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School-Based Management in Alberta: Perceptions of Public School Leaders, 1994–1997

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SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT IN ALBERTA:

PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL LEADERS

1994-97

by

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ABSTRACT

SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT IN ALBERTA, 1994-1997. Robert J. Wilson, Ed.D., University of San Diego, 2000. Director: Mary Williams, Ed.D.

In 1994, the Government of Alberta, Canada, instituted major fiscal measures designed to reduce operating costs and a large provincial debt. In tandem, Alberta Education restructured public education by: reducing the number of school districts, redefining the role of school boards, increasing the involvement of parents, initiating Charter schools, expanding student testing, downsizing Alberta Education, improving delivery of services to children, and mandating the implementation of school-based management in all public schools (Alberta Education News Release, January 18, 1994).

The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of how the implementation of school-based management, through the first three year plan (1994-97), shaped the roles, functions, and attitudes of participant school leaders. School leaders were defined as lead teachers, principals and school council chairpersons. A case study methodology was used to describe, and examine, interviews with the eighteen participants from three elementary and three secondary schools, on site observations and school and district documents.

The findings provide a description of the collective and individual roles of participant school leaders and how they accommodate staff and parent input, decision-making, increased community involvement and improved communications. Stewardship was the style of leadership which evolved during the Three year Plan (1994-97). Participants reported a high degree of satisfaction with school-based management, in spite of conflicting

restructuring measures, and placed a heightened value on collaborative decision-making.

Implications of the study include changing leadership styles that occurred as a result of collaborative decision-making which help refocus school attention on school-based management. School leaders, particularly the principal, used collaborative decision-making, mentoring and power sharing to strengthen school-based initiatives and redefine stakeholder values which resulted in school leadership which was transforming and encouraged collaborators and leaders to be stewards of the process.

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Introduction

Background of the Study

Fiscal reform has changed public education in the province of Alberta, Canada. These changes, initiated in the 1994-95 school year, included a significant reduction in education spending, and gave parents and concerned stakeholders increased opportunity to influence what happened in local schools. The initiative to give parents a greater voice, in the operation of schools, came from province-wide consultation with taxpayers who requested reductions in government spending and increased participation in school decision-making at the grass roots level. The introduction of school-based management, and the formation of parent school councils as decision making bodies, were the vehicles the government of Alberta chose to fulfill taxpayer expectations. Details of government action and the resultant changes, made by Alberta Education, are outlined in this chapter.

This study examined how school personnel reacted to the implementation of school-based management. Individual school staff; represented by principals and lead teachers, and parents, had to utilize school-based management to govern schools. This study explored participant insights into how they utilized their own skills and knowledge, and changed behaviors

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when required to exercise the collaborative decision-making aspects of school-based management.

The stated purpose of school reform was to improve the performance of schools in delivering value to society. Valued outcomes were described as the preparation of a diverse population of students with the skills and knowledge they will need to be productive members of society (Mohrman & Wohlstetter, 1995).

In Alberta, the valued outcomes most commonly called for in public education were reduced costs, greater system-wide accountability, higher student achievement, increased parent and community involvement, and improved communications between stakeholders (Alberta Education, 1993). Outcome based performance pressure was a reaction to the reality of a global economy which meant that Alberta's economic future, and the province's ability to employ citizens, became dependent on the employee base being as well educated as their competition. A large part of Alberta's economic restructuring measures were derived from an economic model used by the government of New Zealand in 1988 (Hyman, 1994). Alberta's political leaders based much of the province's social restructuring on principles advocated by Sir Roger Douglas (1993), who reformed New Zealand's national monetary policy which reduced the country's debt, resulted in the privatization of all government corporations, and adopted a 'user pay' philosophy for services that had previously been free.

New Zealand's education reforms began with the Education Act of 1989. Schools were made responsible for their own administration and have since been governed by individual site councils consisting of three to five parents, the

principal, a staff representative, and a student representative if the school was a secondary school. Each school was directly responsible for all staffing, administrative, and maintenance functions, and followed a nationally set curriculum monitored by officers of the Education Review Office, a national inspectorate, who conduced effectiveness and assurance reviews of all schools every three years (Lange, 1988). This devolution of authority changed the nature of public education in New Zealand.

The Government of Alberta did not emulate all of the sweeping changes that New Zealand's education system underwent as part of its fiscal reform (Williams et.al, 1997). They chose to decentralize selected decision-making functions but maintained provincial control over primary resource allocations, curriculum, and assessment. The decentralized functions gave schools, and school councils, the chance to assume greater control and responsibility for educational decision-making. The principal was no longer able to make arbitrary decisions regarding education. "The principal shares the challenge of making wise decisions with one or more of these groups; i.e., the school board, the superintendent, teachers and other school staff, the school councils, students and their parents, and the community" (Alberta Education,1994. p.27).

The program of educational reforms designed to guide and shape the future of public education within the province originally contained thirteen restructuring items which were announced by the Government of Alberta in a news release on January 18, 1994. One of the major goals included: "Giving schools more authority in deploying resources and determining how results are achieved. This will see greater school-based decision-making. Schools will be accountable for the results they receive" (p. 2). The announcement

concluded, "we are moving in new directions for the education system in Alberta. They are directions that will ensure our students are well prepared for the world of work and for life-long learning, at a cost that our province can afford" (p.3).

On March 31, 1994 school-based decision-making, as previously defined by Alberta Education, became school-based management. Under the restructuring Amendments to Bill 19; parents and students were to have a more meaningful role in the education system and schools more decision-making authority. Decisions made at the school level included the expenditure of monies allocated to the school by the school board; the nature of programs offered at the school and organization of their delivery; reporting of student achievement results to the public; staffing patterns and mix at the school; conduct and discipline of students; management of the school facility or building and ensuring that students had the opportunity to meet the education standards of the district (Bill 19, Government of Alberta, 1995).

