THE MOVE TOWARDS SHARED DECISION-MAKING: A CASE STUDY OF PRINCE GEORGE SECONDARY SCHOOL

by

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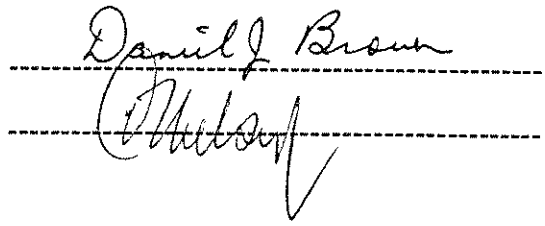

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to chronicle the events that occurred in Prince George Secondary School (P.G.S.S.), British Columbia School District # 57, when it shifted to a decentralized organizational system under School-Based Management (SBM). More precisely, since SBM involves school-based shared decision-making (SDM), this study examined the various models of SBM and SDM presented by recent research and compared them to the structure of SBM and SDM used at the school. Moreover, this study identified the strengths and the weaknesses of the structure used at the school and the problems experienced by the school's staff when the new decision-making model was introduced. In addition, as literature shows that principals have a critical interest in school decision-making, the principal's role in P.G.S.S. was also examined.

This study revealed that the restructuring efforts in this School District were driven by several forces including alterations in the policy and fiscal environment, organizational debureaucratization, and the professionalization of school personnel. Aside from all of these compelling factors, however, the most prominent impetus propelling the change was the Board's aspiration to "flatten" the organization and to improve schooling through the widespread involvement of all stakeholders in the educational community. Indeed, the Board employed several strategies to achieve its goal. Most noteworthy is the inclusion of articles in the Collective Agreement to promote and encourage collaborative decision-making and the elimination of appointed department heads in schools. And, in essence, these actions set the stage for the formation of staff committees in schools. Paradoxically, however, no one in the school discussed in this study had knowledge or experience in establishing collaborative decision-making structures. To complicate matters, the principal of the school in this study had not been part of the change due to his year's leave of absence.

As a result, the staff at the school reacted quite dubiously and invented a decision-making structure most suitable for its circumstance. Fortunately, the decision-making structure contained many sensible and innovative features including the democratization of the selection process for membership in the decision-making committee and the non-departmental representation of committee members. However, the election of members along with the non-departmental structure of representation, though innovative by design, created several problems for the school. Fortunately, the staff committee had the flexibility to respond immediately to address the new problems that emerged. Ironically, in their eagerness to protect the democratic and unhierarchical components of the decision-making structure, staff committee members may have unknowingly formulated solutions that significantly reduced their decision-making efficacy and, ultimately, perhaps their relevance.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> You accept each other for who you are and you feel free to contribute what you can. There is no big deal over leadership and status, no ego hassle over who should be in charge. Leadership is a function of what has to be done and who can do it best. There is real freedom to concentrate on the task, to complement each other's skills and to accept the authority of the person whose experience, knowledge and expertise are most appropriate. You are equal as persons; you differ only, and quite considerably, in the range of what you do to the best of your ability because you do not want to let the others in your group down.
>
> - Women MBA students cited in Jardim & Hennig, 1990, p. 134.

This quotation describes the relationships of individuals in a "flattened" organization. Such an organization is not controlled from the top-down, with differentiated levels of position and rank, but from the center - a "centrarchy," (Jardim and Hennig, 1990). Although the tenets of centrarchy are compatible with teacher participation in school decision-making (Conley, 1991), difficulties arise when schools attempt to introduce this type of decision-making structure (Glickman, 1990; Murphy and Beck, 1995). Centrarchy is consistent with collective decision-making as a way of restructuring organizations (David, 1989). Within schools, this restructuring is known as part of the phenomenon of "school-based management," i.e., the devolution of decision-making authority from central office to school-level participants. School-based management is a form of restructuring which encompasses changes that go beyond staffing and curriculum; it involves teacher collegiality and collaboration (David, 1989). The rationale for school-based management is guiding today's efforts in North America and overseas to empower

school-site staff to make decisions to create more productive workplaces and learning environments (Levin, 1992).

BACKGROUND STATEMENT

On June 1, 1993, The Board of School Trustees of School District No. 57, (Prince George), published a report on its administrative structure. This review presented the Board's objectives for the future: to reduce the size and cost of district administration and direct more resources to schools. In the proposed structural revisions, the Board announced its intention to flatten out its own management structures in order to decentralize and provide more direct support and decision making power to schools.

The Board, in these efforts, promoted co-operative decision-making in the schools and involved employees, students and the community in the planning process. In addition, the Board established a link between its goals and expenditures with staff growth and professional development in terms of curriculum changes and programme delivery. Furthermore, the Board strengthened communication links among district administrators, school administrators, district employees and the community. In addition, it downsized and re-organized central office administrative staff and initiated the termination and re-assignment of some Managers and Administrative Officers. Finally, in its efforts to change the decision-making process in the district, the board presented a decentralized decision-making model designed to promote school-based decision-making.

To demonstrate the Board's commitment to move in this direction, the Collective Agreement between the Prince George Teachers' Association and The Board of School Trustees from July 1992 to June 1994 included articles that afforded schools the opportunity to develop processes and practices to foster collaborative

problem solving and decision making. As a result, a staff committee, consisting of teachers, support staff members and the principal was formed at Prince George Secondary School (P.G.S.S.) to provide recommendations to the school's administrative team as it deliberated decisions relating to school issues.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine one experience highlighting the processes and skills necessary to implement school-based shared decision-making. The study reports on the P.G.S.S. staff committee as the school district has moved toward a participatory, collaborative decision-making, problem-solving model (Glickman, 1990; Weiss, 1993). Using a case study format, conducted via open-ended interviews, structured interviews, direct observations of staff committee meetings, and an examination of pertinent documents, the study describes the events that transpired at P.G.S.S. when a new decision-making structure was introduced. The report delineates the procedures and processes the school-site staff used as well as identifies the problems experienced by the P.G.S.S. staff committee during the adoption, implementation and continuation phases (Brown and Ozembloski, 1995). The study examines the model used by the Prince George Secondary School's staff committee in school-based shared decision-making and analyzes the problematic areas using a tri-phasic model as suggested by Brown and Ozembloski (1995) to frame the events that emerged in the various stages of the organizational change.

RATIONALE FOR THIS STUDY

As the devolution of decision-making authority occurs in schools, inevitably problems occur for all those who interact within the school. Of course, it is possible to

minimize these problems by sharing knowledge and understanding of the issues anticipated. In that spirit, it is hoped that the findings of this study can suggest improvements to the P.G.S.S. model which may inform other schools or school districts contemplating a similar decision-making model. Ideally, the knowledge gained would assist practicing administrators and others to improve the productivity and achievement of all actors on the stage of educational change. Ultimately, it is hoped this study will add to the reservoir of knowledge that will provide insight to the roles and responsibilities of educators as they attempt to introduce substantial organizational change. Knowledge and understanding of the issues in decentralization concerning shared decision-making is clearly needed not only to improve education for students but also to transmit the message to legislators that schools as professional organizations are capable of greater autonomy and need not be strictly controlled and monitored to achieve their social obligations. Thus, studies which reveal how educators can effectively exploit their increased latitude in decision-making are indispensable towards making more effective schools. All that is needed by school personnel to show that they are capable of fulfilling the demands of school-based shared decision-making is an understanding of the challenges, knowledge and skills required along with the opportunity to face those challenges. For, as Gardner indicates, it is in meeting challenges that often the most unexpected results occur:

> ...individuals discover unsuspected strengths and reveal a capacity for bravery, endurance, generosity and loyalty beyond all expectations....Sometimes capabilities remain hidden simply because the circumstances of life do not evoke them....but sometimes the gifts have been buried by early defeats and harsh treatment, or layered over by cynicism, or held inactive by self-doubt....The battles we wage....are not just exercises in compassion. They are battles for the release of human talent and energy.
>
> - John Gardner, in Glickman, 1990.

Surely, given the need for effective changes in our schools today, such releases of human talent and energy are solely needed.

THE CASE AND WHY IT WAS CHOSEN

This study focuses on examining the present decision-making model currently utilized by Prince George Secondary School (P.G.S.S.). Its primary intent is to examine the school's decision-making structure since members have been elected rather than appointed by the principal. A new decision-making model was needed by the school when, due to the Board's desire to establish a more flattened organization and budgetary restraints, department head positions were eliminated by central office.

This case was considered worthy because the school's staff responded dubiously when they were given the opportunity to install a more democratic system of decision-making in the school. Since this study reports on the events that occurred during the adoption, implementation and continuation phases of the change, it provides a map for other schools attempting to embark on a similar journey. Indeed, like other restructuring initiatives under the banner of SBM and SDM, this case is laden with its own problems and difficulties as well as accomplishments. Thus, it is within this context that this study endeavors to comprehend the type of decentralization and the model of shared decision-making currently in place at P.G.S.S. Consequently, the conclusions presented in this case study can illuminate the current thinking about SBM so as to confirm or dismiss the assumptions advocated by various academics.

INTERVIEWEE SAMPLE

Interviews were used for much of the data collection. The sample selected for interviews included past and present members of the staff committee, including the principal as a representative of the administrative team. Most of the interviewees have been actively involved in the early stages during the development of the school's staff committee. Frequent visitors to staff committee meetings were also interviewed. These individuals were identified in the minutes of staff committee meetings as active members of other standing committees or task forces in the school.

In total, the interviewees selected for this study include three administrative officers, all of whom are male, and eight staff committee members (past and present), five of whom are female. Two of these staff committee members belong to the local teachers' association as staff representatives.

OUTLINE OF THE PAPER

This first chapter has sketched the background, purpose, rationale and focus of the study. Chapter two includes a literature review on school-based management (SBM) and shared decision-making (SDM) which examines the various models of decentralization and teacher participation in SDM. An examination of the various models of SBM and SDM is essential in this study so that the particulars of the P.G.S.S. experience of SBM and SDM can be noted and compared with previous research. Chapter three delineates the general research methods used in the study. The fourth chapter reports field data and presents the results of the interviews. Finally, chapter five reconsiders the particulars of this case study against the

literature, and offers a series of recommendations for the continued efficacy of SBM at P.G.S.S.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

> SBM is a proposal to decentralize and debureaucratize school control. For some of its advocates, it is also a proposal for shared decision-making within schools. And for some, it is a method of increasing the influence of parents in school decision-making...
>
> - Sackney & Dibski, 1992, p. 3, in Murphy and Beck, 1995.

This review of literature explores research dealing with the concepts of school-based management (SBM) and school-based shared decision-making (SDM) as approaches to decentralization. The intent is to examine how teacher participation in school decision-making operates under the various models of SBM. These variations will be used as a comparison with P.G.S.S.'s model of decision-making. Additionally, this review examines the problematic areas of SDM as presented by recent research, so as to illuminate aspects of the P.G.S.S. experience. Lastly, this literature review focuses on research about principals' involvement with SDM.

Arranged in three major themes, this literature review begins with an examination of definitions, models and rationales of SBM. This is followed by an investigation of teacher participation in SDM under SBM. The final section of this literature review explores the role of the principal in SBM and SDM.

DEFINITIONS: DECENTRALIZATION AND SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

> There is no question that decentralization is a complex idea and that any simple definition...does not capture the richness of the concept.
>
> - Brown, 1990, p. 36.

> Although the public media, professional literature, and school practice have focused extensive attention on school-based management in recent years, there is neither clarity nor agreement on its definition.
>
> - E.M. Hanson, in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 12.

The intent of this section of the literature review is to examine and compare the definitions of decentralization and SBM offered by various authors. This review of literature acknowledges that school-based management is a manifestation of decentralization, (Brown, 1990, p. 89), and that shared decision-making is an essential feature of SBM, (Crosby, 1991, in Murphy & Beck, 1995).

Citing Clune and White (1988), Murphy and Beck (1995), contend that

> school-based management goes by many different names including school-site autonomy, school-site management, school-centered management, decentralized management, school-based budgeting, school-site lump sum budgeting, responsible autonomy, shared governance, the autonomous school concept, school-based curriculum development and administrative decentralization.
>
> - Clune and White, 1988, p. 3.

As such, it obviously varies tremendously in different locales, including how it is defined, perceived, and structured. Intrinsic to all of them, however, is the rearrangement of power within the organization.

Mintzberg, reported by Brown (1990), defines decentralization as "the extent to which power is dispersed among many individuals," throughout an organization (Mintzberg, 1978, p. 184). Brown (1990), merging Brooke's (1980), conception of power (the ability to influence), in decision-making authority, expands the definition to ... "the extent to which authority to make decisions is distributed among the roles in an organization," (Brown, 1990, p. 36). Brown posits later that decentralization is the "devolution of authority from a higher level of government, e.g., school district central office, to a lower organizational level of government, such as individual schools," (Brown, 1992, p. 1). In his conception of decentralization, schools as organizations are delegated the authority to make decisions about the use of resources and the planning of activities. This notion is supported by other authors, for example, David (1989), Levin (1992), Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994) and O'Neil (1994).

Malen, Ogawa and Kranz (1990) elaborate on the functions and details of such restructuring:

> ...the individual school is the primary unit of improvement [which relies] on the redistribution of decision-making authority as the primary means through which improvements might be stimulated and sustained. Some formal authority to make decisions in the domains of budget, personnel and program is delegated to and often distributed among site-level actors. Some formal structure (council, committee, team, board) often composed of principals, teachers, parents, and, at times, students and community residents is created so that site participants can be directly involved in school-wide decision making.
>
> - Malen, Ogawa and Kranz 1990, p. 290, in Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 56.

Similar pronouncements, though not in such detail, are voiced by Marsh (1992) and Etheridge (1992). Thus, there appears to be an agreement between Brown (1992) and these other authors that the goal of SBM is to devolve decision-making responsibility "downward" in an organization's hierarchy. This devolution of decision-

making authority implies that schools and the communities they serve become the central planning and decision-making unit for school improvement. "Schools" are understood to involve, in this reading, not only traditional school personnel, but also all those individuals involved as participants in decision-making at the school-level.

Murphy and Beck (1995) and Brown (1990) indicate that all definitions of SBM highlight a major shift in the locus of decision-making and new members of the decision-making cast. Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994) analyze such shifts further, identifying SBM as a form of participatory management which consists of four elements: power, information, rewards, and knowledge and skills.

Others emphasize that any form of decentralization provides an opportunity for empowerment (Short and Greer, 1989; Strike, 1993; Ryan, 1993; and Barth, 1988). Candoli (1991, cited in Murphy and Beck, 1995), addresses the shift and nature of the balance of authority with such a change: " [in] site-based management (responsible autonomy) means achieving a balance between accountability and freedom in all parts of the educational system," (Candoli, 1991, p. 13). As Brown (1990) suggests, these authors hold the belief that SDM, which strives to include all stakeholders in the decision-making process is a significant feature of SBM.

Thus, common to all the definitions of decentralization within education systems advanced by various authors is that SBM is a governance structure that aims to delegate decision-making authority from boards to individual schools via planning groups which include the principal, teachers, parents and students. Additionally, members of the community are often involved . The focus of this decision-making authority is decision-making regarding school activities and use of resources to improve productivity. Embedded in the definitions is the belief that those closest to the school and its clients are most the knowledgeable about their clients' needs and should be empowered to share decision-making authority. Also,

implicit in all the definitions is the notion that shared decision-making, and the mechanisms that foster it, are a significant feature of SBM.

FORMS OF DECENTRALIZATION

As is evident from the variety of definitions of decentralization and SBM, many different forms of decentralization exist. These have been characterized as "organizational decentralization" (Brown, 1990, p. 60), and "political decentralization" (Brown, 1990, p. 60). It is important to understand the difference between these types for this study because both models differ immensely in their structure and how they are operationalized in schools and school districts. Although both of these models imply the devolution of decisional authority "downward" in an organizational hierarchy, they vary in how the authority structure is arranged.

Organizational decentralization, according to Brown (1990), is a form in which "central office may delegate authority to make certain kinds of decisions to specific levels further down the hierarchy," (Brown, 1990, p. 60). According to Goodlad (1984), in this situation the superintendent and the Board should oversee only the curriculum guidelines and evaluations and not concern themselves with "precise uniformities among schools, detailed planning, and other school-specific matters" (Goodlad, 1984, in Brown, 1990, p. 75). Organizational decentralization sees the school as a viable unit and supports the notion that "the motivations, abilities, and opportunities for change are seen as resident in the school which is given the authority to make more decisions on site" (Goodlad, 1984, cited in Brown, 1990, p. 74).

By contrast with organizational decentralization, which emphasizes the importance of involving school-level participants in the school's decision-making process, political decentralization emphasizes the role of parents and the community in controlling school affairs. Thus, political decentralization concerns itself with "the

way decisions are made at the lower levels in large-scale structures and implies some form of semi-autonomous local control, perhaps via boards of elected officials," (Brown, 1990, p. 60). In this form of decentralization, school sites become the basic unit of management in a school district. What is key here is the notion of "control," and, hence, political clout, for each of the components in the decentralization. Thus, in political decentralization, elected parent advisory councils may serve as "miniature district boards whose role is not advisory, but controlling" for each school (Brown, 1990, p. 71). School councils may choose and advise principals, approve school-site budgets, and participate in local collective negotiations, while the principal retains control for hiring and assignment of personnel and directs the budget and curriculum. For its part, the province provides standardized exams and establishes the curriculum while the district allocates resources on a lump-sum basis to each school. Each school then produces an annual report including student performance on standardized tests, student turnover, school strengths and problems. Thus, each element within political decentralization has its own responsibilities and control.

In such a system, parents have a choice of schools, which means schools compete for students. Embedded in this form of decentralization is the assumption that "if the community (meaning the people who lived near the school) and parents of school-age children had more voice in the schooling enterprise, then there would be more parental satisfaction with the schools and more commitment to the educational process" (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 6). Again, ideally, the result would be improved educational attainment. Also, proponents suggest that such localized political control makes better use of the community: "[democratization of the educational enterprise promotes] the selective utilization of available expertise in the community" (Burke, 1992, in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 45).

MODELS OF DECENTRALIZATION

Both organizational and political decentralization involve the devolution of decisional authority further down an organizational hierarchy. But three other models (administrative, professional, and community control) are more prescriptive as to who controls and is accountable for school affairs. Murphy and Beck (1995) claim that three "pure models" of SBM exist, - "administrative control, in which principals assume decentralized authority; professional control, in which influence pushed down to the school level resides primarily in the hands of teachers; and community control, in which parents (and members of the larger community) hold the balance of power," (Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 43).

Administrative control means that discretion over decisions rests with principals. Teachers and parents serve only in an advisory capacity. Brown (1992) adds that "...[in administrative control] the usual model for school governance is consultative, where principals lean heavily on the input of teachers but make final decisions and take responsibility for those actions, right or wrong" (Brown, 1992, p. 8).

The professional model of SBM features "teacher control by delegating decision making down the ranks of the professional hierarchy to building-level educators - thus, individual schools, typically through site councils where teachers have the majority, are empowered to make some decisions formerly made by the central administration" (Wohlstetter and Odden, 1992, p. 4, in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 44). This shift involves shared decision-making about such matters as how the budget is spent, who is hired, and whatever authority has been delegated to the school. Under this model of shared decision-making, all decisions are made by vote or consensus (Murphy and Beck, 1995). The main thrust of this form of professional control is to "give those who work inside a system...a direct and deciding vote" (Brown, 1990, p. 229). This description shares similarities with Conley's (1991) description of

the professional model of decision-making in which she states that the "aim of participation is to accord teachers the rights they expect, as professionals, in the school workplace" (Conley, 1991, p. 228).

The community control model of decentralization "shifts power from professionals and the central board to community groups not previously involved in school governance" (Wohlstetter, 1990, in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 45). This model of decentralization closely matches Brown's (1990) description of political decentralization where lay persons, not the professional hierarchy, are in control of schools and accountability is directed toward the community or the elected officials.

As discussed above all definitions of SBM highlight the delegation of decision-making authority from the board to school-site mechanisms which involve shared decision-making (albeit in different arrangements) between principals, teachers, parents and communities. The difference is in the details: who has the authority? For which kinds of decisions? And how, precisely, is the range of involvement determined? Bimber (1993) identifies the complexity of decentralization incisively when he suggests that...

> school reform through decentralization is plagued by one important problem: Education reformers disagree fundamentally over what decentralization really entails. For some, decentralization means making principals the new locus of authority in schools; for others it means allowing teachers to play the dominant role in managing the school; and for still others, decentralization points chiefly to increased parent and community participation.
>
> - Bimber, 1993, p. *ix*, in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 42.

The three pure models of SBM as delineated by Murphy and Beck (1995) focus on who controls school affairs. Common to all the three models is the shift of decisional authority from central office to those closest to the students. In the administrative model of SBM, final decisional authority and accountability clearly

resides with the principal. It is, however, a consultative form of school governance and teachers and parents are accorded the opportunity to participate in decisions in an advisory capacity. The administrative model is similar to classic organizational decentralization in that the principal is delegated decisional authority over school affairs by central office. In the professional model of SBM, teachers are empowered through a school council which grants them a controlling vote on decisions. Principals do not have unilateral control of decisions and must collaboratively make decisions with teachers. This model shares similarities with organizational decentralization in that authority resides with the school's planning group in which teachers have the majority. Accountability in this model, however, is not specified. The community control model of SBM, which is similar to political decentralization, transfers all authority and accountability to community members or parents. Elected officials or parent groups are given control of school affairs through a parent council. Embedded in this model is an assumption that if parents are more involved in the educational process parental commitment to and satisfaction with schools would increase.

The literature repeatly features a variety rather than a standard. Variations occur because SBM is subjected to diverse contexts and thus results in releases of different types of human talent and energy. Depending on contextual and organizational differences, school districts "have varying degrees of control and make some or all decisions about curriculum, instruction, personnel and budget" (Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 19).

Attached to this variability in meaning and interpretation is a variability in the scope of involvement in the decision-making process (Conley, 1991). Murphy and Beck (1995) state that "...involvement can range from the mere presentation of an opinion, where the locus of authority rests elsewhere, to membership in the group which exercises final authority over the issue" (Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 18). Although many definitions are offered by various scholars, the philosophy of SBM

seems consistent. The two primary principles of SBM appear to be the delegation of decision-making authority to schools through school-site councils and an increase in shared decision-making.

RATIONALES: DECENTRALIZATION AND SBM

Many scholars claim that improved student performance, increased accountability, flexibility and productivity of schools can be achieved through the decentralization of education systems. The restructuring efforts in North America and overseas has been driven by these notions. "A main reason for the implementation for organizational decentralization is to improve performance," (Brown, 1990, p. 79). According to Dimmock (1993), the driving force behind SBM, from an educator's point of view, is the desire to improve the quality of education. Underlying this concern for quality is the belief that improved student achievement is most likely to be gained in schools which are relatively autonomous, possess a capacity to resolve their own problems, and in which strong leadership is a characteristic. This argument calls for a "curriculum, client-based approach, with the focus on school-based decision-making, allowing schools control over resources by which to fine-tune curricula for the benefit of students" (Dimmock, 1993, p. 2). Mojkowski and Flemming support this view by contending that..."the shift to a school-based focus enables increased attention to targeted instructional strategies and conditions, promoting a higher degree of responsiveness" (cited in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 28).

Murphy and Beck (1995), Mohrman and Wohlstetter, (1994) and David (1989) contend that the central premise of SBM is that those closest to a situation are uniquely positioned to address their needs and the needs of their clients and thus, school decisions should be made at the lowest possible level. This position, obviously,

overlaps into discussions of accountability for those actions (see next section), but the basis for engaging in the decentralization is put most succinctly by Murphy and Beck (1995): "SBM empowers local stakeholders; empowerment promotes ownership, which in turn increases professionalism and enhances organizational health; and changes in these two variables result in improved organizational performance" (Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 22).

The essence of accountability within SBM "is to improve performance by making those closest to the delivery of services - teachers and principals - more independent and therefore more responsible for the results of their school's operations" (Hill and Bonan, 1991, p. v, in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 30). Murphy and Beck believe this occurs in three ways. First, obviously, control becomes local rather than district wide. Second, as David (1989) notes, there is a shift in accountability from the traditional structure to one more responsive to professional and "market" accountability. As a result, David predicts that professional norms "rise to prominence in the control system," and responsiveness to clients (e.g., school) needs are spotlighted (David, 1989, in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 31). Thirdly, Lindelow (1981) indicates that SBM "alter[s] the focus of accountability, from a preoccupation with inputs and process to an emphasis on outcomes" (Lindelow, 1981, in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 31), "especially student outcomes," (Duttweiler and Mutchler, 1990, in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 31).

The mechanisms by which such layers of accountability are set up rest on six assumptions, as put by Murphy and Beck (1995):

> a) that those most closely affected by school-level decisions - teachers, students and parents - ought to play a significant role in making decisions (Wohlstetter and Buffet, 1991, p. 1); b) that stakeholders in the school system...have the right and responsibility to be involved in the decision-making process (Burke, 1992, p. 38); c) that students, parents, school staffs and communities have unique needs, and that these needs can best be identified and addressed by them (Jewell and Rosen, 1993, p. 1);

> d) that because the school is the fundamental decision making unit within the educational system (Guthrie, 1986, p. 306) schools have to be given the capacity to identify and respond to student needs (Stevenson, 1990, p. 1); e) that imposed educational decisions disempower certain categories of stakeholders (Burke, 1992, p. 39); and, f) that those actors with the best information about a particular subject should have the discretion to make decisions about that subject, and the people in closest contact with students are the ones most likely to make good decisions.
>
> - Hill and Bonan, 1991, p. 6, in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 22.

Brown (1990) states that writers on organizations have examined additional important outcomes of decentralization beyond these six. The first is flexibility, "the ability to respond within a reasonable time ...[and to accommodate] immediate needs, [as well as take] initiatives, some of which may result in innovations" (Brown, 1990, p. 76). The second is productivity, which includes notions pertinent to effectiveness, efficiency, and equity. Finally, of course, the third is change. Of these three outcomes, researchers differ about their relative values, although most put improved educational outcomes at center of their concerns. But, as in every other aspect of SBM and decentralization, local contexts and specific personnel affect the scale, depth, opportunities and results of the efforts. Nevertheless, there is a useful typology established as to how to measure the actual process of SBM.

Brown (1990) suggests that the shifts to SBM be "fitted logically into three relatively distinct phases in time order: adoption, implementation, and continuation" (Brown, 1990, p. 86). Adoption is the "phase wherein a decision is made to initiate the change, plans are made, and the organization is prepared...[implementation is the] phase wherein the innovation is first put into practise, problems are encountered and addressed, and the innovation becomes more widespread...[and continuation is the] phase in which the innovation either becomes commonplace and routine or may be discarded" (Brown, 1990, p. 87).

This concludes a review of the literature as to the rationales of school-based management. However, since teacher participation in shared decision-making is a significant feature of SBM, the next section examines literature dealing with this practise.

TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN SDM AS AN ELEMENT OF SBM

> School-based management (SBM) is a system designed to improve education by increasing the authority of actors at the school site.
>
> - Clune and White, 1988, p. 1. in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 22.

> ...and that is the point - the goal is to empower school staff by providing authority.
>
> - David, 1989, p.4 in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 22.

This section of the literature review examines shared decision-making (SDM) as an aspect of decentralization and SBM, because it is so critical to the investigation of any case study of SBM. It begins with a debate about SDM as primarily an issue of democracy or as a form of organizational governance and is followed by an examination of the rationales for SDM within schools. It then moves to a description of the various models of SDM, followed by a discussion on teacher needs and expectations in school decision-making. Noted especially here is the distinction between zones of decision-making, as well as a discussion on the barriers that preclude the implementation of SDM. This section concludes with a framework for training and preparation of participants to implement SDM as suggested by various scholars.

