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**MARKET VALUES IN EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF ITS EFFECT ON THE
PRINCIPAL'S MODEL FOR SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN ALBERTA**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of**

Doctor of Education

Dean G. Lindquist

School of Education

University of San Diego

August, 1998

Dissertation Committee

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Abstract

Market Values In Education: A Case Study Of Its Effect On The Principal's Model For School Governance In Alberta

Political bodies, facing increased pressures to improve the quality of education offered to students, are shifting to a philosophy that imposes large scale market forces such as parental choice and school competition onto educational systems in order to coerce school improvement. This shift may be prompting school-based administrators to shift school governance practices to reflect these market values.

This shift, occurring in Alberta (Canada), is founded in government policy that articulates the option of educational choice for parents. Presently the government policy promotes these market values in education by providing full funding to public, separate, and charter schools, and partial funding to accredited private schools thus creating an atmosphere of competition and parental choice between schools. Public choice theory, emanating from neoclassical economics, is the economics model that this model operates within the educational system.

A total of seventeen Alberta public, separate, charter, and private school principals were interviewed in this multi-site case study investigating the shift toward market values in education. The purpose of this study was to determine if principals perceived a change toward a market model, and to gain insight into what might be the implications for principals' school governance as a result of the application of market forces. Specifically, the study examined what these principals believe are the effects of the application of market forces on the governance of their schools.

Findings of this study support the contention that a political movement is at the root of this reform. As part of this reform, the findings suggest that an educational system of choice is developing in Alberta, and one of the results of this is increased competition between schools and school systems. Also emanating from this evolving market based educational system is a devolved school governance structure that includes changes to the structures of finance, school organization, and decision making. Consequently, successful school principals are requiring new knowledge and skills in order to lead their schools. Specifically, the findings imply that the principal of a school operating in a market based educational milieu will require enhanced human resources, marketing, leadership, and management skills.

Dedication

**To my wife Edith and daughter Shelby,
for their ongoing support and encouragement.**

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This study came to fruition through the assistance of many individuals and groups who assisted me with this project. I would like to extend my appreciation to the following groups and individuals:

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Chapter I: The Problem

Statement of the Problem

. . . We may venture to assert that anyone who can produce the perfect blend of the physical and intellectual sides of education and apply them to the training of the character, is producing music and harmony of far more importance than any mere musician tuning strings. (Plato, 1987, p. 117)

In Plato's Republic, Socrates discusses the important function that a well planned and balanced attitude toward education plays in the development of the guardians and the other citizens for the Republic. That is, in the early stages of education of the Republic's guardians, the purpose of education is "to train both character and moral and aesthetic judgment" (Plato, 1987, p. 102). Throughout, Socrates argues that the young are easily influenced, and consequently care must be taken as to what the young should be exposed to in their formative years. He writes that the young ". . . are easily moulded and . . . any impression we choose to make leaves a permanent mark" (p.72). For this reason, we can read The Republic to understand our contemporary responsibility: to take great care in developing our attitude about education for the young.

Understandably, the degree that educational reformists are bringing pressures to bear on government agencies to improve education is an indicator of their attitude that the educational system is not successful in terms of the relationship between low student

achievement and the high costs of public education that is incurred by taxpayers. As a result, political bodies, facing increased pressures to improve the quality of education offered to students, are shifting to an economics philosophy that imposes large scale market forces, such as; parental choice and school competition, onto educational systems in order to drive school improvement. This change is prompting school based administrators to shift school governance practices to reflect market values. An implication of this shift is that research is needed to discern the effects of contemporary market forces on the way schools are ultimately governed by school principals.

To understand what is meant by market forces, we must first understand the way values are inherent in the market setting. Rosenberg (1991) identifies the values of the marketplace as “competition, which can be healthy, and choice, which our democratic traditions and world events indicate is morally and instrumentally superior to coercion” (p. 65). This definition is further enhanced by Kearney and Arnold (1994), who refer to schools, impacted by market values, as market driven schools. They state that “a market driven school, . . . , is characterized by a tight connection between organizational performance and the continuing flow of resources” (p. 113). Kearney and Arnold argue that under these circumstances, schools become “more responsive to the external environment” (p. 113). Thus, in a market economy, market forces exact pressures on schools to be more responsive to parent and student needs as a result of the need to attract students to ensure financial viability. If schools are unsuccessful in attracting students they no longer receive funding, thus resulting in the school no longer being able to provide educational services. This is similar to the business that closes as a result of loss of revenue because they did not meet or exceed customer needs. However, they also note

that market driven is different than educational choice. Using Kearney and Arnold's definition, school choice involves increased local control for decision making as well as parental and student choice of a school and school programs. Consequently the difference between the two is the increased local control for decision making.

The entire notion of educational reform is difficult to grapple with as each aspect of reform carries with it, its own qualities and characteristics. Socrates expressed grave concern with reform of education. He used the analogy of song to prompt a certain attitude about the problem with certain types of reform. He referred to the poem Odyssey to illustrate the point that when people "pay most attention to the latest song on the singer's lips, . . . people will think the poet means not new songs, but a new kind of song" (p.132). That is, the kind or degree of reform needed is often misinterpreted by people who develop the wrong attitude, resulting in additional problems. Therefore, the state must resist change for its own sake, and instead pay attention to reform in relation to the needs of society since any unwanted change can, in effect, result in major societal upheaval. In the development of the education system in the perfect Republic, Socrates argues that:

those in charge of our state must stick to the system of education and see that no deterioration creeps in; they must maintain it as a first priority and avoid at all costs any innovation in the established physical or academic curriculum. (p.132)

Socrates believed the sanctity of the educational system must be protected from thoughtless reform, as the system itself ought to be delicately planned to provide a specific function in society, which is to unify the society so that it is the source that produces contentment for everyone by way of virtuous practice.

Interestingly, the concept of applying market values to education is not a new reform to education, as components of this reform can be traced back to the late 1950's. However, the market concept is once again at the forefront of proposed changes by market-oriented reformists. Market reformists feel validated for their cause when they hear other leaders talking about the need for educational reform. For example, former United States President George Bush, while still in office in 1991, stated "to those who want to see real improvement in American education, I say: There will be no renaissance without revolution" (cited in Henig, 1994, p. 3). This revolution is occurring in the form of applying market values to education. This market-oriented reform is not limited to jurisdictions or political regions that are deemed to be more experimental and willing to try out new ideas. Paralleling this United States context, Canada and the United Kingdom, too, are adopting market values.

The market-oriented reform movement is sweeping like wildfire across states, provinces, and countries. This fire is fanned by quotes and comments, by business leaders who see market forces at the heart of education renewal, such as "no more tinkering at the margins" and "you can't tinker at the edges, . . . you have to go to the center" (Henig, 1994, p. 3). Consequently, choice is evolving as one version of market force. O'Neil (1996) supports this contention as he explains that public support is growing for greater choice within public schools. A focus on this view of choice is in part responsible for the emergence of charter schools in the educational system as well as increased support for the privatization of education.

The application of market values affect the principals' governance of schools. For example, and as discussed in further detail in chapter two, the decentralization of decision

making, which may accompany the application of market values redefines the principal's role in school governance. Johnson (cited in Weiss and Cambone, 1994) states that "as teachers' authority is abridged, the role of the principal will be redefined" (p. 287). The problem is, how will the role be redefined and what impact will this have on how the principal governs his/her school.

Background of the Problem

Social values are integral to public institutions. These values, established by society, impact the structure, organization and governance of the institutions. The institution, public education, is presently at the center of a values struggle. This struggle is precipitated by society's shift toward a market determined value system in education. Market determined values in public education are creating debate about their implications for the structure, organization, and governance of public education.

Arguably, these market values are similar between the countries of Canada, the United States, and England. Supporting this conception of parallelism is a study comparing Canadian and American value differences. In this study, Baer, Grabb, and Johnston (1990a) conducted a new investigation into an earlier study conducted by Lipset. In the earlier study, Lipset found significant differences between the values found in England, Australia, Canada, and the United States, even though these countries experienced similar historical roots (Baer et al., 1990a). Baer et al. (1990a) found that contrary to what was believed about the differences between the values found in Canada and the United States, most of the results in their study demonstrated "either no significant differences or else differences that are opposite to those indicated by Lipset's

argument” (p. 693). This, in part, is based on Baer et al.’s findings that “instead of the collectivism and support for equality of condition that Lipset perceives in the Canadian value system, . . . English Canadians are generally no more opposed than Americans to corporate profit and economic inequality . . .” (p. 708). Baer, Grabb, and Johnston (1990b) further qualify their findings by indicating that they are not saying the values are the same, rather they “suggest that the within-country variations are almost certainly greater than the variations between nations” (p. 276).

To understand this value laden debate, one must consider the noble role public education plays in society. Both Hlebowitsh (1995) and Cameron (1992) indicate that public education is a cornerstone of democratic principles. Hlebowitsh (1995) argues that “public education is an ideal that is umbilically tied to the progress of society” (p. 2). This argument is affirmed by John Dewey’s (1959) view that “the school is . . . an institution erected by society . . . to exercise a certain specific function in maintaining the life and advancing the welfare of society” (p. 7). One of the roles of public education, according to Dewey, is to advance and promote principles necessary to develop a moral society.

Dewey argues that the school’s function is more than teaching for citizenship, rather “we must take the child as a member of society in the broadest sense, and demand for and from schools whatever is necessary to enable the child intelligently to recognize all his social relations and take his part in sustaining them” (p. 8). Gunn (1992) elaborates on Dewey’s perception about the responsibility education has for society. He states that Dewey “[is] convinced that education constitutes the foremost institutional responsibility in a democracy” (p. 73). For this reason, Hlebowitsh indicates that as a

society we can criticize and debate the efficacy of the education system, however we must also maintain its mission. Part of this mission “is to build the common ground for discourse and common understandings in a pluralistic democracy” (Hlebowitsh, 1995, p. 2). This belief is substantiated by Cameron (1992) who indicates that “public schools [give] meaning to our nation’s commitment to equal opportunity and cultural diversity” (p. 33). Thus, it can be argued that public schools are charged with the responsibility of developing an educational system reflecting the cultural diversity of the nation as well as one that meets both the common good of society and individual need. Dewey supports this position in that educational institutions carry the responsibility of developing every individual to their greatest potential (Gunn, 1992).

The root of this controversy is that some societal members do not believe that public education is meeting student or societal needs. One of the arguments that market-oriented reformists use to support the shift toward market values is to claim an inability of bureaucratic institutions to respond to the needs of its students. Indeed, Molnar (1996) indicates that supporters for the formation of charter schools identified “overregulation and unresponsive bureaucracies” (p. 10) as the difficulty with public education today and the reason why there is a need for charter schools. However, according to researchers, the reasons for adopting market values is not limited to schools being overregulated or unresponsive to the public. Henig (1994) posits that there are additional issues that are also at the root of this reform movement. He identifies poor educational performance of American schools as a major factor in spite of increased allocation of funds, better teachers, and more rigorous standards. In addition, the problem of the failure of our educational institutions lies with school governance itself. To solve this school

governance problem, Henig (1994) advises that “the prescription for a cure, . . . is to introduce market pressures into the process by which educational decisions are made” (p. 4). He further explains that this education reform is similar to the privatization movement in that it seeks a model for education that reflects free market economic theory and corporate practice (1994). Using this approach, businesses appear to be more successful at injecting innovation, flexibility, and better employee morale into their systems.

Importance of the Study

Alberta (Canada) Education policy explicitly recognizes the importance of parental choice in selecting the school that they feel will best meet the needs of their children. Consequently, the Government of Alberta provides funding to public, separate, charter, and private schools. Although a more detailed definition of each of these schools is discussed in the terminology section of this paper and in Appendix A, a brief description of separate schools is included here. The Constitution of Canada and the Alberta Act (1905) protects the religious minority, Protestant or Catholic, thus resulting in full government funding for both public and separate school systems. Separate schools, with one exception in Alberta, are Catholic jurisdictions. In addition, other types of schools, namely charter schools and private schools, operating in Alberta, receive some funding. Charter schools receive one hundred percent of the per pupil grant provided to public and separate schools, while accredited private schools receive approximately fifty percent (this will increase to approximately sixty percent over the next two years) of this instructional grant.

Combining choice of charter and private schools with open attendance boundaries in the public and separate school systems, the Government of Alberta provides parents with the opportunity to select from a wide range of schools. This opportunity for selection results in increased pressures to market their school's potential for serving student needs. The implication of the choice movement is that principals must become adept at marketing their schools. This study considers how the values of a market based educational system shape the skills and knowledge required of a school principal to govern a school in this system. It also explores principals' insights into how they may be required to change their own governance structures, and employ different decision making models even as they are concerned with the democratic purposes of education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to develop and conduct a series of in-depth interviews of school principals to examine the effects that market forces have on school governance. Specifically, the purpose is to develop an understanding of how market values shape the principal's roles, functions, and attitude about governance of a school.

Research Questions

1. As parents exercise school choice in Alberta, what emerging market values have school principals observed that may affect the principal's role and function in their school?
2. Have principals shifted their approach to school governance as a result of the application of market values, such as school choice, to education?

3. How have principals adapted or changed decision making models or processes at the school level as a result of the application of market values on schools?
4. What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have principals acquired or need to acquire to enable their schools successful transition toward a market based education system?
5. What role, if any, do school principals view educational finance playing in reinforcing the shift toward market values?

Assumptions of the Study

1. Principals of schools within the public and separate school education systems may be less knowledgeable about market values. This may be a result of the compulsory nature of schooling in Alberta, and historically, the choice of school for attendance has been government funded public and separate schools. Conversely, principals of private schools may be more finely attuned to the impact of market values, and thus more obviously influenced by market values as these schools must openly compete with other schools in order to attract students. In particular, as private schools have always been in a marketing position, they have likely developed successful practices for attracting students to their school.
2. Principals are able to explicitly articulate the mental model they use to govern their schools.
3. Parental choice of schools is an expression of market values, and as such, partial funding of charter and private schools enable parents to view them as legitimate, affordable, choice options.

4. The researcher is entering this study with a bias or assumption that there are some school principals that are more prepared for dealing with the market concept in schools than other school principals. Specifically, principals from highly competitive public and separate schools, in addition to charter and private school principals, have a higher degree of knowledge and skills for working within a market based education system.

Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited to school principals located in highly populated centers in regions of Alberta that have each of the four school types represented. Although market values is not likely a predominantly urban phenomenon, it is likely that the interplay of the market will be more demonstrable in a setting in which parents and students have the opportunity of greater choice of schools. Thus, parents have the opportunity in such communities to choose public, separate, charter, or private schools for their children to attend.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher, as a result of government policy, cannot control for school board policies regarding choice within a particular system. For example, school boards may not allow open attendance boundaries that permit students to attend other public schools outside of a particular attendance boundary. The impact of this is that parents within a school jurisdiction may not be free to enroll their children in other public or separate schools outside a specific attendance boundary if the parents wish that their children

remain within the same system. For example, a parent choosing or wishing to send his or her child to a public school other than public school A may not be able to as a result of system policy. Consequently, this policy limits parental ability to exercise true school choice as one of their school system options is eliminated.

A second limitation is that some schools may be less affected by market values and forces as a result of geographic location and the population demographics of the region where a school is located. For example, students attending some inner city schools may not have the ability to enroll in other schools for a variety of reasons including travel and subsistence. Again, this impacts the parents and students ability to exercise school choice.

Definitions of Terms

Public and Separate Schools - This study deals exclusively with the educational system in the province of Alberta. The Government of Alberta has one public education system whose mandate is to provide educational programs for students. This education system is divided into two dimensions; public schools and separate schools. Both dimensions are fully supported by public funds as outlined in the Constitution Act 1867 and the Alberta Act (1905). The formation of public school jurisdictions was determined by the religious group (i.e., Catholic or Protestant) that was defined as the majority at the time the school system was formed . Currently, all but one of the school jurisdictions operating in Alberta are public school jurisdictions, the remaining Catholic school jurisdictions are known as separate school jurisdictions (Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association, p. 1). An important aspect of education in Alberta is that education is compulsory until the

age of sixteen, however, the type of school attended is not mandated. Consequently, students can attend public or separate schools, charter schools, or private schools.

Charter Schools - Government of Alberta policy 1.1.1 states that charter schools may be established “to provide for a innovative, different or enhanced program to improve student learning.” As part of this process, individuals and societies may apply for the establishment of a charter school to be operated by a society incorporated under the Societies Act or a Provincial corporation as defined in the Financial Administration Act.

According to an Government of Alberta August 1996 press release, eight charter schools will operate In the province of Alberta during the 1996-97 school year.

Private Schools - According to Government of Alberta Policy 3.6.1, “Alberta Education recognizes the parents have the right to choose a private school for their children.” There are two types of private schools parents to choose; accredited private schools and registered private schools. According to policy 3.6.1, section 22(1), a registered private school has Ministerial approval based on the school’s program of studies complying with all requirements set forth by the Minister; the school meets the required standards of achievement and meets the achievement testing requirements; the Minister can monitor and evaluate the school; and the school meets all health, safety and building codes. An accredited private school is one that the Minister approves any modifications to the educational program, as well, the operator accepts the requirements identified for registered private schools above.

For the purpose of this study, private schools will refer to any school approved as a registered or accredited private school by the Minister of Education.

Decision Making Models - Decision making models are the models that are adopted by school administration and staff to make decisions within their school. Depending upon state, province, and/or local government mandate, the degree of latitude that school administrators and staff enjoy in decision making varies greatly. However, with the shift toward a market value based education system, new decision making models are emerging. Gewirtz, Ball, and Bowe (1995) indicate that there is a movement toward governance structures such as total quality management, that incorporate decision making, to bring about school improvement. Similarly, Alberta Education has mandated, as its decision making model, school based management (site based management) in Alberta public and separate schools. Neal (1991) defines school based management as:

a research based, committed, structured, and decentralized method of operating the school district within understood parameters and staff roles to maximize resource effectiveness by transferring the preponderant share of the entire school system's budget, along with corresponding decision-making power, to the local schools on an equitable lump sum basis, based upon a differentiated per pupil allocation to be spent irrespective of source in the best interests of the students in those schools according to a creative local school plan and local budget developed by the principal collaboratively with trained staff, parents, and students as stakeholders, and approved by the superintendent; such plans being designed to achieve goals of improving education by placing accountability at the individual school, and evaluated more by results than by methodology. (p. 17)

Democratic Values - In chapter two, a table compares comprehensive [democratic] values to market values using educational descriptors. However, to define democratic

values is difficult. Perhaps Gutmann (1987) best describes this term when she states “. . . a democratic state of education tries to teach virtue -- . . . what might best be called democratic virtue: the ability to deliberate, and hence to participate in conscious social reproduction” (p. 46). This is similar to Bellah, who refers to the idea of civic virtue, or Plato’s common good. That is, democratic values are those values that are espoused as important for developing citizens. This includes concepts such as justice and equity.

Chapter II: Review of Literature

Introduction

Educational reform is precipitated by a variety of individuals, groups, and polity. Reform also comes in many forms. The roots of the market-oriented reform originate in the late 1950's and 1960's. Murnane and Levy (1996) state that market based initiatives to improve student achievement have endured for more than twenty-five years (p. 10). However, according to Hirth (1996), a proliferation of reform initiatives were created in the 1980's as a result of the publication of A Nation at Risk. It was this report that presented a failing educational system that threatened America's economic position in the world. The result was government sponsored educational reforms. A second reason is the rising cost of education today. Student achievement results are not commensurate with the increasing cost of education. As a result, there is a public outcry for educational reform. This supposition is supported by Biller (1995), who indicated that "educational alliances and advocacy groups are questioning the cost effectiveness of public education" (p. 34).

For the reasons stated above, and likely for many more, "school choice was included in the political platform of many successful candidates . . ." at all levels of government (Biller, 1995, p. 35). Supporting this claim, Cameron (1992) and Clabaugh

(1992) indicate that in both the Reagan and Bush administrations, there was support for providing public funding to private schools. A similar pattern resulted in school choice in both Canada and the United Kingdom. In Alberta, Canada for example, education has encountered a variety of reform efforts that has resulted in financial and governance reforms. These reforms will be discussed in the sections to follow.

Historical Perspective

Reform is an ongoing process for education throughout the industrialized world. The momentum for this reform comes from the dissatisfaction, expressed by a variety of stakeholders, with the present educational system. As a result of this dissatisfaction a variety of change initiatives are applied to the educational system. However, some theorists express difficulty with applying change without having a research base to support it. Pogrow (1996) indicates there is a problem with continually shifting between what he calls “inadequate progressive and traditional reforms” (p. 660). In his general argument about why reforms seldom work, he states that “the primary reason to adopt reforms is the failure of what exists rather than the demonstrated success of what is being proposed” (p. 660). School choice may be one of these reforms, as its history begins early in the twentieth century.

According to Kemerer and King (1995), in 1925 the United States Supreme Court gave parents the right to enroll their children in private schools. However, the ruling did not include public funding to financially assist families enrolling their children in these programs. As a result of the Supreme Court ruling not directly addressing the funding issue, the right of many parents to send their children to private schools was thwarted by

the cost of doing so. One of the problems facing proponents for the funding of private schools is “because approximately 85% of private schools are religiously affiliated” (Kemerer and King, 1995, p. 308), and as these authors indicate, the constitution of many states prohibit the use of public funds to support sectarian education. Consequently, court challenges to the funding principles have not been successful as a major part of the problem exists with the constitutionality of funding religious schools in the United States.

Tovey (1995) paints a different and bleaker picture of the origins of school choice. He states that it “was first advocated by southern conservatives as a means of thwarting desegregation efforts in the 1960’s . . .” (p. 15). A different perspective is presented by Lewis (1995), who identifies that the idea of a voucher system first appeared in the early 1960’s as a result of an economist, Milton Friedman. According to Lewis, Friedman believes that governments should not have a monopoly on schools. Thus, Friedman’s plan envisions a voucher system with each voucher “[equaling] . . . a certain number of public dollars” (Lewis, 1995, p. 41). As a result, the plan is that these vouchers will enable parents to choose the school they feel will meet their children’s needs best. Thus, the market economics would force “schools not chosen [to] either improve to meet the competition or go out of existence” (Lewis, 1995, p. 41). Consequently, the choice movement has experienced a colorful past, and its future, in terms of how it will manifest itself within the educational systems, has not yet been determined. However, the choice issue is a major component of individualism and consequently will likely play a role somewhere in the educational system in the future.

The Market Values Issue

To gain additional understanding about the market values issue and its role in restructuring, this next section will address the market values debate on a broader level through a review of pertinent literature. This discussion will primarily focus on school choice. Immediately following this section, market values, or more specifically, school choice and its impact on school governance will be discussed using a framework that consists of four models. These are a values of individualism model, a market model, a finance model, and an administrative governance model.

Public choice theory is the economics model that school choice operates within the educational systems. According to Johnson and Galvin (1996), public choice theory emanates from neoclassical economics. The main ideas adopted from neoclassical economics by public choice theory are “choice, scarcity, exchange, and utility maximization” (p. 101). It is the choice and utility maximization elements that formulates the case for school choice as presented by the classical economist, Milton Friedman, and as discussed in the finance model section of this chapter. Johnson & Galvin (1996) cite Becker (1976) in explaining choice as being “human behavior, both individually and collectively, [that] can be understood in terms of the rational support of self-interest within exchange relationships” (p. 101). Furthermore, Johnson and Galvin (1996) define utility maximization as “individuals who seek to benefit from the exchanges made within a given social system or systems” (p. 101). Ostensibly, these two elements play a critical role in defining the framework for the school choice debate.

Plant (1998) in support of a welfare ethic, discusses the concept of public choice theory. In his paper, he supports Johnson and Galvin's viewpoint of public choice. He explains that "the basic behavioral postulate of public choice . . . is that man is an egoistic, rational utility maximizer" (p. 73). According to Plant, using this theory in both the political and market process, the "individuals seek to further their own purposes . . . by engaging in social interactions" (p. 73). That is, in a true public choice environment, there are "no such things as social objectives, national goals or social welfare functions" (p. 73). Applying this theory, Plant (1998) indicates that what follows is the belief that bureaucracies, such as schools, are "public sector interest groups within which individuals pursue materially self-interested goals . . ." (p. 73). In a less than redeeming sense, Plant cites Lawson, who wrote, "welfare administrators are far from selfless Platonic guardians of popular mythology" (p. 73). According to Plant (1998), the goal of the public choice theorist is to "assimilate bureaucratic behaviour to market behaviour in terms of motivation . . ." (p. 75). Thus, it is necessary to develop reform strategies that enables the practice of public choice theory.

Levin (1992) discusses three reform strategies for education. These are restructuring, public choice, and market choice. Levin (1992) explains that restructuring "refers to the drastic revamping of public schools in terms of their organization and decision-making to improve their effectiveness" (p. 279). Public choice is providing parents and students with the opportunity to choose to attend public schools outside of their attendance area. Market choice takes this public choice one step further by enabling choice across public and private lines. Levin (1992) indicates that restructuring is often

combined with the choice reform. This combination is a major part of the platform for many conservative groups.

Chubb and Moe (1992) explain that a choice system consists of at least three main components. These components are parents and students have the right to choose the school, a choice of schools exist, and the schools control organizational and governance decisions. Therefore, a medium exists for establishing a competitive environment in which the schools must exist. Consequently, Chubb and Moe's position that choice systems must contain these three components further substantiates Levin's claim that restructuring accompanies choice. That is, within the choice element, although the schools control organizational and governance decisions, these organizational aspects must meet parent and student needs in order for schools to remain viable alternatives of choice.

Chubb and Moe (cited in Smith and Meier, 1995), opponents to the present educational system, indicate that public school systems are structured to respond to political systems and bureaucracies rather than to parents and students. According to these authors, this is the primary reason that public school systems are failing. Consequently, Chubb and Moe advocate for a market based educational system.

Investigating the differences between the public driven and market driven system at a technical level, reveals that the differences extend from bureaucratic structuring to decision making within the organization. One primary difference is how authority for decision making is utilized. Chubb and Moe (1990) note that the primary difference between how authority and the process of exercising authority is administered under democratic control or market is the way it is allocated. In the public institutions, public

authority is granted to elected or appointed positions. An example of this is elected school board members or appointed school superintendents and school principals. According to Chubb and Moe (1990), the group granted public authority has “the legal right to make public policies and to devise governmental structures that are binding on everyone in the polity” (p. 28). Furthering this example of the working of a public school board, the board establishes policies and governmental structures for the school system without necessarily involving the public in the decision. An equally important point is Chubb and Moe’s assertion that there is a legal obligation to financially support these structures regardless of a person’s opposition to them. For example, in the instance that a family’s children attend a private institution, the family still continues to support the public education system through taxation.

In the market system, “authority . . . is decentralized” (Chubb and Moe, 1990, p. 29). That is, in the market situation public authority is used by the government to establish the framework that “imposes a system of rules for determining who owns what property and for assigning to owners the authority to make certain choices about its disposition.” (p. 29) Consequently, the difference between public and market driven systems lay in the level of public authority exercised. In the market system, once the legal framework is established, individuals participating in the system are free to establish curriculum, pedagogy, hiring of teachers, tuition and all other aspects needed to offer an educational program. Therefore, in the market driven system, parents and students acting as consumers have the right to make the decision as to which school to attend.