During 1994 the government made a number of adjustments to its announced education reform. Changes included: Canceling the initiative to make all superintendents government employees, and amending the authority relationships originally set out for administrators, teachers, and parents. These "corrections" seemed to indicate that government was hesitant about the direction originally taken and had the effect of destabilizing the first eighteen months of the school-based management implementation process. Alberta Education in 1995 further redefined school-based management as a system in which: "as many educational decisions as possible were made at the school level by the principal, with the advice and involvement of the School Council and

teaching staff" (p. 30). This change from the original intent of Alberta Education to make school councils responsible for student outcomes returned decision-making authority to the principal.

The first, three year, school-based management plan was introduced to public schools in Alberta in 1994. The plan contained target dates for the implementation of site-based management, which was expected to be in place, province-wide, by the end of the 1 996-97 school year. The plan contained four strategies for parent, community involvement:

(1) It enable parents and teachers to have a meaningful role in decisions about policies, programs, budgets and activities

(2) It encourage increased parental involvement in their children's learning

(3) It removed local attendance boundaries within and between public and separate school jurisdictions

(4) It allowed agencies to pilot Charter Schools. (p. 9)

Public pressure to improve public education was further addressed by providing greater choice of student programs, and reaffirming the role of individual school councils as vehicles for community input into the operation of schools.

The move to decentralize aspects of public education in Alberta came as a result of public pressure to improve the delivery of education and achieve increased efficiency and effectiveness. Closely allied to the implementation of school-based management was the desire for increased parental and community involvement, especially in schools. School reform measures were

not new to Alberta but this province-wide implementation of school-based management, was swift and unprecedented.

The general reaction of the public school system, within Alberta, to the new legislation was akin to shock. A variety of responses was noted. It was nature of these reactions that helped frame the purpose of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how government mandated school-based management has effected the governance of public and separate schools in Alberta, by seeking to identify the challenges that mandated school-based management presented to school/site leaders, the researcher expected to better understand the problems and challenges that school leaders addressed during the initial, three years (1994-97). Participants represented the major school/site leaders, with the possible exception of secondary school student leaders who were not included in this study.

Specifically, the purpose was to develop an understanding of how school-based management has shaped the roles, functions, and attitudes of the participants about school governance. When leadership structures were altered, or realigned, the expectations and responsibilities of leaders were also changed. The nature of this change is an important dimension of this study.

Research Questions

This study focused on the "leadership roles" of these three major stakeholders. Of particular interest was the way in which these stakeholders interacted within the school-based management model they operated. The description of leadership roles of participants in school operation and decision-making added to the current research data and gave this study its significance. Four research questions guided this study:

1. What leadership issues emerged from the mandatory implementation of school-based management and how have these affected the participant's role and function within the school community?

2. How have participants revised or adapted decision making models, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of school-based management?

3. What barriers have participants encountered while implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers?

4. What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have participants acquired, or still need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management?

Significance

The Government of Alberta mandated school-based management as a means of improving student performance and increasing community decision-making at the school level. With the province-wide implementation of school-

based management, policy makers assumed that student performance would improve and local decision making would increase. Changes in roles of school parents were reflected in the legislated formation of school councils; made up of parents, community members, school administrators and staff; who were to advise school principals on matters of mutual concern.

In this changing milieu, the roles and responsibilities of administrators, school staff, parents and community members underwent significant change, which persists to this day. With little formal guidance from government, schools and school systems had to make their own regulations to manage change. As Knight and Steele (1996) reported: "the government's approach to the creation and operation of school councils is fraught with problems: mistrust, lack of credibility, fear of misinterpretation, frustration with poor or no communication and anxiety about the future" (p. 14). This climate of unease was in part a reaction to the mandated speed of implementation, but was also exacerbated by a perceived lack of direction from Alberta's Department of Education.

Representatives of three school-based stakeholder groups, lead teachers, administrators, and parents (School Council Chairpersons), were asked to share their perceptions of: how the implementation of school-based management has affected their role within the school community. What barriers did they had to overcome? What skills and knowledge did they need to acquire? Were they been able to achieve the aims and objectives of the groups they represent? What conception of school-based management did participants have after three years of implementation?

The significance of this study rests on how a sample of eighteen representative school leaders, made up of six school principals, six lead

teachers and six parent school council leaders, in Alberta, Canada, viewed their experience with school-based management. An organized comparison of the experience which detailed similarity and differences within, and between, specific categories was used to give the data structure and meaning. To enhance the comparison, artifacts gathered from schools added to the data.

The six schools under study were involved with school-based management since 1994. The leadership of each school, in conjunction with their District leadership, began implementation in 1994 and by 1996 were dealing with the long and short term challenges of school-based management. Information from this research provides valuable insights into how province-wide implementation of school-based management influenced participants, challenged their leadership, and affected their school communities.

Assumptions

It was assumed that the state of school-based management, province-wide, was diverse and differences in the degree to which school-based management had been achieved would be apparent. Differences were expected between school districts and between schools.

It was assumed that participants would share perceptions based on their own experience. This experience was expected to vary from school to school, and position to position.

It was assumed that participants would be able to articulate the belief system, processes, and strategies that governed their school. Participant

knowledge of systems, processes and strategies was expected to be profound.

It was assumed that participants represented a cross-section of school-based personnel most direct responsibility for the implementation of school-based management in their schools. Participant experience was expected to provide rich sources of data.

It was assumed that participants would be typical of other school-based leaders. The information in this qualitative study could then apply to other school-based leaders in Alberta, Canada and internationally.

The governments of New Zealand and Alberta, Canada legislated significant changes to public education within months of each other. As an educator with experience in both jurisdictions I would like to take this opportunity to describe why I chose this research topic.

<u>Background of the Researcher</u>

This study is the result of my belief in life-long learning. I received my undergraduate and masters degrees in the late sixties and early seventies. Since then I have completed twenty eight years of teaching service in New Zealand and Canada. Hence my interest in recent educational change in both countries. In 1991, I decided to pursue a doctoral degree to compliment the leadership work I was engaged in and expand my knowledge base. At first I was driven toward quantitative research but later came to value my natural

proclivity toward collecting information by interacting with the people most closely involved in the issue under study.