The practise of shared decision-making under SBM is viewed differently by various scholars. To some analysts, SDM is an issue of democracy that attempts to open "up school systems to involve groups not previously involved in school governance" (Wohlstetter, 1990, p. 2, in Murphy and Beck, 1995). To these reformers, "participatory decision-making is a collaborative approach in which superordinate and subordinates [and community members] work together as equals in an attempt to identify, analyze, and solve problems that face the organization" (Wood, 1984 in Murphy & Beck, 1995, p. 15). Murphy (1991) views two reasons underlying this argument: the first embraces the notion that democracy promises the most hope for improving schools, and the second clings to the belief that it is only through institutions that practice democratic principles that students will learn the true meaning of democracy in society (Murphy, 1991 in Murphy & Beck, 1995). Others, such as Corcoran (1987, in Conley, 1991) and Osborne (1991), claim that teaching and learning provide an ideal site for understanding collaborative processes, and preparing for democratic citizenship. Bryk (1993) even extends this beyond the schoolyard, and argues that "enhanced democratic activity at the local level can be an effective antidote to unresponsive societal institutions" such as those that are centrally managed (Bryk, 1993 in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 28). Glickman (1993) also views the devolving of decision-making authority to schools as an issue of democracy.

To other analysts, SDM is viewed as more a question of an organizational or managerial approach. To these analysts, SDM is a form of organizational governance featuring a decentralized arrangement of authority structures. These analysts define shared decision-making as a "mode of organizational operations" (Conway, 1984, p. 12, in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 16), and view SDM as form of participatory management (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994).

Finally, some analysts embrace the notion that SDM is "a *value position* as well as *process* [original italics] designed to achieve certain purposes," (Burke, 1992 in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 16). These authors view SDM as a moral issue and hold three beliefs about shared decision-making: "first, meaningful involvement of stakeholders is appropriate regardless of instrumental outcome" (Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 16); second, "teaching is a moral activity and as such should be subject to the control of teachers themselves" (Bolin, 1989 in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 16); and third, "site-based management/shared decision-making can also serve as a moral doctrine by which students can regulate their behavior" (Fusarelli and Scribner, 1993, p. 8 in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 16).

Although various perspectives are offered on shared decision-making, it appears that SDM can be operationalized a bit paradoxically. It is a complex administrative system that combines the tenets of democracy but does not necessarily significantly alter the formal hierarchical structures. Perhaps, it also follows that it, too, varies greatly in scope and interpretation in various sites. If so, what are the various rationales put forward for engaging in SDM?

RATIONALES FOR SDM

In spite of the scholars' diverse perspectives on SDM, all recognize that it can bring about improved educational outcomes for schools. Purkey and Smith (1983), for example, observe that "when improvement has occurred, it has been one of collaborative planning and collegial work" (Purkey and Smith, 1983 in Brown, 1990, p. 75). Brown (1990) explains that "this model of change... is a highly cooperative one within the school, where participation is high and a commitment to innovation and its assessment are evident" (Brown, 1990, p. 76). Candoli (1991, in Murphy and Beck, 1995), sees SBM and SDM as "meshing and harnessing the energy of all who engage

in renewal at the building level" (Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 37). Conley (1991) also views teacher participation as a key determinant in improving individual and organizational performance.

In addition to improved student performance, some scholars point out that SDM increases faculty commitment. Dimmock (1993) states that "a more participative school environment may enhance the sense of personal efficacy (a construct that refers to the individual's expectations of coping with, and being able to control, the environment) felt by principals and teachers" (Dimmock, 1993, p. 5). In specific, Dimmock argues that "increased teacher participation may generate greater commitment to curriculum policy decisions" (Dimmock, 1993, p. 6). Chapman (1990) claims that increased commitment by teachers may improve educational outcomes in two ways. First, "more information and knowledge dissemination is likely to lead to improved understanding and clarity of policies, decisions and reasons for change, and second, feelings of increased trust, greater sense of self-efficacy, and commitment to decisions are thought to improve curriculum and educational outcomes" (Chapman, 1990 in Dimmock, 1993, p. 6). Thus, even this improved commitment adds to the initial rationale of improving student performance. In addition, SDM can "knit together" the professionals within a school. Johnston and Germinario (1985), state: "The most effective teacher-administrator relationship, in terms of morale and productivity, is a participative one" (Johnston and Germinario, 1985, p. 91 in Conley, 1991, p. 229).

Common in the literature referred to by Murphy and Beck (1995) is the belief that participatory management (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994) improves the indicators associated with the health of organizations: e.g., efficiency of resource use, goal attainment, and responsiveness. Other advocates of SDM mentioned by Murphy and Beck (1995) also argue that participation serves to broaden dialogue, establish a "more diverse information base," and produce "more informed

stakeholders through shared experience of people with a range of perspectives and expertise" (Burke, 1992, p. 39 in Murphy and Beck, 1995). This increase in control and self efficacy can lead to greater skills at teamwork. One researcher contends that "an individual's expectations regarding ability to exert personal control over the environment have been shown to facilitate adaptive behavior, promote constructive behavior change, and lead to improved performance" (Dimmock, 1993, p. 5).

Dimmock (1993) emphasizes that "the kind of school-based management that fosters a participatory work environment is instrumental in promoting teacher collegiality" (Dimmock, 1993, p. 7). Little (1990) explains that the "vital ingredient seems to be that collegiality is characterized by close, constructive, and congenial individual and group relations" (Little, 1990 in Dimmock, 1993, p. 7). Dimmock supports this argument by stating that "participants in more tightly knit, coordinated organizations would tend to share a common perception of the organization's rules and work practices" (Dimmock, 1993, p. 11).

According to authors mentioned by Murphy and Beck (1995), "broad-based involvement in decision-making" (Conley, 1991, p. 37), referred to as the "participation in the formulation of collective viewpoints" (Burke, 1992, p. 39) promotes a general "sense of ownership" (Etheridge et al., 1992, p. 10) by members of the school community, all of whom share a "greater personal stake in seeing those decisions succeed" (Rothstein, 1990, p. 22). Rothstein (1990, in Murphy and Beck, 1995), summarizing the benefits of shared decision-making, agrees that members of the school community (teachers, parents and school employees) should be more committed to decisions if they participate in making them. Murphy and Beck (1995), supporting this assertion, state that "empowerment and ownership work to improve organizational processes and outcomes through their influence on three important bridging variables - commitment, efficacy and satisfaction/motivation" (Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 26).

Finally, this increased commitment for decision-making and improved teamwork can make the professional team stronger and more flexible managers. Chapman (1988) states that "teachers are more likely to confront issues, to consider alternatives, and to justify practices under school-based management...and there is likely to be more personal interaction between principals, teachers, students and parents" (Chapman, 1988, in Dimmock, 1993, p. 6). In the secondary school, a further outcome may be closer interdepartmental relations, fostering a more coordinated, whole-school curriculum perspective (Dimmock, 1993).

A key part of the improvement in the quality of decision-making is due to the nature of information upon which decisions are based. Conley (1991) posits that, within conditions of SDM, administrators develop a dependency relationship among organizational participants. In other words, Conley (1991) suggests in many organizational settings "managers recognize that they benefit from those who have closest contact with the organization's products or clients." Because teachers are "line professionals," and are the ones who have direct and ongoing contact with the school's primary clients, "they are the main reservoir of organizational knowledge, the ones most knowledgeable about clients' instructional, counseling, and classroom managerial problems and needs" (Conley, 1991, p. 239). Thus, administrators, within SDM, rely on the "knowledge teachers have to make effective managerial decisions" (Conley, 1991, p. 239).

Conley (1991) and Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994), acknowledging the symbiotic relationship between administrators and teachers, mention that information and knowledge has two dimensions: flow and type. "Type" refers to the actual form of information - statistics, minutes, oral exchanges, etc. As types of information are similar within schools regardless of whether or not they are undergoing decentralization, a discussion of type is not necessary. Of more interest, however, is the other dimension, "flow." Information can flow in several directions

throughout an organization. Conventional approaches "...tend to emphasize the downward flow of information from top management to other employees" (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 64). This type of top-down information flow is vertical in orientation and belongs with bureaucratic notions about organizations. Newer models of information flow emphasize the horizontal variety, where information is held at various locales and flows upward, downward and across an organization (Conley, 1991; Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994).

These newer models of vertical, horizontal and lateral information flow, are consistent with the principles of SDM, e.g., that collective input into decisions is essential in reaching higher-quality decisions.

Higher quality decisions, a sense of workplace democracy, teacher compliance with decisions, closer relationships among teachers, and opportunities for teacher career progression are all benefits clearly linked to SDM. They underscore that institutionalizing SDM is consistent with the rationales for SBM in that SDM emphasizes the merging of energy and expertise of site participants to reach the common primary goal of improving schools. It is simply good fortune that a by-product of this process is not only an expanded information base brought on by open dialogue between participants, but increased cohesiveness between school personnel, students and the community.

It is all very well to know that SDM brings these improvements, but that still leaves the question, "How does a school institute SDM? What are the models, mechanisms, stages for teachers to join in decision-making? What are teachers' expectations and needs? Which are the areas of decision-making in which they have influence? What are the conflicts and problems which can arise? And what kind of training and preparation and support exist not only for teachers, but also for other school personnel to assist in this way of making decisions?" The next several sections consider each of these issues, and their treatment in the literature, in turn.

STRUCTURES FOR SDM

Conley (1991) argues that some form of teacher participation in decision-making has always existed, providing mechanisms for teacher influence on administrators' decisions. Traditional forms of participation, such as departmental structures, teacher teams, grade-level meetings, teacher committees, advisory boards, decision-making boards, constitutionally based shared governance systems and school councils are common. These forms of participation, however, have inherent barriers that limit teachers' exercise of influence on school decisions, according to Conley.

Rather, the kind of structures suggested by SDM are the result of a true delegation of authority and power from an "apex" to a more diffuse arrangement. Citing Mohrman (1978), Conley (1991) states that the "dominant image associated with participation in decision-making becomes one of decisional influence moving down the hierarchy or a flattening of the organizational structure" (Conley, 1991, p. 227). She suggests, however, that this can occur to differing shades of participation. For example, Conley notes, administrators may delegate decisions (authority) to teachers or they may consult teachers in making joint decisions, thereby casting teachers in an explicitly advisory or consultative role. This is, largely, what traditional forms of participation have done. However, Conley views participation as including two political dimensions: a) who participates in decision-making and, b) the types of decisions in which members may participate (e.g., work level decisions, task execution levels or policy making, resource allocation, and other organizational level decisions). Unfortunately, the literature to date is not clear on the "degree to which these [collegial, organic, and participative forms of school management] provide teachers with an advisory or consultative role (influence) or

with final decision-making power (authority)" (Conley, 1991, p. 244). What is clear is that there is a qualitative difference between authority and influence.

Mohrman, Lawler, and Mohrman (1992) have identified the "extent to which an entire organization is actually involved," as an important issue that determines the effectiveness of shared management (Mohrman, Lawler, and Mohrman, 1992, in Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 72). They add that some SBM programs involve only few individuals or groups, while others engage the entire organization. They suggest that a shared management system is more likely to be successful if a large proportion of the organization is involved. Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994), citing Elmore and McLaughlin (1988), also advise those who are contemplating SBM that "top down implementation of a reform to have decentralized decision making is less likely to acquire grassroots support than when the movement has grown from the bottom up" (Elmore and McLaughlin, 1988, in Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 72).

Bridges (1967) suggest three models of shared decision-making:

> 1) participant-determining - which gives all members, teachers and administrators alike, equal say in the decision, with consensus the sought for end point;
>
> 2) parliamentary - which allows for majority vote after all have had equal rights to influence the vote; and
>
> 3) democratic centralist - which gives the principal final authority but allows for teacher influence over the decision.
>
> - Bridges, 1967, in Conley, 1991, p. 255-256.

According to the British Columbia Teachers Federation (BCTF) 1993 Report on the Changing Roles and Responsibilities of School Personnel, "professionalizing a school would involve switching the decision-making model from the third type to either of the first two" (BCTF Report, 1993, p. 12).

STAGES OF DECISION-MAKING

One researcher has sought to clarify these levels of participation by offering a map of "stages" in a decision process. Duke (1981) suggests five possible participation stages:

> a) setting the agenda,
> b) determining guidelines,
> c) gathering information in relation to problems,
> d) designing (solution) choices, and
> e) expressing (solution) preferences
>
> - Duke, et. al., 1981, in Conley, 1991.

According to Conley (1991), at each stage implementors need to consider "strategically whether teachers will exercise influence or authority in decision-making" (Conley, 1991, p. 256). Wood (1984), for example, suggests that a primary source of teacher skepticism over participation is the failure to include teachers in setting the agenda. Also, Firestone (1977) suggests that a lack of teacher influence on final decisions may negate the effects of involvement in all previous stages. To avoid this skepticism, two types of shared governance structures have been explored.

Conley (1991), citing research conducted by Malen and Ogawa (1988) and David (1990), reports two types of shared governance arrangements under SBM: school councils and educational policy trust agreements. According to Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994), school-level councils are a way of distributing power within school organizations and can "vary widely in their composition and delegated power" (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 58). The process for selecting council members varies from district to district but results in members variously appointed by principals, elected or acting as volunteers (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994). According to Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994), some SBM programs "require each school to have more than one council" (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 61). Salt

Lake City school district, for example, has one council comprised of teachers and the principal and a second composed of parents, teachers and the principal (Malen and Ogawa, 1988 in Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994). Chicago school district parents have their own, separate committee (Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance, 1990, in Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994). In Memphis, Tennessee, in addition to parent, teacher, and community representation on a school site council, "participating schools have a professional advisory committee composed of department heads and grade-level chairpersons" (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 61). Etheridge (1992) mentions, however, "that specific guidelines have not been developed on how these groups coordinate their decision making" (Etheridge, 1992, in Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 61).

Educational policy trust agreements or negotiated contracts, often formulated at district level, are designed to identify problems and allocate resources for addressing them in ways specifically intended to expand teacher participation into management decisions (Conley, 1991). Case studies of three districts revealed, however, that tensions between teachers and administrators emerged when teachers became involved in teacher evaluation systems and dismissal policies.

Conley (1991) reports other participation forms that may increase teacher involvement in decision-making as well as the coordination of decisions between teachers and administrators and among teachers. Examples of these forms include such practices as peer assistance, career ladders, and mentor teacher plans. In fact, Conley (1991), proposes four distinct areas for increasing teacher participation in school decision-making:

> a) Direction: the specification of collective or individual responsibilities in terms of purpose, activity, or both (e.g., assigning a teacher a particular subject);
>
> b) Organization: the structuring of relationships between and among individuals and groups (e.g., setting schedules for teachers and students);

> c) Support: the provision of human, material, and other resources needed to execute responsibilities (e.g., providing a teacher with a mentor); and,
>
> d) Monitoring: the ongoing collection and evaluation of information related to performance (e.g., evaluating a teacher's classroom performance.
>
> - Conley, 1991, p. 240.

Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994) view these forms of teacher involvement in decision-making as rewards and argue that they are an important element in participatory decision-making because "they can affect the motivation of organizational members" (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 66). Although these lateral forms of decision-making may dissolve the insular structure of schools, and afford mentor teachers a representative function and greater influence in school decision-making, "they would still operate within the formal authority structures, (e.g., with principals having final decision-making power)" in the school (Devaney, 1987, in Conley, 1991, p. 250).

Conley (1991) concludes that "most new forms of participation appear to be extending decision-making influence rather than authority to teachers" (Conley, 1991, p. 252). She adds that some forms are "oriented toward vertical coordination between teachers and administrators (e.g., school governance teams), others are directed at lateral coordination (e.g., peer assistance), and some plans have elements of both (e.g., mentor teachers)" (Conley, 1991, p. 252).

Various models of teacher participation have always existed that allow teachers influence in decision-making. Some models extend teachers' final decision-making authority while others cast teachers in a purely advisory role. Although research is not clear as to the degree of authority teachers should have, it indicates that teachers are still restricted in their ability to influence decision-making by not having the authority to control the stages of decision-making. This is due to several factors, but it indicates that effective SDM and SBM cannot take place until there is

further clarity on personnel expectations and the nature of decision-making authority.

TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS AND NEEDS IN SDM

SDM assumes that teachers, as a group of professionals, aspire for opportunities to be involved in school-level decision-making (Leithwood, 1992). Teacher participation in decision-making is grounded in the assumption that "teachers expect to be afforded opportunities to participate in organizational decision-making based on their possession of a body of knowledge and expertise" (Conley, 1991, p. 230). This assumption, according to Conley (1991), is embedded in the perspective that schools are professional organizations which "emphasize the significance of participation for enhancing teachers' organizational roles as professional decision-makers" (Conley, 1991, p. 229). Sections in the B.C.T.F. Report on the Changing Roles and Responsibilities of School Personnel (1993), echoes this understanding of the professionalization of schools and teachers, (B.C.T.F., 1993, p. 13). Bacharach and Conley (1986) hypothesize that "...teachers who were denied opportunities to participate would feel a sense of powerlessness based on their professional expectations for discretion and involvement" (Bacharach and Conley, 1986, in Conley, 1991, p. 229). More recently, Conley (1991) adds "depriving teachers of the decisional power they expect and deserve in the workplace, [leads] to dissatisfaction, stress, or work alienation" (Conley, 1991, p. 229).

Conley (1991) claims that much of this stress (or, conversely, increased satisfaction and self-efficacy) has to do with whether teachers assess their decision participation in relative or absolute terms. Relative participation means "...that teachers assess their need for participation based on how much influence they currently have (on organizational decision-making) compared to how much they

desire" (Conley, 1991, citing Alutto and Belasco, 1972, p. 231). According to Conley (1991), this issue is critical in professional organizations where individuals expect a high level of autonomy and decision participation. Absolute participation means "...that teachers assess their need for participation without reference to the amount of participation they would like to have but only how much they currently receive" (Conley, 1991, p. 231).

This distinction, according to Conley (1991), is important because "research prior to the 1970's often conceptualized and operationalized participation in absolute terms" (Conley, 1991, p. 231). Such an approach, according to Conley, did not assess teachers' expectations and assumed that organizational members were "homogenous in attitude, sentiments and expectations" concerning decision-making (Conley, 1991, p. 231). Ryan (1993) agrees, mentioning that teachers vary in their desire to participate in decision-making. Leithwood indicates that teachers who are at the highest level of professional growth are able to "exercise leadership, both formal and informal, with groups of adults inside and outside the school" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 89). At this stage of development, Leithwood indicates, teachers not only "have a broad framework from which to understand the relationship among decisions at many different levels, but are well informed about policies at many different levels in the education system, and participate more in a broad array of educational decisions at all levels of the education system" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 89). Leithwood's (1992) notion that teachers desire various levels of participation concurs with Conley's (1991) assertion that teachers vary in their interest to participate in school decision-making.

Conley (1991) adds that a "relative" conceptualization and measure of participation addresses teachers' needs to participate in decisions by "placing an emphasis on the discrepancy between teachers' current and preferred levels of participation across several decision areas" (Conley, 1991, p. 231). This method,

initially proposed by Alutto and Belasco (1972, in Conley, 1991), in their study of teachers in two districts, measured participation according to three decisional states: "deprived," "saturated" and in "equilibrium." These terms are quite self-explanatory and accompany different teacher behavior. According to the original research - "decisionally deprived teachers reported greater militancy and role conflict than teachers who were saturated or in equilibrium" (Conley, 1991, p. 232). Citing research spanning two decades (Bacharach et al., 1990; Benson and Malone, 1987; Conway, 1976; Johnston and Germinario, 1985; Mohrman et al., 1979; and Schneider, 1984), Conley concludes that "when the professional expectations of teachers for participation exceed current opportunities in the school, teachers report more dissatisfaction, more stress, and less loyalty to principals" (Conley, 1991, p. 232).

In summary, research has shown that teachers vary in their desire and expectations to participate in decision-making. Teachers who have reached a high level of development and expertise in their careers expect more opportunities to participate in decision-making. When deprived of this opportunity, teachers feel alienated and demonstrate a high degree of dissatisfaction and militancy. Although Conley (1991) comprehensively discusses the needs and expectations of teachers to participate in decision-making, she does not address the desire of some teachers to participate for the sole purpose of abridging the unilateral control of principals in school decision-making. That desire, perhaps, should best be discussed as an issue of authority vs. influence.

AUTHORITY VS. INFLUENCE

According to Conley (1991) and others (e.g., Lieberman, 1988; Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994), new forms of participation, such as school governance structures, appear to be generating uneasiness among teachers and administrators

as both parties reassess their respective roles. This apprehension, as mentioned above, may be "partially due to a failure to distinguish between two critical dimensions of power: authority and influence" (Conley, 1991, p. 253). Authority, according to Conley, "deals with final decision-making power, referring to the ability of an organizational member to say yes or no to a particular decision" (Conley, 1991, p. 253). She adds that "authority stems from the legal right to make decisions governing others; for example, principals have the authority to assign students and teachers to classes and teachers have the (de facto) authority to implement instruction" (Bacharach and Lawler, 1980, in Conley, 1991, p. 253). Influence, on the other hand, "stems from the capacity to shape decisions through informal or nonauthoritative means, including personal characteristics (e.g., charisma), expertise, informal opportunity, and resources" (Bacharach and Lawler, 1980, in Conley, 1991, p. 253).

Conley hypothesizes that teacher participation can increase in either authority or influence and thus may not need to fundamentally alter the formal authority structure of a school. Indeed, as indicated by Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994) and Malanowski, Kennedy, and Kachris (1986, in Conley, 1991), teacher teams can be used to select problems and design their solutions with administrators maintaining final decision-making control. The teacher teams, thus, increase teacher participation without reducing or shifting the location of final authority.

Conley (1991), citing research from a variety of perspectives (Lieberman, 1988, Mertons and Yarger, 1988), suggests that influence, not authority, is the pervasive issue in participatory decision-making. Researchers advise teachers to assume leadership responsibilities so as to increase their influence capacities, and in doing so, elevate their lateral influence in school decision-making. Furthermore, they remark that teacher and administrator influence in school system need not be incompatible. Conley (1991) posits two theoretical elements of influence to defend

this position. First, influence is multidirectional: it may be initiated at any organizational level, flowing from lower (e.g., teacher) to higher (administrator) positions or vice versa (or laterally). Second, influence is non-zero sum in nature: Although only one organizational position may wield final decision-making power, conceivably all organizational members may exercise influence on decisions. Conley concludes that "together these properties suggest that decisions influenced by teachers do not necessarily cause a decrease in administrator influence on or authority in those same decisions" (Conley, 1991, p. 254).

In summary, Conley's (1991) work shows that both influence and authority play a role in shaping school decisions. Although teachers may not have the legal authority to say yes or no to decisions, they do and can have the capacity to influence school decisions through both informal and formal means. Research also contends that influence in school decision-making is multidirectional and allows teachers to increase their lateral influence in school decisions by assuming leadership roles via teacher teams.

NEWER MODELS OF TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

Conley (1991) mentions two ideal models in which teacher participation in decision-making can be analyzed: the professional and bureaucratic. The professional model maintains that "empowering teachers to make both classroom and school decisions is the sole key to educational improvement," hence, the administrator's role in school management is limited "[while]...the bureaucratic model suggests that teachers should have little influence in school-level decision making" (Conley, 1991, p. 256). In the bureaucratic model, participation is used manipulatively to "buy" teacher acceptance of decisions already made. Conley proposes that between these two opposing models of school governance is a realistic

middle ground, in which participation systems can be designed to allow teachers to broaden their scope of decision-making but not threaten the "legitimate authority of schools and school districts" (Conley, 1991, p. 257).

SBM programs, according to Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994), "delegate different levels of power to school-level decision makers, ranging from making binding decisions to advising or giving consent" (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 61). However, there are not only types of decision-making power, but also a variety of domains in which power is delegated. These include, among others, budget, personnel, and instructional decisions (Brown, 1990; Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994; Murphy and Beck, 1995).

Conley (1991) and others (for example, Mills 1992), maintain that it is "only by examining specific decisions in the school organization "... [that] decision areas in which teachers may increase their involvement" can be identified (Conley, 1991, p. 233). Conley notes the complex decisional nature of school organizations, and in that light, suggests teachers' potential to increase their involvement is "multidimensional." This multidimensionality Conley maintains, allows evaluating of strategies about where teacher participation is needed most urgently. This is crucial to the efficacy of the newer models. A global approach to decision participation, Conley advises, "would fail to capture the actual domain-specific nature of decision participation," and might simply increase participation without specific focus (Conley, 1991, p. 234).

To study this domain specification, Conley (1991) claims researchers must examine the "horizontal characteristics of decision participation rather than the more typically examined vertical distribution of decision involvement" (Conley, 1991, p. 234). Thus, they both consider individual-organization fit, but the former "explores the fit between the individual and the amount of participation" and the latter

"explores the fit between the individual and the domain of participation" (Mohrman et al., 1978, p. 15 in Conley, 1991, p. 234).

In other words, research indicates that increasing teacher involvement in SDM is both complex and multidimensional. A global conceptualization, which supports a general increase in teacher participation, however, is appropriate; rather, several authors suggest that school decisions must first be inventoried to determine the areas in which teacher involvement is most needed. This approach minimizes teacher involvement in decisional areas in which they hold no knowledge nor personal stakes. One way to differentiate these areas is to understand them as different decision-making "domains."

DECISION-MAKING DOMAINS

Mohrman et al. (1978) drawing on Parsons (1960, in Conley, 1991), distinguish between "two broad decision domains or organizational subsystems, each associated with a unique set of decision areas: technical and managerial" (Mohrman et. al. in Conley, 1991, p. 233). Conley (1991) describes the "technical domain" as consisting of decisions related to task execution (e.g., selecting texts, resolving learning problems, etc.) and the "managerial domain" relating to decisions about managerial support functions (e.g., hiring and firing personnel, planning budgets, etc.). Interpreting the results of the Mohrman et al. 1978 study, Conley (1991) claims that "although teachers desire and actually have more participation in the technical domain than in the managerial domain, they feel most deprived of decision-making influence in the managerial domain" (Conley, 1991, p. 235).

Bacharach et al. (1990, cited in Conley, 1991) observed two things about these domains. Since the technical domain deals with "carrying out immediate work activities, it was viewed as operational in nature" (Conley, 1991, p. 235). However,

because the "managerial domain deals with broad organizational resource allocation decisions and overarching policies, it appeared strategic in nature" (Bacharach et. al. in Conley, 1991, p. 235). Bacharach et al. also noted a distinction between whether operational or strategic decisions primarily affected individuals or the organization as a whole. Instead of the original two domains, they proposed four distinct areas as refinements of the original two: a) strategic-organizational, b) strategic-individual, c) operational-organizational, and d) operational-individual. Examples of decisions on the strategic-organizational domain are budget development and expenditure policies; examples of decisions in the strategic-individual domain are school and classroom assignments; examples belonging to the operational-organizational domain are student rights and reporting procedures; example of decisions belonging to the operational-individual domains include books-use data (Bacharach et al., 1990, in Conley, 1991, p. 236). In Conley's view, teachers feel deprived of three types of decision-making within these four areas - those in the strategic-organizational area and those in operational areas close to the boundary of the classroom (e.g., grading policies and student placement) (Conley, 1991, p. 237).