Chubb and Moe maintain that the schools within the public education system are controlled by the group that control the public authority. Political groups, administrative

groups, teacher unions and many other interest groups vie for control on many issues. The groups who win do not always reflect interests of students and parents. As a result, the groups that do not win on a particular issue must live with the outcome. Chubb and Moe indicate that this does not occur in the market system. They opine that “markets work to ensure that parents and students play a much more central and influential role in private sector education...” (p. 32). On the surface it appears that in the private sector parents have no say in decisions about how the organization is run. However, Chubb and Moe (1990) indicate that this is not the case. They identify three important factors that facilitate student and parent influence on the private sector. Firstly, there is an incentive for the owners of private institutions to make decisions that please the clientele of students and parents. Secondly, if the clientele is not satisfied with the product or the decisions, the clientele may move to another institution. Thirdly, the rule of natural selection applies. That is, schools that do not meet clientele needs will lose customers and may ultimately go out of business. The schools that survive are those that meet the customers’ educational needs, or perhaps, other needs such as the political agendas of clients. Chubb and Moe urge that it is these dynamics that will “promote the emergence of a population of schools that matches the population of parents and students” (p. 33). In the public sector, students often must attend the school within the geographic region that they live. Thus choice is limited to a family’s ability to relocate their residence to an area with a school that they believe will meet the needs of their child or to pay tuition fees to a private institution. Systems that have open attendance boundaries provide parents with increased choice, however, this choice is limited to parents who can provide the requisite transportation requirements to access the school of choice.

The bureaucracy and the hierarchy that exists within the public system is also a major concern to the proponents of a market driven educational system. The public school system is comprised of a number of layers within a hierarchy. Each level may have hierarchical control over the levels below it. Therefore, each of these hierarchical levels above the school level may impact on school decisions. For example, Chubb and Moe explain that the agenda for public schools is established by politicians, administrators, and interest groups. They use the example of policy implementation that is mandated from the federal level to explain their case. In this case, a policy is implemented at the local level as a result of hierarchy and not necessarily as a result of the local level's support for the policy. Applying the Canadian context to this situation, policy or direction for policy is developed and mandated for implementation at the school or school jurisdiction level by the provincial ministry level. The authors dislike this process as it removes the power from external forces such as parents and students. Conversely, Gerstner, Semerad, Doyle, and Johnston (1994) argue that statutes and regulations are necessary and proper, and that they are tools designed to prevent abuse, not to stimulate superior performance. This view promoted by Gerstner et al. (1994) is contrary to the market based system, promoted by Chubb and Moe, Friedman and many others, where school autonomy and choice is sought. Proponents of the market driven system argue a very important reason for supporting autonomy. That is, they believe that school staff members are in the best position to ascertain the customers' satisfaction with what is offered. At the same time, the staff is able to make adjustments to the school's plans to meet the needs of the customer (Chubb and Moe, 1990). Federal, state, and

provincial governments do not enjoy this position that places the consumer in such close proximity.

According to proponents of a market driven school system, an additional case supporting the reform is the present organization of public schools. Presently, the bureaucracy within the system limits the control that school principals have in establishing their staff as well as the use of staffing incentives. Chubb and Moe note that these limitations are a result of formal rules established by government and teacher unions. Examples of formal rules are tenure laws, teacher certification procedures, and other forms of protection for civil servants. In the market setting, the principal recruits staff based on the needs of the clients that make up the school's population. Teachers who are not successful within the school environment are released. Thus organizational performance is maximized by the principal's ability to select staff. Chubb and Moe (1990) assert that a strong team is built and the principles of this team can be reinforced through teacher incentive programs.

The choice debate and its impact on school governance, investigated at a macro level seems to indicate that restructuring, in terms of governance structures, does coincide with the application of choice. The framework presented next investigates choice at a micro level. That is, this framework investigates individualism as one of the roots of choice in our society.

A Values of Individualism Model

Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (1996) view that, as a result of a series of social changes, there is a major shift in society to adopt individualistic motives

over civic responsibility. This individualistic motive may account for the shift toward market values such as choice. Peters (1992) identifies that “most of the problems threatening democracy in modern mass society can be traced back to the excessive realization of the democratic principles: excess of freedom, excess of individualism, excess in money orientation” (p. 272). In this section, it is individualism that will be investigated. However, first it is necessary to portray what is meant by the term individualism.

Toqueville (1990), father of the coined term individualism, described it as: a mature and calm feeling, which disposes each member of the community to sever himself from the mass of his fellows and to draw apart with his family and his friends, so that after he has thus formed a little circle on his own, he willingly leaves society at large to itself. (p. 98)

Toqueville approaches individualism as the development of a personal enclave that enables one to be concerned with matters pertaining only to self and significant others. Peters (1992) determines that individualism, in the United States, draws its support from a more political perspective. Accordingly, he indicates its origins reflect back to the development of the Declaration of Independence, which declared “governments are installed for the sole purposes of securing for their citizens life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” (p. 19). Bottorff (1979) explained that Jefferson’s pursuit of happiness was “the pursuit of knowledge and of health” (p. 60). Accordingly, society provided the means for this pursuit, that being education. Peters (1992) argues that it is the guarantee of ‘pursuit of happiness’ that precipitates individualistic tendencies. He states unequivocally that:

the invitation to pursue happiness is, . . . , the root of many repulsive and dangerous developments of American Society: unbridled greed for material property, impetuosity in the exploitation of the environment and of other people, egoism and ruthlessness in pursuit of one's own personal goals . . . (p. 21)

The term individualism is an extremely complex topic, and consequently difficult to define. Therefore, due to this complexity, Bellah et al. (1996) describe individualism through a collection of adjectives and phrases. They explain that American individualism:

demands personal effort and stimulates great energy to achieve, yet it provides little encouragement for nurturance, taking a sink-or-swim approach to moral development as well as to economic success. It admires toughness and strength and fears softness and weakness. It adulates winners while showing contempt for losers . . . (p. viii)

It is this competitiveness, the idea of winners and losers, that is inherent in individualism that precipitates the concern for one's own interests rather than a collective concern.

Bellah et al. (1996) state that this is particularly true "in times of social adversity" (p. ix).

The social adversity that Bellah addresses is in many ways, the result of the tensions between two political positions; neocapitalism and welfare liberalism. At the present time, Bellah et al. (1996) indicate that the neocapitalist position has grown both ideologically and politically, thus outgrowing its counter-movement, welfare liberalism. It is the strength of neocapitalism and its impact on policy that is in part responsible for the increasing amount of social adversity. The tension created in society by this social adversity appears to support a developing trend that appears to be shifting toward an

individualistic, competitive approach. It is this individualistic, competitive approach that is leading to the outright advocacy of school choice and competitiveness between schools, rather than a more collaborative approach.

To develop a clearer understanding of individualism, it is necessary to juxtapose individualism with classical republicanism. Classical Republicanism views society as “the active citizen contributing to the common good . . .” (Bellah et al., 1996, p. 142). Therefore, if individualism and classic republicanism are brought together for examination, a continuum with individualism serving as one extreme and classic republicanism the other is exposed. However, examining this continuum using Aristotelian ethics, both of the extremes are divisive. Furthermore, Toqueville (1990) expresses distress over the impact individualism has on life’s virtues. He equates individualism with selfishness, and states that “selfishness blights the germ of all virtue” (p. 98). Consequently, in society, there needs to be balance between the extremes of individualism and classical republicanism. This balance is the development of a common good. Aristotle (1987) refers to this as the “mean state between them . . .” (p. 61). It is this mean state, or the idea of a common good, where the citizen needs to establish him or herself within a democratic society. Bellah et al. (1996) refers to this as civic membership, which is “that critical intersection of personal identity with social identity” (p. xi). Using this notion, the community is able to develop by virtue of active individualists. That is, these active individualists recognize that “the identification of one’s own good with the common good” (Bellah et al., 1996, p. 254) is critical for achieving both individual and societal growth.

Figure 1 Attaining A Common Good In Society

However, American society has not successfully achieved this mean state.

Rather, Bellah et al. (1996) describe that Americans are at a point where the characteristics of modern individualism are very noticeable. They quote Robert Coles, a psychologist, who notes that individuals view their self as “the only or main form of reality” (p. 143). Viewing self as the only or main form of reality as a main tenet further isolates the individual from striving to achieve common good for society or support the republican perspective. As described in chapter I, in a similar, yet different perspective, Baer et al. (1990b) indicate that there is greater diversity within nation than between countries. Consequently, Canadians may very well be experiencing similar conflict between individualism and a nationalist perspective. Furthering this point of similarity, Emberley and Newell (1994) in their book Bankrupt Education: The Decline of Liberal Education in Canada state that the fathers of Canadian education “designed curricula and teaching practices which balanced individual needs with social responsibility, common sense with moral principle, and freedom with culture” (p. 166). Instead of maintaining this structure, Canadians “have permitted a sterile set of binaries to control [the] public debate: individualism versus communitarianism, traditionalism versus progressivism, the status quo versus global forces” (p. 166).

With this understanding of individualism, it is important to heed Toqueville’s warning. Toqueville warns that “individualism, at first, only saps the virtues of public life; but in the long run it attacks and destroys all others and is at length absorbed in

downright selfishness” (p. 98). Thus, according to some authors, today’s society has reached a juncture where it cannot continue on its individualistic path, nor can it return to where its been. Bellah et al. (1996) indicate that this is a result of modern individualism seeking new rights and levels of autonomy that bring it to a level that cannot be supported individually nor socially. It is for this reason, that the authors suggest a move to civic or biblical individualism; “forms that see the individual in relation to a larger whole, a community and a tradition” (p. 143). Accordingly, Bellah et al. indicate that it is these forms that have the potential to enable nurturance of both public and private spheres.

Supporting the notion purported by Bellah et al. (1996) from an educational perspective is Callan (1995), who explains that as schools currently strive for a consensual conception or identity, “the tendency for teachers and administrator to capitulate to demands for censorship whenever a vocal majority (or minority) objects to what is taught, and the reduction of values education to the promulgation of banalities or, worse still, the policy of suppressing it as far as possible” (p. 259). The consequence of this attempt to maintain a consensual public education system is moral bankruptcy, ultimately leading to the loss of the word public in public education.

However, a difficulty emerges as to what values need to be part of a comprehensive education program that advances the notion of civic republicanism within society. Two notions are proposed here. Macedo (1995) suggests that some reformists believe that “public policy, . . . , should protect freedom and promote certain (at least apparently) all-purpose goods like security and prosperity, but should otherwise be neutral with respect to the choices people make and the aims they pursue” (p. 304). Conversely, Rawls (cited in Callan, 1995) advocates for comprehensive liberalism. This

viewpoint “accommodates diversity only so far as diversity results from the exercise of ideals of autonomy or individuality regarded as constitutive of the good life . . . “ (p. 260). Although these views demonstrate conflict as to what values or virtues become part of a common education, they are in agreement that there is a need for common education.

Consequently, as part of the democratic process, choice in moderation is useful for meeting some of the diverse needs of our pluralistic society. However, taking choice to its extremes is not the solution. Brown (1992) supports this perspective as he draws conclusions from his economic analysis of why schools tend to look alike across systems. In this economic analysis, Brown states that primary services, that is those services that affect the future productivity of students in the market, are very similar across schools and school systems. He explains that this is the result “of uncertainty about student ability and future employment prospects” (p. 287). Consequently, schools develop programs that “[allow] students to diversify by not specializing completely in particular programs . . .” (p. 288). Brown furthers his argument by indicating that the differences across schools and school systems is secondary services, which include services such as religion. Consequently, Brown states that individuals wishing to improve technical efficiency within schools should seek increased competition within public schools and increasing client involvement within the system.

Ultimately, perhaps the answer to achieving a more moderate reform rests in a question posed by Gutmann (1988). She states that “the question we must therefore ask is not whether to maximize freedom or inculcate virtue, but how to combine freedom with virtue” (p. 8). The problem is that combining freedom with virtue is not a simple task. Bellah et al. (1996) discuss that the idea of separation accompanies individualism.

Further, the authors indicate that “when the world comes to us in pieces, in fragments, lacking any overall pattern, it is hard to see how it might be transformed” (p. 277).

Consequently, the idea of choice exacerbates this fragmentation by reducing any form of commonality that may be found in the public education system. Bellah et al. (1996) go so far to say that present day universities can be viewed as “a cafeteria in which one acquires discrete bodies of information or useful skills” (p. 279), and any attempt “to establish a ‘core curriculum,’ often turns into a battle between disciplines in which the idea of a substantive core is lost” (p. 279). The difference between post-secondary and public education is that in the public school, it is not the various disciplines fighting to maintain their control over education; rather it is the pressures of demands for parental choice that drives schools to meet parental terms that ultimately leads to fragmentation of the educational system.

As expressed earlier, Dewey, Gunn, and Bellah et al. argue that a role of the school is to teach skills that are necessary for children to survive in a pluralistic society. Inherent in these skills are values that are important to society. Gewirtz et al. (1995) indicate that these values are drifting along a continuum that these authors indicate ranges from comprehensive values to market values. They have defined value drift as “a redistribution of resources and a shift in emphasis away from the most educationally vulnerable towards the most educationally able” (p. 97). More specifically, they demonstrate how “school value systems are ‘drifting’ from the left to the right along a continua, . . . , from ‘comprehensive’ [democratic] values to ‘market’ values” (p. 150). Examples of this values drift is shown in table 1. As table 1 illustrates, these values exist along a continua. Each school, depending upon a number of criteria, is at a different

point along the continua. According to Gewirtz et al. (1995) and Ball (1998), schools move at different degrees and varying rates as a result of the contexts of the market at each school. Impacting the rate of drift are “different local contexts, local histories and market configurations” (Ball, 1998, p. 42). For example, a school that has been oversubscribed in enrollment for a number of years is less likely to be forced into the extremes of the market system than is a school that is under subscribed. That is, the oversubscribed school is not in the emergent situation of having to pay increased attention to the wants of its clients, nor does it have to adopt a business like approach to attract new students. However, this does not mean that the school can continue without being aware of changing milieu. Rather, it means that the oversubscribed school is in the present position that allows the drift to occur more slowly.

Table 1 A Comparison of Comprehensive and Market Values (Gewirtz, et al. 1995, P. 150)

Comprehensive Values		Market Values
Led by agenda of social and educational concerns	—————→	Led by agenda of image/budgetary concerns
Oriented to serving community needs	—————→	Oriented to attracting 'motivated' parents/'able' children
Emphasis on student need	—————→	Emphasis on student performance
Resource emphasis on 'less able'/SEN [special educational needs]		Resource emphasis on 'more able'
Mixed ability	—————→	Setting [streaming]
Integrationist [inclusive]	—————→	Exclusive
Caring ethos	—————→	Academic ethos
Emphasis on good relationships as basis of school discipline	—————→	Emphasis on extrinsic indicators of discipline, e.g. uniform
Cooperation amongst schools	—————→	Competition between schools

A rationale for this shift in values is explained by Friedman (1982), as he notes that during the nineteenth century and early into the twentieth century, there was an increased need for comprehensive values. During this time period, there was a need “to create the core of common values essential to a stable society” (p. 96), a result of the large number of immigrants arriving in the United States. Today, Friedman argues that we are “threatened by an excess of conformity” (p. 97), and consequently, it is necessary to seek diversity. According to Friedman, one such way to seek diversity is through a denationalized school system.

A Market Model

Economic theory proposes that “goods and services are provided most efficiently and at the highest quality in a market setting, where consumers can compare prices and quality and make informed decisions about how best to allocate the money they have available to spend” (Henig, 1994. p. 57). Accordingly, this economic theory practiced in the day-to-day world by consumers may then require only minor modifications to work for them in education. Researchers studying this phenomenon in education have found that a similar framework does exist. In education, Gewirtz et al. (1995) establish that “the framework of market discipline is set by parental choice, open enrollment, devolved budgets and formula funding” (p. 1). Thus, in many ways the application of the market model in education follows the same principle as those values found in business. Parents and students may shop for their school, just as they can shop for an article of clothing. If parents are satisfied with the product they will buy the services from that school; if they are not satisfied, parents move their children to a different school. Thus, schools are

“forced to increase the quality of education and the efficiency with which they deliver it , or . . . risk going out of business” (Henig, p. 57).

If the perception is accurate that the opposing paradigms of a market driven and non-market driven school system fall on a continua, then at what point on the continuum do the values inherent to one system become detrimental to the values of the other. For example, some studies note positive outcomes of the market. One of the more positive outcomes was some schools were “[attempting] to make schools attractive to girls [by] attempting to implement policies which will enable girls to feel ‘safe’ in traditionally non-female areas such as Design and Technology and Computing” (Gewirtz et al., 1995, p. 173). In addition, the inclusion of fine arts in market driven schools has resulted in a resurgence for this curricula. Substantiating this finding, Gewirtz et al. (1995) found there was “... additional emphasis on Drama, Music and Arts which the market appears to be effecting in a number of schools might also in some senses be viewed as a positive outcome of the market forces” (p. 173).

Conversely, Gewirtz et al. (1995) identify a number of shortcomings within a market model of education. In particular, Gewirtz et al. (1995) note that there is “a marked shift away from mixed-ability grouping towards setting is evident in virtually all of our case-study schools . . . ” (p. 172). This is, in part, due to the expensive programming required to educate children with special needs. Secondly, the research indicated that there is a creaming off effect of the stronger academic students, thus leaving the remainder of the students behind. Gewirtz et al. (1995) state that “a persistent theme of our analysis has been that . . . particular groups of students are being valued in

the marketplace more than others” (p. 174). This idea that some individuals are worth more than others immediately brings about the concern for equity in education.

Contrary to arguments brought forth by many school choice advocates, schools are not trying to become distinctive in their educational practices. The reason is that schools that are too distinctive, limit the pool of students that they can draw from. Gewirtz et al. (1995) found that schools tried to stay away from being too distinctive as “being too distinctive in the market place is risky because significant groups of potential customers may be alienated” (p. 143).

New language and terms are also emerging to assist in a paradigmatic transformation to a school system based on market values. Educational jargon has changed to include concepts such as; site based decision making, parental choice, market values in education, business plans, devolved budgets, open enrollments, as well as many other new terms that apply to this reform. Clarke and Newman (cited in Gewirtz et al., 1995) use the metaphor of bilingualism to describe the changes in language that administrators must use. Clarke and Newman refer to this as “learning to talk management” (p. 98). In an extensive study conducted in England by Gewirtz et al. (1995), the authors found a shift toward a new language, a language embodying corporate terms, used by senior managers and headteachers. The authors note descriptors such as “unique selling propositions, ... getting the product right, [and] corporate images” as new terms used extensively by heads of school (p. 96). In addition, these heads of schools used terms such as “poaching, . . . [and] underhand moves” (p. 97), to refer to actions taken by other schools. Another example of the use of this corporate language is found in Hill (1996), a supporter of school choice. In this example, Hill states that schools must

“[establish] an identity, . . . [and] deliver on its promises well enough . . . , to create ‘brand loyalty’ among families with several children . . .” (p. 72). Gewirtz et al. (1995) purport that this shift in the type of language used reflects changing values within the realm of education. They state that “educational considerations are being increasingly accommodated to image and budget-driven ones.” Business overtones are even reflected in such things as job titles and the consumer orientation schools are now taking. For example, the official title of the headmaster at Martineau School is Managing Director (Academic Resources). This title shifts the emphasis away from headteacher or principal, to a concept of management, that is more reflective of business. Smith and Meier (1995) also support the contention that a consumer orientation is emerging. They explain that as the market becomes more prominent in education, “schools will supply the educational ‘product,’ and parents and students will act as ‘customers’ . . .” (p. 312).

A Finance Model

Friedman (1982), in his book Capitalism and Freedom, explained that liberalism is the term that is associated with the economic policy over the last one hundred years. Liberalism is “associated with a readiness to rely primarily on the state rather than on private voluntary arrangements to achieve objectives regarded as desirable” (p. 5). Consequently, public schools are generally supported through the government taxation of its citizens. According to Friedman, although “the twentieth century liberal regards welfare and equality as either prerequisites of or alternative to freedom” (p. 5), liberalism was not always defined in this way. Prior to the twentieth century, liberalism “emphasized freedom as the ultimate goal and the individual as the ultimate entity in the

society” (p. 5), and this position is what Friedman is advocating for today. That is, freedom is “the most effective way to promote welfare and equality . . .” (p. 5), in a society. The new term for this form of economics (in North America) is conservatism. Another term applied is neo-conservatism (Gewirtz et al., 1995) which may arise from a political-economical position identified as neocapitalism (Bellah et al., 1996).

It is this tension that exists between neocapitalism and welfare liberalism that seems to be the roots of this debate. Bellah et al. (1996) indicate that neocapitalism dominates the social-political arena today and it is the tension created that results in the debate as to how far market values should drive the educational system. The neocapitalist perspective is one that views “privatization in the service of economic competitiveness [as] the solution to almost all difficulties” (p. xxvi). As Bellah et al. explain, “neocapitalist ideology aims to convince us that all government social programs have been disastrous failures” (p. xxvii). Furthermore, some political groups believe that “government should be restricted to the production of public goods in the economists’ sense of that term” (Plant, 1998, p. 76). Plant explains this belief through the example that common goods refer to such things as defense and clean air. In these types of examples, production requires cooperation. Consequently the market model cannot apply. Furthering this point, according to the reformists who oppose public system monopoly of education, education is a marketable commodity.

Friedman (1982) opposes the nationalization, or government control of education. According to Friedman, the main problem with the nationalization of education is that government connects financing with administration of schools. Rather, he believes that these two should be separated on the following point. Using the “neighborhood effect”

argument, there appears to be a case for nationalizing schools. The “neighborhood effect” case is the need for the teaching of core values in schools. Friedman argues that this could be done by any school, public or private. The government would prescribe and pay for a minimum level of schooling. This payment would be in the form of a voucher and allow parents choice in where to send their children. To ensure the core values are taught, the government would inspect schools. Consequently, denationalizing schools “would widen the range of choice available to parents” (Friedman, 1982, p. 91), while enabling the government to ensure that a set of core values remain within the scope of school curriculum.

Another problem with nationalized schooling is that it provides public education with a technical monopoly, as it encourages residents to enroll their children into the system. This detracts from what Friedman calls competitive enterprise. According to Friedman, competitive enterprise is “likely to be far more efficient meeting consumer demand . . .” (p. 91).

Friedman supports choice versus the nationalized model presently used throughout the United States. This model also parallels the model applied in the provinces throughout Canada. According to Manski (1992), Friedman’s argument for choice is based on “a straightforward application of elementary principles of classical economics . . .” (p. 354). The application of these principles would eliminate the incentives that provide public education with a monopoly. Manski (1992) argues against the use of classical economics in the formation of policy. He states that classical economics may not “optimize social welfare” (p. 355). Rather, according to Manski (1992), classical economics will only optimize social welfare “if production technologies,

consumer preferences, social objectives and the information available to the relevant economic actors satisfy certain conditions” (p. 355). The difficulty is satisfying these certain conditions.

Manski (1992) also discusses modern economic theory. Modern economic theory works under the premise that “consumers and firms have . . . identical product information” (p. 356). Manski argues that it is unrealistic to think that consumers can have the same knowledge as the producers. He indicates that “asymmetrical information seems inherent . . . to schooling . . .” (p. 356). Consequently, asymmetrical knowledge about schooling puts some groups at a distinct advantage over others.

Regardless of this argument over different economic theories, the financing of education does affect the educational system. Hirth (1996) supports this contention as she states that “there is an unquestionable connection between systemic reform, equity, and school finance that requires the attention of educators and policymakers at all levels of government” (p. 468). Indeed, many reform issues have resulted in litigation over financial issues. As indicated earlier in this chapter, the financing of the voucher system using public dollars in the United States has been, in many cases, unsuccessful due to constitutional court challenges. This is not the case in the province of Alberta, Canada.

Government of Alberta policy and regulations provide funding to the “one publicly funded system of education in Alberta . . . through its two dimensions, the public schools and separate schools . . .” (Alberta School Foundation Fund - Policy 3.1.1, p. 1). At the same time, charter schools receive one hundred percent of the basic education grant for each child in attendance. In addition, accredited, non-profit private schools receive approximately fifty percent of the basic instructional grant for each child

attending their school. Over the course of the 1997-98 school year, a government announcement reported that this grant to private schools would increase to approximately sixty percent of the basic instructional grant beginning in the 1999-2000 school year and would be phased in over two years (Arnold, 1998). Consequently, the financial model used by Alberta Education may in fact promote school choice in Alberta schools by forcing schools to compete for students in order to make their schools financially viable. This may become more evident as the funding of private schools approaches an equal value to funding provided for public schools.

According to Manski (1992), determining if a voucher program, or other program that enables choice, is successful is difficult to verify. Manski (1992) supports this contention as he notes that existing models of choice “are too small in scale and restricted in scope to yield significant lessons about the operation of a systemic choice policy” (p.354). Therefore, in a study to investigate systemic educational choice and its implications for social mobility, Manski (1992) used a computer program to conduct simulations as opposed to studying existing choice programs.

In Manski’s study, he discusses the outcomes of three different scenarios of choice as a result of “[developing] plausible models of the behavior of the relevant actors, namely young people and schools” (p.357). Through simulations, the model “simulates alternative finance policies and forecast their impacts on school enrollments and productivity” (p.357). Manski admits that the results from the simulations are not definitive. However, he indicates that they “[provide] strong evidence that voucher finance is not the panacea claimed by some recent advocates” (p.368). Two major findings from the simulations are “the educational effects of systemic choice on low-

income young people appear to be neither uniformly positive nor negative” ; and “even in the most favorable case, a systemic choice system would not come close to equalizing educational opportunity across income groups” (p.368).

Vouchers can provide a great deal of flexibility for the parent in choosing a school to enroll their child. However, this is dependent upon the federal and state laws.

Kemerer and King (1995) note that “growing support for the use of school vouchers has polarized views about whether such programs are valid policy options and hardened the lines on both sides of the debate” (p. 307). This is evidenced by the number of challenges taken to state and federal supreme courts. Subsequent court challenges to the funding principles have not been successful as a major part of the problem exists with the constitutionality of funding religious schools in the United States. Due to this funding issue, many states are unsuccessful in implementing significant voucher programs. As noted earlier in this section, the constitutionality for funding schools in Alberta, Canada is very different with separate schools (Catholic) being part of the public school system.

According to Kemerer and King (1995), the success of a voucher program that includes private religious schools, within the United States, is increased if the following conditions are met.

1. The state constitution does not prohibit expenditure of public money for any form of private schooling.
2. The provision against establishment of religion in the state constitution does not foreclose the expenditure of public money on private sectarian schooling.
3. Funding is given to students’ parents via vouchers rather than to the schools.

4. The voucher program gives parents a wide range of public and private schools from which to choose.
5. The public purpose of the program -to improve educational opportunities for families- is clearly delineated.
6. Sufficient accountability measures are included to ensure that the public purpose is being served.
7. The state is not promoting sectarian interests. (p. 310)

As a result of the constitutional wrangling that has occurred, “the controversy over publicly funded school vouchers is shifting from whether such programs will reform the existing school system to whether such programs are constitutional” (Kemerer and King, 1995, p. 311).

