

The National Program

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In the previous chapters, we presented our data on NYSP projects and youth participants. The main intent of those data is to represent the quality of the total program. Next we will focus on the management of NYSP and discuss policy implications. As the program heads into its 1997 summer, internal efforts are being made to upgrade national and local operations, particularly through a “strategic planning” initiative undertaken by the NCAA Advisory Committee on Youth Programs. By posing policy issues, even though based on limited evaluative observations, we hope to contribute to the deliberations of NYSP leaders across the country.

The formally stated objectives of NYSP are identified beginning on page 2 in chapter 1. In the present review of NYSP policy issues, we identify goals of NYSP activities in addition to the stated five, other intentions and expectations, usually less well spelled out, both at the national and local levels. Those particularly important at the local level have been identified in chapter 3. One of the issues we take up below is the compatibility of purposes and values at the two levels, national and local. We do not take the position that, where there is widespread agreement, no issue exists, nor that where people have competing goals, something is wrong with policy. A vital program is one that brings out a diversity of views as to what shall be done and how. Since both philosophical and technical matters arise primarily through the NYSP evaluation process, we will describe and comment on that process in detail in this chapter.

In our inquiry into NYSP policies, we have visited 20-some sites and several national meetings. The questions we asked were limited, partly because we anticipated continuing the evaluation study beyond the first year. But many issues were identified. Few if any have appeared to be immediately critical in the sense that resolution cannot await the newly started strategic planning.

What we have seen in NYSP is a national program in good health, staffed by good people, doing good things for needy youth. The management of the program has been strong but capable of

being even better. Still its leadership sometimes puts NYSP at risk unnecessarily, principally by failing to take advantage of the support systems available. But the program is robust at several levels of operation, the leaders attentive to new opportunities ahead. As with any healthy program, there will be many strategic issues to consider. Some of them will be issues fundamental to all social service and educational enterprises. None of them are likely to cast doubt upon the basic fact that, each summer, some 70,000 youth of reduced opportunity are experiencing high quality interaction with good coaches and counselors and the stimulating life of a college campus.

The National Office. The NYSP National Office is operated by a small staff at NCAA headquarters in Overland Park, Kansas, under Youth Programs Director Ed Thiebe. Like all major NCAA operations, program authority is vested in an Advisory Committee with action subject to review by the NCAA Council. With major funding from the US Department of Health and Human Services, there is a federal program officer in Washington who sees that the program is operated according to law and annual contract. Although we only got our evaluation of the National Office started, we found a perception among project personnel and others who had contact with it that it was well run, responsive to pleas for clarification or assistance. The National Workshops for some 200 NYSP leaders extending two days in Washington in 1996 and at Orlando in 1997, were thoughtfully planned and effectively carried out. For our evaluation work, we received most but not all the documents we requested, but when we visited the Office, we were treated most hospitably. We were nicely assisted by the NYSP staff in using the program data base and preparing a survey for students at a sample of 20 sites. In all respects that we knew of, Thiebe was doing an effective job of managing the national program, carrying out the directives of his NCAA superior, Ron Stratten, and of the Advisory Committee.

The Guidelines. Local projects are required to operate strictly according to a set of published Guidelines revised in small ways every year or so. In many ways, the Guidelines have not been changed since NYSP began in 1969. Most recommendations for change originate among the Evaluators and are deliberated by the Advisory Committee. This form of governance has served the program for many years.

For procedural operations, the Guidelines provide local NYSP projects with explicit direction. The Guidelines deal with technical matters. Program goals, problem solving, and criteria of quality are not directly emphasized there. As with NCAA compliance requirements for collegiate athletics, there is paperwork routinely to be filed, including for such matters as staffing, student attendance, use of US Department of Agriculture foodstuffs, and expenditure of funds from donors. The Guidelines do not cover all important aspects of programming--but they should not; many choices should be made at the local level. We did not encounter any policy problem with the Guidelines. Originally we expected that some project directors would find them onerous but instead heard that the Guidelines make sense and seem necessary. Local staff members consistently expressed pride in being a part of a "ship shape" organization. To us, "ship shape" sometimes means compliant, possibly inflexible. We will consider the Guidelines again under the heading, "Role of Evaluators," as we closely review the NYSP's quality assurance process.

Awards and probation. Extra attention is brought to the Guidelines by competitive awards handed out to exemplary projects at the National Workshop. To marginal projects, low scores bring the threat of probationary status. In a carefully developed rubric, projects are awarded points by their Evaluator during his or her summer visit, for adherence to the Guidelines and for program enhancements. Many projects leaders seem to enter into this competition enthusiastically. The awards carry no material value but recognition is valued and winners cite their award in promotional efforts, seeking donors and summer staffing. In 1995, for example, the NYSP at Altavista University (chapter 2) was among the highest scorers and was acclaimed widely across the state for its instruction in sports skills and physical fitness. A few projects each year go on probation or are discontinued. We were troubled not to find an appeal process for Committee actions. What should happen when projects claim they are in compliance with the Guidelines but the Committee rules otherwise? That and the related question of uniform criteria of merit will be taken up below as a matter of policy under the heading of "Partnerships."

Internal Evaluations and Evaluators¹

The internal evaluation component of NYSP has been in place, as far as we can tell, since the inception of the program. The component consists of a cadre of Evaluators (15 in 1996) and a Chief Evaluator who visit each of the sites (170 in 1996) to "assess the manner in which the project is conducted, review adherence to Guidelines, and monitor inventory supplies" (1996 NYSP Federal Budget Narrative, 5/21/96). The Chief Evaluator coordinates the work of the Evaluators and serves as liaison to the National Office. The Chief Evaluator currently is Fred Furukawa, a dynamic, contemplative, personable, indefatigable executive. Almost every policy issue we discuss in this report brings to mind his central role in the present operating scheme.

This internal monitoring function (or "self-policing" as it sometimes has been called) correctly conveys to government agencies, funders, and private sponsors a sense of accountability and responsibility within the program. It "preserves legitimacy" and assures these agencies that the program is being managed consistently and appropriately at the 170 institutions across the nation. Internally, the primary function of the evaluation component is said to serve as the "eyes and ears" of the Advisory Committee, providing its members and the National Office staff with direct "feedback from the field" on how policies are being implemented at each individual site. It is a complex and closely monitored process.

The Evaluators certify the numerical data (e.g., number of children served, number of summer jobs provided) that are aggregated for the "Fact Sheets" disseminated each year in reports and public relations documents. For a relatively small financial investment (approximately \$200,000 per year, about 1.7% of the federally funded portion of the budget), NYSP gains substantial payoff from the evaluation component in terms of image, quality

¹Data Sources: Observations (shadowing) of the local program evaluation process at two separate sites; extensive informal discussions with two experienced Evaluators and one novice Evaluator; periodic discussions with Don Kirkendall; interview with Fred Furukawa, Chief Evaluator; references to evaluation system in interviews with Advisory Committee members and with federal program Officer; informal information from local project staffs; site reports from local features strand; group and individual responses on Activity Director survey; observation of fall Evaluator meeting, including joint session with Advisory Committee representatives.

assurance, and data gathering.² There is a separate auditing system by Price Waterhouse that provides a more intensive verification of inventory and expenditures for a subset of local projects each year.

