing and domestic maintenance. The unit cost of property management by school boards for 1997 was C\$ 30.68 per square metre, much less than that of their nearest competitor, the municipal sector, whose costs were 26% higher. In the private sector, overall costs per square metre came to C\$ 49.38. The study concludes that the performance of the school boards in terms of property management is excellent and reflects the efforts at rationalisation made by these bodies since the beginning of the decade.

By way of example, the annual energy assessment drawn up and published by the *Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec* (MEQ, Quebec Ministry of Education) shows that substantial savings have been made. For 1996/97 alone these savings came to C\$ 63.5 million, and over the 19 years covered by the MEQ data they total C\$ 689.5 million.

The study, *Mesure de la performance de gestion du parc immobilier scolaire du Québec* (Assessing the Performance of Educational Building Management in Quebec), was jointly produced by *Chaire UQAM-SITQ Immobilier* (*Université de Québec à Montréal-Société immobilière Trans Québec*) and François Des Rosiers, Ph.D., Laval University. Copies of the 85-page document are available upon request; telephone 1 514 289 8688.

IRELAND: HISTORIC MOVE IN STATE FUNDING

Micheál Martin, Irish Minister for Education and Science, has announced an historic move in funding school buildings and sites: "I have agreed with the Minister for Finance that the state will offer to provide the full costs of sites for all new schools at both primary and second level. In addition, the level of local contribution required for building projects will be reduced significantly." Until this decision, schools and communities throughout the country were required to fully fund the purchase of school sites and up to 15% of the cost of all building work, costs which can be particularly high for smaller schools and schools in areas where land is expensive. The Minister praised the work of school management in meeting the challenge of this fundraising through the years and noted that the scale of the funds to be raised had clearly put unreasonable pressures on many management authorities.

Local contribution to the costs of new schools will now be reduced to 5% and capped at £50 000, and reduced to 10% and capped at £25 000 for renovations. There will be further benefits for special schools and schools which are designated as serving areas of significant disadvantage. The new schools provided under these changes will be in the ownership of the state and leased to the patrons.

UK CONFERENCE ON SCHOOL IN THE COMMUNITY

"School in the Community: Lessons for the Future" is the topic of an international conference to be held in the United Kingdom in September 1999. It will celebrate what has been achieved in British school design over the last 50 years and acknowledge lessons that can be learned on an international level, opening the door to diverse and imaginative solutions for the future.

Successful school architecture is a blend of quality design, value for money and fitness of purpose to secure the best opportunities for teachers to teach and pupils to learn. Curriculum and school organisation change, and a successful school building is able to respond to accommodate the changes, within the prevailing financial, social and cultural constraints.

The conference will aim to set a clear agenda for meeting the challenges of accommodating education in the 21st century, and its workshops, visits and presentations will focus on a range of pertinent topics: design of curriculum areas, inclusion of pupils with special educational needs, provision for information communication technology, strategic asset management, challenges of multi-use design, energy efficiency and procurement strategies including Public Private Partnerships.

The event will bring together building professionals and designers, students of architecture, educational professionals and others with an interest and enthusiasm in accommodating education. It is a joint promotion by the UK Department for Education and Employment and the Royal Institute of British Architects. (See p. 24.)



AIA DESIGN AWARDS

The American Institute of Architects is honouring state-of-the-art designs in early childhood learning environments, kindergarten to year 12 schools, learning centres and two-year colleges. The 1999 Design Awards and Exemplary Learning Environment Program emphasises the quality of the physical environment as well as the comprehensiveness of the planning process – “to show how the planning and design process together can translate into an environment that will make a difference in the way students of all ages learn”. Projects will be selected in June 1999 among international entries and will be published on the AIA Web site and in other formats. For more information, see <http://www.e-architect.com/pia/cae> or contact the AIA Committee on Architecture for Education, telephone: 1 202 626 7453.



US CONFERENCE ON COMMUNITY AND LEARNING

“The Box is Breaking: Who Cares? We Care” was the title of the 1998 Minnesota Conference organised by the Council of Educational Facility Planners International. Four themes were explored:

Brain-based Learning: Discovery and Applications – The principles of brain-based learning were presented along with their implications for school design. The brain is stimulated by environments or displays which change, and by moving through places that vary in shape, colour and light. Ideas develop more rapidly in areas where needed resources are clustered. Because people learn by doing, school designs should accommodate more areas for project work.

Changes in Work, Family and Community: Their Impact on Learning Environments – As stresses on families continue to increase, educational institutions must prepare children for family life as well as for work. Learning facilities can address family stresses by zoning for safety and extended hours, offering a range of services, becoming a network base for the community or serving as a satellite or surrogate home.

Life-long Learning: Engaging the Whole Community in the Learning Process – Participants examined how lifelong learning and community-wide learning can be promoted and the implications for facilities. An ideal learning environment includes cross age group experience, a home for every student and learning that starts from where you are and what interests you.

International Education: A Global Perspective on Learning and Facility Planning – The educational systems of different countries were compared. Participants considered facility planning strategies that address the needs of schools across cultures, making the best use of money spent on educational buildings and using the building to help accommodate changes in education or society as a whole.

Other facility planning strategies suggested include responding to individual learning styles with flexible programming, providing secure learning environments, integrating school and businesses and aligning school and community renewal plans.

This article is based on the Executive Summary of the conference, prepared by Bruce Jilk. The full text is available at <http://www.designshare.com/> under “Articles/Research”, along with a summary of design principles based on brain-based learning research.



NEEDS ANALYSIS IN BELGIUM'S FLEMISH COMMUNITY

Confronted with a growing need for educational buildings and a significant lack of funds, Belgium's Flemish Community carried out an inquiry into building needs at all levels of education. This article concentrates on the methodology used for the inquiry, the findings and the consequences for Flemish educational building policy.

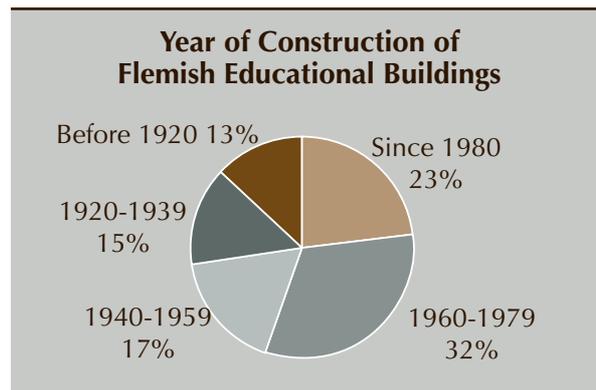
The inquiry was commissioned by the *Dienst voor Infrastructuurwerken van het Gesubsidieerd Onderwijs* (DIGO; Subsidised Education, Infrastructure Works Department) and took place from June 1995 to late 1997. DIGO is a government agency that subsidises the purchase, construction and renovation of buildings for municipal, provincial and private institutions. It grants subsidies of up to 60% of total construction costs for primary education and 70% for secondary and higher education; the construction must not exceed the maximum legal standards for educational buildings. Demand for state aid in financing educational infrastructure has been increasing for some years, and the funds available – US\$90.6 million per year – are far from sufficient. A waiting list has accrued, which in March 1998, represented a total of \$394 million in construction projects.