Malen and Ogawa (1988, cited in Conley, 1991) contend that schools are marked by a "traditional influence pattern" in which decisions are differentiated by locale and position: "strategic decisions typically are made outside of classrooms by administrators and operational decisions are made within classrooms by teachers" (Conley, 1991, p. 237). Bridges (1967) argues that decisions falling within an area of managerial/strategic concern "may lack relevance to teachers' classroom responsibilities [as well as] access matters in which teachers may posses few qualifications" (Bridges, 1967 in Conley, 1991, p. 238). As such, they can enter a teacher's "zone of indifference" (Conley, 1991) and paradoxically reduce the effectiveness of SDM by eliciting "decisions in which teachers do not have a high personal stake" (Conley, 1991, p. 238). Lortie (1977, in Conley, 1991), who favors a

restricted intensity of teacher involvement in management, argues in support of this, by noting that the intense classroom environment "acts as an organizationally centrifugal effect that pull[s] teachers deeper into the classroom and farther away from involvement in school affairs" (Lortie, 1977 in Conley, 1991, p. 238).

Conley (1991), Donaldson (1993), Midgley and Wood (1993), and Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994), however, all criticize the fine line dividing the classroom and the larger school organization, arguing that decisions made at school level span both borders. These researchers claim that teachers and administrators share knowledge and skills on new instruction strategies, on, for instance, planning and organizing meetings, developing school goals, and designing staff development plans.

Conley (1991), in fact, identifies such "overlaps" as a "bureaucratic-professional interface" (Conley, 1991, p. 241). This is an integrated decision-making zone between teachers and administrators. Hanson (1979) proposes five decision areas in which teachers and administrators can coordinate their efforts: a) allocation decisions, including teacher scheduling and teacher assignments; b) security decisions, including attendance policies and student rights; c) boundary decisions, including parental problems and parent-teacher interface; d) evaluation decisions, including teacher promotion and evaluation; and e) instructional decisions, including school curricular policies (Hanson, 1979, in Conley, 1991, p. 242). This domain is, however, political in that it is contested, and "the benefits of participation increasingly would lie in the ability of teachers and administrators to influence decisions previously left to the other" (Conley, 1991, p. 245). Other scholars, for example, Midgley and Wood (1993) and Sergiovanni (1994), write about making joint decisions that are tied together by a common vision for change. These writers advocate the necessity and value of collective decision-making to dissolve the fine line dividing managerial and classroom decision domains and promote a more collaborative school culture.

Shedd (1987, in Conley, 1991), for example, has suggested going beyond decision domains and "zones of acceptance - which carve out separate areas of influence for teachers and administrators - to some new framework that emphasizes the coordination of teachers' and administrators' decisions and the ability of each party to achieve influence over decisions previously left to the other" (Shedd, 1987 in Conley, 1991, p. 237). This approach derives from a political view of organizations that advances the notion that schools are "contested terrain where individuals and groups negotiate the decisions in which various parties will become involved" (Conley, 1991, p. 237). She adds that within this framework, "the precise line delineating managerial and technical domains of decision-making - and the separate work of teachers and administrators - may soften, blur or disappear" (p. 237). Barth (1988), agrees, calling this blending of decision-making domains "shared leadership" (Barth, 1988, in Mills, 1992, p. 5).

Some scholars contend that school decision-making can be divided largely into two decision-making domains: technical, which captures decisions relating to classroom activities, and managerial, which involves decisions relating to school organization. Research indicates that teachers feel most deprived of opportunities to participate in decisions that fall into the managerial domain. Other researchers, however, acknowledge that school decision-making is complex in nature and cannot be conveniently categorized into two large decision domains because a contested zone exists that intersects both managerial and technical domains. Instead of specifically carving out decisional areas for teachers and administrators, these scholars call for an integration of both the managerial and technical domains to one in which both teachers and administrators can influence decisions previously left to the other. Such an approach is called a "bureaucratic-professional interface" in which lines separating the work of teachers and administrators may become increasingly fuzzy. However, as is evident in the next section, this is not without its own problems.

PROBLEMS AND CONFLICTS IN SDM

Any organizational change could reasonably be expected to attract not only enthusiasm, but skepticism, along with changes to roles, time management, and procedures. SDM is no exception. In fact, one of the features of the literature examining SBM and SDM is the extensive treatment of the negative and difficult adjustments for personnel.

Dimmock (1993), for instance, finds no link between participation and improved teacher practise and adds that, indeed, teacher participation in decision-making "may detract from teaching performance by distracting teachers from their classroom duties" (Dimmock, 1993, p. 6). This assertion is echoed by Conley (1991) and Ryan, (1993) who indicate that if teachers are to be meaningfully involved in true site-based management, time must be allocated out of the regular instructional day. O'Neil (1994) adds that time is a sensitive concern claiming that school councils get "bogged down with time-consuming issues," and "take longer to reach a decision" (O'Neil, 1994, p. 8).

But time is far from the only problem. Conley (1991) cautions that "contested decisions may require greater coordination between teachers and administrators than those falling clearly within either the school or classroom domain" (Conley, 1991, p. 242). This coordination can be difficult to attain, as teacher participation in the intermediate, contested zone may engender conflict between teachers and administrators. Fullan (1993) agrees: "...collaboration does not mean consensus; it does not mean that major disagreements are verboten; it does not mean that the individual should go along with the crowd" (Fullan, 1993, p. 81). Hanson's 1979 case study of one school district also suggested that administrators and teachers often disagree about the degree of influence each party should have on each of the contested decision-making domain (Hanson, 1979, in Conley, 1991). Reporting on the

Chicago SBM experience, O'Neil (1994) also writes about conflicts between councils (composed of a majority of parents and community members) and principals. O'Neil reports that the councils in this school district had the authority to hire and fire principals and helped to develop budgets and school improvement plans. This arrangement, according to O'Neil, perpetuated friction between principals and councils because some members of the councils felt that the principal "still dictated things and some principals felt "they had another school board to labor under" (O'Neil, 1994, p. 4).

Apart from the time constraints caused by meetings, department structures also allow "dominance by the chair" and under contributions from teachers (Corcoran, 1987, p. 32, in Conley, 1991, p. 245). Conley elaborates "[department chairs may give] scant attention to teacher involvement, provide little time for quality interaction, and limit the options that teachers may consider in group decision-making" (Conley, 1991, p. 245). In addition, Corcoran (1987, in Conley, 1991), suggests that, although teacher committees do produce "policy and program changes, they are often dominated in meeting agendas, scheduling, and conduct by principals and thus afford teachers little influence" (Corcoran, 1987 in Conley, p. 246). "Face saving" behavior (Malen and Ogawa, 1988, in Conley, 1991, p. 246) also diminishes teachers' involvement; teachers may be "reluctant to speak up for fear of unfavorable reactions from colleagues" according to Corcoran (1987, p. 14, in Conley, 1991, p. 246).

The consequences of such weaknesses in teacher participation in decision-making are that "reports and recommendations produced in such forums are infrequently entertained seriously or (even less often) approved at higher organizational levels" (Johnson, 1988, in Conley, 1991, p. 246). Instead "a limited scope of discussion and administrator domination of the agenda characterizes most faculty meetings; additionally, faculty senates and principals' cabinets perform an

explicitly - if not intentionally - advisory role" (Conley, 1991, p. 246). Hence, as Johnson (1988, in Conley, 1991) contends, "time constraints, the insular structure of schooling, and the lack of administrative expectations for teacher involvement additionally limit (or preclude) collegial and teacher-administrator interactions" (Johnson, 1988, in Conley, 1991, p. 246).

Unsurprisingly, researchers have also reported teacher cynicism in participatory decision-making. Johnson (1988, in Conley, 1991) has observed that "teachers notice that the advice of committees supposedly designed to gain teacher input often goes unheeded" (Johnson, 1988, in Conley, 1991, p. 247). Bacharach and Conley (1989, in Conley, 1991) report that "teachers suspect that participation is a method to induce them to contribute additional (unpaid) labor" (Bacharach and Conley, 1989, in Conley, 1991, p. 247), "share the blame for unpopular risky actions" (Corcoran, 1987, p. 12, in Conley, 1991, p. 247), or "carry out decisions which someone higher in the authority structure has already made" (Wood, 1984, p. 58, in Conley, 1991, p. 247). In spite of all of this, however, other researchers, (Conley, 1991; Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994) have reported that, although SDM presents such problems as lack of time, loss of autonomy, teacher skepticism and jeopardy of collective agreements, in general, teachers believe that the benefits outweigh the costs.

Nevertheless, even though new governance structures offer a vehicle for teachers and others to be involved in school decisions, closer inspection of interviews, observations, council agendas, minutes and surveys by Malen and Ogawa (1988, in Conley, 1991) do not confirm any changes in school and district decision making. They note instead that "council agendas and meetings [are] restricted in scope and limited to such routine organizational matters as parent conference schedules and facility safety improvements" (Malen and Ogawa, 1988 in Conley, 1991, p. 249). Furthermore, they report that "discussions concerning significant (strategic) issues

related to budgets, programs, and personnel (e.g., staff hiring) [are] rare or nonexistent" (ibid.). Conley, citing Hanson (1979), suggests that the councils "upheld a conventional pattern of school influence where principals control building policies and procedures and teachers control the instructional component, and parents provide support" (Hanson, 1979, in Conley, 1991, p. 258). This pattern of influence, according to Conley, is perpetuated by principal's control over all stages of group decision making. In the school councils examined by Malen and Ogawa (1988, in Conley, 1991), teachers and parents performed only advisory roles. Indeed, as identified by Weiss (1993), there are a number of ways in which it is clear that principals are concerned that SDM abridges their traditional authority and their roles as "captain[s]" of their schools (Weiss, 1993).

Although recent studies have continuously called for increasing teacher participation in school decision-making, they have noted that problems occur when schools attempt to implement shared decision-making structures. Not only do these new requirements pull teachers away from their classroom duties, they often restrict teachers' roles to a purely advisory function, or involve them in meetings dominated by other senior participants. Sometimes also these group decision-making arrangements can cause confrontations between group members who hold varying views. In spite of all of this, however, on balance, teachers say the benefits outweigh the difficulties. Nevertheless, there is certainly a place for training and preparation to mitigate the negative aspects of the transition to SDM.

TRAINING AND PREPARATION FOR SDM

Since SBM and SDM involve a departure from traditional forms of decision-making (David, 1989), and can be considered a comprehensive form of organizational change (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994), planning becomes a crucial aspect of

effective change (Miles, 1993). Miles (1993) claims "...one of the most critical variables [is] skill in social and educational design: creating an actualizable social and pedagogical set of structures (and supporting cultures) well linked to the goals and philosophy, and vision for [a] school, with a congruent plan for peopling the school - a design that [is] actualizable" (Miles, 1993, p. 228). Such planning is not merely "finding and installing good practices," but is, rather, "an organically led and managed process" (Miles, 1993, p. 231). Miles acknowledges that, initially, the change to SBM is rough, but with proper front-end preparation and ongoing support, much can be achieved. "Large scale, change bearing innovations [live] or [die] by the amount and quality of assistance that their users [receive] once the change process [is] under way" (Miles, 1993, p. 230).

Various sources on SBM and SDM, (David, 1989; Huddleston, Claspell and Killion, 1991; Maeroff, 1993; Mitchell, 1990, in Mills, 1992; and Tranter, 1994) claim that roles and responsibilities of school-based personnel so change under SBM and SDM that training is essential. This includes training in team building (providing opportunities for team members to express anxiety, enhance bonding and acceptance of each other and practise listening with respect); facilitation, (the ability to make something happen in a group situation, which requires skill in modeling, empathizing, listening, organizing, sharing, encouraging and confronting); brainstorming (sharing of ideas that are non-judgmental and creative); consensus building (arriving at a decision that each team member can support); pyramiding (a process for members of school-based decision-making committees to communicate with the stakeholders they represent in order to get their views on a particular topic); and conflict resolution and problem solving (Mitchell, 1990, pp. 27-47, in Mills, 1992). Even just this list serves to suggest how comprehensive the changes are within the culture of the school environment under a shift to SBM and SDM. It would be more than

ambitious to presume that on goodwill alone an entire district or an entire school could undertake such a transition and succeed.

Combining teachers and administrators in school decision-making, according to most authors, expands and alters their roles and responsibilities significantly. Since SDM alters the duties, behaviors, and habits of school-based personnel, most researchers strongly advocate that the individuals involved in group decision-making acquire the essential skills to effectively participate in this process. Perhaps most central to such training is the principal, whose role substantially shifts in decentralization.

ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN SBM AND SDM

This section of the literature review examines the role of the principal under SBM and SDM. It begins by examining the literature as to the evolution of the principal's role, continues by examining the effects of ambiguity upon that role, and suggests that successful shifts to more appropriate roles within SBM can benefit by particular forms of preparation and support.

Hallinger (1992) claims that the principal's role has evolved in the last thirty years from "programme manager" to "instructional leader" to "transformational leader." Others (Baskett and Miklos, 1992; Hallinger, 1992; King and Kerchner, 1991; Leithwood, 1992; and Weiss, 1993) also support the notion that principals undergo a comprehensive redefining of their roles as school leaders when schools adopt shared decision-making. Chapman (1990) presents a new conception of the principalship in school-based decision-making. She posits that "principals have found themselves working with new values, new decision-makers and a new set of management decisions and responsibilities" (Chapman, 1990, in Dimmock, 1993,

p. 5). Part of this, Dimmock (1993) contends, is that principals are faced with the new challenges of "dual accountabilities to both school council and central office; working with inexperienced council members; encouraging participative decision-making and power sharing" (Dimmock, 1993, p. 5).

For his part, Hallinger (1992) identifies the source causes of this role evolution as not so much as emerging conceptions of teacher leadership and professionalism, but more the changes to councils and the policy environment of schools. More precisely, Hallinger posits that the recognition that the current system of education is not adequately preparing students has "led policy makers, administrators, teachers and parents to re-examine the assumptions that underlie schooling" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 39). Under a restructured framework, the school is viewed as the "unit responsible for the *initiation* [original emphasis] of change, not just the *implementation* [original emphasis] of changes conceived by others" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 40). Teachers, therefore, are viewed as important sources of expertise, rather than targets of others' efforts to improve schooling. By implication, the "basis for school leadership expands to include teachers (and parents) as well as the principal...which highlights a new role for principals (and teachers) in problem finding and problem solving - a role increasingly referred to as transformational leadership" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 40).

King and Kerchner (1991) also claim that principals are undergoing immense changes in their roles and responsibilities as educational leaders. On the basis of interviews conducted in five school districts undergoing reforms in pursuit of increased teacher professionalization, these authors formulate three conclusions: 1) the principal's role is in a phase of evolution; 2) district policies can lessen role anxiety and encourage principals to promote change; and 3) new roles and responsibilities must be part of developing guidance for principals who are compelled to provide leadership in schools with collective decision-making processes. Weiss (1993), supporting Hallinger's (1992) arguments, indicates that the principal's role is being

redefined in three distinct ways. First, when schools shift to a system of shared decision-making, some of the principal's authority is transferred to the teacher-administrator decision-making group. Second, the forum for principals to make decisions has to expand in order to respond to new questions. Paradoxically, however, it also shrinks, at least in terms of absolute control: "perhaps shared decision-making does require new decisions, but certainly the whole thrust is to reduce the domains in which the principal holds unilateral sway" (Weiss, 1993, p. 2).

Thus, the traditional image of principals as autocratic leaders is increasingly shifting to what academics refer to as transformational leadership. This new concept of principal leadership views the principal not as the sole decision-maker, but as one who encourages others to participate in school decision-making. As with any role shift, however, the new relationships and behaviors are not necessarily innately understood. Some of the role ambiguities have produced complex responses.

ROLE AMBIGUITY AND PRINCIPALS' RESPONSES

King and Kerchner (1991), argue that principals are experiencing a high level of uneasiness because of role ambiguity brought on by restructuring initiatives. The authors classified principals' discomfort into seven categories: 1) "lack of role clarity"; 2) "alteration of their role as instructional leaders"; 3) "insufficient involvement in reform negotiations"; 4) "abridgment of their traditional authority"; 5) "[redundant] principal's position...due to increased teacher leadership"; 6) "perplexing directives from central office"; and 7) "inadequate skills development training to implement reforms" (King and Kerchner, 1991, pp. 2 - 9).

Hallinger (1992) predicts that under the massive restructuring initiatives that are permeating school systems and which represent a significant increase in the degree of uncertainty principals face in their work, principals increasingly need a

greater tolerance for ambiguity in both role and workplace. Hallinger asserts that goals in restructured schools are no longer "vague; [but neither] are they givens...yet they must be clearly defined for the purpose of accountability" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 46). Furthermore, the fact that staff and community are more directly in school management can mean that curricular and instructional approaches are no longer valued as before, and yet, as we have discussed in every aspect of this literature review form definitions forward, neither is there a singular measurable model to guide a decentralization process. Thus, all of these factors increase the uncertainty of the principal's role.

As a result of a study that included 12 high schools and 193 administrators, teachers and other staff (e.g., librarians and guidance counselors), Weiss (1993) concludes that principals may cope with their role changes under shared decision-making in one of three ways. They either "collaborate fully and openly and shift from making decisions to facilitating other people's decision-making [or] outright oppose and wrest back their accustomed power [or] seek to control or manipulate the system, by open or devious means, for example, [such as throwing] their weight around at meetings, [lobbying] for their positions before meetings, [seeking] to control the items that are placed on the agenda, [claiming] that the district office will never allow the action the teachers propose, or [deflecting] the school's decision-making group's attention to trivial matters, such as what to do about litter in the cafeteria or latecomers to class" (Weiss, 1993, p. 2). As part of the last two approaches, principals can also, Weiss notes, reserve for themselves any decisions about personnel, budget and curriculum.

In this study, Weiss gives one specific example of a principal who was "philosophically and psychologically uncomfortable with SDM" (Weiss, 1993, p. 3). This principal had come from a traditional school and was accustomed to exercising authority, and was therefore unwilling to have to take all matters to the school's

decision-making group. This principal would anger group members by "violating the norm of public consensus" by telling the rest of the school when he had opposed a decision and been overridden. The school's decision-making group meetings were characterized by "a lot of shouting" and the principal would employ such tactics as recruiting like-minded teachers to the group so that he was not outvoted as often or as easily as he had been before.

Examining the motivations behind such responses, Weiss attempts to identify variables which affect the commitment principals have towards SDM. She finds that commitment varies as to whether the principal is the initial implementer of SDM or has inherited it, and whether or not the principal has an agenda for major reform in the school. Weiss concludes that the principals in her study that had implemented or initiated SDM in their schools were among the most ardent supporters, as were those who had a reform vision for their schools.

Weiss notes that schools where principals are pushing for serious change experience the most conflict. She finds that those principals who implement innovative programs "alienated members of the informal power structure of the school, such as department heads, union reps and others," and caused a "considerable degree of divisiveness" (Weiss, 1993, p. 7). Weiss also points out, however, that "schools with committed principals managed to implement more changes and more innovative changes in curriculum and schedules than schools whose principals were less supportive of SDM" (Weiss, 1993, p. 7).

Regardless of their responses, principals, according to King and Kerchner (1991), are central actors on the stage of educational reform. Without their positive involvement, proposed reforms are difficult to introduce and maintain; with their destructive involvement, reforms are impossible to undertake. These authors claim that principals who do not understand or support reforms occurring in their school or district can be the cause for the collapse of reform movements; principals' resistance

can be a source of concern for those demanding change. Although in their study the authors observed that principals may have impeded negotiated teacher reforms, they also discovered situations where districts provided principals with perquisites to engage with decentralization. These included monetary compensation, direct communication lines to the superintendent and easy access to district services, involvement in labor-management committees, increased autonomy in school organization, professional development training and interpersonal support networks.

Weiss (1993), comments in conclusion to her study that, whatever a principal's initial response to SBM, those principals about to embark on a shift should be patient and not expect speedy change. She recommends that, to be effective, principals should shift from "being a doer and a manager to becoming a facilitator and enabler" (Weiss, 1993, p. 13). She concludes that successful principals under SBM are "those who plugged away, reminding, prodding, raising suggestions, lobbying among teachers, securing outside resources, holding workshops, getting release time for teachers to work together, bringing in information form other schools, but always keeping the reform vision in the sight of all" (Weiss, 1993, p. 13).

Several authors have indicated that principals are experiencing a high level of anxiety when faced with the challenge of role changes. These authors show that principals may completely support or directly or indirectly resist this role change. Whatever, their orientation, however, it is clear that principals are central to any education reform. As such, a variety of supports, enticements and training may be made available to them to encourage positive compliance.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL CULTURE

King and Kerchner (1991) contend that the "new" style of principal leadership under successful SBM/SDM is neither autocratic nor dictatorial. Rather, it centers

on shared decision-making authority which encourages others to participate in school leadership. Such "new" principals delegate responsibility and are not "threatened by working collaboratively with teachers and union representatives" (King and Kerchner, 1991, p. 3).

King and Kerchner's argument is consistent with Hallinger's (1992) claim that for effective SBM, the principal's leadership style must shift from instructional to transformational leadership. Indeed, as Leithwood (1992) observes, "instructional leadership no longer appears to capture the heart of what school administration will have to become" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 8). He adds a "business" analogy to explain what is happening in the restructuring of schools. In business, "Type A" organizations (which have "centralized controls, maintain differences in status between workers and managers and among levels of management and rely on top-down decision processes") are shifting to "Type Z" organizations (which emphasize the importance of "strong cultures to influence employees' directions and reduce differences in the status of organizational members)" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 8). Type Z organizations focus on participative decision making and are based on a "radically different form of power that is consensual and facilitative in nature - a form of power manifested *through* [original emphasis] other people, not *over* [original emphasis] other people" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 9). To accomplish this organizational climate, "transformational leadership" is required. When it is present in an organization, school staff members "make the most of their collective capacities in solving school problems" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 9).

This shift favors such practices as building shared visions, improving communications and nurturing collaborative decision-making processes not for moral principles, but because "such [a] shift increases productivity" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 9). As discussed above, however, "...when a process makes people feel they have a voice in matters that affect them, they will have greater commitment to the overall

enterprise and will take greater responsibility for what happens to the enterprise" (Sarason, 1990, in Leithwood, 1992, p. 9).

Indeed, transformational leadership provides incentives for people to attempt improvements in their practices. Transformational leaders are in continuous pursuit of three fundamental goals: "1) helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative, professional culture; 2) fostering teacher development; and 3) helping staff solve problems together more effectively" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 9).

Under transformational leadership, the principal does not implement an "imported solution to address someone else's definition of the problem" but rather, "assist[s] staff in reaching their own conception of the problems facing the school, [and helps] generate and develop potentially unique solutions" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 42). Part of this involves "tapping" the expertise and leadership of teachers rather than insisting on his or her own expertise. This supports the flexibility and thoughtfulness of quality decision-making, as "collective decision-making represents a stronger response to solving non-routine problems...and highlights the importance of principals' ability to work collaboratively with staff in group problem solving" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 42). Of course, such emphasis on shared decision-making greatly alters what was once a principal's private discretionary activity.

The strategies transformational leaders use in promoting and maintaining a collaborative culture include "involving staff members in collaborative goal setting and reducing teachers' isolation by creating time for joint planning" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 10). Bureaucratic mechanisms are used to support cultural changes, as, for example, when principals select new staff members for the school's decision-making groups, to either initiate new members or strengthen the mission of the groups. Transformational leaders "actively [communicate] the school's cultural norms, values, and beliefs in their day-to-day interpersonal contacts and [share] power and responsibility with others through delegation of power to school improvement teams

within the school" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 10). Trice and Beyer (1991, in Weiss, 1993), write about the difference between "innovation leaders" and "maintenance leaders" noting that innovation leaders "sell others on their ideas," and maintenance leaders "are more apt to sit back and facilitate the plans of others" (Trice and Beyer, 1991, in Weiss, 1993, p. 12). Hence, transformational leadership is compatible with the concepts of innovative leadership.

Strategies used by transformational leaders to foster teacher development include soliciting feedback about "discrepancies between their goals for growth and their current practices and giving teachers a role in solving nonroutine problems of school improvement within a school culture that values continuous professional growth" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 10). Part of this is actively "seeking different interpretations, and placing individual problems in the larger perspective of the whole school and its overall directions" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 11).

Transformational leaders also actively listen to different views and clarify and summarize key points during meetings. They are good at being facilitative in meetings. They can keep a group "on task" but also be flexible enough to change their own views when warranted, "check out their own and other assumptions and [remain] calm and confident" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 11). Leithwood (1992) concludes that transformational leaders "[share] a genuine belief that their staff members as a group could develop better solutions than the principal could alone," a belief apparently not shared by non-transformational leaders in their studies (Leithwood, 1992, p. 11).

Although the tenets of transformational leadership are compatible with school-based management and shared decision-making, Hallinger (1992) maintains that principals "must integrate a variety of role orientations if they are to succeed as leaders" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 44). Aside from the transformational role of being facilitators and coordinators of school activities (Weiss, 1993), they also have to

assume the role of "gatekeeper" (King and Kerchner, 1991) which involves "interpreting community values and ensuring that they are reflected appropriately in their school and meet those that press for change" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 43). But that is not all. Principals should also play a role not only as professional managers (as they did in the 1960's and 1970's) but additionally one as instructional leaders much like their "nineteenth century forebear, the headteacher" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 44).

In other words, principals have tremendous challenges. In order to meet them, Wilson and Firestone (1987) argue that..."principals need to use both bureaucratic and cultural linkages - the mechanisms that coordinate peoples' activities - to build commitment among teachers to the goals of the school" (Wilson and Firestone, 1987, in Dimmock, 1993, p. 10). Bureaucratic linkages, according to Wilson and Firestone, refer to the "formal enduring rules, procedures, and authority relations designed to control the behavior of teachers," while cultural linkages include the "system of collectively accepted meanings, beliefs, values, and assumptions that organizational members (teachers) use to guide their regular, daily actions and interpret their surroundings" (Wilson and Firestone, 1987, in Dimmock, 1993, p. 10).

With regard to effective administrators, the emphasis being placed on symbolic (Bolman and Deal, 1991) and instructional (Sergiovanni, 1989) aspects of leadership encourages principals to draw on influence sources (e.g., charisma and expertise) outside of the formal authority of their positions (Conley, 1991). Furthermore, Hallinger (1992) and Murphy (1985), suggest that "effective principals display a visible presence in classrooms [which] encourages the expansion of influence, at least in part, through informal access to information" (Murphy, 1985, in Conley, 1991, p. 254).

Transformational leadership favors a movement away from the traditional top-down form of leadership. It strives to de-emphasize the use of bureaucratic mechanisms to control people and relies on principals to develop an organizational

climate which promotes collegiality. The principal's role is thus to involve others in the decision-making process and to move the organization towards realizing a collectively formed vision. There are a variety of resources, forums and mechanisms for this, both within traditional structures, and among new structures, created by decentralization. Nevertheless, there are tremendous challenges for principals to take all the dimensions of their jobs. As such, some training and preparation is strongly advocated.

TRAINING AND PREPARATION FOR PRINCIPALS

One of the key findings presented by King and Kerchner (1991), is the lack of training for principals and teachers in SDM. In order for principals and members of school management teams to function in their roles successfully, they require a repertoire of skills including conflict resolution, consensus building, communication skills, policy formulation, and strategic planning (Miles, 1993) in order to successfully implement SBM. Indisputably, without an inventory of fundamental managerial skills, school governing teams are likely to experience insignificant gains in implementing reforms, policies or practices (David, 1989; Hallinger, 1992; Weiss, 1993). It is in acknowledgment of the need of not only support and training for principals, but also all affected personnel in implementing SDM, that this study has been conceived and conducted.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

In light of the tremendous variability of models, definitions, decision-making domains, roles and processes accompanying school-based management, it seems useful to anchor the analysis of the school in this case study along three broad

research questions. The first question delves into the actual structure/model of school-based management used at P.G.S.S. Its purpose is to describe the form(s) of SBM currently in place in the school. Its main intent is to investigate and outline the models of SBM used in the school and how these models are operationalized.