An Administrative Governance Model

Weisbord (1992), in his discussion about organizational change, states that “we have created a world of relentless economic and social change, based on 21st century technologies. Now we struggle to discover management methods equal to the complexity” (p.3). Similarly, education has changed in a way that the past needs of individuals cannot be directly compared to their needs of today. Consequently, it is likely that school governance must change to meet these needs as well. The question is how to develop a new governance model by involving a large number of stakeholders from the expanded educational system.

Friedman (1982) explains that twentieth-century liberalism is associated with centralized governance, or nationalized education. Conversely, the neo-conservative

favors “political decentralization” (p. 6). Consequently, the stage is set for controversy. On the one hand, the liberalists seek power at the province, state, or national level, while the neo-conservatives believe in a denationalized educational system. These polarized positions become apparent in the studies discussed below.

Manski (1992), in his study about educational choice and social mobility, discussed that public school systems are criticized for how they are organized and structured. The criticism emanates from the issue that “decision making . . . is to concentrated in school district administrations and that teachers and principals lack the incentives and authority to perform their jobs effectively” (p. 352). However, too often, in an effort to correct a problem, organizations look for technical fixes, to solve a problem that has no easy solution. In many ways, the application of market values to education is an example of looking for the easy answer. Heifitz (1994) refers to these as technical fixes. Instead, Heifitz (1994) proposes that adaptive work is required to solve these difficult problems in organizations. He defines adaptive work as “[consisting] of the learning required to address conflicts in the values people hold, or to diminish the gap between the values people stand for and the reality they face” (p. 22). Consequently, applying Heifitz’s theory, adaptive work is needed to diminish the gap between where the public see education presently and where it needs to be in the future.

The Decision Making Process.

The process for decision making varies widely. For the most part, the methods and models applied to decision making are done in an effort to improve schools. However, these various models and procedures being applied to the educational setting

appear to be technical, in that they serve as an add-on to the decision making process. For example, Gewirtz et al. (1995) note a shift toward the use of total quality management techniques and quality assurance programs. Each of these programs formalize the evaluative process and feedback system. The authors argue that in the past, emphasis was placed upon the achievement of academic indicators. A second area of change noted by the authors is a shift toward more expedient decision-making processes. In their study they found that administrators were moving toward a non-consultative decision-making approach in their schools. This decision-making process has a tendency to increase tension between staff and administration. This change is particularly reflected in findings from interviews of staff and management at Trumpton School in the Gewirtz et al. study. The authors found in their interviews at Trumpton that a mismatch was developing between internal and external expectations regarding the amount of time required for decision-making. The result was that management moved toward a non-consultative model which was contrary to past managerial practices at that school. This more expedient decision making process reflects the expectations of external groups such as parents.

Challenging the Gewirtz et al. (1995) study findings, a multitude of studies and journal articles exist that investigate and discuss issues around the implementation of shared decision making, site based decision making, or other strain of devolved school management practice. In one of these other studies, Weiss (1995) explains that this popular school reform practice shifts the decision making responsibility from the jurisdiction to the school. Weiss and Cambone (1994) indicate that the purpose for shared decision making is “to democratize schools and share power with teachers” (p.

287). As a result, other stakeholders, in addition to the principal, are included in the decision making loop. In one particular shared decision making study, Weiss, Cambone, and Wyeth (1992) indicate that the implementation of this devolved decision making reform is not without consequence. The Weiss et al. (1992) study dealt with the conflict that arose between teachers within schools as a result of implementing shared decision making. Their study is based on research collected in an in-depth study of six high schools that implemented shared decision making, as well as information collected from 180 other interviews of school staff from 45 public high schools. A significant finding from the study is that conflict between teachers frequently arises over shared decision making issues, and as the authors indicate, teachers encounter difficulty working with each other in making decisions. One example of arising conflict is a result of teacher involvement or lack of involvement within the decision making process. Some staff were skeptical of the process and did not participate, while those who did participate felt frustrated that they were doing all of the work. The authors indicate that one of the reasons that difficulties or conflict emerge is a result of teachers not being trained for this new role. In particular, the new decision making process moves the relationship between teachers beyond the social type. Respondees in the study identified a number of new and essential skills that teachers needed. These are “a willingness to speak one’s mind without flinching, a willingness to confront other teachers and administrators, and an ability to hold one’s ground” (p. 354).

An additional investigation using the same study was conducted by Weiss (1995). In this longitudinal study, the researchers investigated “how decisions [are] made, what kinds of decisions, on what topics, and with what consequences” (p. 572). Five main

findings were discussed in this study. Three of these findings are decision topics among schools were very similar, the structure and norms of the institution in many ways exerts pressure on the teachers that ultimately directs their decisions, and “teachers [tend] to ignore outside sources of information, such as professional and research literatures” (p. 587) in making decisions. Interestingly, this study demonstrates that in both traditional and shared decision making schools, “principal were more likely than teachers to promote large changes in curriculum and school organization” (p. 587), and that principals were less affected than teachers by institutional norms.

A second point of difficulty for teachers is who has the final authority for making decisions. For example, if the representative body makes a decision, can the principal or district office staff change the decision? Weiss et al. (1992) found that teachers often felt confused over who had final authority over decisions. A second problem arose after a decision was made. That is, who is responsible for ensuring the decisions implementation. The authors noted that this was a cause of frustration as the teachers believed that this was the principal’s responsibility, while the principal believed that those who make the decision have the responsibility to follow through on the decision.

Consequently, the authors indicate that teachers need training in both content and process areas of shared decision making, accurate and up to date school information to assist in decisions, and negotiation skills in order for teachers to be successful in this new role. Therefore, the school principal plays a key role. The principal, in working with their teachers, must delineate the roles and responsibilities for the process within the school. Without clearly articulated responsibilities, according to the authors, conflict can erupt.

Sarason (1997) in his book, How Schools Might Be Governed and Why, is concerned with school improvement. Sarason alludes to the point that the overarching purpose of schooling and its governance is to support the [creation of] conditions that make students *want* (sic) to learn; *not* have to learn but *want* (sic) to learn more about self, others, and the world” (p.34). Supporting this contention, Sarason is adamant that “real school improvement” , which, according to the author, means achieving a productive learning environment for students, is not possible under the current practice of school governance.

In Sarason’s discussion about the need for school improvement, he discusses how the existing definition of the education system is too narrow of a focus to bring about successful change. Sarason indicates that presently, school improvement initiatives occur at the school level and consequently, if successful they help only that school with little opportunity, encouragement, or mandate to assist other schools. Sarason states that if school improvement is to be successful, the system must be defined in a broader context to include schools, school jurisdictions, post-secondary institutions, as well as the legislators. Included in this broader system is the utilization of the knowledge and skills of faculty from universities and colleges to assist in improving schools. A major component of this school improvement strategy is assisting the system to become a self-correcting system.

At the present time, individual schools endeavor to implement school improvement strategies in isolation, and consequently, in many cases the strategy is unsuccessful or reverts back to original practice in a short time. Examples of this can be found in schools within any jurisdiction throughout North America. Sarason believes that

success lays within a self-correcting system. Within this self-correcting system, many of the tools used in total quality management are applied to the educational system.

Supporting this venture is the utilization of university and college faculty to assist in research, measurement and evaluation, and ultimately working with the schools in their improvement endeavors.

A second point raised by Sarason is that there is a need for a radical shift in school governance structures and practices to bring about school improvement. This shift would ultimately lead to eradicating the traditional model of governance that includes school principals and school boards. The new governance model would bring parents and teachers together as the key players in making decisions about the school. It is Sarason's belief that "if any one or any group is going to be affected by a policy, they should have some role in the formulation and decisions about that policy" (p.35). He refers to this as the political principle. Sarason believes that this is an extremely important aspect as stakeholders need to be given the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect them or their children. Sarason describes this principle as the "bedrock to a system of governance . . ." (p.35). Ownership of the issue or policy is important for individuals, and through participation in the development and implementation of policy a sense of ownership is achieved.

According to some literature, the school principal is key to an effective school. This is contrary to Sarason's plan that would not include the principal in the school governance model. For example, Sergiovanni (1991) states that "research indicates that one difference between high- and low-achieving schools was the impact of the principal" (p.76). The difference between these schools is that "in higher-achieving schools,

principals exerted strong leadership, participated directly and frequently in instructional matters, had higher expectations for success, and were oriented toward academic goals” (p.76). Furthermore, Sergiovanni, Burlingame, Coombs, and Thurston (1987) indicate that “the general picture drawn of the principal as leader is that the principal guides the faculty in defining goals of the school, then provides assistance in clarifying the best means for reaching these goals, and finally participates in evaluation that help strengthen linkages between means and goals” (p.288). Consequently, the principal plays a key, yet shared role, in school governance.

Sergiovanni (1991) supports involving parents and teachers in the school governance model. He states that principal leadership is only one aspect of successful schools, as Sergiovanni notes that the quality of leadership density within the school is equally important. According to Sergiovanni (1991), leadership density “refers to the total leadership available from teachers, support staff, parents, and others on behalf of the school’s work” (p.76). In addition and as discussed earlier, Sarason’s belief in the political principle is critical for today’s schools. Consequently, Sergiovanni supports an inclusive model of school governance.

Sarason (1997) indicates that government legislation would be required to instigate a radical shift in the model of school governance that he supports. He believes that without legislation, radical changes to the present educational governance system will not happen. Supporting this contention, Sarason cites charter schools in United States education as being the only real reform that changed the governance system, and this change was initiated by legislation. This reform method is also apparent in Alberta, with similar legislative direction. To be successful, Sarason indicates that the legislation

should be enabling, encouraging, and supporting of parents and teaches to take on the responsibilities of school governance.

A Concern For The Quick Fix.

In the market place, businesses must move swiftly in times of economic problems in order to prevent bankruptcy. The decisions that are made to eliminate the problem often happen quickly. This phenomenon is also occurring in education. Gewirtz, Ball, and Bowe (1995) found that in schools vulnerable to market forces, “the new preoccupation with image is leading managers to adopt apparently superficial and short term solutions to problems . . . ” (p. 157). The findings further indicated that the short, quick fix is used when in the long term the solution may be counterproductive. The authors use the example of school uniforms. Uniforms give the perception of a dress code and discipline, however as the authors found in their study, the institution of such a practice “may lead to a deterioration of student - teacher relationships within schools” (p. 157). Another example of the quick fix is permanent student exclusions or expulsions. Gewirtz, Ball, and Bowe (1995) use the term ‘constructive exclusion’ to explain how schools remove the problem student from their roll without following the procedures (p. 158). The school is successful in this constructive expulsion by counseling the parent into moving the child to another school or threatening exclusion so the parent voluntarily withdraws their child from school. Although the removal of the child solves the problem for the school, the child’s problem is not as easily corrected. In this example, the values of the market place supersede the child’s needs, as school image is more important than helping the child to solve his or her problems.

A Concern For School Image.

An important aspect of the market model is a change in attitude about marketing the school, as marketing does become part of the governance model. Interviews with headmasters and headteachers in English schools noted discomfort or dislike of terms such as market and marketplace when referring to education. One deputy headteacher succinctly stated “. . . using terms like ‘marketplace’, people are absolutely horrified by that. I don’t think any of us are embracing that willingly but in the knowledge that . . . if we don’t ensure that we’re successful we simply won’t survive” (p. 102). In another example, one other deputy headteacher indicated that it is not possible to step back and away from the concept of markets and school. This again is supported by the comments from another deputy headteacher. That comment was “. . . if you don’t market, if you don’t sell what’s good about your school, you’re not going to actually fill your school” (p. 103). Consequently, school survival is based on their ability to market their school to the public.

As a result, image is becoming an important marketing tool for the school. Yet, what is image? According to Carroll and Carroll (1994), image is “the sum of perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, ideas, and feelings held about an object” (p. 61). The authors note that an image “makes people act in certain ways and shapes attitudes toward a product, service, business, corporation, organization, or public school system” (p. 61). Interestingly, image does not always match reality. Carroll and Carroll (1994) use the example of two corporations collecting the same amounts of hazardous waste. One corporation has created an image of being environmentally safe, while the other

corporation has not. As a result, although the corporations are very similar, the corporation with the safe image is perceived by the public to be safer. Therefore image and reality are not always synonymous in what they represent.

As a result of examples like the one noted above, the school's image and how it is communicated, is becoming very important. Gewirtz et al. (1995) and Renihan and Renihan (cited in Carroll and Carroll, 1994) note that schools focus on a number of things to improve their image in the community. These include the care of school buildings, publicity materials, such as; brochures, press releases, communication with feeder schools, school - business partnerships, school programs, public events, and a host of other activities that attract attention to the school. Renihan and Renihan (cited in Carroll and Carroll, 1994) report their findings regarding a study about the image of schools. The findings "identified the image of public schools as the feelings developed by various publics as a result of their observations and experiences of the school accrued over the long term" (p. 61).

A part of this image is the link to business in terms of language and action. Parents are referred to as customers and are treated in this fashion. Reception areas are developed and designed around business concepts. Professionalism is key.

Public events are planned to show off the school and serve as a method of promoting a school's image. The Gewirtz et al. (1995) study found that promotional events are designed to sell the school in ways that include more systematized processes than what was the norm in the past. In the study, it was found that in the past individual departments were left on their own to promote their department and create an image. With the inception of market values, there is increased emphasis on the importance of

promotional events and as a result, schools have unified a process to promote their school as a whole.

The study found that the new promotional materials are professionally designed, glossy and colorful compared to previous school photocopied brochures. Gewirtz et al. (1995) noted that although a school designs the brochure, the brochure is printed by professionals.

The immense task of creating a positive school image negatively changes some of the roles and functions of teachers. Gewirtz et al. (1995) expressed concern that “the work of image production . . . absorbs significant quantities of teacher time, emotional energy and financial resources which could have been spent on enhancing the educational experiences of children in the school” (p. 130). The absorption of teacher time to provide functions other than classroom related activities, takes away from the time teachers have to spend on planning, teaching, and working with students. For example, Carroll and Carroll (1994), indicate that it should be everyone’s job to promote the school in the community. They state that this role should be included in the job descriptions of all education personnel. The consequence of this action, is that taking time to plan and carry out individual campaigns for promoting the school, takes away from the time the teacher has to carry out the duties associated with their classroom.

A Concern For Accountability

A key concern emerging from the governance of schools is the whole issue of accountability. That is, who is ultimately accountable for the decisions made at the school level. To fully understand this issue, it is important to have a clear understanding

of accountability. Milliken (1971) indicates that accountability “can mean a strict accounting by educators for the ways in which they spend money or an accurate means of testing how effectively educators are teaching children . . .” (p. 18). Thus, accounting can be perceived as being two-fold. Firstly, there is the idea of being accountable for the efficacious utilization of school finances. That is, is the money allocated to schools being spent wisely and prudently. Secondly, given the money that is spent in education, are schools achieving academic results that are commensurate with the costs. It is from this perspective that the issue of accountability will be discussed and investigated.

Cribb (1998) in discussing re-shaping professional ethics, discusses what he perceives as the idea and purpose of control and accountability. He argues that the devaluation of welfare professionals is “the deliberate consequence of the application and dissemination of neo-liberal ideology through quasi-markets” (p. 14). In North America, and more specifically, Alberta, this would be described as neo-conservative ideology. Cribb explained that the intent of this action is to shift the power base from the professional to the consumer. To enable this shift Cribb explains that this new ideology requires “tighter systems of control and accountability which, in the name of efficiency and quality, increasingly specify performance indicators . . . (p. 14). The result is what Yeatman (cited in Cribb, 1998) refers to as “‘technical conception’ of professionalism and of ‘results oriented management’ in the formation of professional identities” (p. 14). The consequence of this action is the loss of the professional’s ability to “pursue . . . social goods” (p. 16). Ultimately, Cribb views that in this new ethical climate, performance and efficiency are the two key elements, and that within this climate, “the central norm, and arguably the highest ideal, is success” (p. 24).

Tyler (1971) reviewed the notion that the issue of accountability did not appear prior to the early 1960's. In reviewing this topic, he proposed that increased interest in accountability in that time period arose as a result of three developments. These developments were the

increasing proportion of the average family's income that is spent on taxes, the recognition that a considerable fraction of youth are failing to meet the standards of literacy . . . demanded for employment in civilian and military jobs, and the development of management procedures by industry and defense that have

increased the effectiveness and efficiency of certain production organizations. (p.1)

Consequently, these three developments lead to increased accountability of schools. For example, when the cost of education rises, this requires increased funding through public taxation, that ultimately leads to the public's position that if additional funds are to be raised through taxes, the school must demonstrate increased effectiveness in terms of achieving higher results.

This accountability issue generates a great deal of discussion about the correctness of holding schools accountable, as it can be argued that accountability is not a black and white issue. Rather, Tyler identified six basic issues or concerns surrounding the notion of holding schools accountable. Each of these issues convolute the accountability dilemma. Paraphrasing Tyler's issues, they are as follows:

1. Do laymen have the right to appraise the work of the professional?
2. What learning goals will the school be accountable for measuring and communicating?
3. Who will set the goals that the school is accountable for achieving?

4. How will these goals be measured?
5. What people in the school will be accountable for the results of the measure?
6. How are accountability procedures to be used in the educational system?

Tyler, in discussing these six issues, presents the difficulties encountered in holding individuals and schools accountable for the achievement of goals. First of all, it must be determined what the school is responsible for in terms of student learning. Many different groups have varying opinions on this topic. Secondly, this leads to the matter of who will determine the goals and how these goals are measured. Ultimately, the question can then be posed, if the goals are not achieved, who will be held accountable and what are the consequences or procedures for rectifying the lack of meeting the established goals?

Regardless of one's ability to address these accountability issues or questions, it is imperative that schools understand that they are, and will be, held accountable for student learning. Lessinger (1971) noted that society's "demand for accountability promises a major and long overdue redevelopment of the management of the present educational system . . ." (p. 7). He further explained that "if education is going to be able to manage its budget properly, it must devise measurable relationships between dollars spent and results obtained" (P. 8). In many cases public perception is that the results do not equal the dollars spent. As a result, reform movements including the charter school movement gain momentum. For example, Kaye (1995) identified that the "prime motivators [for change in education in Alberta] were reputed to be dismal results on international student achievement tests and fiscal exigency" (p. 13). One key change was the legislation that enabled the formation of charter schools.

The success of charter schools, can perhaps be related to the accountability movement. Charter schools, as part of their charter, identify specific goals that the school must achieve in order to maintain their charter. Willis (1995) discusses how the concept of accountability ties in with the charter schools movement. The writer indicates that “in exchange for the freedom to experiment, charter schools accept a high level of accountability” (p. 4). If charter schools do not achieve the goals established in their charter, they are held accountable. One means of holding the charter school accountable is having their charter revoked. As a result of this goal oriented concept, charter schools shift the governance model toward a performance based system. This performance based system is congruent with the principles of accountability in that both demand the achievement of pre-set goals and objectives. Kaye (1995) identifies this as one of the purposes of charter schools. That is, charter schools “shift from a rules-based to a performance based system of accountability” (p. 14) in education.

The emerging concern regarding accountability in education directly affects the role, as well as the responsibility, of the school principal. He or she is ultimately responsible for their school’s ability or inability to be successful in attaining the established goals. Consequently, it is imperative to consider accountability in the changing role of the school principal.

The Changing Role of the Principal

A paper prepared by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (1990) state that “as we rush toward the dawn of the 21st century, our society and our system of education are engulfed by far-reaching change” (p. 1). As indicated in chapter

I, one of the major changes or reforms facing education is the application of market values. Consequently, what new knowledge and skills will principals need as they encounter this reform?

The conception that new knowledge and skills are required by the principal is substantiated by a report produced by the National Commission for the Principalship. The commission noted that the principals' need for new knowledge and skills is the result of their changing roles in today's schools. This commission report cites Thomas Shannon, Executive Director of the National School Board Association, as comparing principals with mini-superintendents. Shannon states that "the push for localism that contemplates . . . school-related decision-making being done at the local school level on a cooperative basis with parents and teachers has rearranged the linkages between the principal and his or her school's parents, other school patrons and the increasingly influential local media" (p. 15). Consequently, Shannon indicates that this new culture requires new attitudes and skills that enable the principal to interact with parents and teachers in a "quasi-governance connection" (p. 15).

Two major reports completed by The National Association of Elementary School Principals (1990) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (1996) reported similar knowledge and skills requirements for principals. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (1990) indicates that principals will need to develop strong interpersonal skills in order to work with a diverse group of individuals and organizations that includes teachers, parents, and external agencies. In addition, principals must keep up with what this organization calls the "information explosion" (p. 2) in terms of educational research. As the body of educational research grows,

principals must also keep current. A third area identified is that teachers are graduating from universities with better knowledge and skills in the area of instruction.

Consequently, the principal must in turn become more knowledgeable about curriculum and instruction.

The effective principal literature researched by this association identified a number of additional areas of knowledge and skills that principals need. First, the ability of the principal to “create and maintain a warm and positive climate for learning” (p. 16) is important for effective schools. However, the principal must take this one step further by establishing this as the image for the school. Two other critical steps include the principal’s ability to implement innovations and their ability to establish and maintain a vision for the school. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (1990) frame the need for this new knowledge and skills by stating that “those entering the principalship in the next decade will need to possess a willingness and capacity to find better ways of doing things - and then be able to effectively market them” (p. 2).

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (1996) identified seven recommendations that addressed leadership needs in schools. Of these seven, four focused specifically on the leadership of the principal. Two of the recommendations, the need for vision and knowledge in curriculum and instruction, were similar to the knowledge and skills identified by the National Association of Elementary School Principals. The two additional recommendations are developing the knowledge and skills needed to “. . . lead and manage change [and] . . . foster an atmosphere that encourages teachers to take risks to meet the needs of students” (p. 99).

Applying Market Values in Education

Henig (1994) asserts that the market oriented system in education is one that if it truly existed, would enable vouchers to be used for attendance at public and private schools, minimize government regulations for the formation of new schools, and increase the transparency of school and district boundaries. He does not believe that many Americans would support this type of model. To eliminate concern and to build support for the market based system, Henig (1994) notes that proponents for this type of system use two forms of bridging. For example, the concept of shopping for a school and shopping for shoes is bridged. Thus bridging the two ideas makes the shopping for school appear to be less radical than it really is. Henig notes that shopping is a “unifying experience in the American culture” (p. 13). A second method used to bridge the market metaphor is using current practices that reflect elements of choice such as district wide choice and magnet schools to demonstrate the success of the market system. In this situation, parents choose among public schools for their child. This second form of bridging is already a form of a market system that exists in the public school sector and has the same problems in terms of the need for image and changing values.

Parental choice or educational choice provides parents with the opportunity to send their children to the school of choice rather than to the local public school (Gewirtz et al., 1995; Henig, 1994). Gewirtz et al. (1995) indicate that parental choice will “[make] schools more responsive to their ‘consumers’” (p. 20). Parental choice can be in the form of a number of different systems. These include, but are not limited to, open enrollment, vouchers and tuition tax credits.

The argument for parental or educational choice is that competition amongst schools for students will “stimulate innovation, responsiveness, and improvements in school performance” (Henig, 1994, p. 4). Hill (1996) substantiates the stimulation for school improvement as he noted “the demands for sheer economic survival . . . [makes] teachers concerned about the performance of the school as a whole” (p. 672). Supporters of parental or educational choice indicate that this market system shifts the decisions away from government and moves the decisions to parents. That is, the elimination of compulsory attendance areas provide parents with the choice of school attendance as opposed to a jurisdiction directing a child to attend a particular school. In compulsory attendance areas, Hill (1996) notes that “staff members . . . need not fear for their jobs if their school fails to perform” (p. 672). According to Hill, parental choice eliminates the possibility of complacency of staff members.

Hill (1996) identifies a number of other factors that affect parents when they have choice as to which school they send their child. He indicates that the parent as a consumer “is . . . the foundation of a much richer set of trust relationships between parent and child and child and school” (p. 673). Hill (1996) recognizes a set of trust relationships developed as a result of the parent choosing the school as “. . . a grant of parental authority, . . . greatly [increasing] the school’s leverage over its students, and . . . schools . . . have leverage in dealing with parents” (p. 673). The trust relationship developed between the school and parent is a result of the parent having chosen the school because of its demonstrated achievement or ability to meet student needs. Hill (1996) concludes by indicating how people with little choice, particularly low income

families, “seldom develop strong feelings of confidence and loyalty” (p. 674) in the school their children attend.

Advocates of choice emphasize that choice directly affects students in a positive manner. Hill (1996) identified the affects as school staff developing a reputation and image, parental commitment to the school, student commitment to the school, and students observing adults working together to achieve success positively impacts on students and their learning. Each of these factors place either implicit or explicit pressure on students to work to achieve high standards through commitment to the school and their parents.

Unfortunately, a number of researchers found that choosing schools is not always based on data that is quantifiable. For example, Petronio (1996) conducted a stratified random sample of forty-two parents within the community of Cambridge who participated in making a choice about the school their child would attend (p. 33). Petronio (1996) found that in order to determine if a school was a good school or if it had good teachers, “parents turned to their friends and neighbors” (p. 33). In the study sample, only one set of parents compared standardized test scores to determine school success. Petronio (1996) further noted that choice tended to segregate students based on income level and cultural minorities. Middle and upper class families tended to choose more nontraditional schools while the lower socio-economic parent tended to choose more traditional schools. Although both socio-economic groups used friends and neighbors for selecting schools, the values of cultural minorities implicated their choice options. According to Petronio (p. 35), “values about keeping young children close to

home precluded the possibility of sending a young child to a school outside the neighborhood” for many minority cultures.

In a study conducted in Scotland, Willms and Echols (1992) found both contradictory and supporting evidence for the Petronio study. This study consisted of two large data samples: one of 5000 students, and the other 616 students. Findings in this study indicate that “parents’ choices are rational in the sense that they increase their children’s likelihood for success” (p. 347). However, the authors qualify this finding by indicating that the improvement was marginal. Two other major findings were identified. Firstly, parents exercising choice were more likely to be more highly educated themselves, and secondly, parents “chose schools with a higher SES and higher levels of unadjusted examination attainment” (p. 347). A concern expressed by Willms and Echols (1992), as a result of the findings, is that there is an increased risk for re-segregation of schools.

Summary

Public education is in the midst of a change from democratic values to market values. This market-oriented change is occurring in many industrialized countries, such as the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. This change reflects a neo-conservative approach to governance in that it supports decentralization of government structures. Its connection is also to a business model supporting choice and competition. This model reflects a neoclassical economic model of which public choice theory emanates. Within this theory, school choice and utility maximization are emphasized. Consequently, with these two concepts being a part of the theory, the concept of

individualism is also a major part of this movement. That is, the inception of a market model in education in each of the countries identified above promotes individualistic tendencies, thus eliminating the ideal of values consistent with a communitarian or democratic form of education.

Administratively, the governance system utilized by schools has evolved into a system that relies on extensive measurements to determine accountability. In addition, the literature demonstrates that decision making within this emerging governance model has shifted to a non-participatory style that reportedly is more efficient and expedient. Thus, the emerging paradigm consists of a new governance model that adopts structures for decision making, financial support for schools, and ultimately a business model that actively promotes parental choice and competition between schools. Using Levin's (1992) discussion of three school reform strategies, it appears that public choice in combination with restructuring is more prevalent in North American education today. However, the market model is practiced on a smaller scale through vouchers and other experimental choice plans.