The course work at University of San Diego enabled me to practice the case study method and then apply it to examine the province-wide implementation of school-based management in Alberta. As a public school principal I experienced the first two years of the initial three year implementation Plan. For me the experience was confusing and frustrating. Of the confusion Charles Hyman (1994) wrote:

> Who was ready for this? Certainly not teachers who were still working on yesterday's agenda. And certainly not school trustees caught up in the fantasy of making important decisions on the electoral mandate of a few good people .... Senior administrators too, already busily engaged in reform plans of their own making, were nonplused by proposals that threatened their very existence. They were particularly upset because they had already adopted business-speak and were heavily into Total Quality Management when the word arrived that it was their quality (and quantity) that was about to be managed. (p.6)

District administrators, in my jurisdiction, seemed unable to deal with change and waited to see if this directive would simply go away. It was obvious to me that other school districts, and schools, were adopting, and refining, school-based management processes to meet their needs and the expectations of local and provincial authorities. When transferred to a Federal First Nations School, operated under the authority of the government of Canada, I followed the evolution of school-based management as it

progressed. When the first Three Year plan, 1994 to 1997, was completed it seemed appropriate to seek answers to my research questions.

I found the challenge of studying educational leadership, after twenty two years spent in school administration, to be invigorating and beneficial. The greatest benefit came from blending what I learned with what had been won from long experience. I became a better leader.

As an career school principal I had some beliefs, formed by experience, which influenced my perceptions and analysis of data. I believed that the most appropriate role for a school principal is as a steward of their school community using a collaborative form of leadership which brings the participants of a school community together to work towards common goals.

Stewardship has been defined as:

an act of trust, whereby people and institutions entrust a leader with certain obligations and duties to fulfill on their behalf ... Stewardship also involves the leader's personal responsibility to manage her or his life and affairs with proper regard for the rights of other people and for the common welfare. Finally, stewardship involves placing oneself in service to ideas and ideals and to others who are committed to their fulfillment. (Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 139)

For me, stewardship had two attractions. One is the service I offer those I lead which caters to an inbuilt need to help and support others, and the other was a means of expressing my commitment and belief in the rightness of public education.

Close professional colleagues encouraged me to undertake this study which examined how school leaders adapted to the mandated implementation

of school-based management in Alberta, Canada. This study examined how six principals, six teachers, and six parents, representing six public schools experienced the implementation process.

Definition of Terms

School-based management is one of the processes that was mandated by the provincial government of Alberta, to restructure public education. School-based management is defined by Alberta Education (1994, p. 7), as: the process by which decisions are made at the school level about instructional programs and services, and how funds are allocated to them. School-based management includes the whole school community. Members of the school community will jointly determine (within regulations and guidelines) the types of programs that will be offered at the school, how available funds will be allocated to meet educational requirements and how the school's daily operation will be managed.

Lead teachers were defined as experienced teachers who were acknowledged by their peers as teacher leaders. For the purposes of this study educator participants (lead teachers/school principals) must have

taught/administrated before, during, and after the school-based management implementation process (1994-97).

Decision-making in education is the process used to determine a conclusion or judgment related to a subject and subsequent action related to a topic (Alberta Education, 1994, p. 11).

Models for decision making include:

Authoritative, where the principal makes the decisions;

Democratic, where the staff or parents make a motion and vote on the motion;

Collaborative, where people by working together, come to a common agreement that everyone can share; and *consensus building,* where everyone agrees with the final decision.

(Alberta Education, 1995, pp. D1-D2)

Triangulation is a process that cross checks and corroborates information gained from interviews, related observations and artifacts. Guba and Lincoln (1989), felt that this form of triangulation could be used as a credibility check and "should be dedicated to verifying that the constructions collected were those that were offered by the respondents" (p. 241).

Leadership is an influencing relationship among leaders and collaborators who intend real changes that reflect the purposes mutually held by both leaders and collaborators (Rost, 1993. p. 102). Participants in this study exercised leadership within their school community. Each was part of a

constituted group representing teaching staff, school administration, and parents.

Summary

Beginning in 1994 the Government of Alberta enacted a budget which severely reduced education spending, and simultaneously mandated a number of reforms to public education. The intent of this action, as expressed in the Meeting the Challenge document (1994) published by Alberta Education, was to tighten government control of public education. One of the first reforms described changes to educational funding. In the governments view, "Full provincial funding of public and separate schools was essential to supporting the fundamental changes outlined in this plan. It will ensure that our system is adequately and equitably funded, accountable, and efficient" (p. 3).

School governance was directly impacted by the initiation of two specific reforms, school-based management, and expanded roles for school councils. Both reforms appeared to have altered the nature of the working relationships previously existing between school principals, staff, and parents. Each school community was obliged to develop and adopt new governance mechanisms in consultation with the principal who was expected to seek input and direction from staff and parents in the governance of their school. The Meeting the Challenge: Three-Year Business Plan, 1994/95 - 1996/97. Alberta Education, 1994, gave school communities three school years, to fully implement school-based management. What was the state of school-based management in Alberta, before, during and after the first Three Year Plan? How did participants

shift their approach to school governance? How did participants modify or change decision making models or processes? Now that the initial implementation deadline has passed it seemed appropriate to seek answers to these and other related questions.

School-based management in Alberta was adopted en mass, in tandem with other restructuring measures, with little consultation, insufficient guidance and short time constraints. The implementation of school-based management was difficult, took longer than expected, and was ongoing. This study considered how the implementation of school-based management reshaped skills and knowledge needed to govern schools in this new milieu. It also explored participant insight into how they changed school governance mechanisms, and employed decision-making strategies which required increased collaboration between stakeholders.

Chapter II presents the results of a literature search regarding leadership, school-based management, decision making and stakeholder roles and functions. It also includes an overview of what has been occurring within Canada, and internationally, regarding the implementation of school-based management.

Literature Review

Introduction

The intent of this study was to examine and describe how the implementation of school-based management, in Alberta, shaped the roles, functions and attitudes of school principals, teachers and school council chairpersons. In this review participants were specifically identified as school leaders. Four research questions formed the focus of the study, and guided this literature review:

1. What leadership issues emerged from the mandatory implementation of school-based management and how have they affected the participant's role and function within the school community?

2. How have participants revised or adapted decision making models, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of school-based management?