The second research question investigates shared decision-making in the school and explores how the "new" differs from "old" model of decision-making. It compares the new model with the old in terms of the types of decisions made, how decisions are made and who participates in school decision-making. It also examines the strengths, difficulties and problems that are inherent in the new structure of SDM.

Finally, since principals are central characters in any school change and hold a critical interest in school decision-making, the third question investigates the role of the principal under SBM and SDM at P.G.S.S.

1) How may SBM be characterized in Prince George Secondary School? (Model of SBM, Rationales, Structure, Effects)

2) What is the process of school decision-making in Prince George Secondary School? (Model of SDM, Rationales, Structure, Scope of Decisions, Who Participates, Strengths and Difficulties, Comparison of the New to the Old Structure)

3) What is the role of the principal under this structure of SBM and SDM? (Authority, Leadership, Change of role)

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

This project is a qualitative case study (Merriam, 1988; Schumacher and McMillan, 1993) using interactive, noninteractive and multimethod strategies (Schumacher and McMillan, 1993). Interactive strategies involved interviews of individuals who were instrumental in the adoption, implementation and continuation phases of the change in the decision-making process in the school. The individuals were selected for interviews because of their active involvement in introducing and implementing school changes. These individuals included past and present members of the school's decision-making team (staff committee).

Non-interactive strategies included a written survey of other staff members in the school who frequently attended the staff committee meetings and were members of other standing committees. These individuals were seen to have a high level of influence in school decisions because of their active involvement in problem-solving teams formulated to address school issues. Other non-interactive strategies included the examination of pertinent documents such as policy amendments, collective agreements, minutes of meetings, school annual reports and district reports.

Finally, multimethod strategies primarily included information obtained from direct observations of school-wide staff meetings, staff committee meetings and staff committee retreats. Together with the information collected by the other two methods, data was analyzed into the themes presented in chapters four and five.

In order to gain a more explicit grasp of the context of this study, however, it is useful to describe an overview of the actual site of the case study. As such, the following sections provide overviews of the school district and school in question, the staff committee and the school council. Next, the sources of non-interview information are detailed and the interview questions specified.

AN OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL DISTRICT 57 (PRINCE GEORGE) AND PRINCE GEORGE SECONDARY SCHOOL

The site selected for this study, Prince George Secondary School (P.G.S.S.), is located in Prince George, British Columbia, in a school district that serves a population of about 20,000 students. School District 57 (Prince George) has fifty-three elementary schools and eleven secondary schools, a continuing education program, and a correspondence school. The School District employs 2,667 people, serving communities as far north as Mackenzie and as far east as Valemount. There are seven elected school trustees who oversee the District's educational activities, (School District # 57, Newsletter, 1995).

School District 57 (Prince George), was selected for this study because of the nature of events which followed the Board of Trustees' decision to decentralize its decision-making processes and devolve decision-making authority to individual schools in the district. Articles in the 1992 Collective Agreement between the Board and teachers of School District 57 afforded individual schools the opportunity to develop processes for collaborative decision-making via staff committees. As a result, Prince George Secondary School's (P.G.S.S.) staff formed a staff committee, consisting of elected staff members and the principal, to replace the school council model of decision-making.

This change in the decision-making structure warrants investigation because it has comprehensively transformed the nature in which decisions are made at the school. Instead of having a school decision-making team comprised of members appointed by and accountable to the principal (a top-down, bureaucratic structure), team members are now elected by, and accountable to the school's faculty for all decisions. This shift in decision-making structure and accountability is consistent with Murphy and Beck's (1995) description of professional control of SBM and

Conley's (1991) professional model of decision-making which implies that higher-quality decisions are made when teachers are given the opportunity to participate in school decision- making. Hence, this study's comparative probe into the effectiveness of the "new" decision-making structure is deserving of intense analysis.

Prince George Secondary School enrolls approximately 1530 students from grades eight to twelve, with a total of 100 teaching staff and 10 support staff. The administrative team consists of a principal, three vice-principals, and a business manager. The community it serves is both rural and urban and students attend the school from several geographically separate areas. Students from the rural areas are bussed to school from a distance of up to thirty-five kilometers. The student population comes from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, and includes a significant Native population (nineteen percent). In addition, the school houses several district special education programs such as Alternate Education and Pre-Employment. In 1987 - 1988, this school became the district center for the International Baccalaureate Program.

Although the school offers a full secondary program from grades eight to twelve, the student enrollment is unevenly distributed among the different grade levels. There are approximately 120 students (each) in grades eight and nine, 110 in grade ten, 425 in grade eleven, 550 in grade twelve and 200 in ungraded programs. The junior secondary level students live within the immediate catchment area of the school, whereas the majority of the senior students arrive from three junior secondary schools, two of which are in suburban areas, with the third in a rural area.

Prince George Secondary opened in the late 1960s as a new facility. At that time it was solely a senior secondary and was considered to be a model facility (School Annual Report, 1995; Fonseca, 1992, Unpublished M.Ed. thesis).

P.G.S.S. was selected as the primary site for this study because no other schools in the School District have formed a staff committee of the same composition

and design as the one at P.G.S.S., i.e., consisting of elected staff members, including support staff, and the principal. In addition, access to this site and information rich data was enhanced as the researcher is a teaching staff member at P.G.S.S.

AN OVERVIEW AND DESCRIPTION OF THE P.G.S.S. STAFF COMMITTEE

Encouraged by Article 21 of the 1992 Collective Agreement between the School Trustees and the teachers of School District 57, the Prince George Secondary School (P.G.S.S.) staff struck a task force of volunteer members. The group soon became known as the "*staff committee* committee" (SCC), and consisted of both teachers and administrators. It set itself the task of exploring the possibilities concerning a comprehensive proposal on the size, shape and functions of a staff committee.

Early in the process, the SCC organized a workshop for itself, facilitated by BCTF Professional Development Associate Anne Smith. Sessions focused on staff committee responsibilities, mechanics of operation, agenda formats and minute-keeping, constitutions and procedures (Appendix # 1). Kit Krieger, then a BCTF staff member, was consulted and relevant research and documents on staff committees were examined and critiqued by the SCC. School Trustees (Appendix # 2) and Senior District Administrators were invited to both SCC and staff meetings to speak on the topic.

In the initial stages, members of the SCC were given the task of soliciting input from all P.G.S.S. departments about the structure of the staff committee. The goal of SCC was to seek answers to questions and to promote discussion about how to structure the committee. Following these department meetings, an informational progress report was presented to a full staff meeting. In January 1993, the SCC circulated a memorandum (Appendix # 3) to all staff, describing three possible staff

committee models. The staff was cautioned that a variety of formats existed, but *no* existing model was necessarily ideal for P.G.S.S. Should the staff decide that it *did* want to form a staff committee, SCC suggested, P.G.S.S. might need to invent its own model, taking from other models various practices and procedures considered appropriate for the school. It was further suggested by the SCC that changes to the shape and operation of the staff committee might be needed, and could be made as the committee and its functions evolved over time.

Staff members were urged to discuss the proposed models, and the meeting agreed that voting to determine P.G.S.S. preferences regarding specific procedures should occur at the next staff meeting. A portion of the next staff meeting was allocated for voting and the results were tabulated and circulated (Appendix # 4). The School District's collective agreement and the results of the vote were then utilized by the SCC to formulate a proposed constitutional framework for the school's staff committee (Appendix # 5). By April 1993, a proposed staff committee model had been drafted, and this was distributed to staff in preparation for its consideration at a full staff meeting. In May 1993, the majority of the staff agreed to adopt the constitution (Appendix # 6) in principle, and to hold elections by the end of the school year.

Elections were held at the final staff meeting in June 1993. Staff committee members became responsible for a group of ten randomly selected staff members, and for conducting occasional meetings with these "constituents" to discuss staff committee business (Appendix # 7).

During 1993-94 and 1994-95, staff committee meetings were held twice a month. As part of the process of clarifying and refining its function, the Staff Committee (SC) recommended to staff the creation of a School Operations Committee (SOC), which would be comprised of department representatives (chosen by department members), and which would meet monthly to deal with non-policy

related business: that is, the nuts and bolts of day to day school operations (e.g. "Student Council wants a school dance: which date is most suitable?" "Text book orders from departments need to be submitted" by such-and-such a date, etc.).

Staff agreed. SOC was created, and some of the pressure of business was lifted from staff committee meeting agendas. Staff Committee was then able to concentrate more on policy issues, such as student attendance and conduct rules and practices, bell schedules, use of the public address system versus the photocopied daily news bulletin, structures and roles of other staff standing committees, liaison with parents and the community, etc. In 1995-96, the staff committee switched from two meetings each month to one.

As of the time of writing, the P.G.S.S. staff committee remains in full operation, providing recommendations to staff and the school's administrative team on matters of school policy and other issues.

Other models of staff committees have been proposed by members (Appendix # 8) but are not currently in use.

AN OVERVIEW AND DESCRIPTION OF P.G.S.S. SCHOOL COUNCIL

Prior to the formation of the staff committee model of decision-making at P.G.S.S., many decisions were made by the school council. The school council consisted in part of the administration team (i.e., a principal and three vice-principals, the business manager who oversaw the school finances as well as eight appointed Positions of Special Responsibilities (P.O.S.R.), who assumed the role of department heads). P.O.S.R.s usually served a term of two years and then positions were re-advertised. The school council had department heads from the Humanities, Special Education, Languages, Math and Science, Fine Arts, Industrial Education, Counseling and Business Education departments.

Any staff member could attend school council meetings and was entitled to a vote on any issues that were tabled. Most concerns relating to policy, school operations, and curriculum were first addressed at the department level but final decisions were made by school council. The administration team would solicit recommendation from school council on various issues before making any decisions (Fonseca, 1992). Decisions that could potentially affect the whole staff were discussed during school-wide staff meetings before decisions were arrived at by administration or school council. Decisions or voting on issues seldom occurred during school-wide staff meetings.

School council often used to deliberate on various issues, such as the school's timetable, attendance policy, calendar of school activities, budget and reporting periods. P.O.S.R.s would consult department members and delineate departmental needs and preferences in relation to any given issues addressed in school council meetings. During voting (done by a show of hands), P.O.S.R.s would presumably vote to reflect their department's wishes.

The agendas for school council meetings were formulated by the administration team and any other business was added by the P.O.S.R.s at the beginning of each meeting. These issues were then discussed in order of their submission. Any deliberations or decisions made by school council were communicated to the whole staff via memoranda or by P.O.S.R.s during departmental meetings.

When P.O.S.R.'s were eliminated as a result of fiscal restraints and the Board's restructuring initiatives, articles in the 1992-1994 Collective Agreement between the School Trustees and the teachers of School District 57 afforded schools the opportunity to form staff committees. These external forces along with the dissolution of appointed P.O.S.R.'s provided the impetus to install new decision-making processes in the schools of Prince George School District.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A number of approaches have been used to obtain the information required to complete this report including an examination and review of district and school documentation pertaining to philosophy, goals and objectives. Other relevant data such as policy framework and processes, organization charts, decision making structures and processes, demographic data, budget and allocation of resources, collective agreements and program and teacher handbooks have also been examined. Information from communications circulars, i.e., agendas and minutes of staff committee meetings and school wide staff meetings have also been used as sources to obtain other needed information.

Open-ended and structured interviews of administrative staff, teaching staff committee members (past and present) and frequent visitors, support staff, i.e., clerks, teacher aides, custodians and local teachers' association officers were conducted to acquire their perceptions on the efficacy of the new decision-making model.

Finally, some information has been gathered from direct observations of staff meetings, staff committee meetings and retreats.

The conclusions delineated in this study are limited by the fact that the data gathered are interpreted by the researcher who is a current member of the teaching staff. Furthermore, since this report is based on a case study, its findings are not meant to be generalizable or universally applicable to other schools or school districts. However, the internal validity of this study is reinforced by the lengthy data collection period (June 1993 - June 1996) and disciplined subjectivity (Schumacher and McMillan, 1993). Also, comparability and translatability of the findings is enhanced by establishing the context in which the findings were generated.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1) How would you describe the decision-making structure in placed in this school?

2) What are the main differences between this new decision-making structure and the old structure?

3) What kind of problems have you observed with the present model of decision-making?

4) What do you see are the strengths of the staff committee model of decision-making?

5) Are there any other comments you would like to add relevant to the effectiveness of, or changes to, the present model of decision-making?

6) (Additional question for the principal) How would you describe your role as a principal in this new form of school decision-making?

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter, divided into three sections, addresses the research questions as outlined in the second chapter. It first describes the structure of SBM and SDM currently used at Prince George Secondary School (P.G.S.S.) along with the rationales for their implementation. Second, it discusses the new decision-making structure and its strengths and problems. Throughout both sections, a comparison of the "new" staff committee structure with the "old" school council is presented. Thirdly, since the principal plays an important role in school decision-making, his role under this new structure of decision-making is also examined.

The information presented in this section was derived from written surveys completed by staff members (Appendix # 9), open-ended and structured interviews of staff committee members (past and present), staff committee retreats, observations of staff and committee meetings, and other documents contained in school and school district files (Appendix # 1 - 16).

THE STRUCTURE OF SBM AT P.G.S.S.

Article 21 titled "Staff Committees and School-based Decision-making" of the 1993-1994 Collective Agreement between the Board of School Trustees of School District No. 57 (Prince George) and the Prince George Teachers' District Association (P.G.D.T.A.) states that "each school shall develop processes and practices to foster collaborative decision making and problem solving at the school level amongst all employees" (Collective Agreement, 1993-1994, p. 11). This section of the agreement clearly states that each school within the district may implement collaborative decision-making through staff committee[s]. This section of the collective agreement

is of considerable importance because it unambiguously states that staff committee[s] may "review and make recommendations on any matter of general interest to the staff" and that "recommendations of the staff committee[s] shall be considered and responded to by the school administration" (p. 11). In interpreting this section of the Collective Agreement, the staff committee constitution formulated at P.G.S.S. extended the intent of the article by stating that... "the purpose of staff committee is to facilitate collaborative decision making and problem solving to enhance the working and learning climate of the school." This section of the staff committee constitution, consistent with Article 21, also states that "the staff committee shall review and make recommendations on any matters it agrees to consider, where such matters are of general or specific interest to the staff of P.G.S.S."

This article of the collective agreement specifically pronounces that authority and accountability for school decision-making resides with principals and that staff committees assume an advisory and consultative function in school decision-making. Although the principals are legally compelled to consider and respond to staff committees' recommendations on any school decision, they are not obligated to follow any of those recommendations.

In light of Article 21 in the collective agreement, the structure of SBM at P.G.S.S. can be characterized as containing elements consistent with the models of organizational decentralization as delineated by Brown (1990, p. 60), and the administrative control and the professional control of SBM as described by Murphy and Beck (1995, p.43). It appears, based on the data collected, that SBM at P.G.S.S. bears similar features to the above mentioned models of SBM because not only does final decisional authority belong to the principal, but teachers (via the staff committee and other standing committees) and parents (through a Parent Advisory Council, P.A.C.) are cast in a purely advisory role. Although important in the role

they play in school governance, P.A.C.s are not relevant in this writing and are not elaborated here.

Thus, based on Article 21, it appears that the principal is expected to solicit input from staff committee on any school decision that affects teachers and students, and make decisions after considering the recommendations provided by the school's staff. As specified in Article 21 (Appendix # 5) of the collective agreement, the staff committee assumes an advisory role in school governance. Given that its mandate is to provide recommendations to the school's administrative team on issues of general interest to the staff, the staff committee is not considered by its members, or the school's staff, as a final decision-making body.

This is of considerable importance because the principal, who took a year's leave of absence in the same year that the staff committee was formed, had initially assumed that the staff committee was to play a similar role to the school council. As a result, in the first year of implementation, members of the staff committee and the administration experienced a high level of confusion and frustration regarding the staff committee's role. The principal, in particular, was frustrated by the staff committee's presumed role. One interviewee noted the principal "almost fell off his chair" when during a staff committee retreat he was informed by the members that they did not envision the staff committee playing a role similar to that of school council. In particular, members informed the principal that they envisioned the primary role of the staff committee as advisory to the administration on policy issues that affected the working and learning conditions of the school. Apparently, the administration's view of the role of staff committee was to be that of a primary decision-making team for the school. Consequently, this role confusion became quite obvious in the implementation and continuation phases, resulting in a high level of frustration experienced by the administrative team. Perhaps its frustration can be

summed up by the comment of one member of the administrative team "...staff committee? oh, they actually don't do anything...they just talk."

What is intriguing about this role confusion is that members of the staff committee did not want to be seen as replacing the school council model of decision-making. As one interviewee stated, "we don't want to replace one hierarchical universe with another." This is significant because members of the staff committee felt that the old school council was an extension of the administration and was used by the principal as a forum to approve and implement decisions formulated by the administration: members were appointed by the principal and their tenure as persons of special responsibility was perceived to be dependent upon their visible support of administrative preference. This proved uncomfortable. As one interviewee mentioned, "I want to be seen as a person who represents the staff, not the administration." So why undertake the change to new system? To explore that, it is important to highlight the rationale behind the implementation of SBM at P.G.S.S.

RATIONALE FOR SBM/SDM AT P.G.S.S.

The driving force behind SBM at P.G.S.S. is evident in the Board's goal of "[reducing] the size and cost of district administration to direct more resources to schools" and "to flatten out the management structure in order to provide more direct support and decision-making power to schools" (Report of the Board of School Trustees, June, 1993, p. 37). The Board, more particularly, wanted "to move the point at which decisions are made as close to the schools as possible" and "to develop processes that ensure that those affected by decisions are consulted and involved in the making of those decisions" (ibid.). The Board's intentions in implementing "decentralized decision-making processes" (ibid.), was "to locate all resources,

providing curriculum and programme support to teachers...in schools" and "have all staff responsible for the delivery of curriculum and programme supports..." (Report of the Board of School Trustees, June, 1993, p. 39). The underlying principle that motivated the Board to move in this direction is to "[effectively involve] students, employees and the community in planning and decision-making..." (School District No. 57 Newsletter, 1994-95).

It is apparent that the Board's rationale was to "reduce the size and cost of district administration" while simultaneously improving schooling by providing opportunities for all stakeholders (employees, students and the community) to be involved in decision-making (Report of the Board of School Trustees, June, 1993, p. 37). It appears that the most significant strategies the Board employed in reducing its administrative costs were the elimination of paid P.O.S.R.s (department heads) and the installation of mechanisms for the formation of more collaborative decision-making structures (staff committees) in schools.

The staff committee constitution specifies that the role of staff committee is to "review and make recommendations to be considered and responded to by the school administration on any matters it agrees to consider, where such matters are of general or specific interest to the staff" (Staff Committee Constitution, 1995). Clearly, this purpose and mandate allow the staff committee to consider a diverse range of issues and influence any school decisions that affect both staff and students.

THE PROCESS OF SHARED DECISION-MAKING (STAFF COMMITTEE) AT P.G.S.S.

In June, 1993, the staff committee constructed a constitutional framework to differentiate it from the (earlier) school council, and to outline the size, shape, and functions of the new decision-making body. It begins by defining the staff as "all

those persons who are employed by the school district to work primarily out of P.G.S.S." (Staff Committee Constitution, 1993, Appendix # 6). This includes not only teachers, but administrators as well as support staff. The constitution also specifies that the purpose of the staff committee is to promote collective decision-making in order to "enhance the working and learning climate of the school" and to review and make recommendations to the school's administration on issues it agrees to discuss, if such issues are of "general or specific interest to the staff" of the school (Staff Committee Constitution, 1993, Appendix # 6). Although this constitution is clear that the staff committee is not to make decisions, it stipulates that the school's staff may call a staff meeting to review any recommendations that the staff committee makes..."in the event of disagreement between the staff committee and the staff, the decision of the staff meeting shall prevail" (Staff Committee Constitution, 1993, Appendix # 6). Under this framework, it is supposedly understood that the school's staff, not the staff committee, is the final decision-making body.

Membership on the staff committee consists of: "one representative of the school's administration" (known as the Admin. Rep., usually the principal), who represents the school's administrative team consisting of the principal, three vice-principals and one business manager; "one representative for each ten (or fraction thereof) of P.G.D.T.A. members" (known as teacher reps.) who represent a teaching staff of one hundred; and "one representative for each ten (or fraction thereof) of C.U.P.E. members" (Canadian Union of Public Employees) known as "support reps," who represent support staff, i.e., secretaries, custodians, teacher assistants, noon-hour supervisors (Staff Committee Constitution, 1993, Appendix # 6). As is evidenced in this membership, the proportional representation for each working group in the school is not balanced. Although teachers have a higher number of representatives in the staff committee (ten representatives in this case according to the formula of representation), the administrative team maintains a disproportionate

advantage in the number of individuals it represents. This occurs because there is one admin. rep. representing only four administrators. Since there are one hundred teachers on staff, there are ten teacher reps. on the staff committee. Although support staff are entitled to four representatives, they generally have only one representative at staff committee meetings. Essentially, each teacher representative represents a constituent "pod" of ten randomly selected teachers. These teacher representatives supposedly voice the concerns of their constituents and communicate their constituents' preferences on issues deliberated by the staff committee. This representation of constituents' concerns, however, can only occur if teacher representatives are in continuous contact with their contact groups. Based on personal observations, however, contact group meetings only occur on an infrequent basis. This may be attributed to the fact that no specific times are scheduled for contact groups' meetings.

The administration's representative has always been the principal, while teacher and support staff representatives are elected to the staff committee in an annual election. Teacher and support staff representatives are elected for two year terms "staggered so that half the positions are elected each year" (Staff Committee Constitution, 1993, Appendix # 6). By-elections are also held "at a constituency group's discretion, to fill vacancies" or to "adjust numbers upward" if staffing numbers warrant (Staff Committee Constitution, 1993, Appendix # 6). The main purpose of the staggered elections, as one member states, "is to make sure that the staff committee is not totally made up of rookies."

Any member of staff (as defined in this constitution), who is not a member of staff committee, may attend staff committee meetings and has the right to speak but is governed by the same rules of order as other members. The non-members, however, are not accorded the right to vote. Other visitors may be "admitted to any Committee meeting at the discretion of the person chairing the meeting, except that

his or her discretion on this matter may be overturned by a majority decision of the Committee, or a decision made by a staff meeting" (Staff Committee Constitution, 1993, Appendix # 6). This practise was meant to reinforce the message that decisions are not to be unilaterally made by the staff committee.

Meetings are held at the call of the chairperson(s) (persons elected by staff committee members) when agenda items exist, or at the call of one third or more of the members of the committee, or when requested by a general staff meeting. Staff committee meetings are normally held on a Thursday prior to a general staff meeting or any other day provided that reasonable notice is given to committee members. During the early implementation phase, the staff committee met twice a month to address school business. This frequency was necessary as one member stated "to deal with all the administrivia" the administration had included in the agenda. During an observation of one of the staff committee meetings, it became clear that some members felt this was a misuse of committee time. As one member stated, "it is a pity to spend so much time discussing trivial items. Perhaps items like this can be handled through a memo system." This statement was made in reference to a discussion on school dance dates. The principal responded to this statement by saying that "I don't want to dominate this meeting, but I'm not going to approve dates without school support." The principal continued by stating that "I need a representative group of teachers to run things by, and to talk about certain issues. I don't know where to go [with this]. If I can't present it to this group, I need one to present it to."

Under the Constitution, staff committee agenda items may be submitted by any staff member, "by adding them to an open agenda [which is] prominently posted" (Staff Committee Constitution, 1993, Appendix # 6). Before formally adopting an agenda, committee members establish an adjournment time, which can only be exceeded with the agreement of two-thirds of voting members present. A quorum

exists when the numbers of members present exceeds fifty-percent of the committee's total elected membership. In the early implementation phase of staff committee, the adjournment time was agreed on in the beginning of each meeting. It was usually agreed by members of the committee to adjourn meetings at five p.m. The principal, in all staff committee meetings observed, voted against this adjournment time. The principal always argued that there was never enough time to address all the agenda items and that the committee needed to meet longer. In one particular meeting, the principal asked to speak about the adjournment time and voiced his concern stating that he "had difficulty supporting the motion to adjourn at five p.m." because "it [is] very frustrating if we don't complete items on the agenda." One committee member's suggestion was to "reduce the administrivia from the agenda." The principal disagreed. The disagreement between staff committee members on the adjournment time of meetings shows that "lack of time" is a constant obstacle that staff committee continuously encountered. On the one hand, the principal needed the staff committee to meet longer to appropriately address all items contained in the agendas but, on the other hand, other members, particularly teacher representatives, could not meet longer because of other commitments. As one interviewee stated "I can't stay longer, I have a ride [home] waiting." This problem may be attributed to the fact that no time was allotted during school operating hours for staff committee meetings to occur.

An important task established by the Constitution is the responsibility of electing or appointing, with consent of the school's staff, persons to fill "time-limited roles or perform such specific tasks as the Committee may from time to time decide are necessary or desirable" (Staff Committee Constitution, 1993, Appendix # 6). This is significant because the staff committee may, based on school or staff needs, strike other standing committees to look into specific issues and to provide recommendations to address these issues to the staff committee. These

recommendations are initially discussed by the staff committee and then presented in a general staff meeting for discussion and voting. The staff committee makes decisions based on motions and voting. Any decisions made by the staff committee are posted or circulated to staff via memoranda by the recording secretary (chosen by members). Minutes of meetings are kept on school files, with a duplicate placed in the library for staff perusal. The constitution also stipulates that amendments to the constitution may only be made during a general staff meeting at the discretion of the staff.

In summary, the staff committee constitution clearly outlines the procedures and processes utilized by the staff committee when addressing school issues. It specifically delineates its role and functions in school decision-making and provides a process for the school's staff to bring forth individual and organizational concerns. Although the staff committee, according to its constitution, is not a decision-making body, it does make decisions as to how specific school issues will be addressed. School decisions that have far-reaching implications that could affect the staff and students as a whole are generally made during a staff meeting. The task of the staff committee is to decide whether an issue deserves prolonged examination, and thus it decides whether another standing committee needs to be formed. The staff committee during its deliberations also generates recommendations to address specific issues to formally present to the staff for discussion and voting. To understand how the staff committee is structured is important, but of equal value is the understanding of how the constitutional framework is operationalized within the school's decision-making process. In this context, an examination of how decisions are made would provide a broader information base in which SDM at P.G.S.S. can be analyzed.

HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE BY THE STAFF COMMITTEE

Regardless of the type of issue that the staff committee encounters, a decision-making process is followed before any recommendations are put to the staff. This process is a consistent template that the staff committee follows before any decisions are made. The first step in the decision-making process is problem identification. This problem is either brought to the attention of a staff committee member for discussion and possible resolution during a constituent meeting, or submitted as an agenda item for staff committee consideration. Generally, uncomplicated problems are discussed and resolved during a staff committee meeting. If the problem appears complex and controversial, the item is further examined and discussed. The staff committee then decides whether a task force needs to be formed to examine the problem further. Should the staff committee decide that a task force needs to be formed, staff members are asked in a general staff meeting to volunteer to sit on the task force examining the problem. The task force then meets to examine the problem and generates recommendations for staff committee discussion. The task force recommendations are then presented to the staff in a general meeting. Amendments to the recommendations may occur during the staff meeting or voting may occur in support of one or a combination of the recommendations. The results of the voting establish the premise for a draft policy to be written by the task force. A draft of the policy is then presented to staff in a general meeting and voting takes place to ratify the policy. If the policy is ratified, it is included in the student or teacher handbook or both. Thus, the school decision-making process when addressing complex organizational issues can be summarized in the following steps:

Step 1:	Step 2:	Step 3:
Problem is identified.	Problem submitted as an agenda item for staff committee discussion.	Problem discussed and recommendations are generated by staff committee to present to staff or task force formed to examine problem.
Step 4:	**Step 5:**	**Step 6:**
Recommendations by task force put forth in a general staff meeting for discussion.	Amendments are proposed.	Draft policy is composed by task force.
Step 7:	**Step 8:**	**Step 9:**
Draft policy is presented to staff.	Voting takes place.	Policy is ratified and included in school file and handbooks.