Chapter III: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

The purpose for this study was to investigate how applying market values to education impacts the governance of schools by the school principal. Specifically, the study attempted to assist the researcher in gaining further understanding about the knowledge, skills and decision making models that principals use to successfully govern their school in a market based, free enterprise educational system.

The literature review, in chapter II, outlined how the values in education have shifted from democratic values to reflect market values in many schools and school jurisdictions throughout the industrialized world. In a similar fashion, the data presentation in chapter IV affirms that this shift has occurred in Alberta as well. Furthermore, these changes reflect a neoclassical economics model that promotes school choice and utility maximization both individually and collectively. Consequently, it was important to select a methodology that would help the researcher understand the implications for governance to this form of economic model. Therefore, the type of research methodology chosen for this study reflected what was needed to address the research questions developed in Chapter I. These questions generally addressed school finance and governance, and specifically addressed the knowledge, skills and decision making models used to govern a school within a market driven economy.

This chapter discusses the research study which consists of a phenomenologically based multi-site case study of seventeen principals, representing public, separate, charter, and private schools. The data collected from the interviews and observations was placed into a case study data base, analyzed and composed as a descriptive analysis using the research questions as a guide.

Methodological Overview

Lauder et al. (cited in Gewirtz et al., 1995) indicate that markets need to be studied in the context in which they exist. The rationale for studying markets in context is that the outcomes generated by educational markets is determined by both formal and informal properties. It is governments or institutions that typically use legislation to establish the formal properties of a market. For example, the laws governing the funding of education in Alberta, developed by government, actively promote choice. Actors within the market setting create the informal arrangements or properties. In the case of schools, it is the actors, administrative officers and staff, who seek to change or modify the nature of the competition that confronts them through the use of these informal properties.

To determine or understand the most appropriate methodological approach to study market values in education and its affect on the principals' model for school governance, it was necessary to consider the appropriate research paradigm. Husen (1988) identified two research paradigms used to study education. One of these paradigms "is modeled on the natural sciences with an emphasis on empirical quantifiable observations which lend themselves to analyses by means of mathematical tools" (p.17).

This paradigm using empirical research establishes correlative relationships between independent and experimental variables. Husen (1988) stated that the “other paradigm is derived from the humanities with an emphasis on holistic and qualitative information and to interpretive approaches (Verstehen)” (p. 17). Dilthey, a 19th century German professor and philosopher, explained that “the humanities had their own logic of research and pointed out that the difference between natural sciences and humanities was that the former tried to explain, whereas the latter tried to understand” (cited in Husen, 1988, p.18).

Dilthey (cited in Husen, 1988) elucidated that the intent of studies in the humanities is to understand rather than explain. Furthering this viewpoint, Gewirtz et al. (1995) contend that it is necessary to study market values in context. Consequently, a qualitative research design structure enables the researcher to better understand this educational reform through direct observation and interviews with the principals directly affected by the phenomenon. Legitimizing this research design is Merriam (1988), who stated that “recently education has turned to case study research to explore the processes and dynamics of practice” (p. xi). In addition, Yin (1984) indicated that the case study methodology is used in a variety of settings that include public administration research. Furthermore, Yin (1993) stated that “the major rationale for using [case study] is when your investigation must cover both a particular *phenomenon* and the *context* [sic] within which the phenomenon is occurring . . .” (p. 31). Therefore, case study was appropriate as the study involved studying market values on administration of education within the context of public and private education. Specifically, this study described the processes

or dynamics of applying market values to schools and how these market values affected the principal in governing his or her school.

According to Merriam (1988), “the qualitative study is a . . . suitable methodology for dealing with critical problems of practice and extending the knowledge base of various aspects of education” (p. xiii). Supporting this contention is Stenhouse (1988), who stated that researchers who use case studies “are concerned . . . with the understanding of educational action” (p. 50). Action, in this study, was observed as a study of the emerging skills, knowledge, and decision making strategies that principals adopt to be successful in a market based educational system. Furthermore, Merriam views the case study “as the best methodology for addressing those problems in which understanding is sought in order to improve practice” (p. xiii). Consequently, the case study served this purpose as very specific ideas and examples were noted in chapters IV and V that will provide principals with an increased understanding of this market phenomenon. Thus, the principals can utilize this information to improve their practice of governing their school in an evolving market based education system.

Validity and Reliability

Internal and external validity and reliability ought to be major concerns to any researcher. Wolcott (1995) indicates that originally “validity looks at whether a researcher has measured what the research purports to measure” (p. 169). This definition has shifted, thus aligning validity “more closely with truth value . . .” (p. 169). That is, the relation between the research and the real world. Wolcott (1995) further notes that as qualitative researchers, you are active in the study and this puts the researcher in a good

position for ascertaining truth value. Maxwell (1992) supported this contention, as he noted that “a realist conception of validity that sees the validity of an account as inherent, not in the procedures used to produce and validate it, but in its relationship to those things that it is intended to be an account of” (p. 281). Consequently, we need to view validity with a different conceptual view; one that is reality oriented.

Therefore, it is necessary that the issues of validity and reliability be addressed in qualitative studies. Accordingly, Merriam (1988) noted that any concerns regarding internal validity, external validity and reliability “can be approached through careful attention to a study’s conceptualization and the way in which the data were collected, analyzed, and interpreted” (p. 165). For this reason, methods were examined to ensure internal and external validity and reliability were taken into account throughout the course of this research study.

Internal validity.

Maxwell (1992) refers to internal validity as descriptive and interpretive validity. He noted that in descriptive validity, “the first concern of most qualitative researchers is with the factual accuracy . . . -that is, . . . they are not making up or distorting the things they saw or heard” (p. 285). Interpretive validity is concerned with an accurate representation of what the “objects, events, and behaviors mean to the people engaged in and with them” (p. 288.). Consequently, internal validity measures the congruence between the research data, the analysis and the reality of the situation. To determine the internal validity of a study, it is necessary to first define reality. Lincoln and Guba (cited in Merriam, 1988) define reality as “a multiple set of mental constructions . . . made by

humans; their constructions are on their minds, and they are, in the main, accessible to the humans who make them” (p. 168). That is, an individual’s reality is a complex set of mental images that only the individual has access. Consequently, for the researcher to attain validity within the study, the researcher must demonstrate that the multiple mental constructions are “represented . . . accurately” (p. 168), as was the case in this study.

Within case studies, Yin (1984) makes the point that “concern over internal validity . . . may be extended to the broader problem of making inferences [as] case study involves an inference every time an event cannot be directly observed” (p. 38). Consequently, Yin indicated that in this situation, one infers x from y. Therefore, it is necessary for the researcher to develop a research design that takes into consideration questions about the accuracy of inference throughout the study.

To ensure as much internal validity as possible in this study, the researcher followed Merriam’s (1988) advice and used triangulation. Triangulation within this study included interviewing principals, collecting artifacts, utilizing member checks, implementing a third party interview transcript verification process, and making known any researcher biases. One interview was conducted with each selected principal. Interviewed principals were provided the opportunity to verify the contents of the transcript, although only four chose to do so. Upon completion of the transcription of all of the interviews, an outside analyst reviewed a random selection of the transcripts to verify their accuracy. Lastly, citing the researcher’s biases and assumptions in chapter one assists in attaining internal validity by ensuring these biases or assumptions do not become part of the findings and conclusions, unless they are legitimate outcomes of the study.

External validity

Merriam (1988) defines external validity as “the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations” (p. 173). Wolcott (1995) refers to this as generalization of the research. However, Wolcott (1995) states that we cannot generalize our results. He explained that “I am inclined to treat generalization as something highly desirable yet always beyond grasp” (p. 172). He discusses that this is a result of the fact that the study looks at only one case. Conversely, Merriam (1988) cited Cronbach who views that the notion of generalizations be replaced by the idea of “working hypotheses” (p. 174). These hypotheses provide “the individual educator [with] some guidance in making choices -- the results which can be monitored and evaluated in order to make better future decisions” (p. 175). Furthermore, Erickson (cited in Merriam, 1988) believes that by thoroughly studying one case, the resulting concrete universals may be compared to other similar case studies. Furthering this point, Yin (1984) argues that we cannot use a statistical definition of generalization. Rather, he uses an analytical generalization. This analytical generalization “[strives] to generalize a particular set of results to some broader theory” (p. 39).

Maxwell (1992) divides generalizability into internal and external components. Internal generalizability refers to “generalizing within the community, group, or institution studies to persons, events, and settings that were not directly observed or interviewed” (p. 293). External generalizability is explained as “generalizing to other communities, groups, or institutions” (p. 293). According to Maxwell, internal generalization is more important than external, as qualitative researchers seldom attempt

to make external claims of generalizability of the accounts.

In this research study, the researcher thoroughly investigated multiple sites in an attempt to determine concrete universals, thus resulting in what Stake (cited in Merriam, 1988) referred to as naturalistic generalization. That is, “[a] ‘full and thorough knowledge of the particular’ allows one to see similarities ‘in new and foreign contexts’” (p. 176). Therefore, external validity was evidenced through similarity, rather than universal generalizations. Using this notion, it was understood that no two groups would be exactly alike, and consequently, the outcomes would not be exactly alike. For this reason, the best that could be hoped for was using similarities between groups to guide decisions, similar to the one Merriam (1988) suggests when discussing working hypotheses.

Reliability

Merriam (1988) defines reliability as the “extent to which one’s findings can be replicated” (p. 170). As a result of the need to replicate, reliability is difficult to attain in qualitative research because of the difficulty in replicating human behavior. Kirk and Miller (cited in Wolcott, 1995) advocate that reliability be handled “through carefully documented ethnographic decision-making” (p. 168). However, Wolcott disagrees. He views reliability as not needing to be addressed, rather, we “make sure that our audiences understand why it is not an appropriate measure for evaluating fieldwork” (p. 168). To the contrary, Merriam (1988) argues that the issue of reliability goes hand in hand with internal validity. He cites Guba and Lincoln who view that “it is impossible to have internal validity without reliability, a demonstration of internal validity amounts to a

simultaneous demonstration of reliability” (p. 171).

Yin (1984) states that “the general way of approaching the reliability problem is to make as many steps as possible as operational as possible . . .” (p. 40). Consequently, it required that the researcher document and operationalize as many steps within the study as possible to enable future replication of the study. However, Yin and Merriam do not agree on the replication of results, as Yin does not address the difficulty of achieving the same results in future studies that replicate the original study.

Therefore, in this study, Merriam’s views were adhered to. That is, adequate measures were taken to ensure internal validity, and as a result of attaining internal validity, reliability was also present. One additional step was taken. That is, as many steps within the study as possible were operationalized. For example, selection of sites was done using stratified random sampling. The stratified sampling was completed through the process of first of all identifying each of the principals by school type. Each principal was then assigned a number, and through the use of a random numbers table the principals were chosen for participation in the study.

Research Design

The research study was an educational case study that followed a descriptive design. Stenhouse (1988) states that the purpose of an educational case study is to “enrich the thinking and discourse of educators either by the development of educational theory or by the refinement of prudence through the systematic and reflective documentation of experience” (p. 50). Thus, the case study assisted the researcher in understanding the effects of market values on the principals’ governance of schools.

The multi-site case study followed these steps:

1. A proposal outlining the research study was submitted to the Protection of Human Subjects Committee at the University of San Diego for approval.
2. The dissertation proposal was also presented and approved by the researcher's dissertation committee.
3. Research was conducted to identify the regions of Alberta that had all four school types (public, separate, charter and private schools) located in the same geographic region.
4. Through a stratified random sampling technique, principals, from these identified regions, were invited from the four school types to participate in this study. The following formula was used to invite school principals to participate. The formula had a sampling of 40% of public and separate schools from the selected school districts, 50% of private schools, and 100% of charter schools. A letter was forwarded to the principal in each of the selected schools inviting their participation in this study.
5. A requirement for this study was participating principals from the public and separate school system had to have a minimum of three years experience in their school or school district. No previous principalship experience was required for charter school and private school principals.
6. Stratified random sampling as identified by Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (1990) was used for the final selection of the participants. The steps taken were:
 - a) Define each sample population.
 - b) List all members of each population that are willing to participate.

- c) Assign individual members of each population a distinct number.
 - d) Utilize a random numbers table to select the subjects from each population based on having representation from the geographic regions identified for the study.
7. Initially, only one charter school principal indicated interest in participating in this study. As a result, the researcher phoned each of the charter school principals in the geographic regions requesting their participation. This method enabled the researcher to get the number of charter school principals needed for this study.
 8. Subjects selected for the interviews were contacted by a follow-up phone call verifying their participation in this study. At this time, the interview times were established.
 9. Names of principals not selected for participation in this study were placed on a back-up list in case some participants dropped out prior to being interviewed. No principals dropped out of the study, and as a result no additional principals were added to the interview roster.
 10. The researcher conduct a multiple site case study, completing 17 interviews with school principals.
 11. Names of the individuals were masked in order to protect the identities of the subjects and their schools.
 12. One additional public school was added as this principal replied after the deadline for receiving their intention to participate form. However, due to the fact that this individual was from a geographic region that no public school principal had

replied, the researcher added this principal as an additional interview to the original 16 that were sought for the research study.

Data Collection

Data collection was completed through one 1 - 2 hour interviews with each participant between October, 1997 and April, 1998. During the interview process with each school principal and where applicable, the researcher reviewed artifacts pertaining to information provided by the subject. In each interview, a tape recorder was used for recording interviews in order to increase the accuracy of data collection. All participants were given the opportunity to request the transcripts to verify and make any changes to the transcribed interviews prior to the interpretation of the data. In addition, a third party reviewed a random sample of all tapes and transcripts to verify transcription accuracy. Consequently, the researcher used interviews, school artifacts, the use of the tape recorder, and randomized third party analysis of the typed transcript to collect and verify the data. The utilization of multiple methods is one recommended by Merriam (1988). That is, the use of “dissimilar methods such as interviews, observations, and physical evidence to study the same unit” (Merriam, 1988, p. 69) is referred to as methodological triangulation. The advantage of incorporating triangulation into this study was that each of the research methods utilized had strengths and flaws. According to Denzen (cited in Merriam, 1988), using dissimilar research methods, the inherent deficits of each particular method is often a strength of the other methods. Consequently, the researcher in this study was able to overcome deficiencies of individual methods by relying on the strengths of other research methodologies.

Entry to the Population

The population participating in this study were school principals from selected geographic regions within the province of Alberta. Public and separate school principals had at least three years experience as a school building principal within their school district, while charter and private principals did not have to have prior experience.

The researcher's entry into this population is that he is presently a school principal of a grades 7 - 12 school in Buffalo Trail Regional Division #28. In addition to his current assignment, he has seven years experience as a school principal in Alberta; two years as a principal of a grades one to twelve school, and five years as principal of a kindergarten to grade six school. In addition, he has one year of experience as a vice-principal of a kindergarten to grade six school. Consequently, as a school principal, the researcher has been involved with many of the changes that Alberta schools have undertaken over the past seven years.

Selection of Site/Subjects

Selection of principals and sites relied on the following criteria:

1. Subjects were principals of public, separate, charter and private schools from geographic regions that had all four types of schools; public schools, separate schools, charter schools, and private schools.
2. Permission was obtained for interviewing principals in selected sites before implementing the data collection process.
3. Permission was obtained from public and separate school jurisdictions that had policies requiring researchers to get permission to conduct research within their

jurisdiction. This was done by initially contacting the superintendent or designate of the jurisdiction by phone to establish if there was a jurisdiction policy regarding conducting research within their schools. If a policy existed, the necessary paperwork and applications were completed and forwarded to the appropriate offices.

4. Stratified random selection was used to invite principals from the four types of schools to participate in the study. Initial invitations were sent out to 40% of public and separate schools from the selected school districts, 50% of private schools, and 100% of charter schools will be initially invited to express their interest in participating in this study.

Protection of Subjects

Stenhouse (1988) explained that case studies may present a problem of ethics. The problem is that case studies are often written in a form that may “subject [persons or institutions] to the possibility of recognition” (p. 53). Therefore, to ensure protection of people and institutions and according to University policy, the researcher submitted a proposal to the University of San Diego’s Committee on Protection of Human Subjects for review and approval. The intent of this process was to ensure that the research design did not violate ethical guidelines established by the University of San Diego, and was consequently in compliance with federal and state regulations for protecting case study subjects’ identities.

To participate in the study, each participant signed a consent form. Subject identity was protected by coding the participant list, coding the taped interview and transcripts using a cross-referenced system so that only the researcher could match the

participant to the tape and transcript. Each tape and transcript contained only a number that matched the tape to the transcript. This tape and transcript number were cross-referenced to the school information sheet that contained the following information:

1. The participants name;
2. The gender of the principal;
3. The age of the participant;
4. The type of school (public school, separate school, charter school, or private school and grade levels) they are principal;
5. The number of years they have been a principal;
6. Previous teaching experience; and
7. The phone number, address and city in which the school is located.

The school information sheet was secured in a locked filing cabinet and after the data was analyzed was placed in a secured file. Tape recorded interviews and transcripts contained only a code, known by the researcher, that identified which school principal it represented.

A random sampling of the transcribed interviews were checked by an outside third party analyst, not involved in this study, to verify accuracy of the transcription. In addition, six interviews, that were transcribed by a stenographer were verified for accuracy by the researcher.

Approach to Data Analysis

According to Taylor and Bogdan (cited in Merriam, 1988), the goal of data analysis, . . . , is ‘to come up with reasonable conclusions and generalizations based on a

preponderance of the data” (p. 130). Merriam (1988) discusses strategies that can be used to successfully organize the data into the case study data base. To do this, the collected data was read carefully, noting important information that may be used to formulate categories. The next step organized the data topically, by emerging units of information. These units, as identified by Guba and Lincoln’s version (cited in Merriam, 1988), met two requirements. The units were “heuristic - that is, the unit should reveal information relevant to the study and stimulate the reader to think beyond the particular bit of information. Second, the unit should be ‘the smallest piece of information about something that can stand by itself . . .’” (p. 132). These units were then sorted into conceptual categories. This is similar to the method advocated by Strauss and Corbin (1990) who use open and axial coding to analyze the data for grounded theory. A computer was used to assist in the analyzing of the data, by identifying the different categories, using various fonts, colors and callout boxes, within the transcription.

The reporting format was completed using an approach that Stenhouse (1988) refers to as the analysis reporting approach. This approach, according to Stenhouse, “. . . favours (sic) the search for precision in terminology and theory” (p. 52). Contrasting this reporting method with the narrative reporting method, Stenhouse indicates that “the words of narrative are crowded with connotations and derivations, those of analysis tend to be starker and more denotative in the light of their definitions” (p. 52). He also notes that analysis reporting tends to be “more explicit” (p. 52). Consequently, this reporting method enabled a direct method for reporting the analysis of the data and stressed precision in understanding this phenomenon. Initial reporting was conducted using a “descriptive [account] of the phenomenon under study” (Merriam, 1988, p. 127).

Following this descriptive account, a more detailed account was developed that carefully analyzed the categories that evolved from the data analysis. Therefore, the reporting method followed an approach that reported the data from a more general to specific level.

Background of the Researcher

The researcher, Dean Lindquist, is a school principal in Wainwright, Alberta, Canada. He has kindergarten through grade twelve experience as a school principal. In addition, he also has extensive educational experience as a classroom teacher at all levels of public education.

The researcher graduated with a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Saskatchewan in 1981. His major and minor in the program were physical education and mathematics. In 1993, the researcher received a Master of Arts degree in Education Administration from San Diego State University. The emphasis in this program was educational leadership. He is presently a candidate in the Leadership Studies program within the Educational Doctorate Program at the University of San Diego.

Summary

The researcher, as an Alberta public school principal, has an excellent background, and consequently entry into the population for this research study involving the implications of applying market values on education and their impact on principal school governance. Using an educational case study as the methodological approach, the researcher interviewed 17 school principals. During the interview process, the researcher

used observation and collection of pertinent artifacts to assist in further understanding the phenomenon under study. The use of member checks and third party analysis of a random sample of audio tapes and transcripts further facilitated the use of triangulation to ensure the data analysis was as accurate as possible.

The research design was such that it was developed to protect the identities of each of the participants through masking participant, school and jurisdiction identities. Selection of participants followed a stratified random selection method, after contacting school principals within the school jurisdiction being studied and soliciting interested principals.

Based on these data collection techniques, the researcher collected the necessary information to understand the implications of the shift from democratic values to market values in schools. In addition, the information, contained in the case study data base assisted the researcher in understanding the model of school governance used by the principals involved in this multi-site case study. Consequently, the data enabled increased understanding of principal school governance within a market driven educational environment.

Chapter IV: Analysis of Data

Introduction

The literature review supports the contention that market values are an emerging phenomenon in education today. Consequently, one should not be surprised to find these market values affecting the educational system in Alberta, and more specifically, principal governance of his or her school. However, it is important to determine the direct effect market values have on education, and what the principal needs to possess in terms of knowledge and skills in order to enable his or her school to survive in an environment that is increasingly becoming competitive and market driven. This chapter will review the data collected from the principals, which will assist the researcher in drawing conclusions and directions that may assist principals in ensuring their school is competitive in an environment that promotes survival as the only rule of the educational market place.

The data collected from the principal interviews supports the contention that there is a shift toward market values in education in Alberta. However, the issue becomes murky as some of these values manifest themselves in a number of different ways. As one example, a principal of one school does not see her school as a competitor, although she believes in the idea of school choice, and to her, parents choosing schools is not, nor

does it create, competition between schools. To a different principal, choice meant aggressively marketing his school in order to attract students. A third example complicating or clouding the issue is the belief of one principal that we are on the cusp of a paradigm shift in education. Although Jim, a public school principal, believes that we are in a market oriented period, he also indicates that we are in the midst of moving from an industrial model of education to an information model. This information model shifts the role of education to one that facilitates students developing new skills to be ready for the 21st century. These new skills are “its important how you get the information, get the knowledge when you need it, and then how you apply that and re-engineer it to work for you.” As a result of this shift toward an information model, schools must change the way they are structured, which will ultimately affect how schools are governed.

Each principal approached this topic from their own perspective and, in some cases, philosophy. As a result, each philosophy is accompanied by its own terminology and definitions. Regardless of these varying philosophical positions, excerpts from the principal interviews and many of the artifacts collected contained data which reflect the findings that researchers cited in the review of literature in chapter II. In addition, the data from this study clearly describes how these market forces impact on principal school governance in Alberta.

Although principals used different terms to describe their perception of the present educational model, it was clearly evident that principals viewed the model driving today’s educational system as emulating a market based system or business model. As one example, a high school principal brought out a number of government documents to support her contention that the model used by Alberta Education is, in fact, a business

model. Felicia, a public school principal, read aloud the various Alberta Education publications and reflected on the idea that the present educational model was clearly evident within the titles themselves. The document titles were the:

Three year Business Plan, Third Annual Report, Summary Report, Discussion Paper, Position Paper, Handbook, Roles and Responsibilities, Accountability in Education: A Discussion Paper, Framework for Enhancing Business Involvement in Education, Accountability in Education: A Policy Framework, Interim Educational Plan, Meeting the Challenge: An Education Roundtable, Translating Vision into Reality through Focus on Quality, Results Report on the Three Year Business Plan for Education, Report Card.

After reviewing each document, Felicia followed up by asking what is the model Alberta Education is following? Her reply to this rhetorical question was “I think it’s a business model.” Each of these documents using terms such as quality, business plans, accountability conjure up the image of running a large business or corporation.

A different perspective was brought forward by another principal. Bernie, a charter school principal, compared the changes in education to an emerging renaissance. He suggested that this renaissance is evidenced in all professions today. This individual stated “I believe [that] what is happening we find . . . in all professions, you can take medicine, you can take it in law, you can take it in all of the basic professions. It’s a renaissance starting to happen.” In this renaissance, people are no longer taking things for granted. People are beginning to question what was once unquestionable. Teachers are no longer thought of as the expert, parents are very quick to question things.

The findings contained in this research study, in many ways, agree with both of the principals cited above. That is, there is a renaissance occurring in education, however the renaissance is likely the emergence of market values in education. People are adopting school choice and consequently, practicing choice by shopping for schools. As Adam, a public school principal, indicated, “if we make a mistake, parents here are very reasonable. They know you are human, you make a mistake and that sort of stuff. Second mistake, maybe enough is enough.” Parents are accepting, but only to a point, and if this point is breached, they will exercise their right of choice and move to a different school.

The result of shifting toward market values is that it affects how school principals govern their schools. This chapter will review and endeavor to elucidate how the data collected within this study supports the view that the shift toward market values significantly impacts upon school principal governance.

Subject Information

As explained in chapter III, the participants in this study were randomly selected from a list of principals who expressed a willingness to participate in the study. These individuals indicated their willingness to participate by responding to a written request that was sent to their school. The table on the next page serves as an introduction to these school principals. To protect their identity, a subject code is used (false name), and the school name and jurisdiction is not provided.

Table 2 School Type and Subject Code Matrix

Type of School	Subject Code
Charter School Principal	Ruth
Charter School Principal	Bernie
Charter School Principal	Jack
Charter School Principal	Greg
Separate School Principal	Bruce
Separate School Principal	Harvey
Separate School Principal	Bob
Separate School Principal	Don
Public School Principal	Felicia
Public School Principal	Adam
Public School Principal	Jim
Public School Principal	Doug
Public School Principal	M.D.
Private School Principal	Janet
Private School Principal	Glen
Private School Principal	Leroy
Private School Principal	Charles

Table 3 illustrates the ‘average age of the school principals’, their ‘average years served in the position of principal’, and their ‘average years as a teacher prior to becoming principals’ of those principals participating in the research study.

Table 3 Mean Subject Information and Data

	Age	Years as Principal	Years as Teachers
Charter School Principals	50.75 Years	13.25 Years	12.75 Years
Private School Principals	47.33 Years	4.75 Years	16.75 Years
Public School Principals	48.25 Years	9.7 Years	8.38 Years
Separate School Principals	50.00 Years	11.75 Years	14.25 Years

The above table indicates that the average age of the principals selected to participate in this study within each school type is very similar. Interestingly, of all the principals, the private school principals had the least experience as a principal, but the highest average number of years as a teacher. Conversely, the charter school principals had the most experience as a school principal. Public school principals had the lowest average time as teachers before becoming school based administrators.

As the data in this chapter will illustrate, no direct comparisons between principals could be made based on age, years as a principal, or years as a teacher.

However, the data does indicate a shift toward market values, and that this shift is apparent in each of the four school types. The following section uses this research data to illustrate this shift by studying the perceptions of the interview subjects in regard to where each believes their school lay on a continuum between comprehensive and market values.

A Comparison of Comprehensive and Market Values

Principals, participating in this study, completed the screening instrument which asked them to compare each of the values identified on the Gewirtz, Ball, and Bowe chart found in chapter II. In each pairing of values, principals were asked to identify where they saw their school on a continuum between one and ten, with one being purely comprehensive values and ten being market values. Each principal completed a form for where they saw their school or educational system three to five years ago, at the present time, and where they see their school or education being three to five years in the future. The following table, labeled table 4, (Gewirtz, et al, 1995) is modified to include a value number so that the mean scores for each school type can be shown more easily on table 5.