3. What barriers have participants encountered while implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers?

4. What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have participants acquired, or

still need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management?

The research questions sought answers which had their source in the individual experiences of participants who, for three years, were engaged in the implementation of school-based management. This study was grounded in a model of school organization, called school-based management and shaped by participants who were school leaders.

In answer to the first question a search was completed which attempted to link leadership theory with the present day realities affecting school/site leaders in Alberta and other locations. A wealth of information was gathered, and a number of distinguished sources were selected for this study. The first and foremost of these were Rost and Sergiovanni. Care was taken to ensure that the discussion of leadership was framed in a context which included the distinctly different leadership challenges which participants faced. For example the leadership role of the principal as compared with the role of a lead teacher, or the role of the parent chairperson of the school council. During the collection of information, the notion of stewardship was identified as important to the role of school/site leaders. Therefore it was included in this section.

The second question produced information on decision-making and the models which were developed to explain decision making theories, models and processes. The implementation of school-based management in any system undergoing a decentralization process requiring decisions to be made

at a site level, as opposed to a systems level, required new decision making mechanisms to facilitate change.

Question three raised the issue of barriers, to leader effectiveness, to governance, and organizational development. The research indicated a number of impediments to leadership effectiveness in organizations undergoing reform and renewal. Time was viewed to be a significant aspect affecting organizational leadership and reform. Time was often quoted as a barrier to task completion, leadership development and organizational growth.

Question four drove a search for new attitudes, knowledge and skills, that arose when individuals and groups underwent governance and organizational change. Leadership theorists offered considerable guidance on this issue, some of which was included in this review. In each section of this chapter, reference was made to related topics such as power, barriers to change, school/site councils, program and student outcomes and the relationship between school-based management and participants. Table 1 outlines the structure of this literature review in the form of a summary.

Table 1

Chapter Review

Leadership	An influence relationship between leaders and collaborators - involves real change - mutually purposeful to both leaders and collaborators.
Stewardship	Exercise of accountability as an act of service - servant leadership.
Heart of Leadership	Trust - shared organizational values - vision - ethic of justice and care.
Power of Leadership	Power relationships - devolution of traditional power-power shared.
Decision Making	Process to determine conclusion or judgment - primary role of leaders - various models and types - shared or collaborative decision making.
	School-Based Management Consequence of school reform/decentralization movement-governance reform often part of larger reform initiatives - S.B.M. designed to produce increased student achievement, increase morale, greater staff commitment and productivity.
Variations/Models	Summary of variations-four common models, collegial, administrative, parent committee/board and school-based committee.

Implementation	Popular form of school/system restructuring - common in North America, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Israel and Europe.
Barriers	Increased time demands on staff and administrators. Failure to meet expectations - unclear roles for school councils - issues related to decision-making and inadequate financial resources.
Program Outcomes	Instructional improvements lost in efforts related to implementation - suggestion that S.B.M. initiatives do not result in significant educational goals or practices.

Stakeholder Roles and Functions

	Three differing participant - school principals, lead teachers and parent chairs of school councils.
The Principal	Most responsible leader - colleagual seeker of consensus-primary group facilitator.
The Teacher	Primary curricular leader - forms majority of school workforce - their cooperation essential to program success.
The Parent	Represents school parents and community -adult voice of students on school council -sometimes reluctant to be responsible for decision-making - favors advisory role to school administration/staff.

School leaders (participants) were central to this study. Their experience within the context of their school community was influenced by the style, scope, and nature of leadership existent in each school.

Rost's (1991) post-industrial definition of leadership stated: "Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and collaborators who intend real change that reflects the purposes mutually held by both leaders and collaborators" (p. 4). Rost recognized the reality of a rapidly changing world in which leadership was shifting from a traditional industrial paradigm to an emerging, post-industrial paradigm. (p. 6)

Predicting the nature of the post industrial paradigm was difficult. What was clear was the leadership values associated with the last century changed to meet the needs of current economic and social realities. Burns (1996) acknowledged that, "Many of the edifices, rules, and assumptions associated with the industrial paradigm are crumbling under the siege of the emerging requirements of the post industrial global village. We probably are currently in a state of transition between major societal paradigms" (p. 153).

The changes made to Alberta's public education system, in 1994, served as an example of this transition. Government, in one stroke, introduced fiscal restraint, amalgamated school districts, decentralized decision making, and called for more collaborative school leadership. This collaboration was seen as a means to include voters, especially parents and local residents, in school decision-making. Authoritarian leadership was replaced by a more collaborative form of leadership. The basic elements contained within Rost's

(1991) definition of leadership were: "(1) a relationship based on influence, (2) leaders and followers develop that relationship, (3) they intend real changes, and (4) they have mutual purposes" (p.127).

The skills needed for post industrial leadership were described by Rost (1993). These included:

> influence in multidirectional relationships; build noncoercive relationships, focus on process not just content; include as many different people as possible; take risks; allow for conflict among collaborators; facilitate large groups; empower others in the organization; be political in your influence strategies; use ordinary power resources to influence; get comfortable with highly complex, messy, dynamic situations; and advocate for the commons (p. 5).

Discussion has focused on the relationship between leaders and collaborators as defined by Rost, who suggested that the contributions of both parties was similar in nature. Sashkin and Rosenbach (1993) disagreed: "the leaders' essential contributions are quite different from the contributions of followers. Leaders' contributions include synthesizing and extending the purposes of followers as well as constructing conditions under which followers can be transformed as leaders" (p. 105). In terms of vision building, or expressing common purpose, the relationship between leaders and followers may not be equal, but should be balanced in commitment to each other and to the shared vision.

The development of shared vision was another aspect missing from Rost's definition of leadership which implied that transformational leaders synthesized and carried out the visions of followers. Sashkin and Rosenbach

(1993) argued that: "Transformational leaders do not simply identify and build a clear vision from the visions of followers. They also identified what followers themselves might wish to envision but have not and perhaps cannot .... In sum, transformational leadership involved real, unique contributions from both followers and leaders" (p. 105). In this dichotomy the leader may, at any one point in time, be master or servant.