This process of decision-making is followed by the staff committee when addressing complex problems. It is of significance because it demonstrates the amount of staff involvement that can occur at each stage in school decision-making. The decision-making template the staff follows also illustrates how individuals can formally involve themselves at any stage of the decision-making process. But most importantly, it displays the democratic nature in which school decisions are made. This, then is the process. What of the content of the types of issues that are deliberated?

TYPES OF ISSUES DELIBERATED BY STAFF COMMITTEE

It is important to examine the types of issues that are deliberated by staff committee so that conclusions can be reached as to whether the issues discussed actually promote an improved working and learning climate in the school.

A range of topics is presented in this section that have been considered by the staff committee during the adoption, implementation and continuation stages of the staff committee model of decision-making. The examples noted here are not exhaustive of the range of issues discussed and are meant to give only a flavour of matters considered by the staff committee. Most of the issues delineated occurred during the adoption and implementation phase of the staff committee model of decision-making. It is noteworthy that the types of issues considered by the committee moved more towards policy related issues during the continuation phase.

The range of issues considered by the staff committee during the adoption and implementation phases can be placed in seven categories: 1) staff committee operation; 2) school rules, policies, practices and procedures; 3) school budgets and staffing; 4) staff professional development; 5) legal matters; 6) community interaction; and 7) curricular matters. It is hoped that a close examination of the types of issues staff committee considered will provide an understanding of the decision-making domains that the staff committee participated in. It is necessary to determine these decisional areas so that conclusions can be made about whether they are indeed areas in which the school's staff hold a personal stake or have knowledge about.

In the adoption and implementation phases, the most significant topic discussed by the staff committee related to the actual operation of the staff committee. More precisely, meetings were saturated with discussions relevant to clarifying and amending roles and responsibilities of the staff committee and its members. Even though the constitution prescribed the general representative structure and purpose of the staff committee, it did not specify the roles and responsibilities of its members. This is of considerable importance because initially staff committee members were uncertain of their duties and hence, unsure of the types of school issues they needed to address. On the one hand, the principal

envisioned the role of the staff committee as all encompassing, which included communicating departmental concerns which might involve curricular issues as well as other pertinent organizational concerns. On the other hand, teacher representatives did not see themselves as departmental representatives or department heads and did not want to discuss department issues. And, in light of the representative structure of the staff committee constitution, departmental representation in the staff committee was non-existent. Hence, because constituent groups were randomly selected, staff committee representation was not departmentally or geographically based, thus rendering departmental representation impossible. Furthermore, since staff committee members did not want to perpetuate the school council model of decision-making, they refused to discuss specific departmental concerns. As one staff committee member stated..."we are not here to represent department interest, we don't see ourselves as replacing school council."

Another stated..."this role was thrust upon us, [we] are asked to pick up pieces the school council took care of." It is clear that neither every member in the committee nor the school's staff was really aware of the roles and responsibilities of the staff committee or its members. As a result, meetings and retreats in the adoption and implementation phases were permeated with discussions related to staff committee's role and responsibilities. More specifically, members of the staff committee wanted to clarify the decision domains which they needed to be responsible for. One member put it quite succinctly when she asked..."who is this committee really for?, what is the intent?" Since decision domains were unclear during the adoption and implementation phases, the staff committee deliberated a wide range of issues including school rules, policies, practices and procedures.

Topics in these areas were extremely diverse. Some of the discussions resulted in the formulation of school policy or alterations in school procedures, and other discussions were simply for information sharing. One significant issue which resulted

in the formulation of policy was student attendance. Since attendance rates were of continued and considerable importance to academic achievement, the staff committee decided that a task force was needed to examine the problem. As a result, an attendance committee composed of voluntary membership and chaired by a staff committee member was formulated. Their task, as established by the staff committee, was to make recommendations for staff approval to improve attendance rates.

Other examples of topics discussed under this heading included the calendar of school activities which involved establishing appropriate dates for school activities such as parent-teacher nights, memorial services, school assemblies, school dances, reporting periods, and any other activities that affected both students and teachers. It was the responsibility of staff committee members to share with the administration any information that interfered with the smooth running of school activities.

Other items that were discussed were the District Code of Student Conduct, mentoring of new teachers, contents and format of staff and student handbooks, school access during non-operating hours and school growth plans. The results of the discussions on these topics were communicated to the whole staff via memoranda and publications of meeting minutes. It was in these discussions that information about the day-to-day operation of the school were shared between the administration and staff committee.

As was stated earlier, final decisions were not normally made by the staff committee. Instead, staff committee meetings became the vehicle for the administration to share and disseminate information. In most cases, the principal supplied or sought information relevant to budgets and staffing needs.

In this decisional area, topics such as access to accreditation funds, budget overruns, methods for prioritizing technology purchases, processes for determining

the use of leadership points (release blocks), job descriptions, recruiting persons for specific responsibilities such as athletic or graduation coordinators, and staffing recommendations were discussed. Recruitment of school personnel and staff evaluation reports, however, were not included in staff committee agendas or discussions, and authority in these domains belonged to the principal. Teachers, however, were oftened asked to participate in the selection process when the need to hire staff arose. Although decisions were not made during staff committee meetings on any issue, the principal sought and considered staff committee recommendations on any issues relating to budget and staffing

The topic of staff professional development also attracted discussion from the staff committee because it affected all of the staff and specific strategies were needed to assess the professional development needs of staff members. Also, the issue of teacher accountability for non-instructional days became a concern. The professional development committee was asked to look into obtaining facilitators for the school's professional development days. Again, the discussions around this topic were for information sharing and required no specific decision.

On some occasions, the principal shared information regarding legal matters such as negligence lawsuits initiated by parents, child abuse legislation and the responsibilities of teachers and W.C.B. regulations on designated first-aid persons in work sites. Again, no decisions were made on these issues except that information was shared with the staff committee.

Also, the principal provided information to the staff committee regarding community use of school facilities, RCMP concerns regarding student drivers and corporate partnerships. Again, no specific decisions were made by the staff committee.

Discussions relevant to curricular matters included topics related to the need for and formulation of an academic review committee and discussions of

recommendations from the educational change committee. Information relevant to the placement of special needs students, release time for curriculum development, the implementation of ministerial initiatives, funding and timing of curricular field trips and school policy on final exam exemptions were also discussed by the staff committee.

In summary, it is important to note that many of the topics discussed by staff committee led to recommendations from the staff committee for discussions during meetings of the whole staff. It appeared that the staff committee consciously avoided making decisions that would in some way be binding on staff members not at staff committee meetings. It is also important to mention that those issues that were not considered to be contentious were deliberated by the staff committee and decisions were communicated to all staff via publications of minutes. More complex policy issues were discussed by the staff committee and decisions were made by the entire staff during school-wide meetings. Although it appeared that staff members participated in all stages of the decision-making process, it was not clear what specific decision domains the staff committee held responsibilities for. More importantly, there were no guidelines to determine which issues were considered benign or contentious.

The democratic way in which the staff committee is entitled to make recommendations to the school's administration is quite obvious given that staff involvement can occur at any stage of the decision-making process. The structure of SDM at P.G.S.S. is one that increases participation in school decision-making. Indeed, the potency of this participative form of school governance lies within its democratic framework, but other strengths intrinsic to this form of decision-making deserve further discussion.

STRENGTHS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

In the adoption phase, it was apparent that those who were involved in the architecture of the staff committee were concerned most with developing a system of school decision-making that did not perpetuate the hierarchical pattern inherent within the school council model. This was made obvious in the initial constitution. The fact that teacher representatives were elected and not appointed by the principal (as in the school council model) indicated that most of those involved in the adoption phase wanted to move away from a decision-making system where members of the decision-making group were directly accountable to the principal. The results of the written survey and data from interviews repeatly showed that the school's staff wanted an elected group of representatives because this meant that they (elected members of the staff committee) could candidly express theirs and others' views without fear of losing their jobs as P.O.S.R.s. This electoral system, to most staff, was a true indicator of the efficacy of the staff committee system of decision-making because it unambiguously demonstrated that teacher representatives were accountable to the whole staff and not just the principal.

But what are the other strengths of the staff committee? Does it align with what recent research concludes? Does it promote open dialogue amongst school level actors and hence, not only broaden the information base in which decisions are made but amplify collegiality between staff members and the administration as well? Does the staff committee structure empower staff resulting in increasing staff involvement in school decision-making? Does accountability exist for decisions made in this democratic system of SDM? And, if accountability exists, where does it reside?

According to both past and present members of the staff committee and other staff members who were interviewed, communication of information among staff was enhanced through the staff committee. Since staff representatives were responsible

for a randomly selected constituent group of ten staff members, communication was enhanced through these contact groups via small group meetings and discussions. More importantly, participation in small group discussions was encouraged because speakers were not "intimidated by having to voice their opinions in front of a lot of people" [during a school-wide staff meeting] and "people [were] more willing to voice their concerns in a small group format." As a result, the administration team "hears things better, particularly when there were [complaints]." Undoubtedly, communication and information flow between staff and the administration, according to some interviewees, was enhanced through the use of contact groups.

Since staff committee representation was configured using contact groups, where members were selected randomly and not departmentally based, it promoted inter-departmental communication as well and "did not draw attention to specific departments or staff member when sensitive issues or concerns [were] raised," and "anonymity [was] maintained" during staff meetings. The non-departmental composition of the staff committee also allowed "contact groups to divorce themselves from departments and helped [staff committee members] make decisions that affected the whole school [and not just represent] departmental interest." This apparently has been a healthy development because members of the staff committee must now consider issues from a whole school perspective instead of representing individual department preference. The staff committee, according to one member, also became an "avenue for communicating inadequacies within the school" and "contact group members appreciate being informed of staff committee decisions." And, because support staff members are now represented in the staff committee, "[they] feel part of the staff instead of feeling isolated."

According to some interviewees, because the contact groups were not departmentally based, "it encourage[d] friendly participation [in small group discussions] and reduce[d] [departmental] balkanization [which was] perpetuated by

the size of the school, the size of the staff [as well as] separate work areas for departments." There is no doubt that most interviewees believe that communication and perhaps collegiality (through staff committee and other standing committees formulated by staff committee) amongst school-site actors was enhanced through the non-departmental representation in the staff committee. But what about staff involvement in the decision-making process? Are staff members actually involved in the various stages of decision-making? And, does staff participation increase in this type of decision-making result in staff empowerment?

Perhaps the most important feature of the staff committee model of decision-making, according to some interviewees, is the open agenda system. The staff committee constitution states quite clearly that any staff member can submit items in the staff committee agenda. This "promote[d] staff involvement in [decision-making] because the agenda [was] not controlled [solely] by the administration." Also, because decisions that were binding to staff were not made in staff committee meetings but through voting at school-wide meetings, it became obvious that every staff member was afforded the opportunity to participate in decision-making. And, since voting at a general staff meeting is intrinsic in this decision-making process, "staff empowerment [was] increased [and facilitated]...soliciting staff input for decisions [which provided] a sense of ownership on any decisions [that were] made." In general, most interviewees held the opinion that the staff committee has been effective in "opening the communication lines" between staff and the administration and "people seem[ed] generally happier with decisions and with the method of hashing things out and then bringing it to staff meetings." Furthermore, staff participation in decision-making has been facilitated through staff volunteerism in other standing committees.

Indeed, it is reassuring to know that the staff committee model of decision-making is not only representative and democratic by design and practise, but that

the outcomes of the decision-making process have resulted in improved communication and collegiality between all staff members. But what about accountability for decisions made? Where does it belong and actually reside?

In the form in which SBM is arranged in this school district and in P.G.S.S. in particular, accountability for school decisions clearly belongs to the principal. Even though the school's staff is empowered through an elected body of representative in which teachers hold a majority, and mechanisms for a voting system when making final decisions exist, ultimate decisional authority and hence, accountability, rests with the principal. Although teacher representatives and/or the principal must communicate and explain reasons behind certain staff committee decisions to staff, teachers' jobs are not threatened should an unpopular decision be made. Teacher seats in the staff committee as representatives, however, may be jeopardized in future elections should their continued performance be substandard. According to one interviewee, "no evidence of professional responsibility or accountability exists" within the committee. This respondent, however, stated that "it [the staff committee] is a useful and presumably representative group to discuss policy issues with" and "I, also, frequently at our monthly meetings, ask for and receive advice on potentially sensitive or difficult issues." Even though the staff committee provides advice to the principal on certain issues, and the principal is legally obligated to consider and respond to the recommendations provided, authority and accountability for any decisions rests with the principal.

In summary, SBM and SDM at P.G.S.S. appears to contain several key strengths. Most noticeable amongst them are the democratic and representative nature of its structure. For whatever reason, staff collegiality has increased and the information base by which school decisions are made has also significantly expanded. And, although the model of SBM and SDM at P.G.S.S. contains several components, it appears to be consistent with organizational decentralization as presented by

Brown (1990) and the administrative and professional models as outlined by Murphy and Beck (1995). The Board's philosophy of devolving some decisional authority to individual schools in terms of budget, curriculum and personnel to improve educational outcomes and organizational health also coincides with those advocated by various scholars, e.g., Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994).

Many scholars, e.g., Conley (1991) and David (1989), however, also advance the notion that any organizational change or school restructuring is burdened with many uncertainties and obstacles. Thus, like any another social agency, undergoing substantial transformation, P.G.S.S. has encountered many barriers and problems during the change phases when it attempted to introduce a new system of decision-making. Therefore, it is essential to identify and fully comprehend these problems so that efforts to ameliorate the current system are underpinned by informed analysis.

PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY THE STAFF COMMITTEE

The problems outlined are obtained from personal observations of staff committee and school-wide meetings, interviews with staff committee members, other teaching staff , the principal, and written surveys. Since all persons interviewed do not share the same perceptions of the problems the staff committee encountered, the problems selected here may not be comprehensive, but they appeared to have emerged consistently in interviews, surveys and observations of the writer. And, in order to develop some understanding of the problems experienced by the staff committee, the problems are arranged into seven categories: 1) decision-making domains; 2) departmental communication; 3) school climate; 4) personality fit; 5) principal input; 6) lack of clear goals and strategies; and 7) lack of training and preparation.

In the adoption phase of the staff committee, most of the school's staff expected to encounter certain difficulties with the new decision-making model. One of the most salient difficulties as expressed by staff committee members, other staff members and the principal, was that no one knew what the structure would be like or how it would operate. Most staff committee members had little or no experience with this new form of decision-making. Although a constitution was formulated by staff committee members, and members of staff at large (but, significantly not the principal because of his leave of absence) no *decision-making domains* were established for this body or for the administration. Staff committee members did not know the boundaries of their decision-making domains and did not formulate one at the outset. During the implementation phase, this confusion about decision-making domains became quite evident when staff committee members felt that there were items in the agenda that did not belong within the staff committee decision-making domain, e.g., administrivia, students' award criteria, student council, professional development, accreditation follow-up, educational change (e.g., advisement), room allocation, school-based teams, extra-curricular activities, yearbook, parent-teacher nights, corporate partnerships, parent advisory councils, computer acquisition, departmental budgets, First Nations curriculum, ordering of departmental supplies, provincial exams, Ministerial directives, and health and safety to name just a few.

Staff committee members felt that many of these issues were not their responsibility and vehemently refused to discuss them during meetings. In the school council model of decision-making, all issues were addressed. Since many issues were not addressed by staff committee, the principal felt that a "vacuum" was created and that items that needed to be attended to were neglected. The administrative team felt compelled to address these issues and obtained support from the staff committee to form a school operations committee to attend to them. (Note: The school

operations committee, though important in the role it currently plays in school decision-making, is not part of this study).

Neither the staff committee or the administration specified what kind of relationship the school operations committee would have to the staff committee. Some teaching members in the staff committee did not approve or support the administration's move and felt that the administration was undermining the legitimacy of the staff committee. Some teaching members of the school, however, who did not belong to the staff committee, wanted to get involved in the various committees (e.g., school operations committee, educational change committee) that were created. Some teaching staff, however, did not want to get involved in these subsidiary committees because they felt that school decision-making belonged solely to the staff committee and did not want to interfere with the school's decision-making structure.

In summary, one of the most prominent difficulties experienced by the staff committee as whole, is the issue of decision-making domains. The principal also did not want to make unilateral decisions in certain areas to avoid conflict with the staff or staff committee. This lack of clear guidelines in decision-making domains which perpetuated a "lack of clarity" with the role of the staff committee and role of the principal was due in part to the non-departmental structure of staff committee. And, since staff committee members did not represent individual departments the problem of *departmental communication* emerged.

Since staff committee did not have departmental representation, a problem directly related to decision-making zones emanated from the Board's decision to eliminate P.O.S.R.'s . More precisely, the principal expressed a concern about the lack of communication between the administration and various subject departments. Due to budgetary restrains and the School District's goal to "flatten out the organization" the department head (P.O.S.R.) positions were dissolved at the same

time that the staff committee model was being implemented. This meant that no school within the Prince George School District had any department heads. No one in the schools was allowed to perform department head duties, and any teacher who did could be subjected to grievances filed by the local teachers' union. With the loss of department heads and departmental representation in the staff committee, the principal did not have direct access to the departments as a whole. The principal felt that departmental representation within the staff committee was essential for the dissemination of information relating to, for instance, budgets, staffing requirements, curriculum and attendance and provincial exam results.

To exacerbate the problem of departmental communication and representation, members refused to modify the staff committee structure so as to represent departmental concerns or needs because they did not see themselves as representatives of individual departments. This situation, in effect, was precipitated by the staff committee's orientation not to be seen as a group replacing the now dissolved school council because members felt that the school council model of decision-making had been too hierarchical. Moreover, the staff committee's refusal to address departmental issues, in fact, resulted in conflict between members and the principal which severely affected the *school climate*.

Another problem that became very divisive between staff committee members, the staff and the administration, was that P.G.D.T.A. members of the staff committee met as a group without informing or including the administration or support members of the staff committee. In an interview the principal noted that a "clique" had developed within the staff committee, and furthermore a clique that wanted to formulate "a united front on certain issues that were contrary to the interests of the staff and the administration." It is important to note that this is an observation made by the principal, and according to another interviewee, may not necessarily be the reality. The "clique" which conducted "caucus" meetings, would not

publish an agenda or minutes of their meetings and, according to the principal, "would lobby other staff committee members to vote a certain way on certain issues." The principal claimed that the meetings were a problem because the "democratic climate that he was trying to cultivate was being sabotaged."

The principal suggested that the problem was exacerbated by the destructive behavior of a certain staff committee member during school-wide and staff committee meetings. This member, whose behavior is confirmed by one other staff committee member and from personal observations, would make sarcastic comments, and make inappropriate facial and physical gestures whenever the principal would address the staff or the staff committee. According to the principal, this behavior was a blatant attempt to mock him and undermine his credibility. This became a problem because it was distracting and difficult for him to ignore during his addresses. However, quite apart from this complication as he was attempting to cultivate a more democratic and collaborative school culture, the principal was uncertain as to whether his *personality* was suited to such a task.

In an interview, the principal felt that his personality, one that is consistent with the traditional view of the principal as "captain of the school," might not be conducive to a participatory form of leadership. He felt that he needed to change his leadership style to suit a collaborative form of decision-making. This he thought might present a problem because of the number of years he had been used to the traditional or structural style of management.

Since the principal had inherited this new decision-making process, because of his year of absence, he had no significant input into its structure. The principal attributed some of the problems of the staff committee to this *lack of input*. If he had been accorded the opportunity to contribute to the staff committee constitution and the structure of staff committee itself, he would have not only a better understanding of its functions but had the opportunity to help establish the decision-making

domains that administration and the staff committee clearly required. He also commented that a staff committee model of decision-making which did not establish *clear goals and strategies* might present a problem.

The staff committee was formed to "improve the working and learning conditions" at P.G.S.S. This goal however, was not accompanied by any clear guidelines or strategies to meet this stated goal, and did not, by circumstance, involve any discussion with the principal as to methods. Members of the staff committee envisioned the staff committee as being the "teachers voice" in the school's decision-making process and would represent staff interests. Though sensible in its intent, the staff committee evidently neglected to formulate observable and measurable goals consistent with their stated purpose. This problem might have been avoided if appropriate *training and preparation* were provided to participants in the adoption phase.

Similarly, in an interview, the principal voiced some concerns about whether he had the skills to make the staff committee model of decision-making work. The principal mentioned that the School District had not offered principals any seminars or workshops on collaborative decision-making, conflict resolution, consensus building, and communication skills, and he felt overwhelmed with the responsibility of implementing a decision-making structure he had no training for.

Staff committee members who were interviewed also repeatly expressed the need for training for this type of decision-making structure. Because of the lack of resources, members of the staff committee were not given any pre-service training in the adoption, implementation and continuation phases of this decision-making model.

There is no doubt that principals are at center stage in any school change and have a critical interest in changes made in school decision-making. But what are the expectations of central office for principals under SBM? What is their role in SDM? How do they accommodate the incongruity of collective decision-making and being

exclusively accountable for all school decisions? These are questions that unavoidably permeate the thoughts of principals, and any study investigating school decision-making cannot dismiss the importance of the principal's role.

THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

In the Collective Agreement between the P.G.D.T.A. and the Board (1992-1994), the report of The Board of School Trustees (June, 1993), and newsletters published by the Prince George School District (1994-1996), it is clear that the Prince George School District is committed to implementing SBM and collaborative decision-making in schools. The Board resoundingly announced in all communiqués that students, employees and the community were to be effectively involved in planning and decision-making. More specifically, they stated that the "Board remains committed to processes which include all staff in decision-making" (Newsletter, October, 1996, Appendix # 15). Furthermore, one School District policy stipulated that the "Board...shall seek to maintain a collaborative school district" (School District Policy # 4100, Appendix # 12). The Board in this policy defined a collaborative school district "[as] one in which the professional autonomy of staff and the managerial responsibilities of the Board are harmonized around the common goal of providing the best educational opportunities for students" (ibid.). The Board also included the definition that collaboration "means one or more persons successfully working with other persons to attain common or agreed goals and objectives" (ibid.). Connected to this definition is the Board's acknowledgment that collaboration required "meaningful consultation and involvement [and] shared decision-making" (ibid.).

The most prominent feature in the Board's attempt to foster shared decision-making in schools is their promise to "stimulate more effective leadership and

decision-making in...schools by clarifying expectations of principals...[and] to identify areas where decisions previously made by senior, centralized administrators could be turned over to school principals..." (Newsletter, October, 1996, Appendix # 15). Clearly, this pronouncement delegated more decisional authority over school decisions to principals. Although the collective agreement between the P.G.D.T.A. and the Board afforded teachers the opportunity to participate in decision-making through staff committees, final authority and accountability for school decisions clearly belonged to the principal: "As an educational leader the principal is accountable for the total educational program of the school" (School District Policy 1170, Appendix # 13).

Linked to the Board's delegation of decisional authority, principals have also been expected to "encourage leadership by others within the school" (Principal's Annual Performance Appraisal, 1996, Appendix # 10) and are required to "[consult] with teachers...as an integral part of the decision-making process" (School District Policy 1170, Appendix # 13).

Thus, as is evident in newsletters and district policies, principals are delegated the authority and accountability for school decision-making. They are, however, simultaneously expected to include others in the decision-making process. The extent to which they encourage and allow others to participate in the decision-making process and the scope of those decisions is dependent upon their leadership style and the nature of the problem. It is all well and good to know the district's expectations for principals under SBM and SDM, but exactly what types of strategies principal's employ to meet those expectations are also of meaningful value to the purpose of this study.

Based on observations of the principal during staff committee and general staff meetings, it became apparent that the principal consciously deployed various strategies to encourage staff participation in decisions. On more than one occasion,

the principal said during staff meetings that "we'll take it to staff committee for advice" when he could not appropriately answer questions. More importantly, he repeatly asked "what do you think?" or "how do you want to go about it?" It is obvious in these statements that he frequently consulted others and considered their opinions before making any decision.

It appeared also that the principal attempted to dissolve the line of authority that separated him from other staff members by frequently referring to teachers as "my colleagues." And, during discussions in meetings, it appeared that he attempted not to dominate dialogue by responding, "I'm here to listen" when asked for his opinion. Frequently, the principal would also use a phrase like "if you decide..." to seek group consensus.

What needs to be mentioned here, however, is that although the principal appeared to be genuinely employing elements of transformational leadership as discussed by Leithwood (1992), one member of the staff committee remained suspicious of the principal's behavior and expressed skepticism about the principal's sincerity in attempting to involve others in decision-making. As this staff committee member stated..."he may be trying to look like he's trying to involve us [in decision-making] but I'm not convinced."

Aside from providing opportunities and encouraging staff members to express their views on certain issues, it became obvious that the principal's role was to disseminate information on legal issues, budget and staffing needs, curricular concerns as well as district expectations. In other words, a principal has many other duties mandated by his/her position, beyond those that pertain to his/her role in SDM.

In summary, this section of the study has provided a description of SBM and SDM and their rationales at P.G.S.S., and problems experienced by the school's staff when a collaborative decision-making model (consisting of elected staff members and the principal, a staff committee) replaced a school council model (comprising of

appointed department heads). The role of the principal in SDM is also explored, given that s/he is a central actor in school decision-making.

The problems depicted in this study and the examination of the principal's role in SDM are of considerable importance because this study scrutinizes the evolving role of teachers and principals in these times of educational reforms. This study acknowledges that teachers and principals are undergoing a massive redesigning of their roles and responsibilities as educators, driven by the debureaucratization of schools and the professionalization of teachers. This study also concedes that schools are restructuring and shifting towards shared decision-making structures. Thus, this shift toward SDM compels both teachers and administrators to change some of the parameters in which they perform their duties. Therefore, it is essential to utilize recent research to explain the structures of SBM and SDM and analyze the problems as delineated. Ideally, the analysis of the problems will lead to appropriate recommendations to help improve the decision-making structure currently used at P.G.S.S.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Presented in the last chapter were field data arranged around the areas of the three research questions. The first area concerned the structure and rationales of SBM at P.G.S.S. The second area examined in depth the processes of SDM at P.G.S.S. in terms of the nature and type of decisions, and both strengths and difficulties associated with it, as teachers moved into new arenas and arrangements of power with the principal. Finally, the third area concerned observations of the principal's role throughout the different stages of the shift towards SBM and SDM at P.G.S.S.

In this chapter, it is important to look at the specifics of the P.G.S.S. experience through the lenses of the literature, but that is, of course, problematic in that the literature itself so comprehensively emphasizes that nothing about any school's shift to SBM is standard. Therefore, in this final chapter, the results are re-stated in light of specifically appropriate literature. P.G.S.S.'s structure and rationale for both SBM and SDM are discussed with reference to the literature, and special notice paid to the strengths and problems currently encountered in the school. Indeed, these are identified and explained in seven key aspects. Finally, in an attempt to constructively contribute to the success of SDM at P.G.S.S., eight specific recommendations are offered and explained. Of necessity, these recommendations blend and bridge across the literature and the research questions as they are guided more by an interest in practical application than as objects of academic contemplation. Finally, this chapter concludes with a "capstone," commenting on the prospects for ongoing developments in SDM at P.G.S.S. It is fervently hoped that all of the comments in this chapter are received in the constructive, committed and benevolent spirit in which they are offered.