The evaluation component is ingrained in the fabric of the program. Preparing for the evaluation visit in the summer consumes a notable portion of time and effort from the local project staff. Participants are prepped for the visit; project staff members are well-aware of the power Evaluators wield over the rewards--or sanctions--the project will receive. Most of the Evaluators have been with NYSP for a decade or more and clearly see their affiliation and service as an important part of their professional identity. Information from Evaluators is fed into the system of awards and national recognition for local projects. The National Office staff, Advisory Committee members, and federal funding agencies rely on the Evaluators to ensure prompt compliance with new policies and procedures, as well as ongoing adherence to existing guidelines.

We were told many times that in order to understand the evaluation component as it currently exists, one must understand the dramatic change in the countenance and roles of the Evaluators and their evolving relationships with local projects. According to some current Evaluators and local project staff members with whom we talked, the early Evaluators operated in a "gotcha" mode, focusing on minor details and infractions rather than the larger picture. By current accounts, the relationships between local project staffs and the early Evaluators (many of whom had no direct experience running projects) were often strained and antagonistic.

In the early 1980's, when Ruth Berkey assumed the helm at the National Office and Furukawa was appointed Chief Evaluator, there began a slow but steady process of change. Gradual change continues to be supported and enhanced by the current leadership in the National Office and within the Advisory Committee, we are told. New Evaluators must have at least five years experience with a local project (on the Auxiliary staff and,

² It is perhaps interesting to note that a 1982 evaluation by the Office of the Inspector General (US Department of Health and Human Services) recommended a reduction in funds assigned to the evaluation process. The report suggested conducting on-site evaluations of a *subset* of local projects, instead of 100% of them, and applying the savings to increasing the number of children served at the local sites.

preferably, also as a professional) to qualify. Further, the most important qualification is "people skills," which includes an ability to establish rapport with the different types of people who run the local projects as well as an ability to discern what is "really happening" at the local site. Furukawa made changes in the Evaluator training procedures in an explicit effort to "get everyone on the same page", i.e., to establish a greater consistency among Evaluators in their responses to local situations and scenarios. Furukawa has also emphasized the technical assistance role of the Evaluators: one Evaluator told us that they are *expected* to offer a potential solution for any problem (defined as an item of non-compliance) they encounter at the site. The role of technical advisor has been further expanded in at least two ways. First, the mandated use of a computer database for the site visitation report places the Evaluator in the role of "computer consultant"³ at many sites. Second, the Evaluators are now attending the annual National Workshop and are given designated times to meet with people from their sites. In 1996 (the first time in recent history the Evaluators attended), this time together was used primarily for scheduling. In January, 1997, some of the time was used discussing more substantive issues, reinforcing certain procedures, answering questions about the Guidelines, and the like.⁴

The effort to change the focus and make-up of the evaluation component has taken a long time. Most acknowledge that a big part of the change process was "getting rid of the Old Guard" Evaluators, (primarily through attrition, it appears). While everyone we talked with confirmed dramatic improvement from "the old days," the transition is not yet complete. From the local project staff perspective, some "long-timers" remember the previous model and need to be reassured that the Evaluator is there (at least in part) to help.⁵ Some project staff members have

³ At the October, 1996 meeting, a subcommittee presented a list of problem areas and suggestions to the 4D software programmer. There was a general sense that, while some bugs still exist, the software was operating much better than in years past and that Evaluators were able to troubleshoot fairly well in the field.

⁴ Several times in the Evaluator meeting in October, 1996, Furukawa noted topics that should be included in these meetings, reminding the Evaluators that "our business is to help (the sites) succeed."

⁵ One Project Administrator reported, for example, that he was prepared to "lay down the law" to this year's Evaluator about his adversarial behavior with the local staff in years past, until he saw that the Evaluator started off this visit with a more collegial and supportive stance. Other project personnel lodged informal complaints that certain Evaluators insist on things being done only in one certain way. But no formal complaints were filed against Evaluators this year--a point Furukawa commended his colleagues on at the October meeting.

claimed that local project ratings change from year to year, partly depending on the Evaluator, what he or she is most interested in or attuned to. From the Evaluator's perspective, there can be frustrations over needing to "re-sell" the Evaluator role to site people (particularly if there are local staff changes) and over the tendency for some staff members to try to hide problems and fool the Evaluator. One Evaluator sounded exasperated when he recounted his efforts to encourage site people to "tell me about your problems, don't try to hide them from me. If you tell me, then we can work out a solution."

The current cadre of Evaluators is experienced, with three to ten years of evaluation experience for most,⁶ in addition to their years on local projects. They share a camaraderie and sense of comfortableness with each other and have collegial though visibly respectful relationships with the Chief Evaluator and National Office staff. There is, in general, a sense of cohesiveness and consistency in the Evaluators' views of positive and negative aspects of projects and in their reports of strategies used for working with local projects. Still, one or two Evaluators have at least slightly different perspectives from the rest. It is clear that the Evaluators are expected to assume different roles at different points in the evaluation process: at times they are called upon to defend recommended sanctions and at other times they are expected to be advocates for individual projects. It is also clear that some have become more facile at "switching hats" than others, and that the individuals do vary in the relative emphasis they assign to their various roles. In other words, while they may be consistent in the principles they espouse, they--like the local projects--are not homogenous in their implementation of these principles. Before discussing some emergent issues we have identified in the evaluation component, it is perhaps helpful to present an overview of the evaluation process as it is currently implemented.

Overview of the evaluation process. It should help to understand this complex process to "walk through" the year's events. In a spring meeting prior to the beginning of the summer

⁶There are two or three who have been Evaluators for a longer period of time. A NCAA rule says that the Evaluators can only serve six years and then they must "rotate off" for at least one year and re-apply. Exceptions to this rule can be (and often are) granted by the Advisory Committee. If an Evaluator is called back to service in the "off year," he or she might still begin a new six year cycle the following year.

program, the Evaluators meet with the Chief Evaluator to review the Guidelines and to discuss the evaluation process. Each guideline is reviewed and discussed. The Chief Evaluator poses scenarios and asks an Evaluator to describe how he or she would respond; this response is followed by a group discussion of the item and/or the scenario. The purpose of this exercise is to "get everyone on the same page" (a frequently-used phrase), that is, to make sure all the Evaluators have similar understandings of the intent of the Guidelines and, it is hoped, similar reactions in rating local program implementation. The ideal is that all Evaluators would assign the same ratings to the same program. The NYSP staff and the Evaluators seem to recognize and accept that this ideal cannot be fully realized, that different eyes do see different things. But efforts are made to encourage, as much as possible, consistency among Evaluators in their images of the NYSP model and of the consequences of rule infractions on program quality.