Table 4 Comparative Chart for Comprehensive and Market Values

Value Number	Comprehensive Values	Market Values
1	Led by agenda of social and educational concerns	Led by agenda of image/budgetary concerns
2	Oriented to serving community needs	Oriented to attracting 'motivated' parents / 'able' children
3	Emphasis on student need	Emphasis on student performance
4	Resource emphasis on 'less able'/SEN [special educational needs]	Resource emphasis on 'more able'
5	Mixed ability	Setting [streaming]
6	Integrationist [inclusive]	Exclusive
7	Caring ethos	Academic ethos
8	Emphasis on good relationships as basis of school discipline	Emphasis on extrinsic indicators of discipline, e.g. uniform
9	Cooperation amongst schools	Competition between schools

Table 5 Average Scores For Each Values By School Type

Value / School Scores	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Charter Schools									
Past	3	3.75	3.25	2.5	5.75	4	4.75	4	2.75
Present	6	5.5	5	3.25	5.75	6.25	6.25	5	8
Future	7.25	7.25	6.25	4.5	7.75	8	7.75	6	8
Private Schools									
Past	2	4.75	3.625	3.625	3.25	4	4.875	4.5	3.5
Present	3.5	4.75	5.125	5.375	3.25	4.25	6.625	4.25	5.25
Future	4.375	5.5	5.375	5.125	4	3.25	6.375	5	5.5
Public Schools									
Past	4.75	4	4	3.75	3.75	4.25	3.5	3.25	3
Present	6.5	5.75	6.75	4.5	3.25	4	5	5	4
Future	6.25	5.5	6.5	6	3.75	4.75	6	4.5	4.75
Separate School									
Past	3.25	3.75	5.5	3.5	2.5	3.5	4.5	2.75	3.25
Present	5.75	4	7.75	5.5	2.5	3.25	6	4.75	6
Future	6	4.5	8	5.25	3.5	3.25	5.75	5.25	6

The numbers in table 5 represent the mean score for each school type. The score was calculated by adding the principal responses (scores between 1 and 10) for each educational value and determining the mean score for each school type by dividing the total score by the number of principals responding to the instrument. The mean scores of each school type were then compared using the mean scores from past, present and future, as well as principal comments, to determine if there was a shift toward comprehensive or market values.

A Market Values Orientation

At a basic level, there is a perception by principals that the values in education in Alberta are taking on a market values orientation. Table 5 on the previous page indicates that principals from each of the four different types of schools believe that the values identified in the table developed by Gewritz et al (1995) show a shift toward market values. That is, principal scores on the screening instrument are higher in the present or future than they were for the past. For example, principals consistently responded with ever increasing numerical responses when comparing values in the past, present, and future. Low numerical responses on this instrument indicate an orientation toward comprehensive or democratic values, while a higher numerical response illustrates a movement toward market values. Consequently, according to the principals surveyed, there is a shift toward market values in education in Alberta.

Social Versus Budgetary Concern

Interestingly, private schools scored toward the comprehensive value 'led by agenda of social and educational concern' as scores ranged between 2 in the past and 4.375 in the future, whereas the charter, public and separate schools tended to score more toward the value 'led by agenda of image/budgetary concern.' The charter, public and separate school scores ranged from as low as 3 in the past to as high as 7.25 in the future. The position of private schools tended to be supported by comments throughout the interviews. For example, Glen, principal of a private school, indicated that "I think that we are in a time that education is being driven more by budget and image to the detriment of social and educational concerns." However, perhaps the reason these schools have been able to stay their course and not be distracted by concerns about funding or other issues is what Glen further alluded to as:

we have found that we really have to know who we are. And our parents have to know who we are. And the two have to be compatible. And if they are not we won't be able to continue to exist.

This idea of an identity and the ability to maintain this identity is critical to the survival of this private school. This was evident in one other private school. Charles indicated that a major role of the school's board of directors was to "keep the school on course because there are parents who want to pull the school in different directions." However, what has made Charles' school successful has been its continued vigilance in maintaining its focus and direction. Conversely, a number of public and separate schools, in addition to developing a strong reputation, use the such things as magnet programs,

technology, and sports programs to attract students to their schools and these programs may change if they are not successful at bringing students to the school. Consequently, the focus and direction may not be as consistent as private schools enjoy. One public school principal indicated that this was one of the advantages of site based management, as schools are able modify their programs very quickly in order to meet the changes occurring within the community or city.

Community Needs Versus Individual Needs

Schools tended to score toward the middle for the values of oriented to serving community needs and oriented to attracting 'motivated' parents / 'able' children. The range of scores noted in table 5, with the exception of charter schools, was between 3.75 (past) and 5.5 (future). Charter schools indicated a larger range, as a result of two of the four charter school principals indicating an extreme shift toward market values in the future.

Although the mean scores did increase toward schools attracting motivated parents and 'able' children, the increase was very moderate. Explanations for this tendency can be found in that many of these schools, charter, private, public and separate, did not restrict entrance for most students. In some cases, schools did not offer special education programs, or were limited in their ability to offer some specialized programs and consequently, some students would not be accepted. In other instances the schools were specialized and took only special needs or academically strong students. For example, Adam stated very resolutely that "when you live in a very yuppie community and they want a certain thing for their child and it is a very academic, performance-based

program, you are meeting the needs of the community.” Therefore, one of the difficulties with this value comparison is that they are not opposing values, and as Adam indicated, you can have both depending upon your community. In many ways, this value is most directly affected by the expansion of availability of educational choice for students in Alberta, and the parents’ ability to get the student to their school of choice. This aspect will be discussed later in this chapter. However, it is important to note that the idea of community can no longer be thought of as the area directly around a neighborhood school. The meaning of community must be expanded to mean the geographic area that parents are prepared to send their children. In major cities, this may mean the city limits, or beyond. This belief is supported by many of the interviewed high school principals in the public and separate systems, as well as the charter and private school principals who indicated that a large number of their students travel large distances across the city to get to school each day.

Student Need Versus Student Performance

A trend toward the emphasis on student performance over the emphasis on student need is evident among the principals surveyed. For example, scores for the past ranged between 3.25 and 5.5, whereas scores for the future indicate a range between 5.35 and 8 for all schools participating in this study. One of the complicating issues for this value is the way that achievement and diploma exam scores are used in Alberta. For the most part, school grade 3, 6, and 9 achievement test scores are published in local papers. This can place phenomenal pressure on schools to maintain high scores in order to maintain a reputation of academic excellence. M.D., a public school principal, stated that “with the

provincial achievement tests [it] has really focused or moved us away from the center, toward student performance.” This shift toward student performance also supports the next section that discusses how there is a shift toward emphasis on the more able. This shift may be a result of needing to ensure student marks are indicative of a high achieving school.

Resource Emphasis on Less Able Versus More Able

Principal scores indicate that three to five years ago, principals viewed that schools were more concerned with the comprehensive values as the scores varied between 2.5 and 3.75. Mean scores for the present time period shows moderate escalation in the scores to a range between 3.25 and 5.5. The future bodes to moderately increase again toward an emphasis in market values as the scores increase slightly to a high score of 6. School principal responses indicated that they are moving toward resource emphasis on the more able. However, M.D.’s comment contradicts this notion, as he noted that more resources are going toward the less able as a result of increased numbers of less able children enrolling in his school. An explanation for the variance between the scores and this principal’s comment may be, of the participating school principals in this study, a number of their schools cater to a specific student population through special programs. As a result, these program specializations may skew the results. In addition, for a variety of reasons, less able children may be less likely to attend charter or private schools. Again, this concept is supported by the data collected on mixed ability grouping versus setting in schools. Discussing this point further, a number

of schools deliver very specific educational programs that enables very specific types of students to attend.

The Values of Mixed Ability Versus Setting

Mixed ability and setting value is most directly affected by the school type.

Reviewing the raw data, the data collected from neighborhood elementary and junior high schools tended to score toward the mixed ability value (scores between 2.5 and 3.75) at the present time, whereas, specialty schools in all school types scored toward the setting or homogeneous grouping (scores between 5 and 10). For charter schools, mean scores in table 5 vary from 2.5 to 5.75 in the past, and show an increase to a high of 7.75 in the future. One of the reasons for this is a number of the participating charter schools were specialty schools and catered to a specific type of student through special programs. Consequently, the grouping strategies within a given school was based on the specificity of programs rather than a philosophy of grouping, as the school program determined the range of student levels at the school or in the program.

The Value of Integration Versus Exclusivity

Similar to the previous set of values, it is difficult to determine the degree schools adopt integrationist or exclusivist values. The difficulty arises with schools such as the neighborhood schools that do integrate, however their system may also have specialized schools for such things as gifted and talented programs and learning disabled programs in which they send their students. In a similar situation, the charter or private schools are specialized in that they are attracting a specific type of student, whether it is on religious,

academic, or a special needs basis. Consequently, schools that are specialized are there as an alternative to the neighborhood school. In many cases, these specialized schools are also available in both the public and separate school systems if a parent wishes to have a exclusivist setting for their child.

Caring Ethos Versus Academic Ethos

An academic ethos appears to be developing over time in most schools. The average scores indicate an increasing shift toward an academic ethos over a caring ethos. The mean scores for the past ranged from 3.5 to 4.75, while the mean scores for the future range between 5.75 and 7.75. Although school principals stated that they see that relationships are important and they attempt to maintain them, parents are also looking to schools that are providing students with an excellent academic program. This idea of academics is discussed further in the school choices section in this chapter.

Relationships Versus Indicators For School Discipline

A slight shift has occurred in the area of school discipline. All school types show a moderate shift (scores ranging between 2.75 and 4.5 in the past to scores ranging between 4.75 and 6 in the future) toward the emphasis on extrinsic indicators of discipline. However, there was a unified response from all principals that the discipline model emphasized relationship.

In some schools, indicators such as school uniforms and clearly articulated student conduct policies provided parents with the image of a school that is on top of school discipline. However, principals indicated the importance of relationship in

discipline. That is, relationship between the individuals, the school and home is the whole philosophy of discipline, and in this sense, it is the relationship orientation toward discipline through counselling and support of the student that school principals want parents to see in their school.

Cooperation Versus Competition Between Schools

The last value dealing with cooperation versus competition illustrates a significant shift toward competition amongst schools. Mean scores on the principal survey indicate a perception that schools cooperated more in the past as scores ranged between 2.75 to 3.25. These mean scores escalated significantly to between 6 and 8 when principals were asked where they perceived this value to be in the future. This high score indicates a perception that these principals believe schools will be far more competitive in the future.

However, as the next section indicates, some schools are working particularly hard to minimize the competition between schools within the same system. In addition, some charter and private schools believe that they are not trying to compete with other schools. However, these principals indicate that they are being seen as a competitor by other schools types. For example, Janet, speaking about her private school, indicated that “we don’t want to say we are in competition with the other schools. We don’t want to say that and we don’t want to be a competitor. [However] we have always been thrown into the arena as the competitor.”

Competition

Bernie, a principal of a charter school did not believe competition was the right word to describe a particular phenomenon that the researcher called competition. Rather, this principal stated very strongly that:

I think the competition is not so much a competition, but a point of satisfaction. If I'm not satisfied with this child's teacher, I am going to move my kid and I will find a teacher . . . , that I feel satisfied and comfortable with. I think that we are seeing a lot of that, we are seeing more transient type parents that say, hey, there's five elementary schools within walking distance. Now I can choose any one of those, so if my kid is in grade four and I don't like the grade four teacher and that school isn't going to allow my child to have another teacher there in that structure then I'll change schools. I'll find, . . . a teacher that my child can work with.

Furthering this point, the principal explained how the idea of choice is based primarily on need. Bernie stated that "in choice, . . . I will find an alternative if it doesn't meet [or] satiate my need." Accordingly then, it is this satiation of parental need to fulfill the educational need of the child that orchestrates a parents decision to exercise choice and that competition has nothing to do with this issue.

Bernie's position is that competition cannot exist in the realm of education. He stated emphatically:

there is no competition, it's not a competition. It should never be regarded as a competition. We are a service industry. We are taking care of education for children. Its not a competition. I can be a good teacher in my own right, and

there are certain kids that I can't touch. Should parents not have the option to take that child some where else where they can get the education? Absolutely!

Absolutely! Is this competition? No, education is just that.

Consequently, in Bernie's eyes, the perception of competition does not exist. Rather, there are some students that teachers are not able to teach, and in these instances it is the parents right to find a teacher who can work with their child. However, this is not the way other principals perceive what is happening in Alberta. The idea that emerged through discussions with school principals is that competition can occur within a school system and between school systems.

For example, Charles recognizes that there is competition in education today. He noted that competition is there because of such things as school based budgeting. Schools need the enrollment to keep the funding required to run the program. Without the necessary enrollment, public and separate schools are unable to maintain their program offerings. Charles, at the present time does not see any competition, because no other school offers what his private school offers. However, he believes that charter schools will or could be competition for his school in the future. For this reason, Charles advertised his school this year. He indicated that "we are advertising, not because there is a drop in enrollment, but because there are now more choices with more chartered schools opening up and private schools, we did not want to wait and see how things unfolded, we might as well let people know."

The interviews indicated that competition is different within systems and across systems. Therefore, the next two sections will deal with competition from these two perspectives.

Competition Within Systems

Principals in both the public and separate systems indicated that they worked hard as a school system to reduce or eliminate competition between schools in their own school division. Bob, a principal in the separate school system, stated:

I don't see any competition between schools in our district, in terms of trying to get more than our share of the kids than we are normally allotted to us by the geographic boundaries. Schools bend over backwards to discredit the value of the [local provincial newspaper] when Alberta Education put out achievement test scores.

Further support of this effort to reduce competition within school systems is M.D.'s comments. He noted that:

we are working very hard as principals within our school system to ensure that we are not competing for the same students. In other words, as much as possible, when parents move from school to school within the public system, we do try to explain and take the position that no matter which school that their child is enrolled in they would find basically the same services, the same standards and the high standard that we have.

Doug, a high school principal, approached the idea of within system competition from a different perspective. He noted that as a school principal you are competing for students that will profile your school. In order to do this, his system has organized evenings in which all the high schools do presentations for students who will be selecting a high school to attend. However, within this staged event, the system philosophy is

continuously promoted, and that philosophy is that “each school definitely will provide a high level program for students. So, in [our system], our line is ‘Wherever you go, you will get quality treatment’.” Doug emphatically stated that “I want the student to make the conscious decision that this is the right school . . . and here are the reasons supporting that decision.”

Considering competition from this perspective, it appears that the competition within a system does not really exist to the extent it may across systems. The competition that is present is there to promote the excellence a student will find at any school within a particular school system.

Competition Across Educational Systems

The issue of competition across educational systems or school types seems to be where schools and school systems focus. This is perhaps supported by Janet’s comments, noted in the section previous to the section on competition, where she feels that although, as a private school, they are not competing with other schools, she perceives that her school is often thought of as the competitor by other school principals. Ruth, a charter school principal viewed competition similarly to Janet. She stated:

from our perspective we are not looking at ourselves as competitors. Simply as individuals with a different approach and a particular focus trying to offer an education structure and setting that best fits certain individuals. In the belief that not all systems work for all students, and therefore we are here to offer an alternative, but the approach we’ve seen from existing educational structures in the area has been one of veiled polite tolerance. Some very obvious attempts at

countering the move of students into this school by not so much presenting their educational structure as being the viable one but by somehow, if not coming out and saying it, that at least implying that this one is not viable.

This perspective hints at the idea that one part of competition is indirect and perhaps covert as schools attempt to compete with one another.

M.D., a public school principal, supports the contention that competition exists across school systems. He stated that competition exists:

between public and separate systems, even more so between the private schools and the public schools, [as] we are very much trying to compete for the same kids. And in our case, our board has noticed that as the population in our area increases, we want to make sure that we receive our due number, or proportion of kids.

Jack, principal of a charter school, answered the question about competition by stating “that the government has designed it such. They have taken away boundaries, the money follows the kid, . . . , you know our whole reason for being as a charter school is to put competition in the system.” Jack provided a different perspective of competition that no other principal provided. He noted that competition provides the school superintendent of other schools and systems with leverage to make changes within their own school system. The superintendent uses what other schools in competing systems are doing to place pressure on their own system to ultimately improve their own jurisdiction.

Jack believes that “Alberta Education is only prepared to let this competition go so far.” He stated that charter schools will only be allowed to exist for a short period of time, as “their role is to show a better way and once that better way is available in the

public system, your reason for existence is no longer there.” Jack believes that the charter schools will eventually be subsumed into the public systems as alternate schools.

As indicated, competition reveals itself in a covert manner as alluded to earlier by Janet. It is also evidenced by the overt action of advertising of schools in the newspapers, on billboards, and other marketing techniques. Janet explains that this overt manner of advertising schools and their programs is good for parents, as it educates them and enables them to make educated choices as to where to send their child to school. The emergence of marketing schools will be dealt with in more depth in the marketing section.

School Choice

The position of some principals is that school choice is healthy for education. In addition, they believe that parents should have the right to choose the school in which their child will attend. Alberta Education policy also enables school choice by allowing the funding to follow the child to either public, charter or separate school, and if they choose private, partial funding will follow. Government and school systems also enable choice through open attendance boundaries. This aspect opens the doors for parental choice of educational programming. For example, Doug, a high school principal, stated:

the money following the student now means that [the city] is no longer your market place, Alberta is your market place. So you will have schools, . . . , for example [who] will advertise right across the province because it has that kind of unique program.

Charles had a different perspective on the idea of school choice. He felt there is a need for more alternatives, if there is to be true choice. He argued that we need:

schools with different philosophies, and if you had about ten such schools, then those who are happy with the public system, stay. For those who are not, then OK, I have ten choices, which fits my child best. Unfortunately, that is not there now. We have the private system, which is just another public system being run as a private system. They are all Christian schools, they follow the Alberta program, just in a different setting.

Charles' perception of choice is that parents are given real choice options that include a significantly different philosophical position in relation to one another. This is not available to parents at the present time as most schools are presently following the program prescribed by Alberta Education.

Principals clearly identified what they perceived as reasons parents choose different schools. High school principals from public and separate schools identified the following reasons their school is chosen:

1. the reputation of prior student performance at the school,
2. a pattern of school success that is measured in terms of scholarships awarded to students,
3. the types of programs offered,
4. the perception of the parent that the child would be happier in that school environment,
5. the friends of the student are attending or planning to attend that particular school, the school is recognized as a safe school,

6. the commuting distance to the school, and
7. the school's reputation of how the students are treated at the school.

The reasons noted by high school principals are not significantly different from public and separate school elementary and junior high school principals. These principals identified the reasons parents select schools as:

1. the safety and security of the child,
2. the proximity of the school to the parent's home,
3. there is strong discipline at the school,
4. there is an educational program that meets the child's needs,
5. the school's educational reputation,
6. the parent has had disagreements with the previous school's teacher or principal,
7. the child chooses the school,
8. and daycare or babysitting is in close proximity to the school.

M.D. expressed concern over what he saw as parents allowing children as young as grade 1 to choose their school, or parents choosing a school because it charges ten cents less per day for noon hour supervision. He stated that:

in a number of cases, its not so much the quality of education they are looking at, but other factors, and that would be what's convenient for parents with respect to baby-sitting arrangements, or we could be looking at things such as daycare at the school, it could be something as simple as, the lunch hour arrangements.

M.D. sees this as a shift away from traditional values. Some parents are no longer concerned with the quality of education, rather it is a matter of personal convenience.

The charter school principals identified a different range of reasons parents choose a particular school. They identified low pupil teacher ratios, school program, matching the needs of the child with the school, and dissatisfaction with the public system as key reasons. Jack noted two additional reasons. These reasons were being an elitist feel for some parents, and the parent cannot get their child into a private school and consequently, the charter school is the next best choice.

Reasons cited by private school principals as to why parents chose their school or moved their children were that the philosophy of the public school is not agreeing with the philosophy in the home, lower pupil teacher ratio, parents can get more involved in the school, dissatisfaction with the public system, child not doing as well academically, or for religious reasons in the case of the private school being religion oriented.

School Image

An interesting and important reason for motivating parents to move their children to a separate school was identified by three out of four separate school principal interviews. The reason is the belief that Catholic schools have more or better discipline. Harvey stated “myth, or otherwise [it is believed that] the Catholic schools have more discipline.” He further commented that this image of better or more discipline “seems to drive [parents] toward the district.” However, a myth can perpetuate an undeserved reputation that also drives parents and prospective students away from choosing a particular school. Harvey indicated that once the community establishes a school’s reputation, it is hard to break. He referred to this concept as grandfathering. Consequently, the reputation may or may not be a myth, however, schools live and die by

the reputation that precedes them. Jim cited an example in which parents chose other schools rather than his school because “they heard that it is a bad school, that it is a tough school.” Consequently, Jim has had to work hard to tear down the old image and create the one that has made his school burst at the seams with new enrollment over the past three years. Jim broke through this myth or image of his school being tough by going out to the community. As he stated, “pound the pavement, go out to the community, like I do with community meetings, . . . , ask community businesses how are the kids at [my school], [ask] have you had any problems.” Jim noted that the next step is to follow through and deal with the students that are a problem.

School Program and Philosophy

Looking at the four school types and the responses from these principals, there are a number of similarities in terms of principal opinions as to why parents choose schools, yet there are also significant differences of opinions. Schools that have very specific programs or philosophy, whether they be international baccalaureate or a program with a strong religious connection, responded somewhat differently to the questions than the other schools. For example, Doug, principal of a high school with a very strong academic focus indicated that:

emphasis on student need, our student need pattern is different from others. To me, I don't let the budget guide the program. First you identify the philosophy and then, once you have your philosophical position firm, then you finance your philosophy instead of philosophizing your finance.

In a similar sense, Janet, as principal of a private religious school indicated that philosophy is key to the success of her school. She indicated that parents:

have the Christian philosophy in the home, the church, they also believe that it should be at school. So the child doesn't have confusion. That . . . is why we exist and that's why we can offer an education with lesser resources and facility because they believe so strongly in it.

Consequently, as figure 2 below illustrates, with identical philosophy in the home, school and church, the result is a firm foundation for children to learn. Janet indicated that if you have only two of the three parts of the foundation in place, the structure is weakened. Therefore, it is imperative that the three parts of the foundation be in balance with one another.

Figure 2 Matching Philosophies Between School, Home and Church

Funding Issues

Funding was an issue for most school principals interviewed. For the most part, many of the principals indicated there was insufficient financial support from the province. In addition, many school principals indicated that funding does exacerbate the choice issue by opening up the avenue of choice, and impacting educational programs for students. Specific areas noted by principals included the issue of funding and regional disparity, funding following the student, unequal funding for private schools, changing funding structures, funding and special needs students, and funding and institutionalizing schools. Each of these issues create problems for the school principals in this research study. As such, a more detailed discussion of each issue is carried through below.

Funding and Regional Disparity

The funding issue has exacerbated school choice. Funding is distributed equally to schools, and does not take into account regional differences. For example, schools that are located in areas identified as being a low socio-economic area do not get additional funding, even though there are frequently higher “environmental costs” (Greg). The difficulties encountered at some of these schools also makes it difficult to keep good teachers. Greg noted that “if you work in a low socio-economic area, or one that is rumored to have problems in the building, you continually get new teachers . . . so you are continuously working with base level professional development.” Consequently, parents choose to send their children elsewhere if possible because these schools do not appear to be academically strong, and one indicator used by some parents is high provincial achievement test scores. Complicating this issue is these schools tend to spend

a significant amount of the instructional dollars on issues other than educating the child. Consequently, this further erodes any chances of this school achieving better academically.

Funding Following The Student

The funding mechanism also promotes school choice by allowing the money to follow the child. Jack, a principal of a charter school, indicated that this is a significant factor for parents choosing charter schools. However, he further stated that the money provided by Alberta Education is not adequate to educate the child. Two of the principals of charter schools noted that parents choosing to send their children to alternate schools such as charter schools pay a financial cost for their decision. Although these schools cannot and do not charge tuition, there are costs for running some programs and as a result a user fee is assessed to the child. Jack also noted that “we do a lot of fundraising . . . , but we have a lot of parents who write checks regularly” indicating that this donation is their contribution to the school.

Unequal Funding For Private Schools

Private schools note that unequal funding of private schools impacts on parents’ ability to have real school choice. Glen, a private school principal, stated that the level of funding does affect whether a parent will choose to send their children to private schools. To make up the shortfall, Glen noted that “we have to charge tuition and that obviously affects choice.” In some cases these schools have provided scholarships for students

whose parents are unable to pay the tuition, however, scholarships are limited. Janet indicated that accredited private schools should get equal funding. She stated that:

I still firmly believe we are educating children and we are an accredited private school, which means we teach the Alberta curriculum, our teachers are university trained, we follow all of the recommendations and expectations of the Department of Education, we should get the full instructional grant.

Recent government announcements indicating funding of private schools will increase to sixty percent has Janet believing that this will help parents exercise choice more easily. Charles stated that the closer private schools get to receiving full funding, more parents check out what the private school has to offer. However, this increase still leaves accredited private schools forty percent short of the funding public, separate, and charter schools receive, and this upsets Janet.

Changing Funding Structures

Changes to the funding structures for school systems severely limited the ability of schools to meet some students needs. M.D. is in a system with a large tax base. With changes to the funding structures, this system lost a tremendous amount of these tax dollars to the government's restructuring plan. The result of this change is that "in some cases it has affected the level of service we are able to provide for kids." M.D. further stated:

our school system used to be perceived as one of the best within the province.

Since the funding change over we've become an average system and we are not perceived as having the excellent services or programs anymore. We just don't

have the dollars for it. So because of that it has made the choice issue more significant for us.

Bob, a separate school principal supports M.D.'s concern. He noted that the cap of four percent of the total budget for central office supports and services has eliminated a lot of the resources available previously to the school. Bob argued

the funding mechanism . . . where they have put a limit on the amount of district based resources rather than school based resources has caused us anxiety because I don't believe the school can adequately meet all of the needs within that school without going to district resources.

As a result of the cutback, school districts no longer have many of the supports for schools to fall back on to assist students. For example, Bob viewed the elimination of curriculum departments and other infrastructure at the district level as a significant loss in terms of support for students in schools.

Funding and Special Needs Students

Addressing the funding issue, Bernie indicated that the funding of special needs students is one of the primary problems facing education today. He stated:

we used to one time go case by case and you built the case around the child and the educational system, that IEP, or educational plan . . . , the funding followed that IEP. Now the governance is that we give it all, we give the monies to the board and it is up to the board to decide where it goes. This is a great idea. This is like a brain surgeon asking his patient on how to make a cut. This doesn't make any sense at all.

Although Bernie was very direct in his opinion of how the money should not be distributed, he also explained that not having the money go directly to educating the child, the result is the money does not always end up where it needs to, thus leading to schools not being able to meet the individual needs of the child.

Funding and Institutionalizing Schools

Funding is a major contributor to the dissatisfaction many people hold with regard to the present educational system. Bernie's view is that schools have become too large and cumbersome. As a result of school size, principals and staff are no longer able to work with students as individuals. Bernie accused the government of turning schools into institutions. He stated that the:

finances is a tremendous influence here. Mega-concepts, what have we done with capital expenditures? We have created an animal that we can't turn back in this country. We are in serious trouble. I know that from the research that I did, clearly back into the 40's and into the 50's, the research was strong then and all the researchers were writing, "do not develop your schools beyond 400 to 500 students in size." We've watched the school turn into an institution. Take a look at elementary schools today, 700, 800, 1200, high schools 2100, 2200, 3000 people in the schools. What are we talking about, education or are we talking about mass production. And what drove that?