Stewardship

The servant aspect of leadership emphasized the role of the leader as a collaborator who served followers by meeting their collective and individual needs while advancing the organization. Examples of this form of leadership are Mohandras Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. and other great religious leaders who have flourished through time (Burns, 1996). When we seek examples of the right use of power, and influence, we are often drawn to look at great religious leaders because they understood how to exercise accountability and activism in service to their followers.

In 1993, Peter Block advanced the idea of replacing leadership with stewardship. He defined stewardship as: the willingness to be accountable for the well-being of the larger organization by operating in service, rather than in control, of those around us. Stated simply, it is accountability without control or compliance" (p. 20).

Block viewed the challenge of post industrial leadership to be collaborating with followers in ways that brought spirit and integrity into play. He advocated a partnership between leaders and followers. "Partnership means

to be connected to another in a way that the power between us is roughly balanced. Stewardship, the exercise of accountability as an act of service, requires a balance of power between parties to be credible" (p. 28).

The practice of stewardship required placing information, resources, and power in the hands of people offering a service or making a product. This precept mirrors modern organizational theory which advocates that decision making should be made by the people most affected by the decision. For example, in school-based management teachers were key players in determining school policies and practices. As Lashway (1996) explained: "The rationale was simple. Those closest to student learning are best equipped to make educational decisions" (p. 1).

The power to decide one's fate was perhaps the first important step in breaking away from autocratic leadership. Partnership, collaboration, trust and a willingness to share power were part of the servant leader paradigm. Greenleaf (1977) believed that servant leadership provided legitimacy partly because one of the responsibilities of leadership was to develop a sense of direction and establish a catholic purpose. This action "gives certainty and purpose to others who may have difficulty in achieving it for themselves. But being successful in providing purpose requires the trust of others" (p. 15).

In 1992, Sergiovanni wrote:

It is best to let those who will be served define their own needs in their own way. Servant leadership is more easily provided if the leader understands that serving others is important but that the most important thing is to serve the values and ideas that help shape the

school as a covenantal community. In this sense, all the members of a

community share the burden of servant leadership. (p. 125)

Sergiovanni made a strong link between servant leadership and moral

authority. He stated:

Moral authority relies heavily on persuasion. At the root of persuasion

are ideas, values, substance, and content, which together define group

purpose and core values. Servant leadership is practiced by serving

others, but its ultimate purpose is to place oneself, and others for whom

one has responsibility, in the service of ideals. (p. 138)

The Heart of Leadership

However defined, the change from an industrial to post industrial mode

of leadership, resulted in leadership which was increasingly more complex

and demanding. For school leaders to provide expertise and inspiration of the

kind described by Rost, Block, and Sergiovanni, they needed skills in

collaboration, team building, conflict mediation, data collection and analysis,

instructional improvement and consensus building. Equally important, the

foundation for moving from autocracy to school-based shared decision-making

had to be laid with stakeholders. This foundation involved credibility and trust.

Lou Holtz, coach at Notre Dame, said "there are three questions every

person asks another in any human relationship: Can I trust you? Do you know

what you are talking about? and Do you care for me personally?" (Else, 1997,

p. 1). If these questions are asked in the school setting and if the answer to any

one is no, there is, at best, a very minimal commitment to relationship.

According to Noddings (1984) an attitude of warm acceptance and trust is important in all caring relationships (P. 65). She supported the development of a community of learners within schools built on trust.

Trust was developed when people came to expect and predict the way others acted. When a school commits the time and energy to involve stakeholders in developing shared organizational values and people live out the shared values on a day to day basis, conjecture and suspicion about actions were dispelled (Senge, 1990). Bennis and Nanus (1985) said: "Trust is the lubrication that makes it possible for organizations to work. Trust implies accountability, predictability, reliability .... The truth is we trust people who are predictable, whose positions are known and who keep at it" (p. 43). The result was leader credibility.

When leaders shared a systems perspective which has underlying structures and connections which were evident, other stakeholders gain an increased understanding of leadership problems and related pressures. With understanding came compassion and real empathy for the complexities of the system. Senge (1990) believed that when compassion and understanding grew within the organization, people came to know what they were talking about and how they were connected (p. 171).

School leaders who facilitated stakeholders in developing shared organizational values, trust and a systems perspective built a strong foundation on which school-based decision-making stood. When leaders helped stakeholders to move sources of power, motivation, self esteem and humanness from their external world to their inner being, people within the school community developed a broader sense of responsibility to the work they

shared and a stronger commitment to school success.

Credibility, like reputation, was earned over time. People tended to assume that someone who attained status, earned a degree, or achieved a significant accomplishment was deserving of their confidence. But complete trust is only given after people know more about the person. The credibility foundation was built, brick by brick. As each fragment was secured, the basis on which we constructed the hopes of the future was slowly built.

Kouzes and Posner (1993) identified four characteristics of admired leaders. They were: "being honest, inspiring, competent and forward-looking" (p.14). "we know from our research that being forward-looking is the quality that distinguishes leaders from other credible people. We also know that without a solid foundation of personal credibility, leaders can have no hope of enlisting others in a common vision" (p. 25). These qualities engendered trust and fostered collaboration.

The literature was full of references describing the place and function of vision in corporate, political and educational leadership. (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1985, Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Starratt, 1993; Tichy & Devanna, 1986) Vision was seen as one of the essential ingredients of leadership. Starratt (1996), defined vision as:

> The projection of an ideal or desired state of affairs, a direction the organization should take, a supreme value or cluster of values that

energizes the organization, a core meaning tied up with the essential identity of the organization, the dream of the organization's founder. (p. 50)

Vision, according to Wheatley (1992), "is the need for organizational clarity about purpose and direction" (p. 53). Bass (1985) confirmed that the leaders vision can enhance the effort and commitment of followers. Bennis and Nanus (1985) supported the power of vision to motivate followers to a higher standard of excellence. Senge (1990) felt that people needed vision to help navigate and make decisions day to day.