Evaluators are assigned a slate of local programs, grouped geographically, to visit during the second to fourth weeks of the program (avoiding the first and last weeks). Prior to 1996, Evaluators were assigned to about 14 programs; per their request, this number was reduced slightly (to 10-12) in 1996 (at least for many of them). Evaluators operate on a two-year schedule, visiting their slate of schools for two consecutive years in most cases, in order to develop a rapport at the site. (Occasionally an Evaluator will visit a site for a third consecutive year, or will "rotate out" after the first year at a site.) Schedules are set early in the spring for the Evaluator's travel planning and for the program's event planning.

During the summer session, the Evaluator arrives at the locale the evening prior to the site visit and expects to have waiting for him or her perhaps a 10 inch high packet of material. The needed materials are listed in the program manual and include the site visit report (prepared from the 4D database program) and numerous supporting documents. The Evaluator reviews these materials the night before to ascertain compliance with the Guidelines and to begin completing the evaluation checklist for the site. For at least three reasons, the Evaluators place heavy weight on the quality and completeness of these materials. First, if the materials are complete and appropriately organized, the Evaluator's lengthy evening review task proceeds smoothly and efficiently. Second, if the written documents are all in order, the Evaluator can spend more time the following day actually observing program operation and talking with the

program staff, instead of being bogged down in paperwork. And third, the Evaluators acknowledge that the paperwork establishes an initial impression of the program that often foreshadows the program implementation: well-organized paperwork suggests to them a well-run, "with-it" program, while sloppy or incomplete paperwork conveys lack of staff organization and/or a lack of understanding of the NYSP model and ideals.

The Evaluator arrives early, before the start of the program day for the on-site visitation. Sometimes, the Evaluator has met informally with members of the auxiliary staff the prior evening. If not, this is the time to greet the staff and to plan the Evaluator's day. Very much on the Evaluator's mind at this point is the paperwork: if there are inaccuracies or incomplete areas of the report, these tend to be the first agenda item (to be pursued until completion). Even if paperwork is essentially complete, there are items that the Evaluator must enter and calculate and so he or she schedules a time during the day for this task. It should be noted that the reference to "paperwork" includes the computer database, which is essential to producing the site visitation report. At some sites recently, complications "with the computer" have consumed much of the Evaluators' time.

Evaluators are treated as "visiting dignitaries" during the day. They are accompanied by project staff members on their rounds of the activities and interviews. It is expected that college and Project Administrators will be available to the Evaluator during the day. Participants know that the Evaluator is on site and, at least at some sites, are prepped on appropriate behavior (e.g., "be sure to wear your NYSP T-shirts"). The Evaluator observes various forms of program activity (sports and educational activities), spot-checks staff and participant attendance, verifies medical records, talks individually with some staff members (from the auxiliary, professional, and support staffs) and participants, and requests a formal session with the college administrator in charge of fiscal reports (to reinforce the "presence" of the program and the importance of submitting paperwork on time). It is our sense that much of the "technical assistance" occurs informally during this process, through comments the Evaluator makes while walking around and observing activities. At the end of the day, the Evaluator meets with the program staff to review, item by item, the program's scores on the evaluation checklist. This reporting session, at Carson Community College (chapter 6), for example, was very formal despite the Evaluator's efforts to add some levity. It was

clear that the Evaluator and the program staff took this "grading session" very seriously. After the Evaluator reviews his or her ratings and describes the basic information to be contained in the narrative, members of the auxiliary staff sign the evaluation form to indicate they have been present for the review, and the local staff retains a copy for local records. (The project staff can contest their scores by writing a letter to the National Office. The burden of proof of compliance, however, is on the local staff, not the Evaluator.)

By the end of the summer, the Evaluator completes a narrative to accompany the rating sheet, highlighting any positive or troubling areas of program implementation. This narrative is part of the official evaluation, and the local site receives a copy. When submitting the evaluation to the Chief Evaluator, the Evaluator also includes a cover letter in which he or she describes on a more personal or intuitive level what he or she thought of the program. While not part of the official documentation available to the site, this cover letter apparently proves useful to the Chief Evaluator in his efforts to identify the "highest quality" programs and to understand the source of problems at troublesome sites.

The Chief Evaluator reviews all of the Evaluator reports and, in effect, checks these for compliance as well. (According to an informal in-group scheme, Evaluators are "fined" for errors in their reports or other irregularities, generally \$1.00 per error, but lack of a cover letter, for example, carries a fine of \$10.00 with proceeds going to the "flower fund.") In collaboration with National Office staff, he begins the process of assigning sanctions and awards. For each local program, they record the guidelines that were "missed" as well as a summary of previous years' compliance and performance. For those programs that "passed" all the guidelines (about 130 of the 170 earned perfect scores in 1996, up from 113 in 1995), a short list of 25 highest quality programs is constructed, based on all the information the Chief Evaluator has obtained, officially and unofficially. At their fall meeting, the lists are reviewed by the Evaluators and representatives of the Advisory Committee. Evaluators are asked to approve the recommended sanctions against their individual programs.⁷ They are also asked to advocate for individual

⁷According to one Advisory Committee member, the Evaluators asked the Committee to put more "teeth" into the compliance review, and the Committee has complied by strictly following a set of procedures for "progressive discipline" against programs. The system entails a series of increasingly serious warnings for non-compliance, culminating in probation and "show cause for funding"--in which

programs on the awards list. But the Advisory Committee as a whole makes the final decisions regarding sanctions and awards. The Evaluators also make recommendations regarding changes in the wording of specific guidelines in order to clarify or reinforce their content. The Committee later makes final decisions regarding changes in the Guidelines, and these changes are reviewed by the Evaluators at their spring meeting, at which point the process begins again.

Evaluator roles. The primary and traditional role of the Evaluators is to monitor local project compliance with the Guidelines of the NYSP program. This is the role ranked "most important" by the Activity Directors and by the individual Evaluators we queried. A second role--gaining prominence with each passing year--is that as technical advisors to local projects.⁸ Evaluators have been told that their job includes offering suggestions and advice to help the projects become more successful. With the implementation of the computer database system and with new procedures for meeting with local project representatives at the National Workshop, this role is being made more explicit to the projects in the field. One frequent complaint among the Evaluators is the lack of communication at the local sites: a top administrator attends the National Workshop and inadequately conveys program rules and priorities to the auxiliary and professional staff back home. Several times at the 1996 fall meeting, Furukawa transferred some of the responsibility for communication to the Evaluators--to make sure the attending administrator understands the rules and has plans for implementing and disseminating these back home. In this and

the President of the host college must appear before the Committee to plead for the program and demonstrate how the local people plan to correct mistakes and comply with program regulations, before funding will be reinstated. Progression to each subsequent level of sanction is "automatic" for programs consistently demonstrating non-compliance on other than paperwork guidelines. However, in the fall meeting with the Committee representatives, the Evaluator can argue (often successfully) for stricter-than-scheduled disciplinary measures, or the Evaluator can attempt to ameliorate the scheduled sanction (usually not as successfully).