According to this principal, this mega-concept of school size is one of the driving forces behind parental dissatisfaction. Bernie argues that the evolution from the one room school to the mega-school has not occurred without problems, and in many cases, the

problem is that when schools become so large, it is no longer possible to know the child.

He states

it's an evolution that kept going and what drove it was the buck. Oh we can supply better LAN's, yes we can, there are more choices for your child, if we have all these things. There is some argument for that, but at what cost?

Individualization of the child?

Bernie believes that it is this loss of not knowing the child that begins to become the root of parent dissatisfaction and ultimately parents making the decision to exercise choice.

Principal Knowledge and Skills

The biggest skill that principals have ever had is good interpersonal relationships, individual skill building for teachers, individual counselling with kids, individual discussions with parents, that kind of thing. Its a human resource management job. Unfortunately, with the budget cuts, a lot of the stuff we used to delegate out to other people is now coming back There is no one else to do the job there anymore. (Greg)

In many ways, Greg's quote sums up the principal's job quite accurately. Not only is the principal having to continue many of their usual roles, there was consensus amongst the principals that the knowledge and skills that principals need are also changing or evolving. In some cases the opinions of principals varied on the types of skills or knowledge that principals required. However, each principal viewed that their role was changing, and as a result, so were the knowledge and skills required to be successful in the position of principal. The following skills were identified by the school principals as

new knowledge or skills that they require to be successful in their jobs today. They are: (a) knowing oneself as a school, (b) practicing public relations for the school, (c) marketing and development of the school image, (d) managing the school, (e) exercising collaborative decision making, (f) practicing human resource management, (g) being visionary, (h) being a change agent, (i) using environmental scanning, (j) being a politician, (k) building a team, (l) being accountable, (m) planning and implementation of initiatives, (n) resolving conflict, and (o) establishing community.

The skills noted here require a new perspective and role of the school principal. As such, each of these points will be discussed in more detail in this chapter. In some cases each will be discussed in a section of its own, while in other instances groups of these skills will be discussed within one section.

Knowing Oneself

Glen, a private school principal indicated that the most important skill that he has developed is “knowing who we are [and] our parents have to know who we are”. He further indicated that twenty years ago, they did not have to worry about this clear identity as he felt they were guaranteed an enrollment at their private school. This guaranteed enrollment is no longer the case. He attributed this change to two effects. Firstly, the confidence parents have in schools. Glen stated that although parents may have confidence in you, “they are quick to question it.” That is, parental loyalty to the school is very superficial. Secondly, he also feels that our system is becoming market driven, and that parents are “shopping around” for schools. As a result of parents

shopping for schools, principals are beginning to have to market and advertise what they have to offer.

Marketing Your Product

The idea of shopping around was not isolated only to Glen. Rather, all the principals had experienced parents contacting them to find out what their school had to offer. However, the number of parent shopping contacts reported by principals varied significantly. Some of the neighborhood public and separate schools reported few contacts of this nature, while some public and separate high schools, charter and private schools reported significant parent contacts.

Felicia indicated that “the people who make choices are often people who are very actively interested in their son or daughter’s education. [These people] are consumers.”

The consumer orientation was reinforced by Glen, who added:

at this time of year we will get phone calls, one a day, a few a week asking what do you offer, at what price, they may compare us to other people and say well this school offers this, how do you compare. And that is very much in my experience a product of the 1990’s.

To deal with this issue, principals identified marketing as an important aspect of their job. Leroy referred to this skill as “street hustle.” Principals have to be out meeting with their various stakeholders within the community. Leroy further explained street hustle as principals needing to:

learn how to market their schools better than they have in the past. . . . You are going to have to be at board tables asking for assistance in the growth of your

school The principals are going to have to recognize that they are going to have to be out in the community far more than they have in the past.

M.D. remarked that marketing is very important to his school. In many cases the marketing campaign is a blunt approach that is taken in response to some of the successes that charter and private schools identify in their marketing plans. M.D. remarked that:

the ability to market our own school, we've had to take on a different approach in terms of promoting our school within the local media, news releases and that kind of thing. We need to be able to demonstrate the strengths that our school has, we also have to address some of the issues when let's say the private schools and the charter schools have publicized or published their provincial achievement test results, diploma results and so on. We've had to take the stance that its not just a laissez faire approach anymore, we've had to say of course you should you have best marks because you are using the best students.

In particular, it is interesting that this principal identifies that it can no longer be approached from a laissez-faire position. Rather, successful marketing must be well planned and clearly deliver the intended message.

This message is developed through a marketing plan that may be devised by the marketing department within the school jurisdiction or by a marketing company that is contracted to assist you in marketing your school. In Doug's case, he can use his system or hire a company to assist with this initiative. Part of his initiative was to develop a logo that promoted his school. With the development of the logo as part of this marketing plan, his goal is that

I want people to understand that's [my school], as soon as they see that [logo], without having to read the print. So everything we do is mirror imaged on that, and it is to the point where people recognize the Nike swoosh without the word "Nike" and it sells the products, then, guess what, there is something in logo recognition that helps people generate a market share.

A second aspect to marketing is creating an image or reputation for your school.

Greg stated that

I think that the big systems basically have lost their ability to operate as good systems. Strictly on a political context, I think that . . . systems adopted the view that they wanted to make the system good, so we did things like school board colors and logos, special business cards for everybody, lots of marketing on behalf of the system, but you can't have good systems if you don't have good classrooms, and they should have spent their resources on their teachers in their classrooms.

He goes on to say that the formula for a successful school or system reputation is "good classrooms + good teachers = good schools = good system." Consequently, the development of a good school system hinges on the collective ability of the schools within the system to effectively offer a sound program, but to also ensure that that image is carried out into the community. For example, as discussed earlier, myth or otherwise, parents believe Catholic schools have better discipline. That is, Catholic schools are perceived to provide an atmosphere that is safe and secure for students. Whether this is true or not, principals indicated that parents cited this is a reason for their choosing a school within that particular school system.

Public Relations

The research subjects identified good public relations as a requirement for principals. Doug noted that:

you have to have a strong degree of public relations expertise. You have to be able to showcase your particular school, and your particular students. You have to be able to persuade parents and students that you are a reasonable alternative to what they are considering. You have to have certain skills in terms of marketability and image.

As part of good public relations, effective communication was identified by a number of the school principals. Ruth identified communication as one of her key roles. As part of successful communication she identified that it is necessary “to be accessible, to be well informed about each child’s situation, so that when a parent calls we are on a first name basis and we can actually discuss things a lot more freely and they are more receptive to suggestions.” Charles supports this contention, as he indicated that

you spend a lot of time talking to parents, especially where children are not succeeding as well as the parents would like them to. You have to be able to sit down and discuss each child on an individual basis. You have to keep on top of what is going on in your classroom. If I have to discuss student A, I have to be able to talk to each of the child’s teachers and find out what are the strengths or the weaknesses. Parents want to know that, that you are on top of what is going on in the classroom.

Personal Relations

This skill, personal relations, deals with the interpersonal involvement between self and others. These may be skills that deal with one's ability to work with fellow administrators, staff, parents, and other professionals. Ruth discussed how you must become personally connected with the people you interface with at school or in the community. She indicated that "there has to be a framework of mutual cooperation that is in place and that takes time to develop." Ruth discussed how this is not necessarily a new skill, as she used this philosophy as a classroom teacher. However, as a principal, she has had to expand it to a school level.

Contained within the personal relations framework is conflict resolution. Bob emphasized the importance of conflict resolution skills by noting:

parents are coming in with demands that certainly can't be met, and dealing with them and have them walk out the door and say 'yeah I was treated fairly, I understand the problem the schools got and maybe I was off base.' Dealing with teachers, the knowledge and skills for dealing with teachers when the parents are right, are absolutely right and the teacher was absolutely wrong, and allowing the teachers to correct the problem with dignity without loss of respect. Those are the kinds of things people learn by experience that no university class can teach. Again, this is personal relations, as the goal of conflict resolution is to attempt to solve the problem, and if you are unable to, the people involved leave with their dignity intact and feeling that their concerns were heard.

Leadership and Management

Leadership is an important aspect of the principals' role description. This importance is reflected in many of the knowledge and skills that were identified by the principals in their interviews. Felicia identified vision as a key skill for today's administrator. She stated that

our jobs are more and more to be the visionaries, to be the people who look beyond the horizons And to be able to anticipate where, what the next road needs to be. And then to be able to inspire the people who are actual doing the work, to believe that they have a role in that and that in fact it relates to what they do with kids in the classroom.

Consequently, from Felicia's perspective, the ability to be visionary, is in reality being a leader of leaders. Furthermore, the successful principal must be able to motivate and inspire their teachers to take responsibility for student learning.

The role of change agent ties in directly with the role of visioning. Felicia viewed the change agent as the person "who [has] to be able to make it happen, we have to be able to tap into resources that are available to us in our system and to be able to go outside and make it happen." She further noted that, as principal you then have to bring people, both teachers and parents, on side in making the vision a reality.

Leadership of teachers is an ongoing skill that continues to be extremely important for school principals. It is also a skill that will assist the principal in producing better results in terms of student achievement. Charles explained that

you have to be a leader for your teachers, which means you have to know the different curriculum, what is going on at each grade level, who will be the teachers teaching it, how are they teaching it, you should be able to analyze the results, where are the weaknesses, how do you address them, and you have got to have the respect of the teachers to believe in you.

Consequently, the principal works in a coaching role. This role assists teachers in ensuring sound pedagogical practices in the classroom. It also extends to increasing the level of accountability the school accepts in terms of educational achievement.

Management was also identified as an area where principals had to gain knowledge and skills. Principals that mentioned this aspect, approached the term management from the perspective as the skills and knowledge that are required to effectively operate or manage your school. Some of the principals identified these as business practices. M.D. felt that this role has detracted from the principal being the instructional leader. He stated that many principals are now “accounting, managing as opposed to school leaders.” The accounting and managing statement ties in with the skills required for site based management that has become a major initiative in Alberta. Bruce viewed site based management as something that takes an inordinate amount of principal time. According to Bruce, “dealing with budgets and how to crunch that out for the best academic use of your entire school” is time consuming. However, the government’s shift to adopt this practice throughout the province has forced principals to take on this new role.

Time Management

Janet found that Alberta Education is bringing down more initiatives over the past few years. These initiatives include such things as the development of the Three Year Business Plans. Consequently, Janet indicated that when a new initiative comes from Alberta Education, as principal she must “read it, . . . work through it, [and] have a really good broad general knowledge of what is going on.” Keeping abreast of these new initiatives, as well as running the day to day operations of the school, time management is becoming much more important. Janet stated that it may be better in the public sector, as the larger systems have additional personnel at the district office whose job is to deal with developing implementation plans for the new initiatives. However, as indicated, in private schools, the principal is responsible for reading, understanding, and developing plans to implement new initiatives. This takes additional time from the traditional work day of the school principal, and consequently creates an additional time burden for the school principal.

Accountability

A different issue that needs to be discussed here is the idea of increased principal accountability for decisions made at the school level. Don believes that principals are more accountable to parents for their decisions and how their school is operated. He gave the example of parents asking more and more questions about what children are learning, what programs are offered, why they are learning that and why is that program offered or not offered. If your response to the parent is not satisfactory or they do not like your answer:

they are certainly not afraid to go to your superiors or make a phone call somewhere else where they think that they can get more information or put the heat on you to make some changes if they are not happy.

The implication in this situation is that parents that disagreed with the principal's position on an issue or did not like his or her decision would attempt to coerce or get the decision changed by going to the principal's superior. As noted earlier in why students move schools, parents are also willing to move their student as a result of dissatisfaction or disagreement with the previous school administration or teacher. Consequently, this level of accountability also increases parental involvement at the school level as a result of the interplay between parent and teacher, parent and principal, and possibly, parent and superintendent.

The method of governance used by private schools and some charter schools also shifts the direction of accountability. In parent run schools, the principal and his or her staff is directly accountable to the parent run board. In a similar manner, public and separate schools are accountable for the decisions they make to both their school council and the jurisdiction's school board. For example, M.D. indicated that it is through the school council that parents have input into school policies and programs. A key aspect in this accountability issue is the role of parents. Harvey indicates that the parent's role is to question things. In doing so, this helps to ensure that the school is making the correct decision. However, a consistent finding in this study was that parents are quick to question the school regarding the decision made. As one principal indicated, parents are also willing to forgive the first mistake or two. However as noted previously in this chapter, Adam noted that once the school has made the second or third mistake, then

enough is enough, and the parent holds the school accountable and moves on to a different school.

In other ways, schools have accepted this accountability based system. M.D. indicated that he uses provincial achievement test results and other data for developing goals for the school's education plan. M.D. explained that his school a sub-committee is formed for this task. He stated that in

[preparation of] the school goals each of the sub-committees review what they would like to have as school goals and then the members of the communication committee . . . meet with me. We review the different alternatives for school goals and from there we select which we want, present this to the school council, we have a discussion, they have the opportunity for suggested revision . . . and of course the school council is made up mostly of parents. So this is where they have their input into school goals.

Therefore, as part of the school accountability initiative, parents are involved in the process by having input into what they deem the school should be accountable for in terms of school goals. However, M.D. indicates that staff have the final decision in this process.

As this account of accountability indicates, there is a trend to increasingly holding schools accountable for the decisions they make and the results achieved. Given the parents limited ways to respond to these achievements in holding the school accountable, it appears that the parent acts out by either going to the superior of the individual being held accountable, or the parent moves their child to a different school. The consequence of this for the school is lost income, and perhaps a tarnished school image.

Human Resources

An area that affects the school principal and his or her ability to promote their school is the area of human resources. Many school principals identified this knowledge and skill based area as an important one for school principals. For example, Bob explained that hiring the right teachers is very important, but he also believed the principals must know what is good teaching. To improve teaching, Bob explained that as the principal you must be able to use the data from sources such as achievement tests, analyze it, and use it to “fix problems in the school.” In fixing the problem, it sometimes means “bringing in stronger teachers, its very often working with the teachers you have right now and making them better teachers.” According to Bob, human resources is having “the knowledge of people, and getting the most out of your teaching staff, the knowledge of parents, what is it that parents really want and working with them to ensure them that we are all working in the same direction.”

Harvey identified team building as a critical skill for principals. It was Harvey’s belief that today’s principal must be able to factor staff, students and parents into the team building equation. This team building philosophy shows up in decision making at Harvey’s school. In a collaborative exercise, Harvey utilizes leadership teams to enable the decision making process. These teams are involved in developing goals and directions for the school through the identification of school needs. Looking at the idea of team building from a different perspective, Bob explained a similar idea but referred to this as establishing community. Bob believed that this phenomenon begins with the establishment of community in the classroom. That is, the end goal is for the school to

become “a community of learners.” It is this community of learners that work together toward the accomplishment of excellence in the school.

The concept of community of learners is integral to a model that espouses excellence, and it is this notion of community that can be extended beyond the walls of the school. Bob, discussing the community of learners model, stated

I feel that I can create a pretty strong school where I am at by hiring the right teachers, knowing what is going on in the building,. . . , starting with that community in the classroom and becoming a community of learners, so the knowledge I need to acquire is very often what is good teaching, what does good teaching look like. The knowledge of looking at the data we get on a yearly basis from Alberta Education, and analyze the data and saying there’s a problem here, and then how do we fix the problem. Sometimes its bringing in stronger teachers, its very often working with the teachers you have right now and making them better teachers. The knowledge of people, and getting the most out of your teaching staff, the knowledge of parents, what is it that parents really want and working with them to ensure them that we are all working in the same direction.

Therefore, the development of a community of learners model is understanding the needs and wants of the school’s community, having the personnel in place to deal with these needs and wants, and being able to channel or direct the parents, students, and staff in a common direction that ultimately leads to attaining the goals identified by the community.

School Governance

Although decision making is a critical skill for principals, it is also an extremely important aspect of school governance. Principals discussed a variety of school governance issues in the interviews. In addition to the new skills and knowledge needed by school principals that were discussed earlier, shared decision making is a process that significantly impacts on school principal governance. Discussions with principals indicate that the decision making process used by school principals has evolved over time from a principal directed model to a more shared governance model. However, Ruth feels that the decision making process is still very much an administrative task. She indicated that:

I think it is probably quite difficult for a lot of administrators is to let go of some of those decision making powers. Generally, it has been my experience in the past that the administrator makes the decision and says do it. Staff meetings are there, input is there, but the final decision does rest with the administrators.

Many principals would have agreed with this position in the past as principals made decisions with very little or no input from staff, students or parents. However, the shift is toward shared decision making involving staff, students, and parents in the process. Part of the reason for this shift is government and system mandate. Don explained:

[the] senior administration . . . have stressed and its been a major emphasis that you don't make decisions alone, you do have a collaborative model, we are a learning organization, everybody's opinion is valued, make sure you consult your parent community.

Consequently, in Don's district, the main principle behind the shared decision making process is for schools to become learning organizations. The senior administration called this program visionary leadership planning. Don explained that this was a program that was done with the principal and his or her staff. In a basic sense, the premise behind the program "was that schools should collaborate more with . . . their staff, and also the parents in terms of a decision making model."

This shift toward shared decision making in schools is not occurring without problems. Bruce noted that there will likely be a shift back toward a principal based decision making model as a result of the frustration teachers feel about the extra meetings and time it takes to get decisions made in a shared decision making manner. Bernie indicated that a balance is required. He stated that "the first thing you have to understand is what you are trying to decide on. The nature of the decision. That decision in itself will determine the manner in which the decision is going to be made." Bernie believes that certain decisions, based on the information that is needed, should be done by certain people. This, as well, is a new skill for principals to develop. That is, what decisions are made by the principal without staff or parent input and which decisions require staff and parent involvement. Bob, in his experience as an administrator, "learned that even the smallest issues can become large issues if you don't give people a chance and invite some response. So virtually every issue now, [is taken] back to the staff." Consequently, the principal must find a compromise in terms of what decisions she or he makes and what needs to be taken to the staff or school council.

All of the principals explained a process that involved shared decision making. In most cases staff and parents have an advisory role, with the final decision resting with the

principal on major issues such as staffing. However, Bernie noted that, in some cases, his staff make the final decisions even on major decisions. For example, his staff members do the hiring of new staff. His rationale for this is he wants his staff committed to helping each other succeed. He stated emphatically that “if I’m involved in the hiring process, I have a commitment to you. I am going to want you to be successful.” This process develops a collective approach to teaching. However, in the interviews, this example was an isolated case. No other school leader indicated this as part of their process.

In fact, in most other charter and private schools, staff were not included in the hiring process. The parent directed and parent run schools tended to give a parent board final decision on the hiring of the staff. In one example, the administrator reviewed the resumes, completed a shortlist for the position and interviewed the candidates. The principal then provided a list of the top three candidates to an education committee, made up of parents, who again interviewed these candidates. This committee then discussed each candidate with the principal and made a recommendation for hiring one of the candidates. This recommendation is subsequently forwarded to the parent board for a final decision.

For the most part, decisions in schools proceeded in the following manner. An issue or need is identified by the school based principal, staff member, student, or parent and is brought to the attention of the school administration. The school administration, consisting of the principal and assistant or vice principals, would gain input from the various stakeholders affected by this need or issue. In public and separate schools, the school councils would be included in this feedback loop. The decision would then be

made by the administrator or by those most affected by the issue. Don used the example of bringing in a new program into his school to demonstrate this decision making model.

He indicated that he would involve:

the school council and the parent community and . . . the staff, everyone has an opportunity for input either through written comments or in a meeting form. And then, you know its not always consensus, but certainly everybody is invited to provide their input and then the people that are most directly involved in making the decision, the administration and if we have a person who really wanted to bring the program in, then we would make the final decision.

Overall, a significant shift toward shared decision making has occurred in most schools. The previous model of principal based decision making has evolved to include input and some decision making abilities to the staff and school council levels. However, for the most part, in the charter and private schools that are parent run, the trend is for the final decisions to be made by the parent board and in some cases, the principal.

Role of the Trustee in School Governance

To assist in understanding the role trustees play in educational governance, it is necessary to understand their role in terms of the law. According to the Alberta School Boards Association Policy Handbook (1997), elected school boards are delegated, by the Alberta Legislature, the authority to govern schools. The school board is comprised of a number of elected trustees who assume a number of roles. These roles are politician, goals setter, planner, evaluator, financial planner, policy, legislator, communicator, education, information receiver, information disseminator, adjudicator, and lobbyist

(Alberta School Boards Association, December, 1997). This document further notes that the school trustee is a member of the board, and it is this board that makes decisions. Consequently, the trustee “may carry out certain duties individually, but only as an agent of the board” (Alberta School Boards Association, 1997, p. 3). Accordingly, unless the board member is acting as an agent of the board, he or she “has only the authority and privileges given the ordinary citizen” (p. 3). This role specificity has implications for an individual trustees involvement in school based decision making. However, this only addresses school trustees in the public and separate educational systems, and as discussed in this section, trustees or elected officials of charter and private schools have additional roles and responsibilities in the area of school governance, and in many cases, these roles vary significantly from those of public and separate school trustees.

In the public and separate schools, principals were adamant that school trustees are not involved in school policy and programming. Although all the principals stated that the trustee’s role is system oriented, Bob’s explanation clearly states their role.

According to Bob, the school trustee’s:

role is to take a global view of whatever district they happen to be in, create policies to make that district as operationally effective and educationally sound as they possibly can and then trust the administration of the district to carry out the policies.

According to Bob, the system policies are administered at the school level, and any policies developed at the school level are school based decisions. The only stipulation is that school policies be in harmony with system policy and direction.

Administrators from both the public and separate system indicated that there is feedback to and from the school trustees. Felicia stated that “on occasion we are asked for input to the decisions that [trustees] need to make, budget decisions, program decisions, and on occasion, policy decisions.” M.D. also noted that school trustees have involved school councils in the development of district policy. Consequently, there is constant feedback between trustees, school administration and school council.

Figure 3 Communication Pattern Between Board and School

Although school administrations and school councils sometimes have input into the governance of the district, the school trustee involvement at the school level, for the most part, is limited to celebratory or information functions. Principals noted that the trustees are interested and willing to attend graduations or parent forums, however, there is a protocol in place where the trustee would not get directly involved in policy and program issues.

Charter and private schools are somewhat different than the public and separate schools in terms of addressing governance by a school board. In this research study, many of the charter and private school principals interviewed came from schools that are parent run or directed which means that a Board of Directors comprised of parents serves

a leadership role in many ways similar to a school board in the public or separate system. However, the main difference is that this board of directors is responsible for only one school, and in some cases, multiple schools if they have more than one campus. Consequently, interviews with the charter school principals seem to indicate that the result is a more hands-on governance approach by the board than you would find in the public or separate school system. Greg indicated that with his board the:

trustees basically look at governance, making sure that money is spent where it is designated from Alberta Education or from the province. They are involved in the staffing process, they are involved in basically giving permission on budget items, . . . and broad policy issues.

Greg further noted that it was “more the role you would expect from a superintendent of a school district, or from an assistant superintendent in a school district than we would see of trustees of a large system.” Ruth noted a similar occurrence. The board in her school primarily sets policy, however with the democratic approach they utilize in the school, the board also participate in the hiring process.

In one particular charter school a significant level of involvement by parents was evident. Jack noted that the Board of Directors of this charter school have 14 committees that are directly involved in the governance of the school. The principal sits on 12 of these committees. Each of these committees has a specific role and reports back to the Board of Directors on a regular basis. One of the difficulties expressed by Jack is that in a parent run school, having this many committees “becomes a bit awkward and diverse and kind of amorphous, all these committees, they are realizing that parent directed and getting so many people involved can really slow down the whole operation.”

In one other instance, the Board of Directors of a private school took on a more direct governance role in their school. Janet indicated that in addition to establishing policy, her board also sets the vision. In program development, Janet used technology program implementation to explain the role of the board in her school. In this example, Janet went to the board with the need to develop technology programs for the school. To determine the approach to develop the programs, the board set up a technology committee to look at budget, hiring, and long range goals. Janet indicated the board is very involved in the process. As part of her parent run school, Janet indicated that parent members education committee also observe teachers in the classroom. These members then meet with the principal to discuss their observations and eventually report them to the board. Janet feels that this process works well as a check and balance. In the case of teacher observation it often verifies the principals observations.

Greg expressed concern over parent involvement in the hiring process. He indicates that this is a case of serious conflict of interest in “parents hiring teachers for their own kids.” For this reason, Greg argues that a non-parent board should be elected for these types of parent run schools. The school council is “legislated and mandated, so parents still have a view there.” Greg indicates that an advantage of this method is it:

would make it a lot easier, because electing parents as board members really means that if you look at it from a board viewpoint, they tend to lose their rights as individual parents. I can’t as a parent walk into a classroom and see what my kid is doing without them thinking that I am a trustee. At the same time, when they walk into a classroom and say I would really like to see more of that then the teacher assumes that this is a directive from the board. So the separation between

governance and action is less, and a little more susceptible to [whimsical] parental influence.

Consequently, Greg feels it is necessary to move away from parent boards in order to increase the separation between board governance and action at the school level.

The other private school principals interviewed indicated that the board was involved in policy making and allocation of the budget to the school. Protocols were established that limited board contact and involvement at the school level. For example, some board policies defined a very definite process for dealing with things such as parental concerns. In this example, the board members would contact the superintendent, or in the event there was no superintendent, the principal in order to have a parental concern dealt with at the school level.

Bernie expressed concern over having trustees in the public and separate school systems. He indicates that what we have done is “taken a political system and then added another political system on top of it.” Bernie does not feel that politics has a place in the educational system. Rather, we need to be making professional decisions. Consequently, we should be training teachers to make those decisions as board members are not trained in education. Leroy supports this position to a degree. He indicated that “you are going to see school boards being forced into just policy development and [forced to] stay out of the administration of school.” Instead, Leroy feels that school councils will take the place of school boards. He stated “the parent council will become stronger and stronger and they will start to replace the need for a big overriding school board.” According to Leroy, when an individual school council runs a school, you will have true site based management.

Explaining this concept further, the fundamental difference between the school board and the school council is that the school board is an elected group representing a larger division that is usually comprised of more than one school. The school council is an elected and/or appointed group representing the stakeholders of a single school. Consequently, the school council, in theory, may represents the school's needs more directly than does the school board, as they represent a larger group of schools.

Role of School Council in School Governance

In the public and separate school systems, the school council is the formal parent group that advises the school administration on policy, program, and school operation. Each of the interviewed principals in the public and separate schools indicated that they were advisory and consultative. Bernie viewed that the role of school councils "is to develop the standards of the community." By community, Bernie is referring to the school. He recognizes that there is a political component to the school council playing this role, however he declared emphatically that "if they want teachers coming in with certain mores, articulate that!" Therefore, the school council must be prepared to establish or articulate the values that they expect to see in their school's teachers. If they do not take on this role, the teachers hired will not be able to achieve the desired outcomes that the parents have for their school.

Felicia described the school council's role as "one of wise council." She further noted that in decisions where she has needed the advice of the school council, she has taken it. Doug provided a different and unique role of his school council. He stated that the school council's role in his school is to:

[provide] another adult response and view to students. Because each meeting students raise what is on their agenda and so we have concerns from the students as an item and the parents kind of look at them and say ‘so you think this is a problem?’