The aim of the inquiry was fourfold:

- to examine the degree to which existing buildings meet present educational needs;
- to recognise the needs that are not met;
- to provide an estimate of the funds necessary to accommodate those needs;
- to develop a needs-driven policy for administering building subsidies and planning future investments.

Historical perspective

Many of the educational buildings in use today in the Flemish Community were built according to now outdated ideas about teaching methods, safety, hygiene and architecture and need to be adapted to current educational policy and practice.



Beginning in the late 1980s, educational institutions were allowed considerable freedom to design and equip their buildings. Previously the buildings had to satisfy minimum conditions set by experts to meet the demands of the day; now the stress is on the physical and financial maximum standards below which an institution is eligible for subsidies. This development provides for a more cost-effective building policy and greater freedom for school boards, although it undermines the legal support of a policy formed in the interest of maintaining quality building stock.

Quantitative approach

The inquiry was articulated around three core notions: evaluation of the building stock, needs and effects.

Evaluation

The inquiry evaluated the "pedagogic suitability" of building stock, whether the elements of a building – structural condition, safety, site, upkeep and teaching environment – help or hinder educational activities (Hawkins and Lilley, 1992). The evaluators were the school principals. In the 500 institutions surveyed, only 28% of the principals judged their buildings to be suitable for educational purposes, and 18% found them unsatisfactory. The table below shows the percentages of institutions that gave "unsatisfactory" ratings to their various facilities.

Flemish Community Survey of School Infrastructure
(Percentage of institutions rated as unsatisfactory)

Classrooms	41%
Available floor space	40%
Location	24%
Safety	21%
Physical structure	18%
All elements combined	16%

Needs

The inquiry measured various levels of needs:

- Perceived: School boards of 80% of the institutions surveyed felt that construction work or the purchase of a building was necessary.
- Expressed: Principals at over half of the institutions had submitted plans to call for tenders or to purchase a building.
- Normative: One fifth of the institutions had received unsatisfactory ratings for both their most recent building inspection report and fire safety report. Subsidies required to bring them up to norms would total \$701 million.
- Comparative: Subsidies solely limited to meeting the needs of buildings judged as unsuitable for educational purposes would total \$553 million.
- Global: If needs are restricted to buildings 1) where work is planned, 2) whose inspection reports are unsatisfactory and 3) which are deemed unsuitable for educational purposes, 7% of the institutions are concerned.

Total Costs to Meet Varying Degrees of Building Needs*

Perceived	\$1 909 million
Expressed	\$1 353 million
Normative	\$701 million
Comparative	\$553 million
Global	\$317 million

*Estimates based on the 500 institutions surveyed and a cost per square meter of construction or modernisation of US\$925.

Effects

The intention of the inquiry was to make possible a more rational and needs-driven school building policy. An analysis was carried out to test the effect of a number of factors on the suitability of school buildings. The area in which an institution is located, the age of its buildings, the presence of temporary constructions, the reports of the building inspectors and fire brigade, the degree of neighbourhood decay and the intensity of use have a significant effect on the suitability of buildings. In an effort to provide a

more rational, needs-driven policy, a statistical model based on these factors was developed. It showed however that the explanatory power of external factors, though significant, is too small for one to predict with certainty whether a building would satisfy requirements for pedagogic suitability.

Recommendations

Increasing investment funds

Belgium, with 1.1% capital expenditure of the total education budget in 1992, is well below the OECD national average of 7.9%. The share of capital expenditure in the Flemish Community has not been much higher hitherto as is apparent from the investment funds granted to the Flemish Community for the years 1996 to 2000. The annual funds for these years amount to 4 billion Belgian Francs, which for 1996 represents 1.7% of the total education budget (BF 236 billion). DIGO cannot possibly meet existing needs at short notice with the current budget. This argues the case for increasing the investment funds.

Needs-oriented distribution of resources

Resources should be distributed among institutions in a more needs-oriented manner, beginning with the systematic upgrading of the 16% of building stock that does not satisfy requirements in any single area of evaluation.

Relying on experts' reports

Resources should be allocated based on needs by making use of objective criteria. As the statistical model developed for this purpose cannot guarantee a successful needs-oriented policy, an alternative solution may lie in working with reports of the building inspection and fire brigade. Building experts could 1) critically evaluate the suitability of a building in consultation with its users and the pedagogic inspection, 2) appraise the necessity of work and 3) if work is justified, decide on its execution. This in turn could lead to the submission of an application for subsidy.

Working with experts' reports must be as objective as possible. It is recommended that such construction work abide by legally fixed physical minimum and maximum standards. Institutions whose buildings do not meet the minimum standards would be obliged to carry out work and would receive subsidies; those that match the minimum standards but fall short of the maximum would not be obliged to carry out work but would be eligible for subsidies if they decided to do so; those that satisfy the maximum standards would not be eligible for subsidies and would have to defray their own construction costs.

Budgeting the resources

A long waiting list hinders not only the rapid processing of subsidies but also discourages prospective builders from submitting subsidy applications. The budget of the investment funds should better dovetail with actual needs. One solution is to simultaneously determine the investment budget and take stock of the funds requested in subsidy applications, when setting the annual budget.

Increasing the return on future investments

The yield of future investments can be increased, thereby procuring savings over time. Workable methods exist, such as providing expert construction advice, master planning (the start up of a planning activity that can as easily take place at government level as at contractor level), encouraging innovation (e.g. by organising a school building prize) and pursuing flexibility in design.

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SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION IN THE UNITED STATES

The following is taken from the "Annual School Construction Report, January 1999" written by John B. Lyons of the United States Department of Education.

The Department of Education's 1998 Common Core of Data Survey for public elementary and secondary schools reports an estimated capital outlay of \$27.5 bil-



Lake Orion High School, Michigan
NCEF/Gary Quesada – Hedrich Blessing

lion in the 1995-1996 school year; a 12.6 percent increase over the prior year, and a tripling of outlays over the past decade. The National Education Association (NEA) reported \$29.1 billion in capital outlays for 1997-1998, a 12.7 percent increase over the prior year, and a 173 percent increase over the past decade.