⁸This was ranked first in importance by 33% of the Activity Directors, ranked second by 34%, and ranked as tied for first by 6% in our 1996 Activity Director survey. The statement read "The Evaluator provides advice about improving the local program." It should be noted that formal "Technical Assistance" is also provided to selected local projects by a team of National Office staff, Advisory Committee members, and Evaluators. In the compliance review process, the Evaluator can recommend technical assistance for the project at the National Workshop or on site during the following summer. This becomes a type of "sub-category" in the classification of sanctions, e.g., "PA (Project Administrator's letter) with on-site technical assistance."

other ways, the Evaluators are becoming even more central in communicating the ideals of the NYSP program to the local site people.

Some Evaluators refer to their third role as: the "eyes and ears" of the Advisory Committee. There are two mechanisms for this. First, the Chief Evaluator attends all the Committee meetings and offers insights and information he has gained from his own visits in the field as well as the information and reports he obtains from other Evaluators. Second, the Evaluators meet with representatives of the Committee for a half-day meeting to review the standing of individual local projects.⁹ In this meeting, the scores for each project are listed and confirmed. In describing problems that local projects encounter or areas of confusion that led to losing points, the Evaluators provide the Committee with detailed examples of how policies are implemented and how, in general, the local projects are performing.

It was during this meeting with committee representatives that we observed the Evaluators switching back and forth between disciplinary and advocacy roles. For the list of projects with compliance problems, the Evaluators were asked to agree to the proposed sanction. Generally, in this part of the process, they *had* to "nit-pick" and focus on transgressions.¹⁰ Later, in defending their multiple nominations for National awards and recognition, they focused on the positive aspects of the projects and resisted (or staunchly refused) admitting problems or comparing one project with another.

An even newer role is gradually being defined for the Evaluators, partly through their participation in the National Workshop. In addition to meeting with their local projects, the Evaluators will assist the National Office in staffing the meeting. It is not clear yet what, if any, effect this type of involvement will have on local projects' perceptions of Evaluators and on the closer relationships with local projects that Evaluators are trying to build.

⁹Prior to this year, Committee members met individually with Evaluators to discuss the local projects--a lengthy process. This year the procedure was changed. A subcommittee met with the group of Evaluators to review the ratings and action designated for each local project.

¹⁰Although one or two used this opportunity to try to explain the extenuating circumstances leading to certain ratings and to argue quite eloquently for leniency.

Consistency among Evaluators. It is the "ideal" of the evaluation process that any two Evaluators would give the same rating to a local project. The Chief Evaluator, and the Evaluators themselves, recognize that individual Evaluators bring with them individual perspectives.¹¹ In fact, the Evaluators themselves argued that comparing the top ranked projects was difficult, since they were each seen by different Evaluators. However, they do make a concerted effort to stress consistency, in the spring meeting (when scenarios are discussed) and in discussions about the ideals and principles of the NYSP model (e.g., active participation and effective use of equipment and resources). The Evaluators do listen to each other and comment on reasoning, rationales, and actions--so they have opportunities to know how colleagues are handling certain situations. But there has been no explicit test, as far as we know, to assess or verify rater reliability. Fluctuations in program ratings from year to year are assumed to be the result of programmatic changes, unless, perhaps, there is clear evidence of a personality clash or some other problem with the evaluation proceedings. There seems to be an aura of objectivity or "scientific process" projected about the evaluation process--so such a procedure for verifying the consistency might be useful. Local project people, while acknowledging the power and authority of the Evaluators, have on occasion questioned the objectivity and reliability of these ratings. They recognize that different Evaluators will have different reactions to their programs.

Validity of reports of program quality. The Evaluators focus on compliance with the written Guidelines, which change only minimally from year to year. The Chief Evaluator defines these Guidelines as the "minimum requirements" for projects to operate functionally and readily acknowledges that the quality of projects can vary substantially--even among projects with identical scores. Defining this quality is somewhat elusive, although Furukawa has tried to summarize in writing what makes a "high quality" program. We requested this document from the National Office but did not receive it. The cover letter submitted by the Evaluators for each project helps to identify the "star" programs and Evaluators also nominate programs for recognition of quality. When asked to defend these nominations, they try to focus on some special feature of the project--but often they find it difficult to isolate one or two characteristics of the program.

¹¹Years ago, Evaluators traveled in teams, but that has been "fiscally impossible" in recent years - - and pairs will also have their idiosyncrasies.

There is an element of rewarding consistently good performance. ("It may not be the best this year, but they're consistently good every year and that should count for something.") There is also an element of accumulative advantage: projects get a good reputation and then they are expected to be in the group nominated for the awards each year. With 130 out of 170 projects achieving full compliance in 1996, NYSP leaders wanting to continue to identify the most meritorious had reason to seek more definable and defensible indicators of "quality" for future years.

It is apparent that the Guidelines are largely procedural and do not closely match the five visionary objectives of NYSP. High standing in the awards process is based not only on compliance but on special initiatives and enhancements. The program at Ecklund University (chapter 4) was interesting in that it was one of the more innovative programs, repeatedly winning high standing in the annual competition, but we found some of its instruction weak. We found greater correspondence for the project at Randolph College (chapter 6) where the staff was poorly organized and the Evaluator's ratings were low. Similarly, the program at Altavista (chapter 2) was one of high reputation both in and outside NYSP and was seen by our team member as strong, particularly in the sports skills it chose to emphasize. The most troublesome validity check for us came at Metro State (chapter 8) where the Evaluator found the program poor but we found the program strong in many respects. We were not permitted to see the Evaluator's written report on Metro but the Evaluator's oral testimony indicated that the program adhered too little to the NYSP philosophy, taking its leadership instead from its community partner. This is only a single case but it raises the questions of merit and validity--and the degree to which NYSP is prepared to enter into partnerships, an issue to be taken up later in this chapter. It is apparent that by focusing on the Guidelines, the Evaluators can reach a high degree of reliability, but by basing awards largely on that focus and little on other aspects of program value, the projects are pushed toward compliance more than rewarded for local initiative and other less tangible aspects of program quality.

Potentially conflicting roles for Evaluators. As Evaluators are asked to take on more responsibility for advising and assisting local projects, there are likely to be difficulties in maintaining their objectivity in monitoring compliance to

Guidelines. The current group of Evaluators are experienced and sophisticated in differentiating among their various roles---at least in post hoc discussions of summer events. But, in the field, it is likely to become difficult, at least in some cases, to assign scores that will result in sanctions when the Evaluator feels the staff has been responding positively to his or her advice and trying to implement recommendations from the year before. The program may have to decide the relative importance of these potentially conflicting roles--at the national level and at the individual Evaluator level.