Doug also used the metaphor of a mirror to explain school council’s role in the school.

He stated:

what they do is they provide . . . a mirror. . . . Here is what we think is working really well, we have noticed some changes in this area, why have you done what you have done, can you explain why we are seeing the changes we are seeing.

In this situation, Doug sees the council serving as a check and balance in terms of where the school is headed. In this school, the council see themselves as “companions of learning.” Doug states, “and as a true companion, they ask questions, [say] it is time to rethink, it is time to refocus.” Similarly, Jim supported this perspective, as he stated:

I believe that the school council needs to be perceived as the non-fundraising board of governance that is responsible for working with the principal and the principal’s staff to ensure appropriate program delivery to their clients, to the students.

In this role, Jim viewed school councils as serving “in a checks and measures role.” That is, to validate that the things your school is doing are getting results as you want.

In a negative sense, Harvey indicated that parents do not always have all the information they need to participate in school based decisions. He feels that as parents, “they are more interested in their son or daughter , they don’t recognize the big picture, so the advice that they give us is important, but very often not global in terms of the school.”

As a result, Harvey seemed to indicate that the validity and reliability of the opinions and direction of school council was or could be skewed toward the direction of the individual child versus the larger school picture.

Consensus amongst the principals was that the role of the school council is advisory, however, the data collected within the interviews also indicated that the questions asked or suggestions made by school councils are taken seriously. The majority of these principals felt that school councils do have something to offer schools in the area of governance.

In terms of school councils, private and charter schools have many things in common with the public and separate schools. In most situations, the school or parent council can only make recommendations to the principal or the board. Jack compared his school council to the traditional PTA (parent teacher advisory), in which the role is “fundraising, low level fun and games, and school spirit kind of activities.” In a similar sense, Ruth indicated that in her school, the school council provides support for the students, staff and board. However, they also have a say in the decision as her school uses a democratic styled decision making model. As an example, the school was looking at bringing in uniforms for the students. Ruth noted that the board, school council, and staff had an equal say in the decision. One other significant difference that you would not find in the public or separate system occurs in Janet’s school, where the education committee, which is similar to a traditional school council, is involved in teacher observation and hiring.

In all of the schools participating in this study, parents, who are not part of the formal school council, have less formal mechanisms for advising the schools. M.D. stated that:

a parent may have a concern about a policy and we take that under advisement, but the school council is the formal avenue by which parents have input into policy and policy development and program development. So the individual parent, like the individual trustees don't have any role to play outside the formal avenues.

For the most part, the principals noted that they make parents aware of policy and program changes through the newsletters and special letters that are sent home with the student. In these instances, parents are invited to call in if they have a concern. In most of the schools, principals noted that parents can volunteer to assist with a myriad of tasks in the school. As an example, parents were invited in to work in the library and in the classroom. An additional example, is in the private and charter schools, some principals indicated that parents, not on the school council, can serve on some of the other committees needed in the school.

To determine parental concerns, a number of the schools had detailed survey instruments. These instruments were designed to collect data to determine strengths, needs, and to provide future direction for the school. These feedback instruments were generally the only significant formal process principal's used to capture the opinions of all parents.

An exception to limited parent involvement occurred in one school where parents played a key role in the education of their child. Describing the parents' role in his

school, Bernie coined a new term “triadual” to explain their educational role and responsibility. The term triadual reflects that there are three components to education. These are the student, parent and teacher. Each component is critical to the success of the child in the classroom. Therefore, each child is on an individualized educational plan that is monitored by the parent. To enable this process, the principal puts on an:

inservice program for parents at the very beginning of the year. Every parent in this school gets an inservice. They get an inservice on two basic things. What is homework, what does it mean and it must be synonymous with education. Two, that as a parent you have the right to monitor your child’s education and we are going to teach you how to do that.

Teaching parents to get involved in the educational process has been successful in this school. Bernie reported that parents are directly involved in helping to write the individualized educational plan, they are taking notes about the progress of their child, and they want to talk about the education of their child.

Role of Teachers in School Governance

[Teachers] are the people that are most intimately involved with the whole program offering in the school and if there is something that is getting in the way of their effectiveness as a teacher they obviously have to have some opportunity to say we have to change something. (Bob)

Bob’s statement sums up the viewpoints held by the principals interviewed in this study. That is teachers are integral to the smooth operation of the school. However, although

they are integral to the operation of the school, for the most part their input was advisory on major school issues.

An interesting perspective on the involvement of teachers in the governance process is they are the people who need to carry things out. Felicia recognizes that teachers are the people who carry out the change in program or practice, however she also indicated that if a teacher does not agree with the change, it can affect its success. She stated “teaching is a subversive activity, and so if a teacher truly doesn’t believe in change, he or she will find all kinds of ways to sabotage it. Its just a fact of our work. So, they’re very influential people.”

To get teachers to agree to the changes and to prevent these subversive behaviors from happening, what is a process that works? Felicia described a process that involved major change in her school. To get the perspective, she gave them a choice in a staff meeting. Teachers could complete a survey or she would be willing to meet with teachers during their spares and breaks to discuss the issues and to get their input. Some staff felt more comfortable with the survey, while others chose to meet with Felicia. According to Felicia, this process worked well for her school.

Role of Parents in School Governance

Only one principal talked about the need for grassroots support. Glen indicated that parent involvement is important. He described parent involvement as an integral part of the communal effort needed in policy and program development and implementation. He described how:

on one end you have educators, professionals and they have a lot of the know how, on the other hand we need to get grassroot support for what we do, so we have to be sure that we keep our ear to the ground when we do things. And make sure that our parents are on board with us.

Consequently, Glen would call parents if he heard they had concerns about the school. The purpose of the call was to determine if it was an issue, and if it was, what were the concerns of the parent. His rationale for doing this “is to get our professionals, the educators, and our parents facing the same way.”

Change in Language

A large number of interviewed principals addressed a recent language shift. For example, Felicia’s previously cited example in this chapter best describes this shift as a shift toward a business model. This model overlays language associated with business onto an educational framework. Business plan, annual reports, accountability documents all relate back to a business model. Felicia also referred to parents who shop for schools for their children as consumers. These parents are extremely interested in the education of their children, and they “make it their business to become knowledgeable.”

The business model is also part of a philosophy of some principals. For example, Janet believed that:

choice is good. I like to be able to choose. . . . I don’t want to be forced to shop at one store only. If I want to choose to shop in a smaller store, then I should have the choice. If I want to shop in a bigger store, I should have that choice. Why should there only be one? If I want to send my child to a charter school where

there is a strong emphasis on sports because my child is athletically gifted, I should be able to do that if there is a school available, or if parents can develop that school.

In addition, these references to parents shopping around and comparing what schools have to offer tend to view education as a purchasable product. This commodity based practice is supported with the adoption of terms such as consumer. Consequently, education is, to some degree, adopting a consumer based philosophy that identifies and honors the individual's right of choice.

Three principals in charter and private schools indicated that their title was chief executive officer or executive director. Although their educational designation, when working with Alberta Education, was principal, their title was CEO in all other circles.

Leroy's board viewed that the title of executive director legitimizes his position when he meets with businesses in the community. Leroy and the board felt there is a stigma attached to the title principal, whereas the title executive director has opened doors to business that may not have been there otherwise. Leroy stated that:

for contacts with the business community, the board decided that it would be better if I was called an executive director. That also affords me the ability to meet with executive directors from other agencies and other businesses much easier than it would if I was a school principal.

In a similar sense, Jack's board was:

very anxious that the principal be called the CEO. In fact the superintendent of this school works for me, which is very unusual. The school act of course tells us differently, but they've set up the structure so that I organize things and he's the

person who handles the liaising [sic] with the government, teaching certification, you know there are certain jobs that the superintendent has to do, and he does these on a contract basis. But they see me as head of the chart and he's an employee of me just like these other employees.

This philosophy extended into the name associated with teachers. In one school, the administration and staff:

have removed the term "teacher" from many of our documents, and we now refer to teachers as "professional educator". There was too much of a tendency for the public and the people looking at us whenever conflicts arose, to use the term 'she is just the teacher' or 'he is just the teacher', and in order to increase the professionalism of the way in which people looked at us, we started to write all of our documents with the teaching staff calling themselves 'professional educators'.

Summary

A shift toward market values in education has occurred, and to some degree, schools have accommodated the shift and have attempted to become competitors in an educational framework that supports free enterprise. This support is demonstrated in the advertising schools do to promote their school and the development and enhancement of school image.

There is not complete and unanimous staff support of this shift toward a free enterprise system. For example, in one situation, an attempt to bring merit pay into one school has met a great deal of staff resistance. In this situation, Jack indicated that:

the governing body which are entrepreneurs, free enterprisers, . . . think people work based on monetary rewards and the teachers who are not used to that kind of a system who think that schools, and our school isn't just a little business running, we are trying to pull together, and so we have this little to and fro at the moment.

This resistance is also seen within school districts, as principals within a school system plan cooperative evenings to present their high school programs to all prospective students, with the ideal that students will choose to attend the school that fits their needs best. In other situations most of the public and separate school principals discouraged parents from moving their children from one school to another within the system.

Interestingly, Janet, who on more than one occasion, stressed the fact that the issue is choice, and that private schools are not in competition stated that:

I think that the public educators have to understand we believe in support of public education because we know we cannot, as a private school, provide education for everybody, because not everybody has our philosophy. We need a very strong public education system in our province and in our country. And, what we are saying is that parents should be able to choose the public system if they want but they should also be able to choose another system without being penalized.

Consequently, schools are evolving in the free market system of Alberta education. At the same time, the role of principals is changing to meet the needs of this new and emerging model of education.

Chapter V: Summary, Meta Analysis, Implications, and Recommendations for Further Research

Introduction

Currently, theory and research suggests that an ongoing tension exists between opposing sets of values in education that ultimately complicates society's understanding of the purpose of the educational system. These opposing values are comprehensive (democratic) values and market values. Lazerson, McLaughlin, McPherson, and Bailey (1985) explain how this complication arises which ultimately results in this ongoing tension. They stated that this complication arises from the contradictory expectations that are counted upon from schools. The authors explained that

we have turned to public education to secure a common citizenship and a common morality in a pluralist society, but have found that this common morality abuses our religious beliefs or ethnic values. We have expected public schools to enhance economic productivity and individual economic opportunity, but have complained that such an emphasis exacerbates individualism and materialism. We have believed that public schools should be cosmopolitan and should share in the nation's goals, but we have also insisted that the educational system be decentralized and that schools be responsive to local values. (p. 3)

Consequently, juxtaposing these antithetical perspectives in education is difficult as society has not clearly articulated the purpose of education. However, at the present time, expectations for education in general, seem to be leaning toward a decentralized school that strives to meet the needs of the individual over societal needs. As rationale for meeting the individual educational needs of students, school's in the 1990's are shifting toward a market values orientation in education. The market values become further evident when schools compete with each other for students, and parents shop for schools, as they would shop for any other service or product.

Consequently, market values are flourishing in education in Alberta. This statement is substantiated by the school principals interviewed in this study who identified how many of these market values, such as competition and school choice, permeate and impact education today. Internally, the educational organization is also changing as the language of education merges with the language of business. For example, the language or jargon used in education has shifted toward a business form that includes such things as business plans and outcomes as an inherent part of the vocabulary. Over the course of seventeen interviews with principals from public, separate, charter and private schools, the principals provided data and perspectives that demonstrated how these market values impact upon the way a principal governs his or her school. Therefore, it is imperative that today's principal be prepared for how these market values impact the way they govern their schools.

This chapter will review the parameters of the study, provide a meta-analysis of the data collected in the interviews, discuss the implications for school principals as these market values become more prevalent in education in Alberta, make recommendations

for further study regarding the effects of market values in education, and draw conclusions from this study that will assist school principals in further understanding their role in school governance as education shifts toward adopting values that reflect a market oriented system.

Summary of the Research Study

Alberta Education policy and funding practices promote school choice. Within this context, school choice refers to the idea that parents may choose to send their children to schools other than the designated neighborhood public or separate school. Thus, choice provides parents with the option of choosing other public or separate schools, but also enables parents to select charter or private schools. Choice of private schools is not available to all parents as the present funding system established by the government provides only partial educational grants (approximately 50% of the instructional grant) to these institutions. However, as the educational grants increase to private schools (60% of the instructional grant over the next two years), tuition fees may decrease thus making these private schools increasingly more attractive and available to a larger part of the population. However, true educational choice will not fully exist for parents until the government provides full funding to all educational systems. It is also evident that as this grant increases to full funding, and pits one school against the other, there may be further erosion of the democratic values taught in schools.

The school choice issue creates a market based, free enterprise educational milieu in the province of Alberta, Canada, that has culminated in the promotion of market values in education. One example of this promotion of market values is that schools now

compete for students, as school funding is based on a per student basis. As a result of this competitive environment, the question arises, “given market values in education, how do these values impact the governance of a school by the principal?” Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the phenomenon of the application of market values on schools in Alberta and ultimately, how these values impact the principal’s governance of his or her school.

Research Design and Methodology

The phenomenon of applying market values in educational systems and its implication for principal school governance was investigated using a multi-site case study model. The research questions developed for this study were:

1. As parents exercise school choice in Alberta, what emerging market values have school principals observed that may affect the principal’s role and function in their school?
2. Have principals shifted their approach to school governance as a result of the application of market values, such as school choice, to education?
3. How have principals adapted or changed decision making models or processes at the school level as a result of the application of market values on schools?
4. What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have principals acquired or need to acquire to enable their schools successful transition toward a market based education system?
5. What role, if any, do school principals view educational finance playing in reinforcing the shift toward market values?

For this study, seventeen school principals, from four geographic regions within Alberta, were selected using a stratified random sampling technique. Selection of the geographic regions was based on the requirement that each region have all four school types located within their geographic boundaries. For example to have all four school types within a geographic boundary would mean that these four school types are located within the city limits of a particular city or school jurisdiction.

Principals from the geographic regions were randomly selected to receive an initial invitation to participate in the research study. Letters were sent to 100% of all charter schools, 60% of all private schools, and 40% of all public and separate schools located within the boundaries of the four geographic regions participating in the study. Final selection of the principals, who participated in the study, was made through a stratified random sampling of those principals who replied to the first mailing. Charter schools were treated differently as initial invitations did not result in enough charter school principals volunteering for the study. Consequently, charter school principals were contacted by phone to ask for their participation. As a result of this contact, enough charter school principals were recruited for the study. The stratification criteria for selecting principals was based upon the requirement that there would be principal representation from all four types of schools. The four types of schools were public schools, separate schools, charter schools, and private schools. For this study, four principals were selected from separate, charter, and private schools, and five principals were chosen from public schools. A fifth public school principal was chosen after the study had already begun. This principal replied late, however, as this individual was the only public school principal to reply from that particular geographic area, the researcher

determined that it was in the best interest of the study to include this individual in the interview sample. Inclusion of this principal ensured as broad an interview sample as possible was obtained for this research study.

The principal interviews were conducted on-site at each principal's school. In each interview, principals were asked a number of questions in a standard format that were developed prior to beginning the research. Interviews were as short as one hour and as long as two and one-half hours in duration. The length of the interview was dependent upon the length of principal responses to the assortment of questions. Each interview was tape recorded and transcribed. A stenographer was contracted to transcribe six interviews, and the researcher transcribed eleven interviews. Principals were given the option of reviewing the transcript for accuracy, although the researcher explained to each principal the established plans to ensure transcription accuracy. The interviews that the stenographer transcribed were each carefully validated for accuracy by the researcher. A random selection of the interviews transcribed by the researcher were validated for accuracy by an independent third party analyst.

In addition to the interview data, principals were asked to provide school documents to assist in clarifying their responses to the interview questions and discussion. A number of principals were able to provide school documents to substantiate or clarify their responses. Examples of school documents collected were professionally developed school brochures and school information booklets, as well as school developed parent survey instruments. Other types not collected, but shown to the researcher were school banners or signs set up in strategic locations within the school or, in some cases, in strategic locations around the geographic region.

Each principal interview, and accompanying school documents, were analyzed by thoroughly reviewing the data, identifying important content from the data, and categorizing the data into conceptual categories. The practice followed was one described by Merriam (1988), in which each unit categorized was both heuristic and was the smallest unit that, if not categorized, made sense on its own. Following this data analysis approach, it was possible to develop clearly delineated categories. As a result of this analysis, seven findings were identified.

Summary of Findings

The following are a list of findings from this study. Each of these findings will be discussed further in relation to current literature in the meta-analysis section of this chapter.

1. An educational system of choice exists in Alberta. This choice system reflects a market driven system in the way that parents may choose any one of four school types or systems.
2. The market values of choice and competition are clearly evident in Alberta.
3. Individualism is at the root of the choice movement. Many parents exercise choice for reasons reflecting an individualistic or self-interested perspective. That is, many parents who exercise choice, choose schools for their children to enable them to be competitive and gain an advantage in the market place in the future.
4. Public choice theory is a part of an economics model that is at work in Alberta education. The public choice theory components that act out in this market situation

are choice and utility maximization. (Note: Public choice theory is explained in detail on page 19.)

5. School finance practices contribute to and enable school choice. This finding is based on the full funding of charter schools and partial funding of private schools. In addition, the per pupil funding practice enables some schools to gain an advantage over other schools as a result of their ability to attract students due to socio-economic status or the geographic area of the school.
6. A neo-conservative political movement has resulted in a decentralized school governance model. The result of devolving governance to the school level is extensive involvement of stakeholder groups in the development of school policy, as well as stakeholder involvement in the decision making process.
7. School principals are developing new knowledge and skills for dealing with this shift toward market values in education. These skills, although discussed at length in chapter IV and in the meta analysis section in chapter V, include human resources, marketing, and leadership and management skills.

Meta Analysis

Perhaps a key to further understanding the results of the data analysis in chapter IV is to consider the evolution education has followed over time. Lazerson, et al (1985) discussed the evolution of education in the United States and explained that late in the nineteenth century, there was an ongoing tension in education between schools and parents. This tension was a result of what Lazerson, et al. coined as the “growing professionalization of public education” (p. 15). As a result of this increased

professionalization, teachers, rather than parents, began to play a greater role in decisions about the education of the child. However, there were two exceptions to this changing role. These, the areas of finance and governance, remained in the hands of the public.

The authors noted that:

because school financing and governance were public, teachers needed as much community support as possible. Educators were thus forced into an ambivalent relationship with parents: At the same time as they called for parental involvement, they decried parental influence. (p. 15)

Maintaining financial and governance control over education enabled parents to have a base of power that provided opportunities for parents to influence the educational process. At the same time, the professionalization of teaching resulted in a movement to minimize this parental influence, thus resulting in ongoing tension between these groups. Today, as it was a century ago, educators continue to struggle with shifting directions in education. Educational finance and, perhaps more than ever before, governance rests with the public body. Consequently, parental influence is encroaching on the decision making processes of educators. Research, in terms of the literature review and the results of this study, indicate that public support of education is also dwindling, and the parents and students are becoming more fickle in regard to their expectations of schools.

The format of this section is to discuss the analysis of the data and to address the findings identified previously in this chapter. Six general subheadings have been identified to encompass and discuss the data collected and findings identified from this study. These are:

1. Educational choice,

2. School marketing,
3. Individualism,
4. School finance,
5. Principal school governance, and
6. The emerging role of the school principal.

Figure 4 Concepts Impacting Market Values in Education

Each of these concepts address the emergence of market values in education in Alberta from a different perspective. However, none of these subheadings act on their own in terms of creating or supporting an educational system whose infrastructure is built on market values. Rather, each of these interact with each other, likely creating a synergy that exacerbates the impact market values have on schools in Alberta.

Educational Choice

As indicated in the summary of findings section, educational choice exists in Alberta. Principals indicated that parents choose schools for an abundance of reasons including school program, proximity to home, safety, and the child's preference of schools. From the researcher's perspective, one of the reasons parents choose to move their children to different schools is one of holding the school accountable. That is, the parent may disagree with a school decision or may have trouble with the child's teacher or the school administrator and in some instances, the result is that parents hold the school accountable and move their child to a different school.

To understand this idea further, it is necessary to define accountability. Accountability, according to Milliken (1971), is the "strict accounting by educators for the ways in which they spend money or an accurate means of testing how effectively educators are teaching children . . ." (p. 18). Milliken further explained that people are becoming "increasingly demanding [about] how their children are learning, what they are learning, and why they are being taught whatever they are being taught" (p. 18). This definition approaches accountability from an input resources perspective. However, Lessinger (cited in Peterson, 1971) used a results oriented definition. According to Peterson, Lessinger defined accountability as "holding the school accountable for results in terms of student learning" (p. 22). Sergiovanni, Burlingame, Coombs, and Thurston (1987) indicated that "the efficiency value is the undercurrent for America's concern for accountability" (p. 9). The authors further noted that "accountability is manifested in the form of product testing (students), program budgeting (objectives), and adoption of

systems-analysis management designs (emphasizing efficiency in operations)” (p. 9).

Thus, reviewing these accountability perspectives presented by Lessinger, Tyler, Milliken, Sergiovanni et al., it appears that schools are held accountable for both input resources and results. The input resources, including funding, is juxtaposed with such factors as the student results in order to determine school efficacy. Consequently, schools are being held accountable, but how is the idea of accountability exhibited in the educational setting?

Tyler (1971) discussed the issue of accountability in education and identified six key issues. These issues were:

1. Should the public be able to request evidence in support of the effectiveness of the work of professionals;
2. What are the learning goals for which the school should be held accountable;
3. Who will set the goals that the school is accountable for;
4. What is the means for measuring the achievement of the goals;
5. Who should be held accountable for the educational results of the school; and
6. What accountability procedures will be used.

This final statement addresses the issue of, if the school does not meet its goals, who in the building will be held accountable. Tyler gives the example of the principal losing his or her position in this instance and new administrator hired with the explicit goal of achieving the educational mandate.

The issue of accountability was evident in the interviews with school principals. For example, Bernie indicated the number one reason for parents moving their children to an alternate school was dissatisfaction with the present level of educational service.

Consequently, parents hold schools accountable by voting with their feet. That is, if they are dissatisfied with the educational program or the service provided to their children, they move their children to an alternate school. If the parent is satisfied, they remain at the school. A second way that one principal indicated that parents held schools accountable was by going to the superintendent with complaints or concerns. Don noted that parents are very quick to make that phone call in order to hold the school accountable. Consequently, accountability plays a key role in the school choice issue.

Schools are also evolving to include other stakeholders in determining what they should be accountable for. An example of this was discussed in chapter IV, where M.D. discussed the formation of the school's education plan. In this instance, administration, teachers, and parents had a voice in determining the school's goals, which ultimately would serve as the accountability instrument. This example serves as, perhaps a testimony to the evolution that accountability is encountering as schools move toward a site-based model of decision making that incorporates the involvement of parents and school councils.

School Marketing

Although marketing is discussed in a general sense within the other sections of this paper, it is important to look at in a more specific manner here. Marketing of schools is visible in the bold advertising campaigns many schools run each year. However, marketing is not limited to just advertising. Rather, as the principal interviews revealed, most schools have created professionally developed school brochures and information booklets. In some cases, these schools have also developed trendy eye-catching logos

that are designed to connote an image of excellence in the mind of the reader. Other marketing strategies include advertising in local media and facility renovations designed to make the building more attractive to clients. Consequently, image is playing a significant role in the marketing of schools today.

The data is supported by a variety of studies cited in the literature review. For example, the Gewirtz, et al. (1995) study indicated the urgency of marketing your school in free enterprise systems such as the one found in England. The citation in chapter II by Carroll and Carroll (1994) discussed the importance of school image. According to these authors, in dealing with image, we are dealing with the perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, ideas, and feelings about something. Consequently, if we are dealing with a school, principals must be concerned about how stakeholders view the school. This became particularly evident during the analysis of the data for market values in education study. Statements made by participating principals in this research study indicated that the best marketing of schools occurred by word of mouth from the parents and students attending their schools. Interestingly, the data in this study concurred with what Carroll and Carroll (1994) noted. That is, image and reality are not necessarily synonymous, and consequently, it is necessary to have a good school image. As an example, in the case of some separate, charter, and private school principals, they indicated that their schools were perceived as being more safe and caring than other schools in the area or in other systems. In spite of this image, many of these school principals noted that this may not be the reality of the situation. For this reason, successful school principals will work toward developing a positive school image through advertising, professionally developed

school documents, and by developing positive parental and community perceptions and attitudes about the school.

Individualism

As described in chapter II, individualism is a factor in the shift toward market values in education. Society appears to be becoming more competitive as a result of , what Bellah et al. would describe as a neo-capitalist viewpoint of the world. Part of this world view has parents seeking ways to establish their children on a track that enables future success. In this instance, a good education is perceived to be a key to this success track. Consequently, parents are seeking the best educational program possible, and as a result, schools are developed that cater to what these parents are looking for in terms of education. At face value, this appears to be a very positive, altruistic mission for parents. However, there is a down side to this mission. As Toqueville explained, individualism is removing oneself from the masses, so that he or she is concerned only for self. An example of this in today's educational setting is magnet programs developed in the public and separate schools to cater to specific types of students, such as high achieving students, which results in segregated school programs. Examples in some private and charter schools is their catering to only elite groups of students. The result is fragmentation of the educational system in Alberta. As the literature review indicates, this fragmentation results in the top students being creamed off, leaving the remainder of the students in the regular educational setting. Essentially, this establishes a two tiered educational system.

The interviews revealed that the educational milieu in Alberta is no longer moving to seek a common good for all Albertans. Although the curricular goals and objectives appear to be reflecting a balance between, what might be referred to as, classical republicanism and individualism, government policy, through school choice, establishes a position that enables individuals to choose schools that fragment and stratify the student population. For example, there are high academic public and separate schools that cater only to high achieving students. Charter schools have also formed in Alberta that cater only to a specific type of child. In this research study, the interviewed principals provided many examples where parents chose schools based on purely academic reasons versus a more rounded educational program that developed the whole child and prepared him or her for their role in society as citizens.

Individualism also revealed itself in terms of schools being less collaborative with other schools in other school systems. Evidence from this study indicated that within school system rivalry or competition is avoided at all costs. For example, high schools plan joint presentations in the spring for prospective students. However, competition does exist, and is blatantly demonstrated, between schools of different school types through advertising mediums.

This competition is a corollary effect of the choice system in education. As discussed in chapter II, Chubb and Moe (1992) reveal how there are three components to a choice system. The third component is the one that seems to exacerbate the competition between schools. That is, when schools control organizational and governance decisions, the medium exists for creating a competitive environment for schools. In other words, schools are able to alter programs and set out or increase offerings that may attract

students from other schools. For example, a school that is failing to attract students may alter or enhance an educational program, such as increasing extra-curricular offerings or adding programs such as the International Baccalaureate program, to attract new students. This competition often prevents a collegial approach to improving the educational opportunities for students across systems. One example of this was the unwillingness of a public school to jointly develop a curricular offering with a charter school. A second example is one that a public school refused a charter school's request for their students to conduct some research in their school for a science fair.