School construction outlook

The construction of educational buildings is expected to witness a 7 percent plus growth during calendar year 1999. Although an expected weaker economy in 1999 will no doubt dampen construction in general, the continued increase in student enrollments, especially in the West, coupled with continued successful passage of school construction bond programs, insures school construction and rehabilitation will remain vibrant through 2000.

Of the three categories of kindergarten to year 12 schools, middle schools saw the highest level of construction in 1997-1998 followed closely by elementary schools. Total school construction, including new schools, additions to existing schools, and significant renovation projects completed, required almost \$12.7 billion. While new school construction continued to be the most visible element, it amounted to only 49 percent of all school construction, followed by additions at 29 percent and 22 percent for modernization. By the year 2000, additions to school buildings is expected to rank third.

Regional school construction – 1997

While it is difficult to identify and provide solid consistent school construction data, an evaluation of regional activities – using the 10 Federal districts as a model – shows that the two Southwestern regions as a block continued to lead the nation in total school

construction, with a substantial amount of construction (approaching two thirds) going for new schools. This trend follows the expected pattern with expanding populations settling in areas where new housing is being developed. The Northeastern region spent major portions of their school construction budget on new school buildings, perhaps because of their greater portion of older school buildings.

Nationally, concerning features included in the construction of new elementary schools there was an increase in the percentage of art rooms, language labs, and outdoor athletic facilities, and a moderate decrease in middle schools of each of these features. New high schools nationwide witnessed a greater percentage decrease in the availability of music rooms, auditoriums and media centers than prior year construction requirements.

Financing

There continues to be a wide range of funding methods and cooperation between the local education agencies and their respective State Agencies. Currently 18 states require local revenues to be the primary base of support for school construction. The most common way of financing school construction at the local level remains the sale of general obligation bonds. Unfortunately, local bond initiatives continue to have an average failure of 30 percent. State bond sales, special and general tax revenues are used by 13 states to provide the majority of school construction aid. In the remaining 19 states local and state agencies share equally in developing the revenues necessary for school facilities.

The full report is available on the Web at <http://www.edfacilities.org/ne/news2.html> or by contacting John B. Lyons, telephone: 1 202 401 3721.

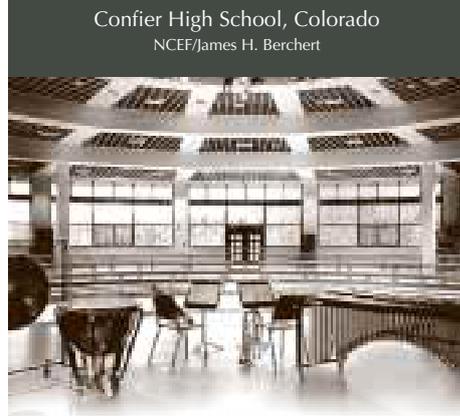
MORE FIGURES ON US CONSTRUCTION

School Planning and Management magazine has published the findings of its third annual construction report, breaking down US spending on various types of construction in 1997 and 1998. It specifies

the facilities and equipment provided at the three school levels as well as the amount of space and cost per student. The national median of high schools planned or underway in 1998, for example, counted 762 students and showed a cost of \$16 872 per student. See <http://www.spmmag.com/construction/Construction1999/index.html>.



Fishback Creek Public Academy, Indiana
NCEF/Emery Photography, Columbus, Ohio



Confier High School, Colorado
NCEF/James H. Berchert



Buckeye Valley Middle School, Ohio
NCEF/James H. Berchert

AFTER-HOURS USE OF SCHOOLS

The use of school facilities for educational programmes or social activities outside of school hours has proven benefits for students, parents and the community at large. PEB studied this topic several years ago and found widespread agreement on both the educational and economic advantages of providing a safe structure with learning opportunities for latch-key children and of opening the school to people of all ages for cultural activities, sports or community services.

Experience in a number of OECD countries today continues to demonstrate how after-hours use of schools can improve student success through more study time, add value to the formal curriculum through extra-curricular activities, provide adults with opportunities for personal development or learning and offer the wider population a well-situated structure that can be the centre of community life. This article describes current practice in Belgium, Canada, France, Ireland, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

In the afternoon, at weekends and during summer vacation, schools which would otherwise sit unoccupied may serve for adult education, child care, cultural events, senior citizens' groups, etc. Both primary and secondary institutions offer appropriate facilities – classrooms, workshops, performance spaces, computer laboratories, gymnasiums – at a central location in the community. School playgrounds may be used by the public outside of school hours as is the case in Geneva. Residences at boarding schools may be used for student retreats as is the practice in Belgium's Flemish Community. In Ireland government agencies and social services share premises with schools. A recently built secondary school in Quebec opens its sports facilities to the public while the municipal library next door serves the students.

Governments can encourage a more efficient use of buildings, grounds and equipment through financial incentives, policies of openness and planning with schools and the community. The US Government is awarding funds to develop after-school centres to combat violence and improve student success. In the UK, schools receive special funding for innovative schemes or out-of-hours child care programmes. Schools under construction in Turkey

as part of its new educational programme are planned as community centres and were designed by Turkish universities.

Costs, organisation and responsibility are issues that must be addressed for the smooth sharing of premises. Policies must be well-defined in regards to insurance, rental fees and other conditions for use. Collaboration between the different actors involved, through dialogue, joint planning and combining resources, not only produces better facilities for everyone but can have unexpected benefits, such as in France where the Open School programme has resulted in less damage to premises as children take possession of their schools.

Geneva: elementary schools open to all

Schools have always played a vital social role in neighbourhoods or towns. Although their primary purpose is to transmit knowledge, they also act as uniquely convenient meeting places to which an area's residents are naturally drawn, whether they are the parents of pupils or ordinary citizens. With this in mind, the City of Geneva has continually sought to ensure that its schools are as versatile and multipurpose as possible by opening them up to extracurricular activities and local organisations.

This policy of openness does not have a major financial impact on the cost of buildings, since it consists of making optimum use of core school facilities and making available the areas that cannot be used for instructional purposes. Rental fees have deliberately been kept as low as possible and only cover direct operating costs, so that they will not be beyond the reach of local organisations with limited funds.

In practice, the openness policy of Geneva's elementary schools takes the following forms:

- **School premises**

From 4.00 p.m. (when classes end) to 6.00 p.m., children may participate in the extracurricular activities organised in each school under the responsibility of specialised instructors for a small fee (a proposal to provide these activities free of charge as had previously been the case was recently rejected by popular vote). These activities are held in the appropriate premises, such as handicraft workshops, sewing rooms or physical education halls.

From 6.00 to 10.00 p.m., gymnasiums, playrooms and dance rooms are rented to local groups. These premises are sometimes available at weekends, but school buildings are closed throughout the school holidays.

- **Special premises for associations**

Most elementary schools have premises intended for local groups, which rent them by the year.