There is ambiguity in the role and responsibility of Evaluators, some of it unavoidable, some advantageous, in the management of all complex programs. According to our three year plan, it had been our intention to address the helpful and problematic aspects of role ambiguity. The work and acuity of the Evaluators is critical to keeping projects compliant with the Guidelines. The Evaluators study and reread the Guidelines, making suggestions for changes when problems occur. They work at uniform interpretation. Their difficulty is not in recognizing compliance but of assessing the seriousness of non-compliance. Some circumstantial situations will not be seen the same by all observers, even those long trained in the review. It is not a strong complaint that we have heard but "it depends on which Evaluator you get" reached our ears several times. Yet, even from these sources we hear more often that the system is well reasoned and fair. Clearly the Evaluators play an important role in maintaining the authority of the NYSP National Office.

Technical assistance. As indicated above, for more than a decade, the increasing responsibility of the Evaluators has been in technical assistance. It is of two kinds, assistance in attaining compliance with the Guidelines and assistance in raising the quality of all the many matters not dealt with in the Guidelines. The Evaluators draw upon long experience as leaders in NYSP projects and upon the collective wisdom of their group. They have a reputation for being fair and hard working. Even with fine credentials, there are many problems of project operation, often in unforeseen circumstances, for which some Evaluators have little experience, little sense of where expertise lies. Typical problems are those of staff development, conflict resolution, and relations with university presidents. If NYSP Evaluators are to do better technical assistance, they need to get more involved in support systems. They need to work on problem diagnosis, referrals, and studying the costs and benefits of bringing in outside experts. As

discussed elsewhere, how much to rely on the Evaluators as fix-it persons as opposed to people more specialized is a policy issue deserving the attention of the strategic planning group.

Our discussions and our follow-up survey of Activity Directors brought testament that the Evaluators are serving both roles, that of assuring compliance and providing technical assistance. We know of at least two Evaluators who worked long extra hours, summer, 1996, bringing site-based computer data-keeping up-to-date not only to satisfy reporting requirements but to help the project generally. There is no way to draw a fine line between the two roles. Yet, there is some conflict in the roles, as mentioned above and as recognized in the program evaluation community (see, for example, the American Evaluation Association). Technical assistance is often thought of as helping the local project attain its goals and further its values. Compliance evaluation is regularly thought of as furthering the goals and the values of the larger program, in NYSP as vested in the National Office and federal sponsors. Many local and national goals coincide but some do not. Even in a highly compliant project, the collective will of the staff and participants works at times toward local goals, some more complex and situationally different from the national NYSP goals. As spelled out above, when differences in aim are apparent, Evaluators sometimes must choose between the compliance and technical assistance roles.

Relationship of NYSP to NCAA

The governance of NCAA is carried out by officers elected by the membership and a Council. Much of the administrative work is performed by committees of college people representing member institutions and by staff members employed by NCAA. The committees are called Advisory Committees but they perform both executive and operational functions, subject to review by the Council. NCAA staff members perform administrative functions under the direction both of the senior NCAA staff and the Council. Although many sports participants and enthusiasts know only about its regulatory function and harbor impressions of meddling and arbitrariness, the ethic surrounding the work of governing and administering NCAA activities is one of facilitation of athletic experiences for youth, promotion of safety and fairness in competition, and dedication to the well being of the institutional membership.

The Advisory Committee on Youth Programs. It is the responsibility of the Youth Programs Advisory Committee not only to oversee NYSP operations described throughout this report but to set policy for NYSP and other NCAA youth programs, assuring that they operate under an explicated philosophy of service to youth. We have only briefly observed the operations of this committee and inquired into the historic role it has played. We did not learn the criteria of selection to the committee, beyond the fact that each have long previous experience with NYSP or represent the federal government or community organizations (a representation stipulated in early years). We failed to learn the terms of office, apparently different from other NCAA committees. We only began to discover the contributions the committee has made to the continuing quality of this program. Knowing that mature projects are capable of pursuing similar goals in various comprehensive ways, we needed to examine what appeared to be a Committee concentration on the Guidelines when the five NYSP objectives suggest broader view and responsibility.

Although we had a very small data base, at the end of the year we were coming to feel that too great a distance existed between governance of NYSP and the governance of NCAA. NCAA staff members were working closely with the Advisory Committee but the Advisory Committee appeared to be operating independently from other NCAA functions. The reasons we do not know more about this issue and why we are not fully prepared to write this report are complex. We were not diligent enough in seeking and meticulous enough in sharing what other members of the evaluation team learned. And then work was stopped before the study of policy got up to speed, so our efforts to get governance information from NYSP went unfulfilled. It seems important enough to us to present in several paragraphs the detail of our relationship with the Advisory Committee.

We at the Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation at the University of Illinois, a long-standing program evaluation group, were asked by Ed Thiebe and other NCAA persons to design an independent external evaluation of NYSP. Plans were negotiated and we contracted for a three year study, renewable year by year. The Advisory Committee was said to

have approved this contract¹² but passed the word that it should be called a research study so as not to confuse it with evaluations already being carried out by the internal Evaluators. It also was requested that one of their Evaluators be added to our evaluation team but instead we made him a member of our Advisory Group.

Noting that evaluation can be intrusive, and that some sites were vulnerable, our liaison person was instructed by Thiebe to choose more robust sites at which to gather data. He was to prepare them for our visits. We indicated that we would also need to gather data at sites not so robust and not prepped for our observations of programming quality. At least one of the sites where preparations were made for us, the local staff was not ready to provide an hour of each student cohort time for our survey. It was as much our responsibility to assure a proper readiness. At that site, unfortunately, we arrived with response sheets bearing the names of students for a different campus. To the suggestion that the students write their own names on the sheets, our team member responded that we needed accurate names for follow-up data in subsequent years, that there was danger that we might not be able to read the students' writing. This was heard as a slur on the children's competence: "You said our children can't read."¹³ The hosts were indignant and confrontational and complained to the National Office. We were not told about the incident at the time but told there had been problems administering our survey.

At our first opportunity to observe an Advisory Committee meeting, belatedly in October, we found without warning that the day was to open with a review of the evaluation study. The liaison person reported that there were serious problems with data gathering at the sites. One member responded saying that our survey was intrusive and racist. Two questions on use of cigarettes, items provided by the national Center for Addiction and Substance Abuse, were seen as intrusive and an item asking for a mother's opinion of NYSP participation was cited shortly after racism was mentioned. We were asked why we had not cleared the questions with the Committee (the liaison person had had the survey in draft form) but more important, we

¹² We requested official minutes of Advisory Committee meetings but received none.

¹³ We have detailed accounts of this incident from both points of view, plus later efforts to ameliorate the situation, ending in a statement by the Project Administrator that we would be welcome to return for further data gathering.

were asked why, since they (the Committee) were our client, we did not seek information that they could use. We did not respond adequately to these concerns, failing to justify the difference between research assistance and an external evaluation study. Our three team members found the approach of some members of the committee intimidating. We suggested that they should examine our draft report due in two months to see what we had contracted to do and to see how our study of quality of the program, including its governance, would be useful to them. They indicated that continuation of the contract would depend on placing the liaison person on the team and responding to their research needs.