School Finance

Finance is a critical reform issue. The emerging economical model is best described as being neo-capitalist which is a term used extensively by Bellah et al. (1996). Similarly, Gewirtz et al. (1995) use the term neo-liberalism as the political match to this to this economic ideology. In North America, neo-conservatism is the term that best compares to this ideology. This neo-conservative model creates a tension between it and welfare liberalism. Interestingly, lines of division fall into these two categories. Private schools, for the most part, believe that they are not treated equitably in terms of government funding. At the same time public school principals argue that private schools should get better results because, in some cases, they only accept the high academic student.

The present funding structure is shifting from a welfare liberalism model toward a neo-conservative approach to funding. That is, originally, public and separate schools were guaranteed government financial support under the Constitution Act of 1867 and the

Alberta Act (1905). These schools provided a program for all students. Today, the model is shifting. Charter schools receive the same grant as public and separate schools. Private schools, until now, received approximately 50% funding. Over the next two years, this will increase to 60% of the instructional grant received by public schools. As a result, privatization of education is increasing competition, and if the theory works through, the result will be increased effectiveness of schools. This is resulting in what Friedman (1982) refers to as the denationalization of schools. That is, public and separate schools no longer have a monopoly in education. Instead, a variety of school types are available to students.

Modern economic theory as reviewed in chapter II is one possible model that is driving education today. However, Manski (1992) does not believe that it is possible for this model to be successful in education. The rationale is that for modern economic theory to work, both the consumer and the school must have equal information, and Manski argues that this is not possible. Regardless, given the findings of this study it does appear that this model is at work in Alberta at the present time.

Through school choice, parents are seeking out schools that best meet the needs of their children. The difficulty relates to how parents find out what these schools have to offer. The partial answer is schools which advertise their educational programs do provide parents with a place to begin. The next part of this informing process is what principals referred to as shopping around. In this aspect, parents contact the schools directly, arrange appointments, and meet with the appropriate personnel to find out more about the school. Consequently, it is necessary for principals to establish plans for effective marketing of their schools. Part of this marketing plan includes how to work

with the prospective parent and student to determine if there is an educational fit between the student and the school. This fit between school and child is determined by providing the parent with as much information about the school as possible, thus enabling the parent to make an educated decision. Regardless of how much information the school can provide to the parent, it is unlikely that same level of congruency, in terms of knowledge, exists between the parent and the school. Consequently, this results in an asymmetrical balance of knowledge that precludes the players in the market in making an informed decision.

Principal School Governance

Friedman (1982) indicated that neo-conservatives favor a decentralized educational system. Consequently, in today's educational milieu, there is a strong movement to implement school based decision making. This model of governance conforms with the neo-conservative position of decentralizing the educational system.

The research supports this movement as the principals in this study identified that the decision making model was shifting toward a school based decision making model. As part of this shift, principals included provincially mandated school councils, teachers, and other stakeholders in the decision making process. Albeit, for the most part involvement of these groups was advisory. However, in the case of school councils, principals of public and separate schools were quick to point out that they seldom, if ever, went against this group's wishes. In parent run private and charter schools, the parent board possessed the power to make the final decision.

Given this change in governance model, school principals must develop a system for involving stakeholders in the decision making process. The process must enable authentic involvement in the decision making process. It must also take into account conflict resolution strategies for working with dissenting stakeholder groups. Principals indicated that one problem with this new decision making process was the time taken to involve all of these groups. Consequently, the process must also take into account expediency and timeliness in decision making. Timeliness is critical as principals indicated that some teachers expressed concern about the number of meetings and the amount of time needed to make this model work. The process must also take into account the political factors arising from involving a number of different stakeholders in the decision making process. Accordingly, principals must have at their disposal, conflict resolution skills that will enable them to bring the conflicting groups together.

Within the school based decision making process, public and separate school principals made it clear that they would make the final decision. Charter and private school principals shared this position on a number of issues. However, on issues such as staffing and budget, the parent boards of some private and charter schools carried the final decision. In these instances, the devolution of decision making powers has not found its way to the private and charter school principal and staff as it has in the public and separate schools. However, both of these models fall short of true involvement of stakeholders in decision making. Therefore, it is imperative that principals seek out models that result in true participatory decision making. The result of this will be what Sergiovanni (1991) refers to as leadership density. That is, the principal strives to develop and elicit leadership from all stakeholders within the school environment. Don

explained this concept well when he referred to it as creating a learning organization. This learning organization encompasses the belief that the school is comprised of a variety of groups and each of these groups contribute to the success of the school. If one of these stakeholder groups is not contributing to the welfare of the institution, it may not be as effective in fulfilling its purpose and mandate.

The Emerging Role of the School Principal

The role of school principals is changing and, in many ways, is reflective of the changes education is undergoing as it adopts market values as its infrastructure. Furthermore, as school choice becomes more popular, it directly impacts the principal. For example, in a choice market, the way the principal interacts with students, parents, and staff may be affected. However, the emerging role is not limited to this example. Rather, as explained in the following paragraphs, the role is becoming very dynamic and skill oriented. The 1990's principal is likely to be described as schizophrenic. What is meant by this term is that the principal must possess a variety of skills that fulfill a variety of functions.

As discussed in chapter II, principals will need to keep up with the information explosion in terms of educational research and how this applies to their own school's context. The research conducted in this study and the literature review are contiguous. That is, within the context of this study and literature review, it is apparent that the role of the principal is shifting, and as a result of this shift, new skills and knowledge are required by the principal to successfully lead his or her school.

The 1990's principal must possess skills that include being a leader, politician, educator, marketer, coach, and effective manager. The literature indicates that as part of this role excellent interpersonal and communication skills are required to assist him or her to lead and manage change within the organization. Similarly, principals in this study indicated the importance of communication in team building, implementation of change, human resource management, and many other skills including conflict resolution.

Again the literature and this study identify another critical skill. This skill is that the principal must be visionary. He or she must be able to plan and implement new initiatives that will make a difference in the area of curriculum and instruction. However, to be able to develop new initiatives, the school principal must be insightful and focused on where the school needs to go. To explain this further, it is necessary to bring forward two examples from the principal interviews. Felicia described the visionary process of the school principal as "being able to anticipate where . . . the next road needs to be, . . . and then to . . . inspire the people who are actually doing the work to believe they have a role in that and . . . that it relates to what they do with kids in the classroom."

Accordingly, the visionary process that begins with the principal, is formalized into a structure that can then be communicated to others. Bob formalized this visionary process as he clearly articulated how the idea of being visionary is tied to the concept of learning, specifically curriculum and instruction. He explained it as a five step process, and this process was used in developing a technology plan for his school. The five steps are:

1. Clarify with the staff what is expected,
2. Develop a common vision with the staff,
3. Get agreement on the vision,

4. Develop a plan, and
5. Keep staff informed during the development and implementation of the plan.

In essence, although the administrator is developing a common vision with the staff, he or she must have the ability to clearly see where they intend for their school to go, and to be able to clearly articulate and lead the various stakeholders, including staff, in this direction.

The impact of market values on education in Alberta has placed significant pressures on school principals to become knowledgeable in many new areas and to develop requisite skills to lead their school. Consequently, principals will need to continually revitalize themselves through ongoing professional development. They will need to work with and communicate well with teachers, parents, and students in order to ensure that their school is indeed meeting the needs of its client. Otherwise, the school risks becoming obsolete.

Implications

The 1990's is a decade of change for schools in Alberta. Part of this change is a movement toward applying market values on education and subsequently shifting the educational model toward one that emulates a free enterprise system. This free enterprise system has serious implications for school leaders. In particular, this research study reveals a number of implications for school based principals in Alberta. The implications for principals addressed in this chapter are school governance, accountability, marketing, and school finance. Each of these tend to directly impact on the school principal and how he or she is able to fulfill their role and responsibility at the school level.

Implications for Governance

The role of the principal in school governance is changing. Today, more than ever, involvement of stakeholder groups within the governance model is expected. As a result, school principals must ensure that they have the knowledge and skills required for school based decision making and they are well versed in collaborative decision making. Principals must also develop strong interpersonal skills that enable him or her to work with and mediate amongst a wide variety of special interest groups.

The school principal must ensure that a governance model is developed that enables stakeholder involvement, but also ensures that the school's mission and mandate is not corrupted as a result of the wide variety of groups involved in the governance process. Specifically, the school principal must be able to demonstrate that he or she is listening to the various stakeholder groups, but is also able to bring these various groups together on a common mission and direction. This will require that appropriate mechanisms are in place to provide the stakeholders with the pertinent information needed to actively participate in the decision making process, as well as the principal possessing the requisite skills to focus the various stakeholders on the agreed upon school mission and mandate.

Implications for Accountability

Accountability is one of the buzz words in education today. Provincial achievement tests are one example of curricular accountability at the school level. However, a more subtle form of accountability also exists. This form of accountability is how parents hold schools responsible for meeting their children's needs. If the parent

deems that these needs are not met, they can hold the school accountable by moving their children to an alternate school, or they place pressure on the school based principal by contacting his or her superior. Either way, the principal must develop proactive means for dealing with the accountability issue. For example, if the school does poorly on provincial achievement tests, how does the principal deal with the situation. Consequently, it is imperative that the principal have a plan for dealing with this type of emergent situation.

Part of this plan may be ongoing reporting of provincial achievement results to the stakeholders. Included in this step is the reporting of how the school is continually trying to improve their results in a proactive manner. Even if the school is in the top quartile, informing stakeholders how the school is trying to improve shifts the school away from being held accountable for learning to being accountable for learning. Although the difference appears slight, the difference is significant in that the message you portray as a school. That is, is the school reactive or proactive in its dealing with accountability.

Implications for Marketing

Schools, in urban and semi-urban environments can no longer rest on or rely solely upon their previous successes. Although having a successful past does not hurt the school, it is also necessary to develop a professional marketing campaign for the present and future. This campaign includes marketing the school over the entire year, not just in the June through August time period, as was past practice in many schools, as prospective parents shop for alternate schools sites throughout the academic year. Brochures and information packages must portray a professional image. Successful schools will develop

these professional documents. As part of the marketing process, schools will need to develop such things as a logo that helps to identify excellence with their school, just as major companies associate excellence with the company logo. Consequently, schools will follow business's lead in marketing and develop professional marketing campaigns to promote their school.

The message schools send out to the community will be critical for their long term success, and the level of success the school enjoys will likely determine the tenure of the school's principal. This statement is made as a result of Tyler's contributions to the accountability discussion in this chapter. The principal, or CEO, must be effective in accomplishing school goals. A significant part of this is also marketing these achievements. If the school fails at this venture, the principal will be the most likely person to be held accountable.

Implications for Individualism and School Finance

The neo-conservative movement is overwhelming any form of counter movement by welfare liberals. Based upon the work of Bellah, et al (1996) and Gewirtz et al (1995), this situation is unlikely to change. Consequently, universal school programs will continue to be at risk as participants in the educational system opt to apply pressures to the existing government structures to end the monopoly that public education has enjoyed since the inception of education in Alberta.

If the public education system's monopoly on education is eroding, it will be necessary to develop safeguards that ensure that students graduating from the school systems are able to fulfill their role and obligation to society. Therefore, to endeavor to

balance societal needs with the pressures parents place on government for wider and more authentic school choice, it is necessary for the government to ensure that all school programs, whether these programs are located in public, separate, charter, or private schools, provide a set of core values that assist in the development of good citizens. Dewey, cited earlier in chapter II explained the importance of this issue. In particular, Dewey (1959) noted that one of the major roles of education is to advance and promote principles necessary to develop a moral society. Can this role be accomplished in a milieu that has a variety of educational systems bidding to offer an educational program to a student? What safeguards are in place to prevent these critical values from being dropped from the curriculum in favor of others that may be more attractive to a demanding public? For this reason, it is necessary for government to establish within each school system, what Aristotle referred to as the mean state. That is, a balance between individualism, that which we are presently pursuing, and classical republicanism, that which Socrates believed so strongly that we should pursue in education. Consequently, it is, or must be government's responsibility to ensure adequate safeguards are in place to ensure a balance is maintained in the educational milieu.

Recommendations

The in-depth analysis of the data collected for this research study reveals a number of important recommendations for further study. These recommendations, if completed, will provide principals, who are assigned with the onerous task of understanding how the application of market values on education affects their school

governance, with focus and direction for competing in the current educational milieu.

The recommendations are as follows.

1. A study be conducted replicating this study with a different sampling of subjects.

This study would select subjects using a purposeful or criterion-based sampling technique as described by Merriam (1988). Merriam describes this form of sampling as “[establishing] the criteria, bases, or standards necessary for units to be included in the investigation ; one then finds a sample that matches these criteria” (p 48). This process would serve to validate this initial study, but would also further elucidate how the application of market values impacts principal school governance.

2. A study be conducted in Alberta replicating this study’s procedures, but using school system superintendents, school board members, school council representatives, and teachers, rather than principals as the subjects involved in the study. The rationale for this recommendation is that a study of this nature will provide insights into how each of these stakeholders perceive the impact of market values on education and how each of their roles affects principal school governance. In this situation, research data would be available to determine the level of involvement or interplay between each of these groups and the school principal in the governance of the school.

3. A study be conducted in Alberta replicating this study’s procedures, but using students, parents, and employers, rather than school principals as the subjects involved in the study. A study of this nature would provide a client based perspective on the market values situation. This may provide increased understanding of the driving forces for applying market values in education.

4. A quantitative study be conducted to investigate the application of market values on education in Alberta and its affect on principal school governance. This type of study will enable the researcher to use his or her findings to further understand market values and to generalize these findings across the province.
5. A study be conducted to investigate the phenomenon of market values in education across Canada. A study of this nature would assist in determining if the market value phenomenon is restricted to the province of Alberta, or it is a national phenomenon, similar to what is found in England and other countries in the western world.

Conclusion

The data collected, and in all cases supported in the literature review, enables the researcher to draw a number of conclusions regarding the application of market values on education in Alberta and its effect on principal school governance. Due to the nature of this research, these conclusions cannot be generalized to all of Alberta schools. Rather, the data and its analysis can be used in a different manner described earlier in chapter III, where Stake (cited in Merriam, 1988) referred to the concept of naturalistic generalization. That is, naturalistic generalization is the understanding of the phenomenon in question in one or more settings, thus enabling oneself to see similarities within new or different environments. Consequently, the ability to understand the phenomenon in one context may assist the school principal in guiding his or her decisions in an altogether different school context.

The conclusions from this study are categorized into the following topics: knowledge and skills, school finance, and school governance. The rational for this is to

bring closure to each of the main topics, as they pertain to market values. Each will be discussed with the intent of providing school principals with recommendations for making the shift toward a market based educational system more smoothly and effective.

Knowledge and Skills

Educational values have shifted from democratic to market values in education. As a result of this shift, a tension in education exists that forces principals to develop new skills and knowledge required to be successful in an ever-changing educational milieu. The knowledge and skills identified as important for the principal to acquire, and discussed in this section include being entrepreneurial, understanding the process of marketing your school, developing a positive school image, and possessing strong public and interpersonal relations.

As a part of this values shift, parental and community expectations of education are changing, which ultimately affects how the school principal governs his or her school. Lazerson, et al (1985) confirm this finding, as they noted that:

Since World War II, the expectations of schooling have expanded vigorously. In the last three decades, Americans have engaged in unprecedented efforts to make public schools the central agency of opportunity and equality, of social reform, and of economic productivity and individual gain. . . .

Heightened expectations have meant more political and intensified conflicts over schooling than ever before. At times, as Americans have contested the purposes and conditions of schooling, the strains have seemed likely to tear the social fabric. The failures of social reform have seemed more dramatic

because the hopes have been so high. It is a measure of the importance of schools to our culture that we argue so heatedly about them. (p. 22)

Consequently, a very broad based conclusion derived from this research study is that, according to the principals interviewed, market values are entrenched in their Alberta schools. These market values reveal themselves in competition between schools. Principals noted that, in many instances, they are adopting a marketing posture for their school.

This posturing is a result of what principals see as governments enabling school choice through policy and funding practices, as well as from the parents recognizing that school choice exists in Alberta. As a result of recognizing the existence of school choice, parents have adopted a marketing mentality in terms of their seeing education as a product or commodity that is purchased.

Although two principals stated strongly that it is not choice, but parent dissatisfaction with the present educational system that results in parents shifting schools, the majority of principals acknowledged that parents do shop for schools. Consequently, the 1990's school principal must be entrepreneurial. He or she must accept the shift toward a market based educational system, and as a result, adopt a practice that attracts the 1990's education consumer. What does this mean for the principal? It means that potential consumers must be made aware of the product their school has to offer. This means advertising the school and its programs. That is, to attract students to schools, principals must allocate school dollars for advertising their schools in newspapers, billboards, and having professionally developed materials to provide school information

to parents. School principals must develop the skill of marketing schools in order to meet or attract the attention of the parent choosing to exercise their right of school choice.

An important point to note is that the marketing issue appeared to have the greatest affect on some public and separate schools. Many of these schools established or were establishing magnet programs to attract a specific type of clientele to their school. Interestingly, principals of charter schools did not perceive the need for marketing as highly as public and separate schools. This is in part due to the fact that many of the charter schools participating in this study enjoyed an extensive waiting list for enrollment into their school. In a similar fashion, private school principals indicated that they did little or no advertising. However, Charles, a private school principal, did indicate that he was going to advertise this year, even though, at the present time, enrollment was not an issue for his school. However, Charles viewed this move as being proactive as he began to inform the community what his school had to offer in terms of educational program in order to ensure ongoing healthy enrollments.

Part of the promotion of a school rests with meeting and exceeding the needs and expectations of the consumer. All principals identified a number of reasons parents chose his or her school for their child to attend. However, with the exception of religion or school program offerings as the basis for school choice, all other reasons, such as safe and caring schools or the academic success of the school, was not verifiable by the parent. Rather, the parents' perspective of these characteristics of the school seemed to propagate as a result of the ongoing reputation of the school. However, in some instances, this reputation was questioned by the principal him or herself, and was categorized as a myth. Nonetheless, the principal of the school with the reputation of academic excellence or of a

safe and caring school has a distinct advantage over his or her counterparts. Therefore, it is imperative that the 1990's school principal establish these values in their schools and subsequently develop campaigns that promote what the consumer is looking to purchase. The result of the campaign must be the development of a school image that reflects a safe and caring school that establishes and achieves ongoing academic student success.

Successful principals are strong in the area of public and interpersonal relations. Principals must acquire the ability to communicate effectively with their stakeholders. This communication may be oral or written. Today's school principal must be able to effectively communicate with the parent looking for a new school, but must also be effective in communicating with small and large groups. Whether this is the school council, a parent, a school trustee, a teacher, or a system administrator, the principal must clearly communicate with each stakeholder group. As noted by the interviewed school principals, school governance is evolving into an entity that promotes a decentralized, collaborative based governance structure. The result is stakeholder involvement in many school based decisions. Consequently, the school based principal must be effective in communicating his or her vision for the school, and subsequently, keep the various groups heading in the same direction.

Written communication is also very important. Principals expressed the need for ongoing written communication with parents for the expressed purpose of informing them of school happenings, policy changes, and to also collect feedback. The purpose of the feedback, through surveys and other communication instruments, was to assist in determining parental satisfaction with the school. This information was used to make necessary changes in meeting the diverse needs of the students attending the school. As a

result, principals should establish formal methods for ongoing communication with parents.

As a result of this emerging collaborative based model, interpersonal relationships becomes very important. Consequently, principals indicated that it is important that he or she be able to effectively resolve conflict. This conflict may be between him or herself and one of the stakeholder groups, or between stakeholders. Regardless of the situation, principals noted that conflict resolution was a particularly important skill for them to have at their disposal.

School Finance

School finance significantly affects school choice. Three out of four private school principals indicated that unequal provincial support of education impacts the parents' ability to exercise school choice for their children. As a result of unequal funding for private schools, as compared to public, separate and charter schools, it is necessary to charge larger tuitions that preclude the enrollment of some children who may wish to enroll but cannot due to financial issues in the family.

Conversely, equal funding in the public, separate, and charter schools impacts choice as a result of regional disparity. In lower socio-economic areas, public and separate schools must spend inordinate amounts of school dollars to provide for the basic needs of the students. Consequently, fewer dollars are available for instructional programs. As a result, fewer students may elect to go to that particular school resulting in fewer students attending the school and subsequently, fewer grant dollars going to the school.

Funding impacts the school choice issue by creating uneven competitive market situations in which schools must participate. There is no easy answer or solution to the funding question as philosophical arguments and positions of people representing the polarized democratic and market value oriented groups prevent any rational debate on this topic. The provincial governments grant increase to private schools confirms this division. Public school supporters abhorred this change, while private school supporters greeted this change with modest optimism and strongly voiced their opinions that they should receive the same instructional grant as their public school counterparts.

Whether the principal is from a private, charter, separate, or public school, funding is a major issue. Schools are becoming more dependent than ever on donations, partnerships, or sponsorships. Felicia acknowledged this concern when she noted that her school relied on partnerships to keep up to date technology in her school.

School Governance

The literature review and the research data both indicate that school governance has changed considerably over the past few years. In years past, principals' enjoyed autonomous ability, within limits, to make educational decisions with little or no consultation with stakeholder groups. Today's principal governs educational organizations using a significantly different decision making model. For the most part, school principals govern using a collaborative or consultative based model. This model involves soliciting, and in many cases, acting on input from the variety of stakeholders including teachers, parents, community, school trustees, and others that are involved with the school. As a result of this governance shift, the interviewed principals indicated that

their role has significantly changed. To be effective in this shared governance model, the 1990's principal must understand that these decisions take longer to make as a result of the ongoing consultation with stakeholder groups. Consequently, it is not possible to take all decisions to the stakeholders. In addition, as indicated by some principals, decisions such as staffing belong in the realm of administrators. However, allowing for input in some decisions but not in others can prove to be problematic for the principal. For this reason, it is important that the principal clearly understand the issue and the decision that has to be made. Understanding the type of decision to be made assists the principal with determining the best approach to making the decision.

To expedite the decision making process, clearly established lines of communication are required for the principal to collect the feedback he or she is seeking from stakeholders. Principals, in this study, used both formal means such as meetings and surveys and informal means such as talking to various stakeholders on an informal basis to collect the requisite feedback.

Interestingly, although site based decision making is mandated by Alberta Education for public and separate schools, most private and charter schools used this governance structure as well for many decisions. This model provides increased opportunity for interaction between the school administration, school trustees, and school councils, in those situations where school councils exist, when decisions must be made.

In conclusion, education is no longer a means to provide equality of opportunity across the masses. Rather, it has become a product driven resource that is used to gain long term advantage. The result is a free enterprise system that has resulted in governance practices that reflect those found in business. That is, the tools used to

govern the school are also the ones that will ensure the survival or demise of the school.

Principals are significantly affected by these philosophical shifts. Consequently, a

balance must be found that reflects a balance between neo-conservatism and welfare

liberalism. Finding this balance will likely result in the achievement of a common good.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A - A Brief History of Education in Alberta

The Constitution of Canada grants that the regulation of education in Canada is a provincial responsibility. Consequently, depending upon when each province entered Confederation, the structure of the educational system was somewhat different. However, “the Northwest Territories, including all of what is now the province of Alberta, was acquired by the Government of Canada from the Hudson Bay Company in 1870, and governed directly . . . until 1873, when territorial government was established by federal legislation, . . .” (Public School Board’s Association of Alberta, p. 1). Federal law, establishing territorial law, was structured to “assure the protection of the interests of the religious minority, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, in the local governance of education” (Public School Board’s Association of Alberta, p. 1). The province of Alberta entered Confederation in 1905. Establishing Alberta as a province was the Alberta Act (1905) of the Parliament of Canada. The Alberta Act is “an integral part of the constitution as it applies to people living in Alberta” (Public School Board’s Association of Alberta, p. 1).

Appendix B - Interview Protocol

Questions

1. When parents exercise their right of choice in choosing to attend your school or another, from your perspective, what do you perceive as the reason for moving their children?
2. Since the emergence of parental choice in schools, what shifts in educational values have you observed?
3. Do you feel that there is increased competition between schools, and if so, how does this competition reveal itself?
4. Looking at the following table adapted from the book written by Gewirtz, Ball, and Bowe (1995. P. 150), on a scale from one to ten, where would you place your school environment in terms of each of these values? Three to five years ago?

(See chart on following pages)

5. In your opinion, how has the government's funding principles for education affected or exacerbated the choice issue?
6. What new knowledge and skills have you acquired, or you feel you need to acquire, to enable your schools to be competitive with other schools?
7. Please walk me through a scenario that allows me see the processes you follow in the decision making model that you use to govern your school.
8. In what way have you shifted or changed the decision making model used to govern your school as a result of the application of market values on education?
9. In your opinion, what role does the school trustee play in policy and program development at the school level?
10. In your opinion, what role does the school council play in policy and program development at the school level?
11. In your opinion, what role do parents play in policy and program development at the school level?
12. In your opinion, what role do teachers play in policy and program development at the school level?

Question #4a

Please read the value from the left hand column and compare it to the value across in the right hand column. On the scale from one to ten, indicate where you feel your school is at the present time.

**Comprehensive
(Democratic) Values**

Led by agenda of social and educational concerns 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Oriented to serving community needs 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Emphasis on student need 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Resource emphasis on 'less able' 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Mixed ability (heterogeneous) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Integrationist 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Caring ethos 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Emphasis on good relationships as basis of school discipline 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Cooperation amongst schools 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Market Values

Led by agenda of image/budgetary concerns

Oriented to attracting 'motivated' parents/'able' children

Emphasis on student performance

Resource emphasis on 'more able'

Setting (homogeneous)

Exclusive

Academic ethos

Emphasis on extrinsic indicators of discipline, e.g. uniform

Competition between schools

Question #4b

Please read the value from the left hand column and compare it to the value across in the right hand column. On the scale from one to ten, indicate where you feel your school was three to five years ago.

Comprehensive (Democratic) Values		Market Values
Led by agenda of social and educational concerns	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Led by agenda of image/budgetary concerns
Oriented to serving community needs	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Oriented to attracting 'motivated' parents/'able' children
Emphasis on student need	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Emphasis on student performance
Resource emphasis on 'less able'	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Resource emphasis on 'more able'
Mixed ability (heterogeneous)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Setting (homogeneous)
Integrationist	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Exclusive
Caring ethos	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Academic ethos
Emphasis on good relationships as basis of school discipline	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Emphasis on extrinsic indicators of discipline, e.g. uniform
Cooperation amongst schools	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Competition between schools

Question #4c

Please read the value from the left hand column and compare it to the value across in the right hand column. On the scale from one to ten, indicate where you feel you would like your school to be in three to five years.

Comprehensive (Democratic) Values		Market Values
Led by agenda of social and educational concerns	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Led by agenda of image/budgetary concerns
Oriented to serving community needs	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Oriented to attracting 'motivated' parents/'able' children
Emphasis on student need	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Emphasis on student performance
Resource emphasis on 'less able'	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Resource emphasis on 'more able'
Mixed ability (heterogeneous)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Setting (homogeneous)
Integrationist	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Exclusive
Caring ethos	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Academic ethos
Emphasis on good relationships as basis of school discipline	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Emphasis on extrinsic indicators of discipline, e.g. uniform
Cooperation amongst schools	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Competition between schools

Appendix C - Transcription Verification Report
TRANSCRIPTION VERIFICATION

April 24, 1998

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to verify that the transcripts used are verbatim.

DARLENE BURTON
STENOGRAPHER