Starratt (1996) sounded a warning about the effectiveness of visionary leadership. He wrote:

A credible vision of education must on one hand acknowledge the limits and failures of the promise of modernity, and yet on the other hand, respond to the public's anticipated skepticism of a vision based on purely personal convictions about the nobility and potentially transcending quality of the human invention. (p. 51)

Starratt (1996) reasoned that because of the enormous shifts that had taken place in social history, and continued to take place, the concept of vision was suspect in the post-modern era. "Schools do not stand outside the larger social history in which they are situated" (p. 50). School leaders must be aware of changes and utilize the more ethereal qualities of organizations, culture, values, vision and ethics effectively.

The ethic of justice and an ethic of care were represented by the participants in a community. These participants were driven to help to build a community of learners within the school. Their motivation in caring was

directed towards the welfare, protection, or enhancement of the cared-for. According to Noddings (1984), "[an] attitude of warm acceptance and trust is important in all caring relationships" (p. 65). She supports the development of a school community based on caring relationships.

Sergiovanni (1992) promoted the idea of moral leadership and the development of a community of learners within schools. He defined community as a collection of people who were bound together by natural will and held to shared ideas and beliefs. He wrote: "When describing community it is helpful to speak of community by kinship, of mind, of place and of memory" (p. xvi). This community existed for all and differed between and among the individual members. Therefore, when attempting to clarify the roles of school leaders, it was important to reflect on each of the participants. Their insights were influenced by their values. As discussed, the values necessary for effective leadership are the foundation for building a learning community.

Heifetz (1994) posited "adaptive work" an essential element of his description of leadership. Burns (1996) stated that Heifetz felt that: "Much of successful human behavior, reflected an appropriate adaption to circumstances" (p. 154). Auspicious social adaptations were used by a culture, or a branch of a culture, to successfully react to challenges. Adaptive work was challenging because people learned new ways of being, doing and relating in their social and physical environment. For Heifetz (as cited by Burns 1996), adaptive work introduced value challenge, conflict, disequilibrium and uncertainty. "Leadership encouraged people and organizations to choose to do

their adaptive work and supported them through the stressful process" (p. 154). The result of adaptive work is adaptive action.

According to Burns (1996), adaptive action was transforming leadership. Adaptive action was not the characteristics or style of the leader, nor was it a collection of leadership skills. Adaptive action required both leaders and followers to participate in a process, not an event. Both leaders and followers were necessary participants in the process. The attributes of the relationship, the roles and responsibilities of followers, altered as one moved from leader dependent situations to conditions that supported Rost's (1991) collaborative groups.

Collaboration and partnership resulted in leadership which utilized power in ways which negated the traditional use of power. Simply put, power over people was exchanged for power shared with people. Within the framework of school-based management, power, the ability to make decisions, spend money, staff and reshape programs, was shared among stakeholders. In Alberta an attempt was made to give greater decision making power to schools who were expected to share that power with parents and in some cases students. How power was shared is an important part of this study.

The Power of Leadership

Power, for many people, had negative overtones. It was allied with force, threat, coercion and sometimes violence. Miller (1986) defined power as: " The ability to advance oneself and, simultaneously, to control, limit and if possible, destroy the power of others" (p. 116). The capricious use of power was

relatively rare except in small patriarchal family based firms and large dictatorships. Most leaders were constrained by tradition, constitutional limitations, rights, civil law, and the demands that organizations made which could not be satisfied by the raw exercise of power. Starratt (1996) pointed out that power, meaning power over someone or something, could mean something else. "We can conceive of power as something that each person possesses, a power to be and a power to do. The most interesting power each one of us possesses is the power to be ourselves" (p. 108). He makes the point that only individuals had the power to be themselves. The decision to use personal power was a matter of individual choice.

The moral use of power was an integral concept found in the writings of Greenleaf (1977), Gardner (1990), Senge (1990), Mitchell (1990), Rost (1991), and Sergiovanni (1992), who argued that leaders should approach their role as influencers of organizational culture in terms of nurturance, stewardship, and servitude rather than manipulation or control. These proponents of democratic, emancipatory, and transformational models of leadership defined power wielding as being quite different from the kind of power usually associated with hierarchical organizational structures. The use of physical force, actions that command obedience, and threats of punishment were forms of power wielding that lay outside the meaning of moral leadership. Dewey (1909) felt that: " The kind of power usually associated with hierarchical organizational structures should rather be directed and organized along social channels and attached to valuable ends" (p. 71). With regard to the exercise of power, Rost (1991) argued that "moral leadership adds to the autonomy and value of those in the relationship, and that no individual should be required to sacrifice dignity to be

in a leader/follower relationship" (p.161).

The unilateral implementation of school-based management by the provincial government, in concert with other system-wide reforms, could be expected to alter power relationships between stakeholders. School principals had to consult with teachers and parents who had gained official representation. Parents and teachers were expected to cooperate in the development, and use, of consensus decision-making. How were power relationships changed, at the school level? What obvious and overt changes were experienced by participants in their "reformed" roles?

Superficially, the implementation of school-based management in Alberta could be viewed as a simple reorganization of school management to meet the government's need to down-size bureaucracy and reduce management costs. The devolution of responsibility from school districts' to individual schools significantly altered formerly existing power relationships. The nature and scope of these changes was another focus of the study.

Decision-making processes and models were included in the data collected for this study. The decision-making skills that participants used and the role that they played was also a focus of this study and forms the next section of this literature review.

Decision Making

Alberta Education (1994), defines decision-making as:

the process used to determine a conclusion or judgment related to a subject and subsequent action related to a topic. Primary role--the group

(or person) must answer for the results of their decision, and they have control over activities and resources that produce the result.

Contributory role--the group (or person) provides advice, interpretations and other important support that others use in making decisions. In education, both "advice receiving" and "advice giving" are important roles. (p. 11)

Alberta Education (1995, pp. D1-D2) offered the following models for decision making in schools: authoritative, the principal made the decisions; democratic, the staff or parents prepared motions and voted on them; collaborative, worked together to come to a common agreement that everyone could share; and consensus building, everyone agreed with the final decision. Another aspect of the changing role of the principal was how decisions were made.

Glickman (1990) posited there were four types of decisions that were most helpful in the school that was striving to be a democratic, educative community.

