

Foreword

For some time now people have been hoping to have available a simple guide summarizing the various steps that have to be taken in order to found a Sudbury school. The School Planning Kit, available from the Sudbury Valley School Press, contains a wealth of information about various facets of the model, including a publication that deals specifically with the details of getting a school going, *Announcing A New School*, which discusses the founding of Sudbury Valley, in 1967-1969. However, for some time now, the need has been felt for a more current work, a work which takes advantage of the experiences of diverse groups, as well as one that deals with more contemporary experiences.

In the Fall of 1995, with the support of Sudbury Valley School's Public Relations Committee, we embarked on a study of the experiences of various schools and groups for the express purpose of filling this need. We visited fourteen schools and groups throughout the country conducting extensive, taped interviews, and collecting materials from each. In addition, we called upon the information that had been gathered from

these and other schools and groups during some eight years of working with people who were trying to start schools and keep them going.

This report is the distillation of our study. We have tried to keep it focussed enough to be useful as a guide without pretending to seek to produce a template. Anyone seeking to delve into our source materials more extensively is welcome to contact us to explore the feasibility of doing so.

This work contains dozens of quotes, based on the particular speaker's experience, that are pointed summaries of a particular subject under discussion. We have used these quotes without attribution in order to protect the privacy of our sources, to whom we had assured confidentiality. In general we have tried to mask the identity of the specific groups whose experiences we are referring to, and we have replaced the names of individuals with unrelated initials.

We would like to thank the dozens of people across the country who took the time and trouble to prepare themselves in advance, to make themselves available to us for long interviews, and to collect archival material for our use. In a very real sense, any beneficial results that emerge from this study are due directly to their efforts.

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