In December we submitted a draft of our Year I report and a brief prospectus of Year II work, indicating an interest only in continuing the originally intended evaluation study.¹⁴ We agreed to accept the liaison person as a team member. After the Committee met a month later, Thiebe notified us that the second year contract would not be offered.

In this brief encounter and indirectly in other communications, we found the Advisory Committee behavior intimidating and self-serving. There were many reasons to believe that they were sincerely committed to the youth population and confident in their ability to deliver a good program. They showed little interest in learning what we were trying to do or the issues needing attention in an evaluation study, and doubted that our evaluation study should examine their role. In the brief period we observed a subcommittee addressing the internal Evaluators, they appeared to us abrupt, intimidating, and demanding of deference. But these were matters of style. As to substance, we became concerned about the Committee's reliance on the liaison person to understand our work. And further, we were concerned about the Committee's absence of expression of concern for what was good for NCAA. It was recognized that this NYSP is a highly political program, yet we did not recall an instance of concern expressed for the vulnerability of NCAA as its host.¹⁵ The evaluation was

¹⁴ We had looked forward to continuing the study because it was intellectually challenging, an opportunity to work with dynamic people, and we felt we were contributing to vital services for needy youth. We were not in need of the work or the income, having other evaluation projects to do.

¹⁵ NCAA is regularly the target of malicious writings, particularly on sports pages, such as a column by Andrew Bagnato of the *Chicago Tribune*, March 9, 1997 entitled "Gambling? Bet you it leaves NCAA clueless" Given lines like

undertaken at least partly for the well-being of NCAA, to satisfy its need for good governance. We heard no indication of action to be reviewed by the Council. We found no comprehension of that need in the comments and communications of the Advisory Committee. It appeared to us that the Committee was acting only in the interests of NYSP. But our encounter was brief and our views are colored by the fact that Committee members found us insensitive and our work of little value to them.

Management costs. It was not within the remit of this evaluation study to undertake a fiscal analysis of NYSP. That is done annually by Price Waterhouse. But it was part of our evaluation plan to consider the broad use of funding for supporting different components. Costs for the National Office and for staffing the projects appeared to be kept close to a minimum. We presume that it is with real pride that the 1996 annual report to the US. Department of Health and Human Services indicated that 66,787 students participated in NYSP and were served with less than a 2% administrative overhead. On the basis of figures from the Children's Defense Fund,¹⁶ we estimated NYSP enrolled 1.3% of the nation's poverty youth in any one year, which aggregates across the years so that about 1 out of 28 children of lowest income families participates in NYSP. At a time when the nation is moving away from federal support for personal affairs, it still appears a good argument that, with minimum overhead cost, a huge number of poor children are given key support in their quest for a happy and productive life.

We pondered the costs of the annual National Workshop, a well organized meeting mostly of Project Administrators, partly for celebrating good management. Clearly, more than anything else, the Workshop identifies each local project as part of a national program. When held in Washington, it gives opportunity for solidifying Congressional support. It is used for the exchange of information, including program activities, for example, the popular ice cream making science activity which we observed in University of Jefferson classes. But it is expensive to bring 200

"The NCAA has made tepid efforts to educate, but those efforts collide with its central mission, which is to regulate," the public forms an image of NCAA as an obstacle to collegiate athletics and higher education rather than a facilitator.

¹⁶ According to Arloc Sherman of the Children's Defense Fund, Family Income Division, there are 4.8 million US youths aged 10-16 living at or below the poverty threshold. NYSP served 66,000 in 1996, about 1.3% of those eligible.

people together for three days. And these are not the people most needing staff development. When we asked the Project Administrator at Universidad Concepcion if the meeting was more valuable than adding two additional NYSP campuses, he firmly said, "No."

Actually, the cost policy issue that most caught our attention is one of whether or not administrative costs are too low. Higher quality NYSP operations probably would be accomplished with more support services provided to the local programs. The present policy resists the bureaucratization of NYSP but also leaves some complicated matters in the hands of persons with little in the way of experience or qualification. The matter was raised in chapter 3 in the section on "Staff development" and will be considered below in "Support services."

Support services. Any sustained program dealing directly with young people will be a complex program. NYSP deals with complexity by hiring very good people as Activity Directors and providing a carefully developed set of Guidelines. But some daily and strategic decisions are not easily or properly made merely by following experience and directive. In many organizations, there are mechanisms for drawing together the collective expertise of a large number of people, both from within and outside the organization. The local NYSP projects have a rather limited collective wisdom to draw from. Each project resides on a campus having an abundance of ingenuity and intellect--but with little tie to NYSP. Projects are near communities within which there is a wealth of diversified talent. There also is a network of other NYSP projects. The mechanisms for drawing upon the talent potentially available are not yet developed. The lack of support for Ted Barnes, Project Administrator at Randolph College (chapter 6), and for Stefi Dunn, Education Specialist at Metro State (chapter 8), are cases in point. The one good resource provided the local program by NYSP is the Evaluator. That person is an expert in running summer programs according to the Guidelines plus expert in another field or two but not expert in nearly all the problems NYSP leaders face. Referring problems to the best resource is a special expertise. And, for some problems, the Evaluator is not the right person to confide in.

We presume that there are reasons, social, political and economic, for what, strong as the individual Evaluators are, is a weak external support system for NYSP. The policy in question

raises the possibility of greater support mechanisms developed through the National Office, even at the cost of supporting a smaller number of sites. Unfortunately, when the contract work was cut short, we had barely begun to study the feasibility and potential costs and benefits of an upgraded support system.

The need for specialist knowledge is exacerbated by the communication culture of the summer projects. It is a culture different from that of the NCAA, the rest of the university, and the government. The authority of the NCAA in its many operations is embodied in written documents. Its communication culture honors the written word. Only in the last decades have varsity coaches come to recognize and comply with that climate of written authority. The rest of the University and the government have long been attuned to representing authority and establishing legitimacy through documentation. However, coaches of yore and teachers, still, and most young people live according to a different tradition, a crafts tradition, where authority and expertise is represented in experience, action, production, and word of mouth, particularly that of models, mentors, and critical friends.

Many of the people who run various aspects of the NYSP summer sessions are of this same tradition. They do not read the Guidelines nor expect the authority of the system to be represented therein. They expect to be told what is what. Changes in practice are not adequately achieved by circulating "the word" in mail-outs or newsletter. The Evaluators know this and the Youth Programs Advisory Committee has acknowledged the problem, we think, in endorsing the theme of the 1997 National Workshop as "Team Building and Communication."

Even among staffers who identify with the "reading culture," there may be need for changes in the information system. Whenever we want to increase understanding, we tend to raise our voices and repeat and repeat the message. Sooner or later, that is counter-productive. Consulting with AT&T on adapting to its information overload, Alvin Toffler, the futurist, advised less attention to short term business indicators and increasing awareness to social and environmental conditions (*The Adaptive Corporation*). That advice may be worth considering for NYSP too.