1. Zero-impact decisions consumes the time of most schools and deals primarily with adult concerns. (e.g. staff fund, bus duties and parking spaces.)

2. Minimal-impact decisions are about issues that pertain to student learning but are of short duration and have less direct influence. (e.g. small budgets, textbook adoption, and parent programs.)

3. Core-impact decisions are those that reflect the core principles of teaching and learning. These are the long-term sustained decisions that

a school makes. (e.g. staff development, curriculum and student

assessment.)

4. Comprehensive-impact decisions involve broader issues than

teaching and learning. They concern site-based management. (e.g.

school budget, hiring of personnel and personnel evaluation) (p.32-33).

Table 2 shows the focus of governance and educational impact as

presented by Glickman, 1990.

Table 2

___

Focus of Governance: Educational Impact

Zero-impact decisions	Minimal-impact decisions
Parking spaces	Textbook adoption
Lunchroom supervision	Parent programs
faculty lounge	In-service days
Sunshine fund	Small budgets
Adult recreation	Discipline policy
Bus duties	
Refreshments	

Core-impact decisions	Comprehensive-impact decisions
Curriculum	School budget
Staff development	Hiring of personnel
Coaching	Deployment of personnel
Instructional programs	Personnel evaluation
Student assessment	
Instructional budget	

Source: Glickman, 1990, p. 33.

___

The role of the principal in decision making, according to Fiedler's Contingency Theory of Decision Making, (cited in Sergiovanni, Burlingame, Coobs, & Thurston, 1987), was shaped to his or her perceptions of the characteristics of the situation. Decisions were made by the principal based on the character of the organization, the environment at that moment, and the task the organization sought to accomplish at that time. The leader was the decision maker based on his or her leadership or management skills.

It was important for the leader to inspire confidence in the people who would be making decisions. Kouzes and Posner (1993) suggested that it was vital for principals, and other school leaders, to stop talking at staff meetings, to set up coaching opportunities, to invite people to assume responsibility, to have an open door, to share the big picture, to let parents be the teachers, and to use modeling to develop competence. The authors felt it was important that school stakeholders learn to participate in decision-making. They stated that decision-making was learned by participation and those who practiced decision-making would feel ownership for the decisions made, and were more likely act on them (p. 78).

In the opinion of Alberta Education (1995), successful school decision-making had the potential for: (a) better use of resources, (b) shared responsibility, (c) flexible decision-making, (d) enhanced school productivity, (e) improved morale, (f) increased student participation, (g) greater freedom to take risks, and (h) increased tolerance, support, and collaboration (p. A).

The literature supported the contention that successful administrators would work diligently to secure authentic consensus that restored a sense of purpose and well-being for their constituents. Yates (1993), contended that

consensus-builders must be clear and creative thinkers, who consciously cultivate a school culture that makes sense and honors the integrated goals of teachers, parents, students, the local community, and society in general. Therefore leaders had to be visionary and have a clear concept of what was important in education and also their school (p.19).

Functional decision-making was pivotal to the role of an effective school leader. Leaders had to inspire confidence in followers and let them share in processes which lead to the development of trust, tolerance, and caring. A primary factor in building these qualities was consensus decision-making. The data gathered for this study helped clarify school-based management issues which cames from current practice, in Alberta, Canada. By comparing identified aspects of former and current practice, the effectiveness of Alberta's change to school-based management could be discussed (see chapter 5).

The next section of this review deals with school-based management as a reform, renewal or devolutionary process. In Alberta, schools were given increased authority and expected to be more responsible for meeting local educational needs, and attaining the societal goals of the greater community.

School-Based Management

The history of public education, particularly in North America, has been characterized by periodic swings between centralization and decentralization of authority and power. (Cuban 1990; Darling-Hammond 1988; Lindelow & Heynderickx 1989; and Mojkowski & Flemming 1988). In times of greater centralized authority, large administrative entities, such as provinces, states,

school districts, and school boards, maintained control over decisions ranging from educational policy, budget, and operations. When the pendulum swung towards decentralization, much of this control shifted to smaller administrative units, smaller school boards and individual schools.

Currently in both Canada and the United States a devolutionary process has been decentralizing aspects of public education. The process has many names but is often called school-based management. Proponents of school-based management consider it more than a new name for a reappearing, cyclical phenomenon. Unlike previous changes, school-based management contained genuine change. White (1989) noted that:

Previous attempts to decentralize were aimed at shifting authority from a large, central board of education to smaller, local boards .... replacing one form of bureaucracy with another. Past reforms avoided a transfer of power to the school site .... school-based management is different .... it changes the entire system of district and school organization and restructures most roles in the district (p. 2).

Oswald (1995) recognized school-based management as being; " One of the most popular strategies that came out of the 1980's school reform movement" (p. 1). Proponents of school-based management claimed that it would provide better programs for students because resources would be available to directly match student needs. They further asserted that school-based management ensured higher quality decisions because they were made by groups instead of individuals (Cotton 1997). Proponents also felt that it increased communications between stakeholders, including school boards, principals, teachers, parents, community members and students.

Reasons for initiating school-based management, were varied, but centered on increased student achievement. For some, school-based management was a governance reform designed to shift the balance of authority among schools, school districts and the province or state. David (1996) postulated: "This tends to be the rationale behind state efforts rather than district reforms, and it is often part of a larger reform agenda that claims to trade school autonomy for accountability to the state" (p. 22).

Others, felt that school-based management was a political reform initiated to expand the decision-making base, within the school, or the larger community, or both. The democratization of decision-making as an end unto itself opened up the issue of who should make decisions.

Mohrman, Lawler & Mohrman (1992) felt that school-based management was an administrative reform designed to make management more effective by decentralizing and deregulating it, thereby serving the primary goal of the organization, student learning (p.57).

Effectiveness proponents hoped decentralization would produce increased student achievement (Cotton 1991, p. 1). This was to happen through more flexible curriculum offerings that were tailored for students. These proponents also expected higher rates of innovation, increased morale, greater staff commitment and productivity. In contrast, they characterized traditional systems as controlled by a bureaucracy that imposed on schools a one-size-fits-all policy.