- **Playgrounds**

The playgrounds of Geneva's elementary schools may only be used by pupils during school hours but are open to the public at other times. In some downtown areas, school playgrounds are often the only place where small children and teenagers can play. In 1980 the municipal authorities launched an ambitious programme to provide 100 play areas, on school playgrounds in particular, and virtually all of these facilities have now been built. Thanks to this large-scale programme, Geneva residents now have access to safe and attractive play areas for children.

This Swiss example is specific to the City of Geneva. Arrangements may differ in other areas of the country.

France: constructive use of vacation time

The Open School plan, launched as an experimental programme in 1991, offers educational, sports and leisure activities along with study support in junior and upper secondary schools during holidays and on Wednesdays (when there are no classes in France) and Saturdays throughout the school year. The activities are reserved for children and youth who have little or no vacation opportunities.

It is local education authorities that authorise the use of a secondary school's premises once the principal has received agreement from the school board.

In 1998 the programme was extended to primary school students. This posed a problem for space since primary school buildings are already used outside of class time as recreational centres (*centres de loisirs sans hébergement*). So in most cases, primary pupils attend Open School at junior secondary institutions, under the responsibility of the host school principal, who works with the primary school director and teachers to define programme activities. Nevertheless certain activities may take place in primary schools on an exceptional basis, with the mayor's authorisation and in accordance with legislation.

French experience is that young people who participate in Open School become more mindful of their environment: they take proud possession of the premises and keep the school clean. The institutions suffer no damage during the programme, and there is usually less damage engendered at the start of the following school year.

United Kingdom: encouraging expanded community use

The majority of schools in the UK are involved in some form of after-school or community activity. Such activities range from homework clubs and extra curricular classes to adult education, sports and the performing arts.

Despite this positive picture there is great scope for more. The government is keen to promote and encourage links between schools and their local communities, so that schools become centres of learning for the whole community and their premises and equipment are far more fully utilised outside school hours.

As a first step, new guidance is being prepared for schools. This will highlight the benefits of encouraging community use, show how to overcome any perceived barriers and include practical advice on such issues as finance, planning, health and safety, security and insurance. The guidelines, to be published this summer, will contain a number of recent case studies.

Another initiative, announced this spring, concerns the establishment of 85 Learning Network Centres based in schools, a substantial number of which will be in inner city areas. The centres will bring state-of-the-art information and communication technology systems within the reach of everyone in the community. They will give children and adults access to new approaches to learning and offer an expanding range of opportunities before and after school. The centres will act as cores for cascading best practice to neighbouring schools and may also develop language laboratories, cyber cafes and arts facilities.

Quebec: combining resources

As in many countries, Quebec schools are structures that help shape a community. Over the last four years, the *Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec* (MEQ, Quebec Ministry of Education) has financed the construction or enlargement of 64 primary schools. Nineteen of these involved local contributions in order for the buildings to serve the community outside of class times.

There is an important move in Quebec for local communities to use secondary school equipment to optimise its use. The *Odysée* secondary school in Val-Bélair, inaugurated in February 1999, is an example of a new kind of partnership between schools and municipalities. The population of Val-Bélair has access to its gymnasium and pool while the adjoining municipal library serves the students.

Ireland: grouping services

Educational facilities throughout the country are being used more and more for larger community use, while not specifically designed to do so. Ireland recognises that school premises cannot remain limited to educational use in the future and is building new schools with this in mind. Two such schools are currently planned in Dublin: one, in Sandymount, will house facilities for the Departments of Education and Health, and a second, in Cherry Orchard, will group primary school facilities, an early-start programme, basic health-care programmes, home-school liaison activities and possibly adult education.

Special schools are also increasingly attracting mixed and after-hours use. St. Gabriels Special school in Limerick provides educational and medical support for children with special needs. Beechpark in Dublin, which caters for the needs of pupils with autism and is set to become a centre of excellence, combining educational, diagnostic, psychological and other related supports.

Problems in the areas of insurance, liability and accountability remain to be solved.

Belgium's Flemish Community: detailed policy recommendations

The policy in Belgium's Flemish Community allows for the use of all types of school facilities by a number of organisations and individuals for social, cultural and sports activities. A school's grounds, sports areas, classrooms, workshops, lunchroom, kitchen, library or theatre can be reserved any time

that they are not being used by the school system. On Wednesday afternoons, when there are no classes, priority goes to activities organised by the school or the *Autonome Raad van het Gemeenschapsonderwijs* (ARGO, Autonomous Council for Community Education).

There is no rental charge for school-related groups – of parents, alumni, students or faculty – or for users organising activities expressly for students. Others who are authorised to use the space – day care services and cultural, youth and sports organisations – pay an hourly fee; prices are set by the local education authorities. Requests must be made one month in advance, and all users must take out material damage and third-party accident insurance.

Common activities include lectures, meetings, exhibits, banquets, fairs and film projects. The premises may not be used for political and commercial activities, nor for bicycle or motorised races or certain other motorised activities.

Boarding schools

Residences and sports facilities at Flemish boarding schools are commonly used for student retreats designed to teach team work through interaction in groups. Availability varies according to the institution; some may be rented only during the school year, others only during school holidays and others are open year-round. Visits to museums, nature reserves or other nearby attractions are often organised during the retreats.

Policies for the use of school premises are defined by ARGO to serve as guidelines to help schools manage their infrastructure efficiently. ARGO is responsible for community education for Belgium's Flemish Community, but schools have almost complete autonomy; therefore actual practice may differ from recommendations.

Turkey: new designs with the community in mind

Having extended compulsory education from five to eight years as of the current academic year, Turkey is now investing resources into accommodating its three million new students. In addition to increasing the capacity of existing schools, 345 new schools are under construction and will be used for various community activities.

The new facilities are designed to meet the future needs of an evolving educational system. Schools will serve as community centres for social, cultural and sports activities. Following a needs assessment



The *Odysée* secondary school in Val-Bélair, Quebec, shares its sports facilities with the city in exchange for use of the municipal library (lower right).



New schools in Turkey are planned for shared use by the adult community.



carried out by the Ministry of National Education, six Turkish universities prepared innovative projects for buildings that can adapt as the education programme develops.

Interiors and exteriors are designed to accommodate people with physical handicaps. In the interest of easy access and to avoid vertical circulation, multiple storeys are avoided, apart from buildings on small sites which are limited to four floors. There are separate entrances for nursery school children, and classrooms for the early years of education are located on the ground floor.

The new schools offer science and computer laboratories, art and music rooms and workshops designed for individual and group work. Faculty rooms are also designed for both individual work and meetings. The schools have two canteens, one for older students and one for younger. There are plans for indoor basketball and volleyball courts, as well as outdoor fields

and recreational areas – all of which can be used by the community.