THE STRUCTURE OF SBM AT P.G.S.S.

As discovered in the literature review, many forms of SBM exist. Depending on contextual and organizational differences, some restructured school districts have subscribed to specific models of SBM, or employed combinations of various components borrowed from all the different arrangements of SBM. What is noteworthy about the arrangement of SBM at P.G.S.S. is that it does not exclusively belong to one form of SBM. More precisely, SBM at P.G.S.S. contains a combination of elements derived from organizational decentralization (Brown, 1990), the administrative and professional models of SBM as proposed by Murphy and Beck, (1995). In spite of the SBM arrangement, however, by implication, the school's staff at P.G.S.S. has been delegated the authority by central office to make some decisions about school policy, personnel, budget, curriculum and instruction. But how and where does SBM at P.G.S.S. fit within the various models of SBM?

One can conclude that because the principal in this school is expected to involve other staff members via a staff committee in the decision-making process, but reserves the right to final decisional authority and accountability over school-specific matters, the arrangement of SBM at P.G.S.S. is consistent with organizational decentralization (Brown, 1990), and the administrative and professional model of SBM (Murphy and Beck, 1995). Although the school has a parent advisory council, its role in school governance is quite limited. Hence, political decentralization or the community control model of SBM is not utilized at P.G.S.S. and is therefore not discussed in this study.

Although at P.G.S.S. decisional authority and accountability belong to the principal, s/he, according to the collective agreement and district expectations (Principal's Performance Appraisal Form, Appendix # 10; District Expectations for Principals, Policy 1170, Appendix # 14), is obligated to include other staff members, in

this case via staff committee, in school decision-making. Therefore, it can be concluded that SBM at P.G.S.S. also contains elements compatible with the professional model of SBM as delineated by Murphy and Beck (1995) and Brown (1990). This is important because, even though the principal maintains decisional authority over certain issues, e.g., personnel recruitment and evaluation, the process of decision-making at P.G.S.S. permits a high level of teacher influence and power. This occurs because decisions over organizational issues, particularly those that directly affect teachers, e.g., attendance policy, are made through voting at a meeting of the staff at large. In effect, although the decision-making process at P.G.S.S. embraces the consultative aspect of organizational decentralization and the administrative model of SBM, the model of SBM at P.G.S.S. leans toward the professional model.

Indeed, it is apparent that the change in the decision-making structure at P.G.S.S. operates using elements from various models of SBM. This change towards a more democratic system has given staff members opportunities to participate in decision-making via the staff committee as well as the opportunity to influence decisions via a voting system. Final decisional authority and accountability, however, still clearly resides with the principal.

It is, of course, of critical importance to this study to identify the model in which decision-making is arranged at P.G.S.S. so that conclusions about its efficacy can be reached. But what about the rationales for the adoption and implementation of SBM at P.G.S.S.? What forces were at work that compelled central office to institute SBM? And, more importantly, why did central office move towards a system of collaborative decision-making?

RATIONALES FOR SBM AT PRINCE GEORGE SECONDARY SCHOOL

Dimmock (1993) clearly stated that the impetus propelling restructuring efforts toward SBM is the belief that improved student achievement is most likely to be gained in schools which are relatively autonomous and maintain a focus on school-based decision-making. This proposal, Dimmock contends, focuses on client needs which allow schools to determine how to use resources to improve curriculum delivery for the benefit of students (Dimmock, 1993). Indeed, in this study, the Board's move to devolve more decision-making authority to schools was not only to allow school-level participants more opportunities to designate resources to improve curriculum delivery, but also to be accountable for the appropriate use of the allotted resources. Hence, it appears that the reasons behind the Board's move to install SBM in its schools are consistent with the rationales outlined by recent studies.

Other scholars support the devolution of decision-making authority and accountability to schools by contending that..."[this shift] enables increased attention to targeted instructional strategies and conditions, promoting a higher degree of responsiveness" (Mojkowski and Flemming, 1988, in Murphy and Beck, 1995). Mojkowski and Flemming (1988) predictions match the situation at P.G.S.S. because the staff committee responded immediately when the problems of students' attendance rates and academic achievement were identified. Another example of "responsiveness" was the staff committee's recommendations when the problem of inadequate departmental communication was identified. More specifically, because the staff committee did not discuss departmental issues, which are both strategic-organizational and operational-individual in nature (Conley, 1991), members recommended that a school operations committee be formulated to address issues related to these decision domains .

But can the effectiveness of staff committee only be measured by its responsiveness to address school issues? Does it have inherent weaknesses because of its non-departmental typology? These questions, of course, cannot be answered without closely examining the structure of SDM at P.G.S.S.

THE STRUCTURE OF SDM AT P.G.S.S.

Given that most members of the school's main planning group (staff committee) at P.G.S.S. are elected staff representatives and that several organizational decisions are made through voting by the staff at large, one can conclude that it is a democratic form of school governance. As Wohlstetter (1990, in Murphy and Beck, 1995) indicated, SDM is a system of democracy when schools involve groups not previously involved in school governance, or when "superordinate and subordinates...work together as equals in an attempt to identify, analyze and solve problems that face the organization" (Wood, 1984 in Murphy and Beck, 1995, p. 15).

Most noteworthy about the structure of SDM at P.G.S.S. is the fact that those involved in the adoption phase of staff committee intentionally established a constitutional framework that emphasized democratic principles. This constitution clearly demonstrated the staff's desire to move away from a traditional pattern of school governance which the old school council had perpetuated. The staff's preference to elect staff representatives into the staff committee may be supported by Conley's (1991) claim that traditional department structures, which allow dominance by senior members, "give scant attention to teacher involvement, provide little time for quality interaction, and limit the options that teachers may consider in group decision-making" (Conley, 1991, p. 245).

Indeed, even though the principal maintains authority and accountability over decisions at P.G.S.S., s/he is obligated to involve staff members via the staff committee which permits staff a high level of influence in school decisions. Furthermore, since the staff committee consists mostly of teachers, and final decisions on certain issues are made through voting at general staff meetings, one can conclude that the structure of SDM employs principles consistent with the professional model of SBM as delineated by Murphy and Beck (1995). In addition, since at P.G.S.S. most school decisions are made through voting of the staff at large, teachers assume more than merely an advisory role in school decision-making.

The structure of SDM at P.G.S.S., however, extends beyond the topic of democracy. In fact, it is also a form of organizational governance. Because the decision-making process follows a consistent template which maximizes staff involvement at each "stage" of the decision-making process (Duke, et. al., 1981, in Conley, 1991), and does not alter the formal authority structure in the school, it can be considered to be consistent with what Barth (1988, in Mills, 1992) calls "shared leadership" and what Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994) refer to as "participatory management."

It is quite apparent that, based on how decisions are made at the school, and how the staff committee is formed, one can conclude that the structure of SDM at P.G.S.S. contains components consistent with all three models of SDM outlined by Bridges (1967, in Conley, 1991). Since SDM at P.G.S.S. is structured so that all staff members have equal say in decisions, it can be said that the structure borrows elements from the participant-determining model. And, because some decisions are made through a majority vote, and staff representatives are responsible to a constituent group and the school's staff, the structure can be considered as compatible with the parliamentary model. But, because the principal has final authority and teachers are allowed to influence decisions through consultative

mechanisms, it can also be considered to be democratic centralist in nature (Bridges, 1967, in Conley, 1991).

Regardless of the model, most scholars argue, however, that the philosophy behind SDM is driven by notions that organizational performance is improved only through active involvement of all participants. But is this assumption consistent with the rationales for adopting SDM at P.G.S.S.? Or was SDM implemented simply because it was a more democratic form of school governance?

RATIONALES FOR SDM AT P.G.S.S.

The P.G.S.S. staff committee constitution clearly states that the purpose of the staff committee is to improve the working and learning conditions at the school. Furthermore, the constitution specifies that the role of the staff committee is to "review and make recommendations to be considered and responded to by the school administration on any matters it agrees to consider, where such matters are of general or specific interest to the staff" (Staff Committee Constitution, 1993, Appendix # 6). Clearly this purpose and mandate are appropriate given that it allows staff committee to consider a diverse range of issues and influence any school decisions that affect both staff and students. In fact, staff committee can increase and has increased teacher influence on school decisions in the areas of "direction, organization, support and monitoring" as outlined by Conley (1991, p. 240).

However, staff members can involve themselves in school decision-making by involving themselves in leadership opportunities provided by other school committees or teacher teams and by submitting agenda items for staff committee consideration. As Conley (1991) suggested, because teachers are "line professionals" and are the ones who have direct and ongoing contact with the school's primary clients, "they are the main reservoir of organizational knowledge, the ones most knowledgeable about

clients' instructional, counseling, and classroom managerial problems and needs" (Conley, 1991, p. 239). Furthermore, some scholars have identified that the extent to which an entire organization is actually involved is an important issue that determines the effectiveness of shared management (Mohrman, Lawler and Mohrman, 1992 in Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994). The results of this study show that P.G.S.S. administrators and teachers have a dependency relationship with each other. It is only by recognizing this symbiosis that the expertise and energy of organizational participants can truly "improve the working and learning conditions" at P.G.S.S.

Thus, the rationale of broadening the involvement of staff so as to address diverse needs of the school has led to a process where staff participation can occur at any stage of the decision process. As Duke (1981, in Conley, 1991)) clarified, there are five participation stages in which teachers can be involved. And, based on the evidence gathered, the staff committee and the school's staff in general, can, and have, exercised their influence in all the decision-making stages. Although it cannot be confirmed by this study that the working and learning conditions at the school have improved, one can assume that working conditions have improved by the fact that seventy percent of staff members (P.G.S.S. Accreditation Survey, 1996) are pleased with the leadership of staff committee in school decision-making. Likewise, most staff also feel fortunate to be provided with opportunities to be included in all stages of the decision- making process. But what about strengths of the staff committee model of decision-making? Have the staff committee members experienced or observed the same benefits as others mentioned in recent studies? These questions are treated in the next section by examining what past and present members of the staff committee and other staff members perceive to be the main strengths of this new model of decision-making.

STRENGTHS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994) indicated that the process of selecting staff representatives in school councils, in this case staff committee, can vary from district to district but can consist of appointment by the principal, self-selection by volunteers or election by staff (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994, p. 58). This is important because most members (past and present) of the staff committee felt that the most significant feature of the current staff committee constitution is the selection process of staff representatives. Because staff representatives are elected by staff members at large, most feel that not only is it democratic in nature but that staff representatives could be more candid when expressing their and others' point of view without fear of losing their jobs. This, according to some, is an important development. Under the school council system staff members as a whole did not have much influence in the composition of school council. More importantly, some staff committee members felt that the old school council, with members appointed by and accountable to the principal, was too hierarchical and hence, viewed by some as not only an extension of the administration but autocratic in practise. Perhaps the electoral aspect of staff committee can be linked to the advocacy of democracy on the part of Glickman (1993) and Murphy (1991, in Murphy and Beck, 1995), when they argue that the participatory nature of SDM offers the most hope for improving schools.

Although Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994) would view school council membership as a form of reward, and argue that it is an important element in participatory decision-making, staff committee members at P.G.S.S. opted for an elected membership instead of appointments made by the principal. This was due partly to the desire of those involved in the adoption phase to distance themselves from a forum designed to obtain support for certain administrative decisions. This

circumstance was noted by Weiss (1993) when she indicated that principals sometimes recruit like-minded individuals to school decision-making teams to avoid being constantly outvoted.

One of the most observable strengths at P.G.S.S., according to most staff committee members has been that communication, and hence, information flow, has been enhanced by the staff committee's non-departmental structure. This strength is consistent with Conley's (1991) and Mohrman and Wohlstetter's (1994) assertions that newer models of information flow emphasize the horizontal variety, where information is held at various locales and flows upward, downward and across an organization resulting in improvements in the quality of decision-making because of the abundance of information upon which decisions are based.

It was intentional that those involved in the adoption phase of P.G.S.S. staff committee opted for a decision-making process that was democratic and inclusive. It is by good fortune that other benefits such as improved communication and collegiality emerged during the implementation phase. But what about problems and difficulties? David (1989) and Weiss (1993) caution that difficulties arise when any kind of organizational change is introduced in schools. Certainly, like any change efforts, the staff committee have not been immune from experiencing problems. But what types of problems? And what do scholars say about why these problems occur? Are there solutions offered for these problems?

PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY THE STAFF COMMITTEE

The previous chapter described the problems that were experienced by the staff committee when they replaced the old school council as a primary planning group for the school. The creation of the staff committee, a decision-making team whose structure was in no way similar to school council, created several problems for

the staff and the principal. The problems outlined are arranged into seven categories: 1) decision-making domains; 2) departmental communication; 3) school climate; 4) personality fit; 5) lack of principal input; 6) lack of clear goals and strategies; and 7) lack of training and preparation. This section explains the problems in light of the concepts discussed in the literature review and provides recommendations that can be used to alleviate if not eliminate the stated problems.

Decision-making domains. It is apparent that decisional areas between staff committee and the administration were not clearly delineated. On the one hand, the staff committee saw themselves as a group that would only make "recommendations" relating only to school policy that affected the working and learning conditions in the school. They did not see themselves at any time to be the decision-making group for the school. The principal, on the other hand, perceived their role as being a decision-making team, similar to the old school council. This confusion, inevitably, caused a high degree of frustration amongst members and even conflict between staff committee members and the principal. This problem can be attributed to the lack of planning at the outset. As Miles (1993) indicated, it is necessary that planning becomes a crucial aspect of effective change. For as Miles (1993) claims "...one of the most critical variables [is] skill in social and educational design: creating an actualizable social and pedagogical set of structures (and supporting culture) well linked to the goals and philosophy, and vision for [a] school, with a congruent plan for peopling the school - a design that [is] actualizable" (Miles, 1993, p. 231). Miles (1993) further indicates that such planning is not merely "finding and installing good practise" but is rather, "an organically led process" (Miles, 1993, p. 231). Certainly, if guidelines had been formulated before adopting the staff committee structure, and close monitoring and evaluation of the change occurred during the implementation and continuation phases, then this confusion and conflict could have been prevented.

Conley (1991) suggests that two broad decision domains exist in schools: technical and managerial. The former domain deals with work activities and is considered to be operational in nature, while the latter deals with broad organizational issues and overarching policies and is strategic in nature. Donaldson (1993), and Midgley and Wood (1993), also indicate that school decisions span both domains which creates a relationship between both domains. This phenomenon, Conley (1991) maintains, is an integrated decision-making zone between teachers and administrators. Perhaps, if the P.G.S.S. staff committee, in the adoption phase, had identified which domains it should have influence in, then some of the confusion created by unclear decision domains could have been prevented. The fact that the constitution nebulously stated that the staff committee should review and make recommendations on matters of general interest to the staff contributed to the lack of clarity of decision-making domains. And, because the staff committee specifically stated that their main role has been to make recommendations to the staff at large and not make decisions, their role in school decision-making is further blurred.

Connected to this problem of blurred decision-making domains has been the lack of assistance provided by central office and the local teachers' union during the change phases. Although the collective agreement was partly responsible for the adoption of collaborative decision-making in this School District, no direct support was given to P.G.S.S. Again Miles (1993) points out that school change has always been invariably rough with difficulties, and "large scale, change bearing innovations lived or died by the amount and quality of assistance that their users received once the change process [was] under way" (Miles, 1993, p. 230).

What is noteworthy, however, at P.G.S.S. is that even though the staff committee members cast themselves into purely an advisory capacity, they attempted through their mandate not to exclude themselves from providing

recommendations to the administration on issues that are managerial in nature. This is evidenced by the range of issues they deliberated in the implementation phase.

If one of the central features of SBM is shared decision-making (Murphy and Beck, 1995), it stand to reason that participants need assistance to implement changes. Levine (1993) agrees, indicating that technical assistance must be provided to those participating in innovative school projects. This seems to suggest that it may have been precisely this lack of assistance that contributed at P.G.S.S. to the problem of unclear decision-making domains. Certainly, the lack of planning and assistance in the adoption phase, in fact, contributed to the problem of *departmental communication*.

The P.G.S.S. staff committee structure did not allow for departmental representation. This meant that members of the staff committee neither represented individual subject departments nor were responsible for departmental concerns. Tasks such as ordering textbooks, supplies, curriculum or budgets were not delegated to staff committee members. Constituent (contact) groups were randomly selected (cross-department) and assigned to a staff committee member. Communication between contact groups was achieved via circulation of staff committee meeting minutes or through informal contact group meetings. As such, the principal had no direct communication lines with departments and could not retrieve much needed department data. The lack of communication lines became a problem for the principal and departments because there were no formal avenues by which the principal could communicate with individual departments regarding provincial exam results, budgets, and staffing needs or concerns, to name just a few examples. As Leithwood (1992) states, part of the principal's role is actively "seeking different interpretations, and placing individual problems in the larger perspective of the whole school and its overall directions" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 11). Thus, the lack of clear avenues of communication was not only frustrating, but potentially weakening

the school's improvement. Conley's (1991) concepts on information flow are also instructive here. Obviously, at P.G.S.S., the lateral flow of information across departments is missing. Hence, because of the non-departmental structure of the staff committee, departmental information which the principal needed to make curriculum related decisions was not provided.

What is noteworthy, however, is that during the continuation phase of the staff committee, this problem of departmental communication, as mentioned earlier, was addressed by the staff committee. More precisely, staff members of the staff committee recognized the difficulty the principal and departments were experiencing and recommended that a school operations committee (composed of elected department contact persons) be struck to attend to departmental issues. This recommendation to form a school operations committee, which was supported by the school's staff, not only showed the responsiveness of the staff committee to identify and address school problems (see Brown, 1990) but was a pivotal development in how school decisions have been made in the continuation phase. And although the school operations committee is not the focus of this study and will not be elaborated on, it is important to note that decisions relevant to what Bacharach et. al. (1990 in Conley, 1991) refers to as "strategic-organizational" and "operational-individual" are now made by the school operations committee and not by the staff committee (Bacharach et. al., 1990 in Conley, 1991).

But is it just the structural weakness of staff committee that precipitated an inadequacy in communication flow? What about the personalities and the relationships of those involved in school decision-making? Certainly these dynamics could have a tendency to influence the decision-making atmosphere, and hence, *school climate*.

One of the problems mentioned by the principal was that members of the staff had formed a "clique" to present a united front on certain issues. The clique, according

to the principal, would lobby other staff committee or staff members to vote a certain way on issues. Although the staff committee appeared collaborative, the decisions reached were sometimes unilateral, usually in favor of the clique's preference. One example of clique's influence was their success in introducing amendments to the staff committee structure in the implementation phase. In one school-wide staff meeting, the principal mentioned the problem of communication between departments and other standing committees. The principal invited the staff to propose a method of improving school communication. Two groups of staff presented a proposal during another general staff meeting. At the end of each presentation, all staff members were asked to vote on the proposal of their choice. As it happens, the model that was selected by the staff was the one proposed by the clique.

Certainly, a group existed which was comprised of established, highly educated teachers (i.e., actively involved in the local teachers' union as staff representatives and with post-graduate degrees) who were well respected by other staff members. This group, according to the principal, wanted more decision-making power but would arbitrarily refuse to make decisions on issues they felt were not in the staff committee's mandate. In the principal's view, this group divided the staff because of their highly unionized agenda and their ability to sway staff's inclinations.

However, there may be additional explanations. Part of the influence of this group may have been caused by the intensifying need of staff committee members to assume school leadership and participate in a broad array of educational decisions. Leithwood's (1992), Dimensions of Teacher Development show that teachers who are at the highest level of professional growth, are able to "exercise leadership, both formal and informal, with groups of adults inside and outside the school" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 89). As Leithwood (1992) indicates, at this stage of development, teachers not only "have a broad framework from which to understand the relationships among decisions at many different levels, but are well informed about policies at many

different levels in the education system, and participate more in a broad array of educational decisions at all levels of the education system" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 89). Thus, what the principal regarded as divisive may have not been intended as such, but rather just reflect actual professional experience.

The need for certain staff committee members to participate, through informal and formal means, in school decision-making may be linked to what Conley (1991) posited about teacher expectations in school-level decision-making. She stated that teacher participation in decision-making is grounded in the assumption that "teachers expect to be afforded opportunities to participate in organizational decisions based on their possession of a body of knowledge and expertise" (Conley, 1991, p. 230). More precisely, at P.G.S.S. the need for certain staff committee members to exercise their influence on certain decisions may be the result of being deprived of this opportunity perpetuated by the old school council. As Conley (1991) reported "...decisionally deprived teachers reported greater militancy and role conflict than teachers who were saturated or in equilibrium" (Conley, 1991, p. 232). Moreover, Weiss (1993) may have provided a clearer explanation for this problem when she mentioned that "...perhaps shared decision-making does require new decisions, but certainly the whole thrust is to reduce the domains in which the principal holds unilateral sway" (Weiss, 1993, p. 2). Fullan (1993) perhaps explains the problem of conflicts in SDM structures when he states that collaboration does not always mean consensus nor are disagreements forbidden. In fact, both Fullan (1993) and Conley (1991) would argue that conflicts in SDM are common as both teachers and administrators reassess their roles in SDM.

What needs to be mentioned here, however, is that, even though staff committee members are at the highest level of professional growth and have the experience and the knowledge to make critical school decisions, they still refused to make crucial recommendations or decisions that could potentially affect the working

and learning conditions at P.G.S.S. Thus, it is this refusal that is instrumental in causing the potential decline in efficacy of the staff committee. Along with understanding the changes in roles and responsibilities and changes in organizational relationships, however, the success of SDM may be dependent upon whether the personalities of those involved are compatible with collaborative decision-making.

The principal felt that his *personality*, one that may be consistent with a traditional view of the principal as "captain" of the school might not be conducive to a participatory form of leadership. In his case, he attributed his leadership style to the number of years he had been used to the traditional or structural style of management (Bolman and Deal, 1991). If true, this is potentially a problem because as Hallinger (1992) and Chapman (1990 in Dimmock, 1993) argue, the role of the principal is now being redefined given that s/he is "working with new values, new decision-makers and new sets of management decisions and responsibilities" (Chapman, 1990 in Dimmock, 1993, p. 5).

Furthermore, Dimmock (1993) maintains that principals are also faced with the challenges of "encouraging participative decision-making and power sharing" (Dimmock, 1993, p. 5). It is obvious that principals, within shared decision-making structures, must reinvent their leadership styles to accommodate not only the intense need of teachers to be included in school decision-making but changes in the policy environments of schools. And because principals' decisional authority is being transferred to teacher-administrator decision-making groups (Weiss, 1993), and changing views of principals as sole decision-makers, principals, according to Hallinger (1992) must shift their leadership style to what is known as transformational leadership.

This form of leadership is not one that precludes the principal from participating in school decision-making but is rather a leadership style that shares decision-making authority with others, and most particularly, teachers (King and

Kerchner, 1991). The inclusion and encouragement of others to participate in school decision-making are the central features of transformational leadership (King and Kerchner, 1991), which highlights the need for principals to move their schools to a direction that business refers to as "Type Z" organizations. These types of organizations, according to Hallinger (1992), emphasize the importance of "strong cultures to influence employees' directions and reduce differences in the status of organizational members" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 8). More precisely, principals must increasingly focus their efforts in exercising a different form of power "...a form of power that is consensual and facilitative...a form of power manifested through other people, not over other people" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 9).

Interestingly, the principal in this study appeared to display managerial behavior, intentionally or not, that reduced the differences in positional status between himself and other staff members. In turn, this promoted a collegial atmosphere void of any visible differences in organizational rank.

But the problems as identified in this study cannot exclusively be attributed to the principal's leadership style, the way staff committee was structured or the unrequited need and expectations of teachers to be democratically included in school decision-making. In fact, what is equally significant amongst the problems already mentioned, is the *lack of principal input* during the adoption phase of the new decision-making structure.

The P.G.S.S. principal mentioned, on several occasions, that the problems he is experiencing with the staff committee model of decision-making have been due to the lack of his input into its arrangement and constitution. Although the principal did not have any input into the staff committee structure, it appeared that he did attempt to make the decision-making model work. This was evident, most visibly, during the implementation phase, when he included all school issues in staff committee meeting agendas. However, in an attempt to involve the staff committee in all organizational

decisions, he was accused of "padding" meeting agendas with "administrivia" which perpetuated an atmosphere of skepticism as to the legitimacy of some of the agenda items. This phenomenon contradicts Weiss's (1993) conclusion that principals' commitment to SDM is conversely proportionate to their input towards SDM. In this case, the principal appeared genuinely committed to making the staff committee model of decision-making work even though he had inherited it. Furthermore, Weiss (1993) submitted that principals who had come from a traditional school and who were accustomed to exercising authority were unwilling to take all matters to the school's decision-making group. In the P.G.S.S. case, this simply was not true. Weiss (1993), and others, for example, Miles (1993), however, were accurate when they mentioned that any reform efforts can be characterized by a lot of conflict among participants especially when there is a clear *lack of goals and strategies*.

Connected to the of lack of principal input to the arrangement of the P.G.S.S. staff committee, was the problem of not having clear goals and strategies for the staff committee model of decision-making to work. Given that the principal was not included in the adoption phase of staff committee, he was not accorded the opportunity to participate in collectively building a shared vision for the staff committee. For as Sarason (1990) stated "...when a process makes people feel they have a voice in matters that affect them...they will take greater responsibility for what happens to the enterprise" (Sarason, 1990 in Leithwood, 1992, p. 9). More importantly, Hallinger (1992) strongly suggests that "...collective decision-making...highlights the importance of principals' ability to work collaboratively with staff in problem solving" (Hallinger, 1992, p. 42). In this case, due to his year's leave of absence, it was impossible for the principal to have participated in not only formulating a "collective vision" as suggested by Sergiovanni (1994), for the role of staff committee in school decision-making, but also precluded from the opportunity of working collaboratively with those involved in the architecture of staff committee. In

essence, although the principal may have been aware of the need to utilize transformational approaches and collaboratively work with staff members in the adoption phase of staff committee, he was unable to do so because of his absence. However, the principal's lack of input into the staff committee structure may have been readily addressed if appropriate *training and preparation* had been provided to staff members during both the adoption and implementation phases of the change.

In this area, all P.G.S.S. interviewees agreed that they did not have the necessary skills to ensure the success of staff committee. Indeed, this has been verified by the number of problems staff committee has encountered. It is of course important, as Miles (1993) acknowledged, that any organizational change tends to be cabalistic and requires "front-end preparation and ongoing support" to ensure its success. But exactly what kind of skills are need by change participants? Various sources (David, 1989; Huddleston, Claspell and Killion, 1991; Maeroff, 1993) call for training in team building, facilitation, consensus building, and pyramiding for participants involved in SDM. This short list of training topics confirms that those embarking on changes towards collaborative forms of decision-making need not merely goodwill, energy or natural talent to successfully undertake such a transition, but a host of skills as well.

In summary, it is clear that many factors contributed to the successes and the problems experienced by the P.G.S.S. staff committee. Of course, any shifts in organizational values or individual responsibilities and changes to a more democratic structure of decision-making are likely to cause incertitude (David, 1989), however, the nature of the difficulties at P.G.S.S. are instructive as to how to improve the school. The staff committee's efforts to install a more participatory form of decision-making in some ways challenged the deeply embedded traditions of authority and conventional methods of school governance and thus, significantly altered the school's organizational culture and climate (Conley, 1991). But the P.G.S.S. staff committee

is not without hope, even though several modifications to the structure are needed in order to elevate the efficacy of this form of SDM. It is thus in a spirit of constructive observation the following recommendations are offered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Researchers suggest that to successfully shift to SDM, most important among many is the allocation of both time and resources to those participating in the change. In fact, O'Neil (1994), Ryan (1994), Dimmock (1993), and Conley (1991) strongly suggest that time must be allocated out of the regular instructional day so that staff members are not diverted away from attending to their classroom responsibilities or their own personal commitments and obligations. Indeed, O'Neil (1994) has confirmed that participants, if they are to be meaningfully involved, must be afforded the time to not only participate in school decision-making but also to obtain the necessary training essential for its success. In light of these scholarly suggestions, it is essential that: The Board allocate adequate resources for training, preparation and release time for meetings of school-based personnel during the adoption, implementation and continuation phase of the change.