The problems of upgrading staff thinking in a short-term, oral culture organization are very complex. John Seely Brown of the Xerox Corporation has studied the problems at length. One example of his relates to upgrading the special skills of copier

repair technicians. They too don't read their manuals. After trying to fix things the old way, they often call someone or ask back at the shop. Brown's answer involved equipping them with cellular phones and making it easier to have lunch with those whose advice they trust. Some NYSP people have pagers but too limited a support system to dial into. How could NYSP staffers be less technically isolated? Perhaps they should have a hot line for consultation. It could be that more should be invested in regional meetings. It could be that video tapes of what it looks like to have "all participants active" should be circulated. We of this Illinois evaluation team are not experts in support services. But as evaluators, we see minimal technical support as a problem. We recognize that a service network and the accompanying staff development are expensive, risking growth of a support bureaucracy. It is an important and complex issue for strategic planning.

Partnerships

It is commonly said that it takes a village to raise a child. NYSP aims to contribute to a village-wide effort to raise the quality of life for children. NYSP cannot be the leader of this effort. Only indirectly does NYSP seek ways of fitting most advantageously into the community effort. Each community is different. The roles of the police, Education, churches, community activists, and the business community, although often appearing the same from place to place, in fact vary substantially. Other sports camps and special interest services for youth vary as well from community to community. Does a highly standardized NYSP fit optimally into the diversity of community systems? Is NYSP too self-contained, too independent, too reluctant to be a part of the local community?

One of the five NYSP objectives is "to enable institutions and their personnel to participate more fully in community life and in the solution of community problems." The principal institutions referred to are member institutions of the NCAA. It is they (and community colleges) that provide host sites for local projects. Strong too is the obligation for the host college or university to form partnerships with local organizations, schools, and businesses to serve the community's youth. And together, as clearly stated, NYSP is to engage in solving community problems, the problems confronting the youth of economically disadvantaged families, the problems of neighborhoods of high

poverty. At local sites, we were told again and again of the problems of low aspiration, little civic-mindedness, little respect for the law and cultural tradition, violence, crime, drugs, gangs, inadequate resources in single parent families, and a shortage of good adult role models. Those are problems also of the society at large but low income families have fewer resources to deal with them. NYSP is to draw upon local initiatives to form alliances with organizations and individuals to help counter the harmful conditions of life for youth in impoverished communities. And it does.

But, even though there are fine examples of NYSP partnering, speaking generally, partnerships are not without inherent stresses. Around and about, few partners are fully compatible. They require give as well as take. If these community members and agencies are themselves to form compatible partnerships with the colleges in pursuing NYSP goals, they must have a say in organizing the services to youth. However agreed upon the grand aspiration, an important policy is raised as to how much NYSP and the colleges will allow partners to participate in setting local goals, strategies, styles and activities. The Guidelines do not suggest that these matters will be negotiated. It is not the question of having partnerships that is raised here--NYSP could not exist without partnerships--but whether present policies provide ample support for real partnering.

Within NYSP we found only a little interest in negotiating goals and activities with partners. In chapter 4, we report the situation at Ecklund University, where classes were organized by skill level. The desirability of such an emphasis on performance level is debatable (see the discussion of "ego orientation" in chapter 5), but the point is that NYSP allowed this innovation. Sometimes it happened. The usual preference within NYSP was to have everything standardized. And that makes sense for programs operating with minimum resources.

But the need to be good partners remains. According to Chief Evaluator Furukawa, NYSP tradition says that when an institution is in non-compliance and in danger of being dropped, the President must appear before the Committee to plead for the program. It is difficult to see how such a tradition, such an authoritarian custom, is conducive to building healthy partnerships. The children and the staffs of NYSP should be learning how "to participate more fully in community life and in

the solution of community problems.” The Evaluators and Advisory Committee should help set the example. Partnering is one of the most complex issues facing NYSP. Perhaps no issue is more critical to its success in the decades ahead.

Campus. In our view, the campus provides three extraordinary assets for this program: facilities, career models, and business management. The gyms, pools, fields, and classrooms are an enormous and essential in-house contribution to this federal program. From a federal perspective, the only apparent alternatives for sites would be high schools, military bases and country clubs. Adequate space priority is not given NYSP on all campuses but generally, apparently, the generosity of university offices and departments controlling space is extensive. They provide facilities, capital equipment, the Project Administrator's salary, and support services. Campus officials we talked to were reluctant to put a figure on their contribution; at one site it was \$20,000, at another \$40,000, at another \$96,000, but how much was an in-lieu-of-rent fee was not explicit. The sum is large.

And there are intangible contributions, such as the University's good name. And the presence of university students and faculty members as an object lesson in career planning. The ordinariness of so many apparently success-bound adults is not lost on these youth. These visible role models are succeeding by staying in school. The path to their success is marked with privilege: interesting and non-threatening people, the ambiance of the campus, and the availability of sports facilities. More of this as a policy issue in the last section, "Program Philosophy."

The business office of the university provides an essential fiscal backup for the rather unsophisticated administration of the local NYSP program. It is not always a happy arrangement, partly because the style of operation of the university is one of long planning, documentation, and formal checks and balances, whereas the style of the NYSP group that gathers for little more than five weeks of intense activity each summer is one of informality and make-do. Both styles are essential for the success of this program. Arrangements of the National Office, particularly in terms of paperwork requirements and monitoring by Evaluators help to pacify the campus administration. No real policy problems were apparent here in this difficult union.

At the outset, we raised the possibility that NYSP might at some campuses be a front for ambitious college coaches wanting to begin or possibly continue recruiting young athletes for their teams. We did not encounter an instance of interest by varsity recruiters.

As alluded to above in the section on "Support services," one asset that most local programs are not exploiting is the abundance of specialized knowledge on campus regarding physical education, counseling, career planning, mathematics and science education, drug and alcohol prevention education, staff development, conflict resolution, and sports training. Efforts to use these resources in the past often were unsuccessful, partly because readiness and decorum expectations of the professionals conflicted with behavior styles of the youngsters. For many activities, it has worked better to use staff members more experienced with the age group even though they were less knowledgeable in many other ways. And there may have been other problems. But, as the Metro State business manager said, "I almost weep when I think how much more this campus could and should be giving this NYSP program." We expect that better melding of resources and opportunities is not likely to happen without major policy reconsideration at the National Office.

Donors. The Project Administrator, Activity Director, Educational Specialist, and other staff members spend considerable time soliciting assistance in the form of speakers, tours, equipment, prizes, etc. Should there be additional guidance and supervision of these efforts? What are the restrictions on donors advertising their affiliation, such as on NYSP T-shirts? We did not encounter a problem but saw need for review of policy here.

On-the-job training. One objective of NYSP is "to provide a combination of employment and on-the-job training in sports instruction and administration." Occasionally we heard mention of employing the unemployed but it was treated nowhere as a major goal. The projects are greatly in need of qualified coaches, instructors and aides, and seem disposed not to go out of their way to provide affirmative action for the unemployed. They are disposed to providing opportunity for qualified staff members to become better qualified.