With the advent of eight-year compulsory education, Turkey aims to modernise its educational facilities by the end of 2000, providing buildings that can serve for lifelong learning and community education.

United States: investing in a new after-school programme

The United States is investing increasing sums in school buildings for activities after school, weekends and summers in high-need rural and inner-city communities. Through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers programme, the US Government provides funds to public elementary, middle and secondary schools for “educational, recreational, health and social service programs for residents of all ages within a local community”.

The Community Learning Centers (CLCs) are located in school buildings and operated by local educational agencies working with local government, businesses, institutions for tertiary education, recreational services, etc. Funds may be used to rent facilities, purchase equipment or remodel, but not to purchase or build new facilities.

Grantees are required to carry out at least four of 13 activities proposed which include the following:

- senior citizen programs;
- children’s day care services;
- expanded library service hours to serve community needs;
- telecommunications and technology education programs for individuals of all ages;
- parenting skills education programmes;
- employment counselling, training and placement;
- services for individuals who leave school before graduating from secondary school;
- services for individuals with disabilities.

In 1998 the Department of Education administered \$40 million toward CLCs through a grant competition; 2 000 schools submitted applications, totalling \$500 million in requests for funding – one in 20 received support. In 1999 the government committed \$200 million to the programme – half of which is to be granted through a new competition; it will fund 1 600 centres, serving 250 000 students. Private foundations are also making important contributions.

In recognising the need for such programmes, the US Department of Education cites studies showing that the peak hours for juvenile crime and victimisation are from 2.00 to 8.00 p.m. and that adolescents who are unsupervised after school are more likely to use alcohol and drugs and are less successful in school than those involved in constructive activities.

The National Study of Before- and After-School Programs

In 1991 the first nationally representative study was conducted in the US to document the characteristics of formal before- and after-school programmes for 5 to 13 year-olds. Below is a sample of the findings, taken from *The National Study of Before- and After-School Programs: Analysis and Highlights*.

- A major need identified in the survey data is for adequate space within facilities.
- Approximately half of all programmes use shared space. The sharing of space is more common for programmes located in public schools (67%) and religious institutions (60%) than in child care centres (31%).
- Locating a programme in a school often helps solve transportation problems; minimises costs related to rental space, staff, equipment and materials; and reduces the fee burden on lower-income families.
- Non-profit organisations operate two-thirds of the programmes in the United States; of these, public schools represent 18%. The largest single category of providers is private for-profit corporations, with 29% of the programmes.
- Programmes remain very dependent upon parent fees for their operating revenue, and only limited funds are available from state social service agencies. These funding patterns are leading to the development of a school-age child care system that is stratified by family income.
- Income from parental fees constitutes 83% of revenue for programmes. Most of the remaining income comes from government (local, state and/or federal) funds (10%), although some form of government funding is received by only a third of all programmes.
- The average hourly fee for combined before- and after-school sessions is \$1.77.

References

OECD (1998), *Under One Roof: The Integration of Schools and Community Services in OECD Countries*, Paris.

Case studies provide a wealth of examples of solutions to the challenge of optimising the use of existing schools by better integrating them into local communities and by promoting new synergies with other services.

OECD code 95 98 03 1P, ISBN 92-64-16110-4, 65 pp., 120 FF

OECD (1996), *Making Better Use of School Buildings*, Paris.

In many towns and villages there is a shortage of facilities for lifelong learning, child care and other leisure, sporting and cultural activities. Yet thousands of school buildings are unused during school holidays and on weekends. This report explains how better use can be made of these valuable and expensive facilities and how they can serve to help halt the decline of rural populations and provide new opportunities during decentralisation.

OECD code 95 96 04 1, ISBN 92-64-14880-9, 37 pp., 60 FF

OECD (1996), *Integrating Services for Children at Risk*, Paris.

This report describes government policies and academic research concerning efforts to integrate children's educational, social welfare and health services in Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. It identifies major strengths and weaknesses in current efforts to co-ordinate service activities.

OECD code 96 96 02 1P, ISBN 92-64-14791-8, 86 pp., 85 FF

OECD (1995), *Our Children at Risk*, Paris.

Children at risk come from a variety of disadvantaged backgrounds and are more likely than others to fail to reach necessary standards in school, to drop out and to experience real problems being integrated into mainstream patterns of adult life. Action requires flexible school organisation, curriculum and teaching to meet the educational and social needs of children at risk and their families as well as community wishes and business interests. This publication draws on reports and case studies from 17 OECD countries and three foundations. It addresses pre-school, school age and transition to work periods.

OECD Code 96 95 05 1P, ISBN 92-64-14430-7, 150 pp., 170 FF

AGRON, Joe (1998), "The Urban Challenge: Revitalizing America's City Schools", *American School & University Magazine*, July.
<http://www.asumag.com/julcov.htm>

In the United States one of the causes of deterioration to buildings is the lack of free time for maintenance in schools that are constantly occupied for after-hours activities.

CEEDS (Center for Environment, Education, and Design Studies).
http://www.newhorizons.org/ceeds_articles.html

Articles at this site include "Reconnecting Community and School: Initiatives to Expand Children's Environments" and "Less is More: Learning Environments for the Next Century" which provide innovative examples of resource sharing to unite students and the community.

HACKER, Michael (1994), "Using Schools after Class Hours?", *OECD Observer*, No. 189 August/September, OECD, Paris.

The author points out some of the social and economic advantages of using schools after hours, as well as administrative and other challenges such as defining responsibility for cleaning and arranging furniture, protecting display material and children's work and disputes over priority for use of spaces by different groups. He warns that "the use of a building by more than one user at different times... will expose any weaknesses in the management structure".

ICS Advisers and the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences, "Vernieuwings prijs 1998".

The "Innovation Prize" was awarded in conjunction with the School Building Prize 1998 (*PEB Exchange* 36, February 1999) to recognise creative plans for community use of primary school premises. The jury evaluated renovation projects according to the flexibility of building construction and multi-purpose use. This 8-page brochure was published in Dutch.

US Department of Education, 21st Century Community Learning Centers Web Site:
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/21stCCLC/21qa98.html>

Characteristics of high-quality programmes and recommendations on how projects can take stock of community needs and resources and set achievable goals can be found in the FAQ section of this site.

US Department of Education (1997), *Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers: Extending Learning in a Safe, Drug-Free Environment Before and After School*.

This guidebook outlines the steps needed to convert a school into a Community Learning Center and lists resources for further information and assistance. It also provides concrete suggestions for estimating typical costs, developing a budget and designing an effective programme. The full text is available at:
<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/LearnCenters/>
 or call 1 877 433 7827, (62 pages).

US Departments of Education and Justice (1998), *Safe and Smart: Making the After-School Hours Work for Kids*.