But time is far from the only issue. More specifically, the non-departmental structure of the staff committee needs to be changed. Clearly, because staff committee members do not represent individual departments, the flow of information between the administration in the "strategic-organizational, strategic-individual" and "operational-individual" domains receives very little attention (Bacharach et. al., 1990 in Conley, 1991). Indeed, these are areas that staff committee needs to be involved in because they directly affect the working and learning conditions at the school. To solve the problem of the lack of departmental communication, The staff committee should, with support of the school's staff, amend the representative

structure of the staff committee to include departmental representation. It is unfortunate that some staff members feel that departmental representation in the staff committee would be perceived by some as a move towards a school council model of decision-making. This perception is significant because it was clear that those involved in the adoption phase did not want the staff committee to be viewed as another arm of the administration. Unfortunately, however, the non-departmental arrangement of the current staff committee may cause the decline of its relevancy.

Since departmental and curricular issues receive scant attention from the staff committee, the need to address these and other issues emerges. Hence, a proliferation of other committees occurred, e.g., school operations committee, accreditation steering committee, educational change committee, professional development committee and attendance task force. The formation of other committees, of course can be seen in some way, as a common and healthy development (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994). Because membership in most of these are other committees are voluntary, staff members are accorded the leadership opportunity to not only participate but have some influence in school decision-making (Conley, 1991). Again, however, the time requirements of involvement in these committees may discourage some staff from volunteering (O'Neil, 1994). Considering the time requirements for committee involvement: The Board should permit the use of non-instructional or professional development days to allow school staff members to conduct committee business. Furthermore, if the teaching assignments of staff committee members were reduced to compensate for their volunteered time, then maybe there would not be a need to form other subsidiary committees to address other school issues that staff committee cannot attend to. Hence: The staff committee should recommend to the staff members at large an amendment to the staff committee constitution to reduce the teaching load of its members.

Another modification to the staff committee structure that needs consideration is the way members are elected into the staff committee. Indeed, if the staff committee wanted a truly democratic form of SDM, then perhaps: The staff committee should amend the constitution to make membership on the committee voluntary, as proposed by Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994). This move would not necessarily marginalize the validity of staff committee; in fact, it might even democratize the committee further, by promoting a more wide-spread staff involvement in decision-making.

What needs to be mentioned, however, is that, even though a voting system exists in this school's decision making process, it does not involve consensus. This is important because Chapman (1990 in Dimmock, 1993) indicated that collegiality and commitment to decisions may be increased through teacher participation in decision-making. Chapman (1990), however, failed to mention that group consensus is a vital ingredient in collective decision-making because the use of voting can alienate staff, and hence decrease the commitment of staff members who do not necessarily support the preferences of a small majority. Therefore, Chapman's (1990, in Dimmock, 1993) assumptions that support the notion that teacher participation in decision-making increases collegiality and commitment may be flawed. Unless school decisions are made through consensus, they may only reflect the will of small majority and not accommodate the diverse range of perspectives and needs of the school's staff. Therefore: The staff should, as much as it is possible, make decisions based on consensus instead of voting.

As responsive as the staff committee may have been in identifying and addressing the lack of attention given to the curricular and budgetary domains, it could have in fact avoided this problem by addressing departmental issues in staff committee meetings at the outset. Refusing to discuss departmental issues, the staff committee has unknowingly deprived itself of involvement in decision domains that

are crucial to the improvement of the working and learning conditions at the school. This is unfortunate because, as Conley (1991) suggests, it is in these "zones of acceptance" that teacher expertise can be best utilized. More significantly, since school decision-making overlaps into both "managerial and technical domains," teachers and administrators must cooperatively move towards a "bureaucratic-professional interface" to better coordinate their efforts to improve schooling (Conley, 1991, p. 241).

But what is really important in terms of teacher participation in SDM is for teachers and the administration to collectively identify "decision areas in which teachers may increase their involvement" (Conley, 1991, p. 233). As Conley (1991) noted, because school decision-making is complex in nature, a multidimensional approach is essential so that areas in which teacher participation is most urgently needed are identified. More significantly, because school decision-making involves both managerial and technical domains, (Malen and Ogawa, 1988, in Conley, 1991), Conley (1991) suggests a "bureaucratic-professional interface" which integrates and coordinates the efforts of both teachers and administrators (Conley, 1991, p. 241). This contention certainly supports the following recommendation: Administrators and teachers should collectively inventory school organizational issues so that precise lines of decisional authority and decision domains are established. Certainly, this "relative conceptualization" of delineating decision domains would not only reduce confusion between the administration and the staff committee as to what decisional areas teachers should have influence in, but would also utilize the expertise of teachers where it is most needed and suitable (Conley, 1991, p. 231).

Furthermore, scholars contend that the central premise of SBM is that those closest to a situation are in a better position to address their needs and the needs of their clients and thus, decisions should be made at the lowest possible level (Murphy and Beck, 1995; Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994; David, 1989). In addition, Hill and

Bonan (1991, in Murphy and Beck, 1995) indicate that by making those closest to delivery services responsible for the results of the school's operations, accountability is enhanced. It is worth noting that even though the staff committee was in an advantageous position to address and respond to students' educational needs, the fact that it refused to involve itself in departmental issues effectively negated the efficacy of its arrangement.

As noted, in an attempt to make the staff committee a primary decision-making team, the principal included all relevant items in staff committee agendas pertaining to "improving the working and learning conditions" at the school. This is a critical step for the principal to take because as Dimmock (1993) indicated "increased teacher participation may generate greater commitment to...decisions." Furthermore, Chapman (1990) concurring with Dimmock (1993), stated that increased commitment by teachers can improve educational outcomes because "more information and knowledge dissemination is likely to lead to improved understanding and clarity of policies, decisions and resources for change" (Chapman, 1990 in Dimmock, 1993, p. 6). It is ironic, then, that even though the principal gave staff committee the opportunity to consider crucial curricular and budgetary decisions, he was accused of saturating the agenda with "administrivia." Unfortunately, the principal in his efforts to "knit together" the professionals within the school and to promote an "effective teacher-administrator relationship" in terms of moral and productivity, has so far been unsuccessful (Johnston and Germinario, 1985 in Conley, 1991).

Burke (1992) indicates "participation serves to broaden dialogue" which "[produces] more informed stakeholders through shared experience[s] of people with a range of perspectives and expertise" (Burke, 1992 in Murphy and Beck, 1995). Undeniably, therefore, it seem an expanded information base would lead to higher-quality decisions (Mohrman and Wohlstetter, 1994). Therefore: The Principal should

include as many items in staff committee agendas as practicable, so that the information base by which decisions or recommendations are made is expanded.

In summary, the achievements of staff committee are to be commended, although several modifications to its arrangement are needed. The efforts of staff members to be inclusive in the formulation and adoption of the staff committee constitution is also deserving of praise. It is not unfortunate that the staff committee encountered problems and frustrations during the change phases because it is only through such difficult experiences and challenges that strategies to address them may be developed and true human talent and energy can be harnessed, released and effectively utilized.

CAPSTONE

Considering all the problems the staff committee experienced, what is the future of staff committee and SDM at P.G.S.S.? Are its problems so complex or the arrangement so flawed that its usefulness is endangered? Will the school operations committee, since they play an important role in daily school activities and educational planning, take over the staff committee's role in school decision-making? Obviously, these are complicated questions that cannot be answered within the confines of this study but they would certainly provide the basis for future investigation. But what do others and staff committee members think about its future? Perhaps a glimpse into their thoughts would provide insight as to what may eventually become of the staff committee.

Conceivably, the formulation of the school operations committee, even though recommended by the staff committee, may be a crucial factor that can erode the efficacy of the staff committee. This is legitimized by the fact that in the continuation phase, it appeared that the school operations committee became the

main planning group for the school in terms of daily school activities, curricular and budget issues. In addition, all staff committee members expressed genuine doubt as to the direction the staff committee should take in school decision-making. Perhaps a comment of one staff committee member captures the uncertainty of the role the staff committee should play in school decision-making "...we are losing a sense of direction, and there are not enough new interested staff to run for the [staff committee] elections."

Compounding this "lost sense of direction" is that the school operations committee is a decision-making team that provides not only recommendations to administration in terms of the calendar of school activities but makes important curricular and budgetary decisions as well. In effect, because the school operations committee operates independently of the staff committee and makes decisions in the strategic-organizational and operational-individual domains (Conley, 1991), it has surpassed the scope and range of school decision-making in which the staff committee had initially influenced. In some ways, it appears that the school operations committee has taken on some responsibilities previously assumed by the old school council. This development is significant, because it substantially alters the way some decisions are made at P.G.S.S. What may be remarkable about this development is the fact that the staff committee may never regain influence in the decision domains which it had originally established for itself. For, as Brown (1990) stated "...[the] continuation phase is the phase in which the innovation... may be discarded" (Brown, 1990, p. 87).

Brown's (1990) explanation of change foreshadows what might be the future of the decision-making at P.G.S.S. More precisely, the role of staff committee in school decision-making may, as a result of the school operations committee, be rendered redundant. Therefore, the influence that the staff committee potentially had in improving the working and learning conditions at P.G.S.S. may be minimized.

Is it possible then, that in the continuation phase the school operations committee will gradually take over whatever role staff committee still has, and that the staff committee will just die of lack of relevance. Perhaps, according to one interviewee, this scenario could happen, but it is not inevitable. The fact is that the school operations committee always has its agenda filled with countless operational items, and never has time to consider crucial policy issues at any length. Perhaps, that is where the staff committee has a role to play. But if the staff committee role is not well understood by the staff, and those who stand for election to staff committee, and by all administrators, then the staff committee will, indeed undeniably collapse.

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APPENDIX #1 (A)

- from BCTF
- at "Staff Committee" Committee workshop
- presented by Anne Smith (Spruceland teacher)

SECTION I
Part II

EXAMPLE OF

COMMUNITY SCHOOL CONSTITUTION

I. Make-Up - Responsibilities - Rights:

1. a. The staff committee shall consist of everyone who works as a teacher, custodian or as a supportive staff member at _____ Community School.
   b. Two _____ Community School Council representatives will sit on the staff committee.

2. Every staff committee member shall have one vote on every issue or agenda item under consideration by the staff committee.

3. The principal shall not have power of veto over agenda items or staff committee decisions.

4. Every month the staff committee shall elect a staff committee chairperson and a secretary from among its members.

II. Liaison Between Staff Committee - _____ Community School Association - _____ T.A. - Students' Council - BCTF - School Board Administration - S.D. #__ Trustees and Ministry of Education

1. The staff committee is the appropriate group to receive input from task committees and student committees. Therefore, all relevant minutes and information from such committees must be made available to the staff committee through the staff committee chairperson.

2. Two representatives from the staff committee will sit on the _____ Community School Association Council. These two members will be elected from the staff committee and serve as its representatives on the association council. Pertaining items and matters will be referred to the two bodies by the representatives.

3. Local-BCTF items and business will be referred to and reported on by the chief delegate or local-BCTF representatives.

4. School trustee or school board administration matters will be referred, for decision and information, to the staff committee by the principal or the designated representatives.

5. Ministry of Education items and matters will be referred for decision and information to the staff committee.

I. Meetings:

1. The staff committee meets weekly from 8.00 a.m. to 8.45 a.m. on a day chosen by staff committee. Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the chairperson.

V. Mechanics of Operation:

1. Consensus and/or majority vote. Decisions of the staff committee are two-fold:
   a. to gather information,
   b. to decide upon a course of staff action.

2. Once a school policy has been established, it is essential that all staff members support it.

3. The role of the administration is to facilitate staff committee decisions.

Staff Committee Concerns:

1. The educational processes and practices.

2. The use of school facilities.

3. Examination of ideas and suggestions for changes in the school and/or district in educational programs.

4. On request, to assist and support individual teachers.

5. Support the work of the local association and the BCTF and provide input to these governing professional bodies.

6. Exploring any other matter of concern to staff members of the school staff and parents of the attendance area.

7. Act as a grievance task committee, on request, in matters dealing with principal's report on teachers.

I. Minutes and Agendas:

1. The agenda of the staff committee will be distributed to every staff committee member one day prior to the staff meeting.

2. Minutes will be distributed to the staff at large following each meeting.

3. Agenda items submitted from the staff will be added to the agenda if such items are in the chairperson's possession one day prior to the meeting.

II. Communications with Staff:

1. It is the responsibility of the members of the staff committee to communicate their ideas, concerns, and opinions to the rest of the staff at staff committee meetings.

STAFF COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION

MODEL 1

A. PHILOSOPHY

We believe that the staff committee should play an essential role in the operation of any school. Teachers, as professionals, have a right to be involved in decision-making in the school. Teachers, as they exercise their collegial decision-making rights contribute to their professional growth and to a more effective learning environment for students.

B. ELECTIONS

1. The staff committee shall have 5 elected members, one of whom shall be an administrative officer appointed by the Principal.

2. Membership shall be for a one-year term. Members may be re-elected the next year.

3. Elections are to be held in at the first staff meeting in September, for the remaining 4 positions.

4. The Chairperson shall be the staff member who receives the most votes.

5. By-elections shall be held as required.

6. The voting procedure for electing the staff committee shall be determined at the staff meeting where the election is held.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

The staff committee may:

1. Review each teacher's assignment under the following headings:

   a. Adequate physical requirements
   b. Suitable class size
   c. Suitable instructional assignment
   d. An adequate supply of learning materials.
   e. Time to plan, to organize and to work with individual students, with colleagues, and with parents
   f. Pupil evaluation

2. Assess the teaching and learning conditions within the school and make recommendations for improvement in the total teaching situation.

3. Study and make recommendations on:

   a. School regulations and routines
   b. School educational philosophy
   c. School staffing, including utilization of teaching staff and support staff

4. Assist the Pro-D Committee (if requested) in making proposals to the staff as a whole on:

   a. Non-Instructional Days
   b. Professional and staff development

5. Study and make recommendations on any other matters of concern to staff members.

6. Receive representations from parents, members of the community, students and/or committees of students in such manner as may be agreed to by the committee.

7. Ensure that all staff are provided with the relevant information to assist the staff in making educationally sound decisions.

8. Have access to and review all school-level budget and financial information.

D. FUNCTION

1. The duties of the chairperson shall include:

   a. Calling the meetings and formulating an agenda, after ensuring that all staff members have had an opportunity to propose agenda items.
   b. Chairing the meetings.

2. The staff committee shall make decisions by a majority vote. Recommendations of the staff committee shall be presented to a staff meeting for adoption by a majority vote of the staff. These decisions may be taken at regular monthly staff meetings called by the Principal or at staff meetings called by the staff committee to consider recommendations. Decisions of a majority of the staff meeting shall be binding on all members of the staff.

3. Minutes shall be kept recording the decisions of all staff committee meetings and staff meetings and copies shall be made available to the staff.

4. The school administration shall not arbitrarily refuse to implement the majority decisions of the school staff. In a case where an administrative officer rejects a majority decision of a staff meeting, he/she will submit the reasons, in writing, to the staff committee. The staff committee will ensure that all staff members are notified of the rejection and the stated reasons.

5. Any staff member has a right to participate in staff committee meetings, with voice but no vote.

6. Any changes or amendments to this constitution can be proposed by 2 staff members and ratified by a two-thirds majority of the whole staff.

7. This constitution shall be circulated by the staff committee chairperson to each member of the staff at the beginning of each school year, and to any new staff members as necessary.

STAFF COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION

MODEL 2

A. COMPOSITION OF STAFF

1 administrator, 7 teachers elected by the staff

Each staff committee member will report back to approximately 1/8 of the staff and will attempt to obtain opinions and ideas from these people prior to staff committee meetings.

It will be the responsibility of individual staff members to inform the staff committee of their individual concerns, opinions and viewpoints.

B. PROCEDURES

1. There shall be at least one staff committee meeting each month and it shall take place on the Monday preceding the regular staff meeting.

2. The chairperson may call a meeting when an emergent situation arises.

3. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of the staff committee.

4. All meetings shall be conducted publicly.

5. Minutes of staff committee to be published within two days after each meeting.

6. Any member of staff may attend staff committee meetings and speak to questions on the floor but voting shall be restricted to elected members.

C. ELECTIONS

1. Election will take place at the September staff meeting.

2. Election of 7 members will take place at this meeting. The Committee shall elect its own officers.

3. The Principal or her designate shall be the administrative member.

4. The seven candidates receiving the largest number of votes will be elected.

5. In the case of a vacancy a replacement will be chosen at the next scheduled staff meeting.

6. All members will be elected at large, not necessarily by department.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF COMMITTEE

1. To assess the teaching and learning conditions within the school and to make recommendations to the principal for improvement in the total teaching situation.

2. To study and make recommendations on school regulations and routines to the principal.

3. To be consulted on the timetable and organization of the school.

4. To consult on and be involved in school staffing and to conduct studies of staff utilization including non-teaching staff.

5. To explore any other matters of concern to member of the school staff.

6. Staff committee decisions will become staff policy. Any staff member may move re-consideration of an approved policy at the following staff meeting. Also, the staff committee may bring issues which are felt to be controversial to a staff meeting for decision.

7. The school administration shall not arbitrarily refuse to implement the recommendations of the staff committee or majority decisions of the school staff. In a case where an administrative officer rejects a majority decision, he/she will submit the reasons, in writing, to the staff committee.

E. AGENDA

1. An agenda shall be published 24 hours in advance of the staff committee meeting.

2. The agenda may be amended before adoption.

F. VOTING

1. Only elected members of the staff committee may vote at staff committee meetings.

2. All voting, except as provided for in the procedure for elections shall be by show of hands.

3. Except as provided for elsewhere in this document all questions shall be decided by a simple majority. The chairperson shall have a vote. In the event of a tie, an issue will be put to full staff at a subsequent staff meeting.

F. AMENDMENT

1. 30 days notice will be required to amend any procedure.

G. RULES

Robert's Modified Rules of Order shall be used in running meetings.

STAFF COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION

MODEL 3

A. STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

We believe that the staff should play an essential role in the operation of our school. Teachers as professionals have the right to be involved in decision-making in the school. The exercise of collegial decision-making not only contributes to teacher professional growth but to a more effective learning environment for students.

B. STRUCTURE

1. The staff committee shall consist of the entire staff.

2. The staff will elect a staff committee chairperson at the first staff meeting in September, on the basis of a majority vote of the whole staff. Any member of the staff, with the exception of administrative officers, may be nominated for and elected to the position of staff committee chairperson. Election will be for a one year term.

3. The staff committee will meet on a monthly basis, in conjunction with the staff meeting called by the principal, or as deemed appropriate by the staff or the staff committee chairperson. The staff committee chairperson shall chair all meetings of the staff committee.

4. Any staff member may suggest topics for the agenda, either beforehand or at the beginning of the meeting, prior to the agenda being adopted by majority vote.

5. Decisions of the staff committee are made by a majority vote.

6. Minutes shall be kept of all staff committee decisions and copies provided to all staff members.

7. The school administration shall not arbitrarily refuse to implement the majority decisions of the staff committee. In a case where an administrative officer rejects a majority decision of the staff committee, he/she will submit the reasons, in writing, to the staff committee.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

(Same as Model 1)

D. REVISION

1. Any changes or amendments to this constitution can be proposed by 2 staff members and ratified by a two-thirds majority of the whole staff.

2. This constitution shall be circulated by the staff committee chairperson to each member of the staff at the beginning of each school year, and to any new staff members as necessary.

British Columbia Teachers' Federation
2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC V6J 3H9 (604) 731-8121, 1-800-663-9163, FAX 731-4891
A Union of Professionals

75 years

APPENDIX I (B)

Ms. Maureen Giffin
c/o Prince George Secondary School
2901 Griffiths Avenue
Prince George, BC
V2M 2S7

Dear Maureen,

Welcome to the world of staff committees. You are undertaking a worthwhile task. I hope that your staff considers the work to develop a staff committee as a component of the larger effort to improve schools and give teachers greater influence over their lives.

I agree with your view that developing a staff committee should be done slowly and thoughtfully. The goal is not just to have a committee. We have enough of those already. The objective is to make better decisions.

Here are some questions to consider:

What is the role of the staff committee?

BCTF policy on staff committees is found on page 35 of your members' guide (Policies 4.M.02, 4.M.04, and 4.M.06).

Generally, the staff committee's role is as follows:

1. to provide teachers with influence in their schools;

2. to provide an avenue for teachers to have individual concerns represented as collective concerns. (There are many reasons that a teacher may wish not to have a concern represented as an individual concern.)

3. to promote more effective decision-making in the school through:

   a. analyzing problems
   b. developing options for staff to consider
   (in other words, the staff committee does the "committee-work")

...2

Who should sit on the staff committee?

Should the administrative officer be a member of the staff committee? This depends upon the administrator's acceptance of the staff committee's role. There may also be a provision for the staff rep to meet without the AO present if a staff member feels uneasy about discussing an issue in the AO's presence?

Some staff committees provide for participation by parent, student, and CUPE reps.

What skills must be cultivated to make the committee work effectively?

This is important issue. Relevant skills include conflict resolution, listening, consensus building, trust building, and other group skills. I believe that the l of group skills is one of the most significant factors in the failure of staff c nittees to work effectively.

What resources are required to ensure the committee works?

The most valuable and scarcest resource is time. The committee should identify other important resources, such as access to clerical time, meeting space, etc.

What is the relationship between the staff committee and other bodies in the school?

Where does the role of staff committee intersect with, overlap with and differentiate from the roles of department heads, staff representative, admin. team, parent advisory group, etc.

What are the limits to the authority of the committee?

It is important to understand that the staff committee does not have the a thority to override the local collective agreement. Is the committee aborative or consultative? The more authority the committee has, the g ter the chance for success.

I am sure that there are many more questions to consider. The planning committee should attempt to define the issues before undertaking the developmental phase.

Call Louise and request that she send a message out on SOLINET requesting that other presidents let her know of any schools that have exemplary staff committees. You could tap into some of these schools.

Finally, I am forwarding under separate cover some bibliographies on shared-decision making. There is some interesting reading here. The work of Susan Rosenholtz is particularly useful because it outlines the contribution shared decision-making makes to school culture, teacher professional growth, and student achievement.

I would be very grateful if you would keep me informed about the progress you make in this important issue. Let me know if I can be of any help along the way.

.ncerely,

Kit Krieger
Assistant Director
Organization Support Division

November 19, 1992
KK/vm/utfe

APPENDIX # 2

Meeting called to order at 15:57

Motion to adopt agenda.

carried

2. Klaus to do official minutes.

3. **Introduction of John Stevens:**

- Compliments the staff on the methodical way to form a staff committee.
- Decisions of staff committee are to benefit students, second the adults that work at PGSS.
- School (PGSS) has a goal.
- Prevent the perception of a bureaucratic structure, that appears to facilitate "grid lock".
- "Positive Conflict", if everyone thinks of the school as running "fine", nothing creative will happen, school will backslide.
- "Conflict" not necessarily bad, but has to be dealt with in a productive way.
- Make decisions with a view that will benefit the school as a whole, not a particular interest.
- Decision making process to keep the welfare of school in mind.
- Necessity to use data in decision making process, too often decisions are made from the "heart". Data based decisions are not too common in education, but should be.
- All staff should engage in reflecting on collegial decision making.
- Professional autonomy of teachers needs to be brought to bear on decision making process.

Questions:

How to fit School Council and POSR's with Staff Committee

- Cannot see a reduction in admin., because responsibilities of school have increased. Staff committee may be the "Senate", the body of "sober reflection".
- Believes that consensus building may be preferable to voting procedure

How open is the playing field? To what extent can staff committee make decisions?

That definition should be school made. Some responsibilities are admin's only.

- The entire staff is also a decision making body.

- School act also limits what the staff committee can do, but there is a lot of leeway where the staff committee can make decisions.

re there training sessions for collaborative decision making?

- There were no training sessions when it was introduced at board, jumped right into the "deep end".
- People were timid at first, but got accustomed to the process.
- Now there is a good mixture of different viewpoints on the committee.

Models proposed by staff committee^2 members.

Proposal to take the proposed models and study them before making further discussions.

O.B.

There has been a mention that elections for a staff committee may happen in May or June to commence operation in September.

eeting: April 5, 1993

eeting adjourned: 16:42

APPENDIX #3

from BCTF

POSSIBLE STAFF COMMITTEE MODELS

A number of models of staff committees exist. A staff should choose a model which suits its particular needs. Large schools usually opt for some form of elected committee either with or without ratification powers by the total staff. Small schools usually opt for a committee of the whole staff. It is important when choosing a model that the committee formed be an actual *DECISION-MAKING* one and not just an instrument of the hierarchy or an advisory group which can be ignored at the whim of the administration.

In establishing a staff committee several basic matters need attention no matter which model is selected. These include such things as method of reaching closure, size of the committee and procedures for calling meetings. All staff members should have voice and vote in setting up a decision-sharing structure.

On the back of this sheet are some models which may help each staff to answer the above question for their particular situation. One can readily see that the individual components are not exclusive to a particular model. Compatible components (including some not listed) could be put together to form other workable models.

~ BCTF

Need Element	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
1. Formation	Formal proposal to a full staff meeting	Alternatives outlined to a full staff meeting	Call a staff meeting to explore the whole concept
2. Staff Committee Membership	All administrators plus several elected teachers	One administrator plus grade or subject reps	Committee elected at large* or the whole staff
3. Role Determination	Elect chairperson, secretary, etc.	Rotate roles of chairperson, secretary, etc.	Elect co-chairperson and several recorders
4. Decision-Making Mechanism	Motions and vote (voting cards?)	Motions and consensus	Group techniques for problem solving
5. Record-Keeping	Full formal minutes circulated and file kept	Minutes briefly recorded in staff-room log and file kept	Record of decisions reached filed with agendas
6. Agenda Formation	Agenda set by chairperson	Agenda set by administration	Open agenda posted for staff suggestions
7. Meeting Schedules	Regular meeting weekly, biweekly, etc.	At call of the chairperson	On a given day of week if agenda items exist
8. Length of Meetings	To completion of agenda	Time limit except by motion to extend	Strictly adhere to time limit
9. Philosophy and Scope of Decision-Making	Structured and limited	Relatively structured with few limitations	Completely open and limited only by legality
10. Carrying Out Decisions	Through administrator supervision	Through volunteers	Through assignment and consent

*Staff committees must realistically include a representative of the administration.