All local NYSP staffers get experience and discipline in matters of youth sports administration, the auxiliary staff much more. Responsibility is portrayed as highly structured, rule-bound, for themselves just as it is for their youth participants. Plenty of opportunity remains for developing flexible, problem-solving management skills but, as indicated in chapter 3 on "Staff development," there is not much coaching and supervision along these lines. For example, at Randolph College (chapter 6), a weakly trained staff hampered the pursuit of NYSP goals. The Project Administrator needed mentoring, the Auxiliary staff and particularly the Activity Director needed mentoring, and project aides and sports instructors needed mentoring. And mentoring is only one aspect of good executive training.

Sophisticated management skill are likely to be found in an organization having a strong sense of self-ownership. Thus a project could be seen not just an agent of the national program (NYSP) but a semi-autonomous entity, capitalizing on the uniqueness of its staff, charged with the responsibility of devising its own staff development. High quality training in sports management requires the exercise of personal authority. Training would be rooted partly in the Guidelines but partly in the uniqueness of community and campus contexts. If this training objective were to be raised to the status of the other four objectives (page 2), a substantial restraint would be needed for dissuading Evaluators, the National Office, and the NCAA Youth Programs Committee from micro-managing local affairs. Again we acknowledge that such expert guidance and mentoring are usually hard to come by¹⁷ and often expensive but strong pursuit of the on-the-job training objective needs investment not presently provided. It could be that this objective should be dropped as not sufficiently harmonious with NYSP programmatic thrusts and resources.

Local contribution to the national program. We did not encounter a strong feeling that each local program has something to contribute to the national program beyond doing the best possible job at home. Ownership of the local project, as mentioned in the previous paragraphs, could extend, more than

¹⁷ It is not difficult to find consultants or companies who claim expertise in staff development. Very few of them have more to offer than motivation, rationalization, and vocalization. Real help requires an understanding of how the conditions of work can be changed.

appears now, into shared ownership of the national program. Local project leaders already have more challenges than they can address but they might handle some things better if they had a stronger expectation that they were assisting in the governance of the national program. Or that might be pie in the sky. It is a policy issue worthy of the careful attention of strategic planners.

Program Philosophy

The dominant philosophy of the NYSP is service to youth and the principal strategy is one of structure and compliance. The program nationally and locally has developed an explicit structure for providing sports and educational instruction. The philosophy is served by arranging a supportive ambiance on facilities-rich campuses and by employing outstanding administrators and dedicated staffs. Service is defined as increasing sports skills and physical fitness, plus knowledge of health practices, citizenship, and career options. Major policies for NYSP appear to be highly consistent with this philosophy.

There are those who think that emphasis on competition is a problem in our society and that encouragement to youngsters to aspire to careers in sports is misguided and illusory. The data reported in Chapter 5 indicate that NYSP is realistic in its recognition of the importance of sports in the lives of children and youth. On the whole, projects seek neither to discourage nor encourage the emphasis. An emphasis on competition is present in NYSP but not outweighing emphases on personal skill development or on sports for personal enjoyment. The program deliberately provides views to career planning other than those based on athletics.

Structure and compliance. To provide the children of low income families in neighborhoods seen to be lacking strong support systems, the leaders of NYSP have recognized that youth opportunity is based partly on keeping life's options open, which requires education, interpersonal skill, a sense of civic responsibility and a conviction of self worth. These requirements can continue to be developed as long as there is personal discipline as well as a social structure within which the youth is connected. Choice depends on structure, the structure of opportunity as well as the structures for utilizing opportunity.

Personal discipline grows greatly during the ages 10-16 but not fast enough to capitalize on even the best of social systems. A climate of discipline and ethics needs to be created or maintained, especially when the ordinary social institutions, particularly family and peer groups, are unable or unwilling to provide it. NYSP projects vary in the degree to which they focus on providing that social structure, yet all deliberately contribute to it. The staffs know that they cannot invent a social structure that will remain off-campus and beyond their five weeks, but they know also that they can contribute to the legitimation and durability of systems already existing. To the extent staff members have been working with these youngsters and in these communities, they know quite a bit about what already exists. Many see a strong ethic of compliance needed and make obedience a visible and deeply felt component of the program, often using threats and intimidation, to gain compliance. Threats and intimidation are discernible also in the approach of Evaluators, Guidelines, and Advisory Committee. It was not adequately apparent what mechanisms protect against misuse of power within NYSP.

The alternative approach to increasing youth opportunity makes rational reflection the key, stressing development of personal choice-making of behavior and the contemplation of implication for being non-compliant. Margaret Wheatley, management consultant, argues that too much can be expected of order, control, stability, and predictability, that we need a tolerance and even appreciation for chaos, complexity, uncertainty, and unplanned change (*Leadership and the New Science*, 1992). Such a complex program as NYSP has all those eight conditions in abundance. Just what policies are best for dealing with opportunity and uncertainty, immediate matters of strategic planning, were high on our agenda for further evaluative study.

It is not necessarily a bad thing for a program to have different standards of compliance within its operations, even with some inconsistency in modeling. It could be a bad thing for the program to be so out-of-step with the community or with the youth's readiness for compliance that it will be treated as irrelevant when summer sessions are over. We note in particular that police are used in substantial ways by a high majority of projects. Police officers have different ideas of discipline among themselves but tend to emphasize compliance differently than physical education professionals (who also differ among themselves). And we are aware that many staffers treat boys and girls differently, and some respond to ethnicity differently. Local

and national policies of enforcing discipline tend to ignore these differences, sometimes implying that they should not exist. But adapting to the immediate situation, even if it aggregates to an inconsistent policy, is one mark of an effective leader or an effective program. Our observations did not suggest that national policies need review but the issue is so central to the rationale for NYSP that we are confident that it will be addressed by the strategic planning team.

Differential need. The last-stated objective of NYSP is "to serve disadvantaged areas in the major metropolitan centers of the United States and other areas of need." Need is a concept central to NYSP philosophy. It is usually interpreted in terms of the need of individual children, but in the wording above, attention is given to "areas" of need. Clearly, major metropolitan centers have been sited. There are seven projects in the Chicago area, five in metropolitan New York, five in greater Los Angeles. Dallas-Fort Worth is the largest urban area not having a project. Historically Black colleges and universities, some rural and some urban, host almost a third of the total projects. No project appeared to be located where a community need does not exist.

Still, obviously, not all areas are equally needy. The criteria of need are not being discussed at the local or national level, nor are other criteria for the selection of new sites. Nor has differential need become apparent as a basis for postponing discontinuation of a site on probation. Selection and retention of "areas" should be getting more attention if this objective is to be wholeheartedly pursued. This matter of need is fundamental to NYSP philosophy. The activities of NYSP do deal directly with the need but the question of maximizing service to areas of disadvantage is too seldom raised.