This report produced jointly by the Education and Justice departments highlights the need for after-hours activities for children along with their benefits. The full text is available at:
<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/SafeandSmart/title.html> or
 call 1 877 433 7827, (93 pages).

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STUDY SUPPORT IN EXTRA TIME IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

In spring 1999, the United Kingdom launched a major initiative that will extend the use of school buildings. Good schools in both public and private sectors have always engaged in recreational and learning activities outside normal school hours. The government has now decided to invest 200 million pounds of National Lottery money to enable schools in deprived and under-achieving areas to develop or expand such initiatives.

Education Extra

The charity Education Extra, established in 1992, has trail-blazed the ideas by encouraging innovation and disseminating good practice and advice. Its director, Dr. Kay Andrews, well known for her articulate advocacy of out-of-school learning opportunities, has been a seminal influence in educational thinking. This small organisation has published research and evaluation reports on what makes a good study support club or activity and has a network of over 1 800 schools receiving and contributing ideas. Awards of between £250 and £5 000 are made annually to schools putting forward worthy schemes for development and reportage. This money comes from other larger charities and industrial sponsors, who sometimes provide gifts in kind such as computer or sports equipment or musical instruments. Education Extra also provides training materials for schools, local authorities, teachers and other adult helpers.

Education Extra has been generating and circulating ideas which have resonated with the objectives of the present government. Both see study support and activities outside normal school hours contributing to higher standards of achievement, raising the self-esteem and motivation of children and leading to school improvement. These are important morale boosters for pupils and teachers. The essence of study support and out-of-school activity is that it is voluntary, and therefore encourages a real sense of involvement and choice by the student. Informal education can also lead to better understanding and personal relationships among students, their parents and teachers.

An example is the establishment of a Reading Club in the small rural primary school at Newstead in Nottinghamshire. Every Tuesday from 3.30 to 4.30 p.m., after school ends, a group of parents set out literacy games, puzzles, computers, group listening audio equipment and a reading corner library. Refreshments are provided to help sustain the children for an extra hour. A parent-governor of the school co-ordinates and organises the session with the support of the headteacher. About 20 parents and helpers assist the children working busily at different activities – some individual and some in groups. Several 12- and 13-year-old pupils who used to go to Newstead, and who now attend a nearby school, join in supporting their younger brothers and sisters. Minister for Education Estelle Morris visited the club in February and later commented that it was “the highlight of her year”.



Parents and helpers support the after-school Reading Club at the rural primary school at Newstead in Nottinghamshire, United Kingdom.

Summer school

Summer schools have often been based on play, but in 1997 the newly elected government asked Education Extra to set up 50 Summer Literacy Projects to help bridge the transfer between primary and secondary education. This was intended primarily for pupils at risk of regressing in their achievement levels during the holidays. Summer schools have now increased to 900 in number and local education authorities administer them. They run for two or three weeks and are staffed by teachers, librarians, support assistants and volunteers. Many use older students as mentors. Information technology is widely employed to develop skills and to produce newsletters and project reports. Up to 30 selected pupils are invited to attend according to pre-determined criteria. Many schools have identified considerable improvements, particularly in easing the transition for more vulnerable youngsters.

New Opportunities Fund

“Study support” can be widely interpreted and encompasses any organised activity that engages youngsters in their own further development and enjoyment of learning – from homework clubs to sports, performing arts or community service. Schools can now apply for funding to the New Opportunities Fund (NOF). It will soon begin to distribute £180 million of National Lottery money for study support, and a further £20 million to study support schemes which integrate out-of-school-hours care for children with working parents. Stephen Dunmore, Chief Executive of NOF, and his team, supported by colleagues from the Department of Education and Employment (DfEE) and Education Extra, have been mounting roadshows around the country to raise awareness and to consult providers about the best way to allocate the funds. It is quite clear that the government and NOF wish to see this extra money address issues of disadvantage and social exclusion. They want to encourage active partnerships between schools and others such as youth workers and librarians. Examples of co-operation can be seen amongst the 50 pilot studies conducted so far (a DfEE report contains a brief description of the 50 pilot bids¹). Half of all secondary schools and one quarter of all primary schools are expected to benefit by 2003.

The first three New Opportunities Fund initiatives are: to set up out-of-school-hours activities in education and child care; to establish a core network of healthy living centres; and to train teachers and librarians in the use of information and communications technology. Future programmes will include cancer prevention, detection and care; green spaces and sustainable communities; and community access to lifelong learning. These will

inevitably have further implications for the use of school buildings. Many after-school care arrangements for children with working parents are already based in schools; private organisations and public social services can hire or share school accommodation. Adult education is often established in facilities of both primary and secondary schools. The schools reap rewards beyond the hire fee – particularly in the area of computer education; equipment can be shared with after-school clubs and is sometimes used by daytime classes. Another outcome is the availability of trained adults for study support in the local area – especially from the growing number of retired people in the community. Lifelong learning will provide the next big opportunity for schools to raise standards through co-operation and by sharing buildings.

Henry Morris, one of the great community educators, and Chief Education Officer in Cambridgeshire from 1922 to 1954, said in his famous memorandum to the Education Committee: “We must do away with the insulated school” and “There must be a grouping and co-ordination of all the educational and social agencies which now exist in isolation ... an amalgamation which, while preserving the individuality and function of each, will assemble them into a whole and make possible their expression for the first time in a new institution, single but many-sided, for the countryside.”

We are now seeing a major initiative to involve students and the community in the wider use of school buildings after school hours and during holidays. It is a significant step towards the establishment of learning communities. The many-sided partnership of local and national government services and agencies, schools and communities, supported by charities like Education Extra, should prove to be a powerful engine for improving the quality of education, particularly in disadvantaged areas.

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Roy Sowden, retired Principal of the Dukeries Complex, Nottinghamshire, is an independent education and training consultant. He contributed to OECD conferences in Paris and Lyon about the wider use of school buildings and community education.

1. DfEE (1998), *Extending Opportunity: Report of a Conference for Study Support Pilots*. Enquiries to 44 171 925 5098/5615, fax 44 171 925 6979/6980, e-mail: info@dfee.gov.uk, Internet: <http://www.dfee.gov.uk>.

Book Reviews

Strategic Management of College Premises

By Ken Ruddiman

Managing Colleges Effectively Series, No. 4, series editor Desmond Keohane

Published by Falmer Press, London and Philadelphia, 1999, ISBN 0-7507-0966-9

A review by Grace Kenny

Background

Ken Ruddiman is Principal and Chief Executive of The Sheffield College. The College was formed from the merger of the six separate colleges which previously provided further education (FE) in the City of Sheffield. The short-hand term for the further education sector in the United Kingdom used to be “the 16 to 19 age group”, but of the 3.95 million students enrolled in FE in England in 1997/98, over two million are now over 25; this illustrates how the sector, from providing mainly vocational and technical training and some “academic” courses, has developed into an enormously diverse area of education and training for all age groups and all levels and types of courses.