To: All PGSS staff

APPENDIX # 4

Here are the results of voting at our last staff meeting. The **Staff Committee** *Committee is now in the process of putting together a comprehensive proposal on the size, shape, and functions of a PGSS Staff Committee, for your consideration.*

Possible Staff Committee Models

Need Element	Model (A)	Model (B)	Model (C)
Staff Committee membership	All administrators plus several elected teachers (7)	One administrator plus grade or subject reps. (29)	Committee elected at large or the whole staff. (46)
Role determination	Elect chairperson, secretary etc. (30)	Rotate roles of chairperson, secretary, etc. (19)	Elect co-chairperson and several recorders (31)
Decision Making Mechanism	Motions and vote (37)	Motions and consensus (23)	Group techniques for problem solving (19)
Record-Keeping.	Full formal minutes circulated and file kept (37)	Minutes briefly recorded in staffroom log and file kept (21)	Record of decisions reached, filed with agendas (20)
Agenda Formation	Agenda set by chairperson (4)	Agenda set by administration (0)	Open agenda posted for staff suggestions (73)
Meeting Schedules	Regular meeting, weekly, biweekly, etc. (22)	At call of chairperson (7)	On a given day of week if agenda items exist (41)
Length of Meetings	To completion of agenda (15)	Time limit, except by motion to extend (51)	Strictly adhere to time limits (13)
Philosophy and Scope of Decision Making	Structured and limited (6)	Relatively structured with few limitations (17)	Completely open and limited only by legality (47)
Carrying out Decisions	Through administrator supervision (7)	Through volunteers (12)	Through assignment and consent (55)
Communication	Circulation of written minutes (50)	Important items written up & distributed as committee members see fit (23)	Informal discussions (5)
Amending Process	Formal motion to amend by vote of committee (21)	Only major amendments brought forward (13)	Committee amends process as they see fit

APPENDIX #5(A)

A (real?) STAFF COMMITTEE
..... FOR PGSS ?

Our *Contract* says:

"21.1 Each school **shall** develop processes and practices to foster collaborative decision making and problem solving at the school level amongst all employees.

21.2 Each school **may** choose to facilitate collaborative decision making and problem solving processes through **staff committees**."

So, where are we at present?

- We have a PGSS *Staff Committee* Committee, which has had some inservice on this topic.
- Its members plan to attend department meetings to answer questions and promote discussion -- preferably in the week of November 23 - 27.
- Between now and then (Nov.23-27) **you** are urged to think/talk about the topic with your colleagues.
- At a date to be announced, a full staff meeting will have to make the following decisions:
  1. *Do we want a Staff Committee at PGSS?*
  2. *If yes:*
     a). What kinds of decisions and problems do we want the Staff Committee to deal with?
     b). What kind of staff committee do we want: cabinet model, elected at large model, department reps model, whoever-feels-like-coming-to-the-meeting model?
  3. *If no: How shall we implement the intent of Article 21.1 of the Contract?*

Questions to consider:

Should our Staff Committee include reps from **all** employee groups? Or the other groups' reps *only* when *their* concerns are being discussed?

College Heights Secondary is trying a model that excludes administrators. Should we?

Should we include student reps? Parent reps? Local business reps?

Would a staff committee replace School Council? Supplement it? "Advise" it?

Do you want our *Staff Committee* Committee to draw up a couple of different Staff Committee models for us all to consider?

APPENDIX # 5(1

Possible Staff Committee Models

Need Element	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Staff Committee membership	All administrators plus several elected teachers	One administrator plus grade or subject reps.	Committee elected at large or the whole staff.
Role determination	Elect chairperson, secretary etc.	Rotate roles of chairperson, secretary, etc.	Elect co-chairperson anc several recorders
Decision Making Mechanism	Motions and vote	Motions and consensus	Group techniques for problem solving
Record-Keeping.	Full formal minutes circulated and file kept	Minutes briefly recorded in staffroom log and file kept	Record of decisions reached, filed with agendas
Agenda Formation	Agenda set by chairperson	Agenda set by administration	Open agenda posted for staff suggestions
Meeting Schedules	Regular meeting, weekly, biweekly, etc.	At call of chairperson	On a given day of week if agenda items exist
Length of Meetings	To completion of agenda	Time limit, except by motion to extend	Strictly adhere to time limits
Philosophy and Scope of Decision Making	Structured and limited	Relatively structured with few limitations	Completely open and limited only by legality
Carrying out Decisions	Through administrator supervision	Through volunteers	Through assignment and consent
Communication	Circulation of written minutes	Important items written up & distributed as committee members see fit	Informal discussions
Amending Process	Formal motion to amend by vote of committee members	Only major amendments brought forward	Committee amends process as they see fit

MEMO TO: All Staff

FROM: The *Staff Committee* Committee

DATE: January 15th, 1993

SUBJECT: The chart on the back of this memo!

At the staff meeting on February 2nd, you will be asked to formally vote on whether or not you want to proceed with the setting up of a **PGSS Staff Committee** -- as a way of increasing collaborative decision-making and problem-solving at PGSS.

The *Staff Committee* Committee has been doing some inservice, reading, and listening, and has come to the conclusion that although there are several models of staff committees in existence, there is *no* ideal model for us to copy. If we decide to set one up, we'll have to invent it for ourselves, to suit ourselves. We, as a staff, would decide on its structure, and its mandate.

What about all the areas in which a staff committee might not have "legal" authority? Would a staff committee have any real power? Contract provisions, backed up by the clearly stated desire of our school trustees to see much more collaborative processes operating in our schools, would ensure that staff committee decisions had considerable clout. (It is conceivable that a democratically elected staff committee *could* replace School Council. That could be one of a staff committee's first topics for study and recommendation!)

The chart on the back of this memo is an attempt to summarize the various options open to us. If we decide we *do* want a staff committee, we will have to make decisions on the items listed in the leftmost column. We would *not* have to adopt everything down the first column of options, or the second, or the third, but could mix and match to suit ourselves.

The *Staff Committee* Committee strongly recommends that these options be explored in discussions at department meetings before February 2nd. If the staff meeting then votes in favour of proceeding to the establishment of a staff committee, you will be asked to indicate your preferences about its shape on a form similar to the one overleaf. The *Staff Committee* committee will then attempt to incorporate them into a formal proposal for a workable PGSS Staff Committee, for consideration and adoption at a subsequent staff meeting.

Most departments at PGSS have a representative on the *Staff Committee* committee. If you have questions or concerns, talk to these people. We're looking forward to an informed debate on February 2nd.

PRINCE GEORGE SECONDARY SCHOOL

STAFF COMMITTEE

APPENDIX #6

STARTING ASSUMPTIONS

For Staff Committee purposes, the staff is defined as all those persons who are employed by the School District to work primarily at or out of P.G.S.S.

A staff meeting, called with reasonable notice to all staff members, may review any decision reached by the Staff Committee. In the event of disagreement between the Staff Committee and the staff, the decision of the staff meeting shall prevail.

2. NAME

The name of this committee shall be the Staff Committee.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Staff Committee is to facilitate collaborative decision making and problem solving, in order to enhance the working and learning climate of the school.

4. MANDATE

The Staff Committee shall review and make recommendations to be considered and responded to by the school administration on any matters it agrees to consider, where such matters are of general or specific interest to the staff of P.G.S.S.

5. MEMBERSHIP

The Staff Committee shall consist of:

- 1 representative of the school's administrators (admin. rep.)
- 1 representative for each 10 (or fraction thereof) PGDTA members (teacher reps.); and
- 1 representative for each 10 (or fraction thereof) CUPE members (support staff reps.)

5. ELECTIONS

Constituent groups shall hold an annual election in June. Representatives shall be elected for two-year terms, staggered so that approximately half the positions are elected each year. Byelections may be held, at a constituency group's discretion, to fill vacancies, and may be held to adjust numbers upward if October 1st and/or February 1st staffing numbers warrant.

. QUORUM

A quorum shall exist when the number of members present exceeds 50% of the Committee's total current elected membership.

. MEETING ATTENDANCE

Any member of staff (as defined in "1." above) who is not a Staff Committee member may attend part or all of any meeting of the Staff Committee, and shall, subject to the same rules of order that govern the conduct of Committee members, be accorded the right to speak, but not the right to vote.

Other persons may be admitted to any Committee meeting at the discretion of the person chairing the meeting, except that his or her decision on this matter may be overturned by a majority decision of the Committee, or a decision made by a staff meeting.

. MEETING FREQUENCY

Meetings shall be held at the call of the chairperson when agenda items exist, or at the call of one third or more of the members of the Committee, or when requested by a general staff meeting.

Meetings shall normally occur on the Thursday prior to the week in which a regular staff meeting is to be held, but may be held on other days, provided that reasonable notice is given to Committee members.

10. AGENDAS

Agenda items may be submitted, by any staff member, by adding them to an open agenda prominently posted for the purpose by the Staff Committee chairperson.

11. ADJOURNMENT TIME

In formally adopting a meeting's agenda, the Committee shall set an adjournment time, which may be exceeded only with the consent of two-thirds of voting members present.

12. COMMITTEE POSITIONS

The Staff Committee shall elect from among its members persons to fill the following offices:

- two co-chairpersons
- a recording secretary, and an alternate.
- a liaison representative to each of the school's standing committees

13. IMPLEMENTATION

The Staff Committee may elect or appoint, with consent, persons to fill such time-limited roles or perform such specific tasks as the Committee may from time to time decide are necessary or desirable.

14. RULES OF ORDER

The Staff Committee shall make decisions based on motions and voting. Once in operation, Staff Committee shall explore other decision making procedures, and bring recommendations to a general staff meeting.

15. RECORD-KEEPING

Decisions made by a meeting shall be posted or circulated by the recording secretary (or alternate) as soon as practicable after a meeting,

Minutes of each meeting shall be prepared by the recording secretary, and be placed before a subsequent meeting for correction, if necessary, and formal adoption. Adopted minutes shall be kept on file, with a duplicate file kept in the library for perusal by any staff member.

16. AMENDMENTS

The above constitution, having been adopted by a meeting of the staff, may only be amended by a meeting of the staff.

Additional rules, adopted by the Staff Committee itself, may be amended by the Staff Committee, subject to review by the staff at the latter's discretion.

APPENDIX # 7(A)

TO: Lynne Affleck, Ray Clarke, Doug Edgar, Marion Goetz, Don Jacques, Ken Lindsay, Al Paciejewski, Kim Rutherford, Mike Sookochoff, Miranda Vogt

FROM: Bob Taverner

RE: **Matter arising from the Jan. 25th 1994 Staff Committee meeting.**

These days you get the highlights of Staff Committee meetings in the form of minutes, prepared by Klaus Blume. So I won't duplicate by going over the same stuff here.

One thing did come up, though, that needs your input.

We agreed that we ought to start discussing 1994-95:

- Do we want to go into the new school year with the two committees – Staff Committee, and School Operations Committee? If we want changes, what would they be?
- What do we want to do about the "department contact person" role? Keep it? Junk it? Replace it with ...?
- What about the prep blocks now assigned to contact persons? Pool them centrally? Pool them by department? Assign them to Staff Committee members instead? Donate them to charity?
- What process should we use to resolve these kinds of issues? Another "Staff Committee Committee"? Let the Staff Committee wrestle with them? (I assume that it will all go to the whole staff for final decision(s).)
- Other stuff I/we haven't thought of yet.

Your input would be deeply valued and appreciated by me. Talk to me. Write to me. Participate in this great democratic exercise!

APPENDIX # 7(B)

A STAFF COMMITTEE MODEL

PROPOSED BY SANDRA DAVIE

1. STAFF COMMITTEE MEMBERBSHIP

- 1 staff committee member for every ten teaching staff member elected by staff.
- 1 administrator chosen by administrators
- 2 members from the I.O.U.E. chosen by their members.

2. ROLE DETERMINATION

- Committee would elect co-chairpersons and several recorders.

3. DECISION MAKING MECHANISM

- Formal motions and vote. If unanimity not achieved, then issue taken to staff for discussion and vote. Majority decision at that point.

4. RECORD-KEEPING

- Full formal minutes circulated and file kept.

5. AGENDA FORMATION

- Open agenda posted for staff suggestions

6. MEETING SCHEDULES

- On a given day of week if agenda items exist.
- Full staff meetings to be called the following week if necessary.

7. LENGTH OF MEETINGS

- Time limit, except by motion to extend.

8. PHILOSOPHY AND SCOPE OF DECISION MAKING

- Completely open and limited only by legality (i.e School Act or P.G.D.T.A. Contract)

9. CARRYING OUT DECISIONS

- Through assignment and consent.

10. COMMUNICATION

- Circulation of written minutes.

11. AMENDING PROCESS

- Formal motion to amend by vote of committee members.
- Formal discussion with staff.
- Secret ballot of all staff.
- Petition of 20% of staff to amend - followed by formal staff discussion and secret ballot.

12. TERM OF OFFICE

- Two year term with an option for two more.
- For the first staff committee, have one/half members voted in for one year, so that after that we will have elections every year, but we will not be replacing the whole committee.

APPENDIX 7(C)

TO: PGDTA Staff Members

FROM: Staff Committee

RE: Byelection Procedure

Here is how the staff voted.

1. Option 1 - Call for nominations one month ahead
   Take nominations from floor
   Election next day
   9 votes

2. Option 2 - Call for nominations one month ahead
   Take nominations from floor
   Post known nominations twenty-four hours ahead
   Election next day
   20 votes

3. Option 3 - Call for nominations one month ahead
   No nominations from floor
   Post known nominations twenty-four hours ahead
   Election next day
   1 vote

4. Option 4 - Call for nominations one month ahead
   Take nominations from floor
   Election at "constituency group's discretion"
   29 votes

APPENDIX #8(A)

MANAGEMENT MODEL

STAFF
s.c. rep
s.c. rep
s.c. rep
s.c. rep
s.c. rep
s.c. rep
pro. d. committee
awards committee
other... committee
school ops. committee
educational change committee

APPENDIX # 9

BCTF Report On Staff Committees
P.G.S.S. Staff Committee
Survey

1) What is your opinion to the effectiveness of the P.G.S.S. staff committee?

2) Are there any refinements to the present model of staff committee you would like to see?

3) What skills do you think are needed to be an effective member of staff committee?

4) What professional development activities do you think are needed for staff committee members?

Other Comments?

APPENDIX #10

PRINCIPAL'S ANNUAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

NAME: _____ SCHOOL YEAR: _____

SCHOOL: _____

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT: _____

School District No. 57 (Prince George) is committed to an annual performance appraisal of all administrative staff. The evaluation of Principals recognizes the unique supervisory relationship that exists between the Principal and the Assistant Superintendent and the value of open, frequent communication about school leadership and management matters. This written evaluation document provides an assessment of leadership strengths and identifies areas for continued growth and development. It should provide an agenda for on-going dialogue between the Principal and the Assistant Superintendent in the supervision of the school leader.

STANDARDS EXPECTED OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

It is expected that a Principal in School District No. 57 (Prince George) will meet these standards:

Possess the experience and qualifications to fulfill the requirements of the position held.

Follow directions as provided by Ministry prescription, Board policy and the Superintendent of Schools.

Respect the dignity of all students, parents and staff.

Act as a positive role model to staff and students.

Use collaborative approaches to decision making and direction setting.

Maintain currency with existing and emerging educational issues, methods, curriculum, philosophy, technology and trends.

Develop and maintain positive associations with the community.

Fulfill the role of educational leader within the school.

Encourage leadership by others within the school community.

Communicate in a clear manner, both written and verbal.

Be highly visible and readily accessible within the school and its community.

Bring order and organization to the school setting.

Maintain positive relationships with teachers, other staff, students, parents, colleagues and community.

Supervise and evaluate staff on a timely basis using appropriate processes.

Promote a safe and healthy school environment.

Support the professional growth of all staff (including self).

Exhibit the qualities of honesty, openness, fairness, compassion, courage, trust, diligence and selflessness.

Possess the confidence of students, staff, parents and supervisor.

APPENDIX # 11

regulation

No 6120

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

REGULATIONS:

1. The school shall develop a philosophy within the time limit established by the superintendent of schools.

2. The principal will consult with teachers and gather information from parents and students.

3. Each school philosophy shall be submitted to the superintendent of schools for approval.

4. Copies of each school's philosophy shall be available to the public.

Approval Date: 78.06.20
Legal Ref.: School Act (Section 103)

APPENDIX #12

policy

No. 4100

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

POLICY:

The Board of School Trustees shall promote cooperation in its dealings with individual employees and employee groups; strive to maintain a positive work environment for employees and students; and seek to maintain a collaborative school district.

DEFINITIONS:

1. A "collaborative school district" is one in which the professional autonomy of staff and the managerial responsibilities of the Board are harmonized around the common goal of providing the best educational opportunities for students.

2. "Cooperation" means working together towards a common purpose.

3. "Collaboration" means one or more persons successfully working with other persons to attain common or agreed-on goals and objectives. Collaboration requires mutual respect and trust; clear commitments to common beliefs and values; meaningful consultation and involvement; shared decision-making; open, honest, on-going two-way communication; risk; creativity; and mutually acceptable processes and outcomes.

4. "Harmonize" means to achieve unity or bring into accord.

5. "Managerial Responsibilities" are actions and activities carried out by the Board or its agents to provide and support quality educational services to learners within a positive work environment.

6. "Professional Autonomy" is the ability and willingness to carry out assigned work responsibilities consistent with effective practice and in a manner congruous with the expectations of the profession, trade or job.

Responsibility Centre: Director of Human Resources
Approval Date: 92.07.07
Legal Ref.: School Act (Section 103)
Other Ref.: School District No. 57 Collective Agreements

Regulation

No. 4100

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

REGULATIONS:

1. Each school or department shall develop processes and practices to promote cooperation and collaboration amongst all employees within a positive work environment to provide and support the best educational opportunities for students.

Approval Date: 92.07.07
Legal Ref.: School Act (Section 103)

APPENDIX #13

ADMINISTRATIVE procedure

No. · 1170

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

A teacher's interactions with students form the essential core of the educational system. If teachers present the highest standard of behaviour then students will be able to achieve the growth necessary to become self-actualizing individuals.

A teacher is expected to:

1. Respect the feelings of each student and provide a learning environment which will help students achieve feelings of self-worth and pride in achievement.
2. Provide a challenging and productive educational environment adapted to the needs and interests of students.
3. Promote, by example and instruction, positive attitudes and desirable standards of accomplishment and behaviour.
4. Provide for the health and safety of students in his/her charge.
5. Be available to provide individual help to students.
6. Present an example of personal appearance, cleanliness and dress appropriate to the profession.
7. Promote, by example, the use of good language free from profanity.
8. Create situations which will allow students to participate in decision-making processes.
9. Promote and maintain liaison and communication with parent(s) and appropriate school personnel, in matters relating to the welfare of students.
10. Encourage respect in students for other people.
11. Be responsible for the observance by students of the provisions of the school code of conduct.
12. Ensure that students are given access to due process.

ADMINISTRATIVE procedure

No. 1170

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

13. Exemplify attitudes of recognition and respect for the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritages of others.

14. Participate in the development and/or revision of the code of conduct and philosophy of the school.

15. Become knowledgeable about the district expectations for behaviour and the school's code of conduct.

Approval Date: 78.06.20
Legal Ref.: School Act (Section 103)

APPENDIX # 1A

ADMINISTRATIVE procedure

No. 1170

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS FOR PRINCIPALS

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

Principals are the educational leaders of the schools. They are the vital link in the process of implementing the goals and philosophy of the district, as well as providing the leadership necessary to develop and implement a philosophy for their school. As an educational leader the principal is accountable for the total educational program of the school.

The principal is expected to:

1. Promote, by example and instruction, desirable attitudes and standards of accomplishment and behaviour.
2. Support teachers in the provision of suitably challenging and productive educational environments.
3. Present an example of personal appearance, cleanliness and dress appropriate to his/her profession.
4. Promote, by example, the use of good language free from profanity.
5. Provide for consultation with parents, teachers and students as an integral part of the decision-making process.
6. Develop strategies and other alternatives for discipline; for example, arrangement of school inservice sessions on the subject of classroom management.
7. Promote effective communications with parents.
8. Report to parents positive and negative aspects of student behaviour and performance.
9. Incorporate due process requirements into school practice.
10. Ensure that activities are planned for the professional staff of the school to promote the advancement of education.
11. Develop programs and regulations designed to reduce vandalism and to protect both public and private property.

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS FOR PRINCIPALS

12. Be responsible for total staff involvement in the supervision of pupils.

13. Develop, publicize and periodically revise, with the involvement of students, parents and teachers, a school philosophy consistent with the district policy and regulations and relevant to the particular situation of the school.

14. Develop and publicize, with the involvement of students, parents and teachers, a code of student behaviour consistent with district policy and regulations and relevant to the particular situation of the school.

Approval Date: 78.06.20
Legal Ref.: School Act (Section 103)

APPENDIX #15

rking
r Learning

DISTRICT REPORT TO PARENTS

Volume 2, No. 1
October, 1996

nts:

to a new school year!

nools will be distributing copies of "Directions
o parent groups. We hope this latest action plan
996/97 school year will continue to make the
stem more accountable to the parents and to the
y.

ar's first District Report to Parents, we have
ed our goals and plans from the last school year
ded an update for you on what we actually

ARD COMMITMENTS ON SAFE SCHOOLS

What we promised to do:

ool codes of conduct at every school with
taff, parents, and students. The codes will
student expectations and consequences for
ns of school codes.

r the school codes for effectiveness.

l and restructure the Student Conduct Review
ttee (the district-level committee that deals with
st difficult and serious disciplinary matters).

e even more support to school administrators
chers.

e students and staff with a safe, healthy
ment.

o prevent vandalism in our schools and their
nities.

What we actually did:

codes of conduct are in place in all elementary
ondary schools.

the drafting phase of this process, the Board
d every single code submitted by schools and
. The trustees required adherence to the
, clear statements outlining expectations of
s, and consequences for students who fail to
ose expectations.

s from schools to the district's Student Conduct
Committee are reviewed by the Board at the

- The Student Conduct Review Committee was expanded into four teams to respond to the increased number of referrals arising out of the more demanding disciplinary school codes.
- Monitoring air quality continued and emergent requests were made to the Ministry of Education to improve air quality at Harwin Elementary.
- The "Student CrimeStoppers" program was introduced in February 1996.
- Vandalism and its costs were the subject of a high profile awareness campaign with school staffs, students, and the RCMP.

BOARD COMMITMENTS ON COMMUNICATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

What we promised to do:

- Report regularly to parents.
- Maintain the visibility of the assistant superintendents in schools and continue to make school visits their highest priority.
- Work with parents to review the effectiveness of school and district parent advisory councils.
- Restructure Board meetings to accommodate earlier media deadlines and avoid late-night sittings on public issues.
- Review and enhance in-district communications.
- Revise the process to evaluate principals to include objective-oriented appraisals. Complete performance evaluations of all district principals.
- Advise the community of the Board and Senior Administration's objectives for the school year and specific plans for meeting those objectives.
- Report to the community each year on how well we did in accomplishing what we set out to do.

What we actually did:

- We reported to parents twice during the school year.

Dis.ict Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) struck a nittee to review the structure of school parent ory councils and of the District Parent Advisory ıcil. The Chairperson of DPAC made a ıntation to principals in August on their role in ıraging effective parent participation in schools.

l meetings were restructured to start an hour r and to provide more time for general discussion rent issues.

gular methods of in-district communication have reviewed or are presently under review, and the l held an exploratory meeting with a ıunications consultant to discuss Board ıunications.

ssistant superintendents have worked with every ɔal in the district to develop an action plan for this ɔchool year and each principal was evaluated in of that plan at the end of the school year. The will review these evaluations in November.

cademic Achievement Task Force was struck in nber 1995 and reported to the Board in June recommendations contained in this report ar-reaching consequences for secondary ls

marks the fourth year we have produced an l statement of objectives and related action plans. the second report on how we performed against objectives.

) COMMITMENTS ON PLANNING, DECISION-MAKING AND LEADERSHIP

What we promised to do:

ate more effective leadership and decision-) in our schools by clarifying expectations of als, vice-principals, and other managers.

ɜs and the senior administration will continue to .te to schools as much responsibility and ın-making authority as is consistent with the ; beliefs and values.

quickly to identify areas where decisions is ade by senior, centralized administrators urned over to school principals and managers.

age, through recognition, positive, professional ıance.

egular meetings of the Superintendent and

What we actually did:

- In the sometime hostile environment of budget cuts, it is difficult to establish the kinds of relationships we all want with our employees. However, the Board remains committed to processes which include all staff in decision making.
- Further discussion regarding the delegation of decision-making powers to school principals continued during 1995-96 as the Board and district staff struggled with the implications of further budget reductions. The Board and senior administration's interest in expanding the schools' authority remains strong and will be pursued aggressively in this current school year.
- The Superintendent met with central office managers on a regular basis.
- A secondary school completion program for employees was implemented.

Trustees

Shirley Bond - 564-8653
Bev Christensen - 562-1988
Bill Christie - 562-5209
Gordon Ingalls - (250) 352 2024
Kathy Mueller - 561-2173
Adrienne Radford - 562-3946
Doug Walls- 564-1133

Superintendent of Schools

Phil Redmond - 561-6800

APPENDIX #16

ing
Learning

Volume 1 No. 1
October 1995

Dear Parents:

Welcome to a new school year!

Schools have recently distributed copies of 'DIRECTIONS 95-96' to parent groups. This summary of the School District's action plan for the 1995-96 school year includes a promise to communicate directly with parents regarding district activities, plans and achievements. With this in mind, in this first *"DISTRICT REPORT TO PARENTS"* we have summarized our goals and plans from last school year and provided an update for you on what we actually achieved. Also included are some facts about your school district. These reports will continue during the school year. We hope that they will make the school system more accountable to parents and to the public. Your comments are always welcomed.

Board of School Trustees
and the Superintendent of Schools

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Your School District at a Glance

Did you know?

- 20,018 students attend school in this district, up 290 from last school year
- there are 64 schools plus Continuing Education and Distance Education School (Correspondence)
- Grade 12 students won 52 provincial scholarships in 1994-95
- it's 491 kilometers between the most northerly district school in Mackenzie and the most easterly one in Valemount
- this year's kindergarten enrollment of 1,533 students is the largest in 5 years
- the value of scholarships and bursaries awarded in 1994-95 was $233,125
- 4,091 students ride 69 buses and vans for 12,570 kilometres every school day
- 2,667 employees work as teachers, principals, carpenters, secretaries -- to name just a few of the jobs in School District No. 57
- the smallest school at Dome Creek has 10 students while the largest, Prince George Secondary School, enrolls 1,530

- ou witness acts of vandalism or suspicious activity on school property, please call e R.C.M.P. at 561-3300 (non-emergency) or 911 (emergency)
- if you know the identity of those who commit vandalism, call the Crime Stoppers Tips Line at 564-Tips

DISTRICT REPORT TO PARENTS

What We Planned To Do	What We Did
• To place **support for teachers and students** at the school level	• Decisions regarding support for students with **special needs** are now made at the school level.
	• Funds are now provided directly to classroom teachers and other school staff for **curriculum and instruction initiatives.**
• Commit **funding** for the implementation of year 1 of the **Technology** Task Force Report	• Although we were unable to reach the goal of $4.9 million, with district funds, school budgets and fundraising, $1.3 million was spent on **classroom technology.**
• Improve the level of **technology** in schools	• In recognition of the importance of Staff Development, an **employee computer purchase plan** was launched at no cost to the district.
• To establish a **District Code of Student Conduct**	• The District Code of Student Conduct has been implemented. It mandates a **much tougher, more consistent approach to discipline** in schools.
	• School Codes of Student Conduct have been **revised to comply** with the new district code.
• To increase the effectiveness of **parent involvement** in district and school based decision making	• Trustees met with parent groups, providing **more effective communication.**
• To increase the focus on **performance evaluations** of employees	• **Performance appraisals of** principals have been revised and will be completed **annually** starting in the 1995-96 school year.

Next issue: A focus on academic programs and student performance.

Trustees

Shirley Bond - 564-8653
Bev Christensen - 562-1988
Lesley Harris - 562-4442
Gordon Ingalls, Chairperson - 563-1095
Kathy Mueller - 561-2173
Adrienne Radford - 562-3946
Doug Walls - 564-1133

Learning For Life!

PRINCE GEORGE SECONDARY SCHOOL
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.57 (PRINCE GEORGE)

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