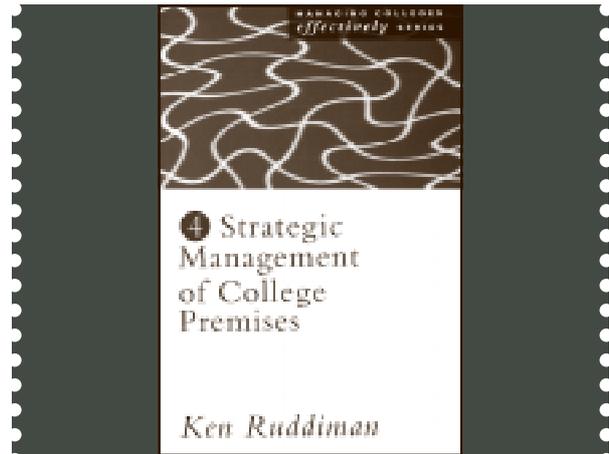
Over 30 000 of these students are enrolled at The Sheffield College, making it the largest further education institution in the country. Among the 444 colleges in the FE sector, 60% have between 1 000 and 10 000 students. The 20% of colleges that have more than 10 000 students tend to be in the major conurbations and to have an extraordinarily varied portfolio of sites and buildings. The more energetic of these colleges are rationalising and slimming down their estates, and *Strategic Management of College Premises* is an account of how Ruddiman and his colleagues are planning and proceeding to do just that.

Each chapter is devoted to a particular element which college management needs to consider, giving both general principles and specific details taken from the recent experience of The Sheffield College.

Why develop an accommodation strategy?

Ruddiman lists five key objectives which underpin the establishment of an accommodation strategy:

- to provide a good quality environment;
- to pursue excellence rather than physical size;
- to streamline and co-ordinate provision;
- to promote access;
- to ensure that financial resources are appropriately directed.



He also mentions that an accommodation strategy is a requirement of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) (for England), but he nowhere suggests that it is an unrealistic requirement. He laconically adds that “the accommodation strategy was a major piece of work”. Given that the college estate originally consisted of 17 freehold sites, around 104 000 m² of accommodation and 96 acres of land, plus some 100 locally leased or licensed properties, this is an understatement.

Assessing what you've got

This section is divided into two: who should do the assessment, and measuring space utilisation. The relative merits of consultants and in-house staff are compared. (The FEFC together with the National Audit Office has also published guidance on this topic and other similar ones.)¹ Will the objectivity of an outsider outweigh his or her possible lack of appropriate experience? Ruddiman emphasises that the fee of a consultant, however high it may seem at first, is, in the context of an accommodation strategy, “likely to be a small percentage of the overall cost”.

The Sheffield College carried out a survey on the use of their teaching rooms. The College found a range of levels of utilisation across its main sites (from 17% to 33%), which fall well within what may be expected in the sector. They decided to raise these levels according to the type of accommodation involved, with a target of 47% for general purpose teaching spaces and less for specialised spaces. It is always startling to discover how many more students can be accommodated within

1. The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) and the National Audit Office (NAO), published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO), and the Trading Standards Office (TSO):

– *Estate Management in Further Education Colleges: A Good Practice Guide*

– *Procurement: A Good Practice Guide*

– *Effective Facilities Management: A Good Practice Guide*

– *Marketing: A Good Practice Guide*

the existing accommodation (or how easily the existing students can be accommodated in less accommodation) by making modest improvements in space utilisation.

Curricular assessment

It is not possible to be too prescriptive about the details of what teaching and learning will occur where. However, the College identified some definite trends and some basic rationalisation principles. In the first place many employers now “prefer delivery of vocational curriculum in the workplace”. Thus colleges need to provide teachers for large, well-equipped firms, but they still need to provide “concentrated and modern resources” for smaller companies (a result of the widespread move towards competency-based qualifications).

More generally the College decided that:

- specialist space and facilities should occur in only one place in the city;
- each main centre should include a core of amenities and facilities such as learning resource centres and information technology;
- the strategy should concentrate on the freehold estate.

Financial implications

Given basic curricular demands and some educational criteria for rationalisation, options must be drawn up and costed, and ways of financing them must be found. This book suggests that options range from doing nothing at all to a complete overhaul of the premises.

In the UK context different sources of funding are proposed:

- **virement** of FEFC funds originally earmarked for remedying health and safety problems but no longer required through closure of buildings;
- **disposal receipts** (more likely and significant in popular city centres);
- **revenue funding** (although some UK colleges are in severe financial difficulties and could certainly not countenance this);
- **grants**, which may be tied to particular types of facilities and students (flexibility of design can be very useful here);
- **value-added tax planning** (may not be possible in all fiscal systems);
- **FEFC capital support**, which is dependent on current government policy;
- **running cost savings**, which can be considerable when old buildings are sold and replaced by new ones;
- **commercial sources**.

Ruddiman offers three guidelines if a college has to enter into major commercial borrowing, but they are always applicable, and it is possible to add a fourth:

- keep each phase of the strategy discrete;
- make sure there are opportunities to delay spending;
- decisions to proceed should depend on the success of other funding sources and a recovery plan;
- keep a mixed portfolio of funding sources.

Consultation

This would appear to be a thankless task, and there is a note of impatience in the remark that “the College was clear that the process was about consultation and not negotiation ... the overall scheme was not open to debate”.

In Sheffield’s case, the public perception is still that these colleges are in the “public domain” and the College had to prove that it was not asset stripping to the detriment of the local community that had previously enjoyed its leisure facilities. Thus the College had to explain carefully that it was now publicly funded only for education and/or training.

The implementation stage

So far as The Sheffield College is concerned, this phase is still going on. An Accommodation Implementation Group reports to the Estates Committee of nine college officers (marketing, learning strategies, etc.) plus six heads of centre who represent their six centre client groups, which are responsible for budgeted projects for individual sites and centres.

One difficulty is to know where to draw the line, since every member of an institution has some interest in the success of its accommodation strategy.

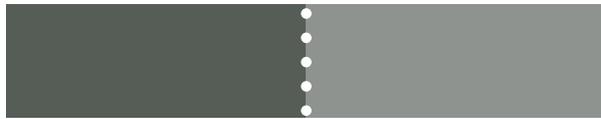
Conclusions

The striking feature of this sector in the UK, as opposed to others in Europe for example, is its dual private/public status. Individual institutions are expected to raise their own backing for capital, while respecting state accounting procedures. This book describes well the tightrope colleges have to walk: responding to the “initiatives” of the current government (e.g. to increase access, to teach more information technology, to improve vocational resources) and to the day to day data demands of the FEFC, while at the same time competing with other providers of education and training and trying to sustain growth and improvement for staff and students. To quote Ruddiman, “While the sector is being challenged to operate

within a business framework, we should always remember, the heart of our business is education”.

The Sheffield College is remarkable by its size and by the fact that it is situated in a city with a long tradition of social investment; it may be the only merger involving as many as six colleges.

Ken Ruddiman has simplified a frighteningly complex process, by providing general but itemised principles supported by helpful hints (VAT avoidance, committee structures, staff loads, public relations advice, etc.). The main message is, “This is what to do and how to do it”. The underlying message, equally important, is, “Do not be frightened”.



Les Murs de l'école
Éléments de réflexion sur l'espace scolaire
(The School Walls, Reflections on School Design)

By Marie-Claude Derouet-Besson
Published by Métailié, Paris, 1998, 305 pages

It is obvious that school design has an impact on the effectiveness of education, but what criteria should be used in selecting designs for schools? What is the best approach to improving the design of buildings and their use? Definitions of how an ideal school should be designed abound and are often disconcertingly contradictory, and the views of educators, elected officials, architects, town planners and parents often conflict. The author, drawing on school building trends in France and English-speaking countries over the past four decades and on numerous field studies, reviews the current state of knowledge in this field in which architecture, pedagogy, town planning, economics, education and politics are intermeshed in complex and constantly shifting ways.

The book begins by looking at the innovations in design introduced in the 1960s and 1970s and examines building trends that were based both on the concept of an ideal, standardised school and on innovative approaches (open areas, mezzanine floors, enriched environments, etc.). The idea that buildings directly influenced their users predominated, and it was thought that the widespread introduction of innovative buildings would lead to the modernisation of educational practices. Faced with the rapid demographic growth and mass education that led to the school crisis, policymakers and school administrators sometimes opted for imported or internation-

ally designed solutions, without considering whether the innovation would work in a standardised form or whether it was relevant to a different country.

Considerable disappointment ensued when it became apparent that new premises did not always lead to a better educational environment. What kind of design should be selected if traditional schools seemed ill adapted and innovations appeared to be questionable? Policymakers, particularly in the English-speaking world, asked researchers to evaluate the main types of school design. The second part of the book examines this research. Psychologists were the first to become aware of the problem, since they had long studied children's perception of space. Their research, especially in English-speaking countries, was based on combinations of variables but did not reach clear-cut conclusions. Later, in the 1980s, sociologists studied how school space is used. They sought to understand why there was a persistent mismatch between the supply of school facilities and their actual use. The author analyses the development of this research, tracing it from the initial definition of variables to the analysis of how users take advantage of the “spatial resources” of building design in learning situations.

The book finally investigates the validity of French public policies on school construction. Standardisation has given way to the utmost variety. Although decentralisation has transferred responsibility for school buildings to local and regional elected officials, what criteria should they adopt for building or renovating schools? The school crisis has discredited approaches based solely on teachers' experience and the pronouncements of experts. The disappearance of national standards makes it easier for stakeholders to make their needs known, but what must be done to make the right choice and facilitate the emergence of locally based democracy? The task is so daunting that many elected officials have turned it over to a new specialist, the school planner.

The sociological approach sheds light both on the role of networking in decision-making and on the leeway enjoyed by school users. Rather than being a constraint that forces them to behave in a certain way, school design is a resource that can be actively used in different ways by teachers, pupils and others. This leeway defines the use value that should be the aim of school construction policies.

Marie-Claude Derouet-Besson holds an “agrégation” in history and a Ph.D. in sociology, and is a member of the Sociological Studies Department at the National Institute for Educational Research (INRP) in Paris.

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Innovating Schools

It is now widely agreed that learning is pivotal in the «knowledge societies» of today and, still more, of tomorrow. It is also widely agreed that schools have a key role to play in laying the foundations for lifelong learning for all of us. But, how well are these aims being met? How innovative are schools as institutions? And what are some of the most promising examples across OECD countries from which we can learn?

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April 1999, 136 pp., OECD code: 96 99 02 1P,
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to strengthen the implementation of the reform goals. They underline the need for broad societal agreement on these goals and the mobilisation of all the parties involved in order to achieve the wide-ranging changes which are envisaged.

September 1998, 120 pp., OECD code: 91 98 06 1P,
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OTHER PUBLICATIONS

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25-26 – The Committee on Architecture for Education of the American Institute of Architects will hold a forum on “Renovating 20th Century Schools”, as announced at <http://www.e-architect.com/pia/events/jun.asp>. Participants will learn how to improve “long term quality without sacrificing good design and construction by minimising maintenance costs and increasing the life cycle”. Tel.: 1 800 242 3837.

August

18-21 – An international conference on playground safety is planned in Pennsylvania, USA, for all those concerned with children’s play areas. Among the topics to be addressed are equipment for different age groups, safety standards, maintenance and innovative designs. See: http://www.outreach.psu.edu/PlaygroundSafety/coop_orgs.html. Tel.: 1 814 863 8982.

September

2-3 – “School in the Community: Lessons for the Future” is the topic of an international conference to be held in the United Kingdom (see p. 5). It is a joint promotion by the Architects and Building Branch of the DfEE and the Public Architecture Group of the RIBA. The venue is the University of Sheffield. For further information or to attend, contact: Andy Thompson, DfEE. Tel.: 44 171 273 6740, fax: 44 171 273 6762, e-mail: andy.thompson@dfee.gov.uk

26-29 – There will be a conference in Australia on facilities management, corporate strategy and other issues of interest to administrators and providers of tertiary education. The Association for Tertiary Education Management and the Australasian Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers are proposing the conference under the title “A Balancing Act: Looking Ahead, Learning from Experience”. ATEM tel.: 61 2 4921 8867. See: <http://www.conferences.co.nz/atem-aappa1999/>.

October

25-28 – The PEB seminar entitled “The Changing Infrastructure of Tertiary Education” will focus on the provision and management of facilities. Organised with the *Ministère de l’Éducation du Québec* and the Association of Institutional Property Managers, it will take place in Canada and include visits to several tertiary institutions. See p. 3.

30-31 – “Invention, Maintenance and Renewal of Urban Educational Facilities: Global Challenges and Community Solutions” is an international symposium organised by PEB, the AIA’s Committee on Architecture for Education and the UEF21 chapter of the Council of Educational Facility Planners International. It will take place in Baltimore, Maryland, USA. See p. 3.

November

1-4 – “CEFPI’s 76th Annual International Conference and Tradeshow” will be held in Baltimore, Maryland. Contact: CEFPI Headquarters. Tel.: 1 602 948 2337, fax: 1 602 948 4420.

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