Similar arguments were frequently made in the context of the U.S. system of public education where curriculum decisions were mandated at the school district level. Alberta, Canada, has long placed authority for curriculum

decisions at a centralized, provincial level and few proponents of school-based management, within Alberta, including the Government of Alberta, advocated curriculum as part of their decentralization platforms.

School-based management was the administrative system that the government of Alberta used to involve more people at the school level in making some decisions about the school. However, what was involved, and what they were to make decisions about, varied greatly from district to district. "School-based management through shared decision-making has been praised and berated; met with great success and disappointing failure, been lauded as the new leadership paradigm to rescue America's schools." (Else, 1997, p.1) Were these divergent results, in part, a measure of the degree of preparation undertaken before moving from a highly centralized system, with lingering strands of autocratic management, to a decentralized, participatory system?

Underlying motives may exist. Stated purposes may obscure far less lofty aims, such as weakening entrenched and distrusted school boards, creating the illusion of reform without investing more resources, putting a positive face on central office downsizing by calling it decentralization, or efficient use of funds.

The next section acknowledges school-based management as a multi-faceted term which has come to mean a number of different things dependent on time, place, and reason for implementation, stimulus for change, and the degree to which power and responsibility were reassigned. In attempting to define school-based management for this study, it was decided to use the comprehensive definition written by Malen, Ogawa and Kranz (1990), which

matched the Alberta experience, and reflected common aspects of international research.

Early in 1994, Alberta Education made this statement:

School-based management is defined as the process by which decisions are made at the school level about instructional programs and services, and how funds are allocated to them. School-based management includes the whole school community. Members of the school community will jointly determine (within regulations and guidelines) the types of programs that will be offered at the school, how available funds will be allocated to meet educational requirements and how the school's daily operation will be managed. (p.7)

Since 1994, this narrow definition has expanded to include many of the aspects found in the next section.

Definition of School-Based Management (SBM)

In this study, the term school-based management has been used primarily because it is the descriptor that Alberta Education gave to school-based decision-making amendments enacted in 1994. Other terms have been used to specify similar arrangements. Arterbury and Hart (1991) identified: "decentralization, restructuring, site based management, school-based management, participatory decision-making and school-based autonomy" (p. 2). Other writers used: decentralized management, shared decision-making, school empowerment, shared governance, decentralized authority, school-site autonomy, school-based decision-making, school-site

management, responsible autonomy, the autonomous school concept, administrative decentralization, and school-based governance. (Ceperley 1991; Cistone, Fernandez and Tornillo 1989; Johnson and Germinario 1985; and Lewis 1989)

More recently, devolution, decentralization and recentralization were used to describe the move towards school-based management (Martin 1994). Lewis (1989) indicated that: "The name is not as important as the shifts in authority that were taking place .... No matter what the term .... the school takes center stage in today's educational reform scene (p. 173-174).

A similar variation was found in definitions of school-based management. These definitional differences are understandable, for they reflected the real variations found in structures and operations of different school-based management programs. These differences have challenged attempts to understand, evaluate, or compare school-based management efforts.

When commenting on the profusion of terms and definitions Kolsti and Rutherford (1991) wrote: "School districts, scholars, and legislators repeated these various terms, but few stated clearly what they meant or what they expect ... how their use of these terms may differ from that intended by previous literature" (p. 1). Linquist and Mauriel (1989) agreed: "variations of the school-based management concept have emerged [and] the results seems to be confusion and misunderstanding concerning these vague and sometimes conflicting definitions" (p. 404). Researchers called attention to the variety of

program features observable in different school-based management programs

(White 1989, p. 1).

Malen, Ogawa and Krantz (1990) described school-based management

as: "A generic term for diverse activities .... an ambiguous concept that defies

definition" (p. 298-299). After reviewing many divergent and ambiguous

definitions, Malen, Ogawa and Kranz (1990) proposed this comprehensive

definition which I used for this study:

> School-based management can be viewed conceptually as a formal
>
> alteration of governance structures, as a form of decentralization that
>
> identifies the individual school as the primary unit of improvement and
>
> relies on the redistribution of decision-making authority as the primary
>
> means through which improvements might be stimulated and
>
> sustained. Some formal authority to make decisions in the domains of
>
> budget, personnel and program is delegated to and often distributed
>
> among site-level actors. Some formal structure (council, committee,
>
> team, board) often composed of principals, teachers, parents, and, at
>
> times, students and community residents is created so that the site
>
> participants can be directly involved in school-wide decision making.
>
> (p. 290)

After producing this definition, Ogawa and White (1994) later wrote:

> Given the many forms SBM has taken, the variety of definitions should
>
> come as no surprise. In some instances, SBM documents note that
>
> such ambiguity is intentional, based on the belief that school-level actors
>
> should determine how SBM programs will operate. (p. 58)

Variations and Models

White (1989) compiled a summary of variations which existed within schools and districts comparing levels of authority, the actors involved, and the areas of control:

Increased Autonomy - the latitude to function independently to a considerable degree .... may or may not accompany the increase in authority at the school site.

Increased School-Site Accountability - was likewise a feature of some school-based management efforts but not others.

The Power to Establish Policy - may or may not accompany the increase in the school's power to make other kinds of decisions.

Decision making Domains - differ enormously among different school-based management arrangements. Districts and boards may extend decision-making authority to the school in the major areas of *budget and/or staffing and/or curriculum, as well as other domains.*

The Extent of Decision-Making Authority within Domains - also differs. For example, to districts implementing school-based management structures may allow their schools to make decisions in the area of curriculum, but one may permit substantive decisions to be made and implemented, while the other allows only relatively trivial ones.

The Distribution of Authority at School Sites - shows considerable variation as well. In some school-based management efforts, virtually all the decision-making authority extended to the site remains in the hands of the principal. In others, teachers .... but not other stakeholders ... join

the principal in making decisions. In most cases, however, decision-making authority is delegated to councils which might be made up of noncertified school staff and/or parents and/or community members and/or students, as well as the principal and the teachers. Another difference across sites was:

The Degree of Real Power held by the Councils - that is, the presence of a broad-based decision-making body representing all major stakeholders does not necessarily guarantee that the interests of all groups are truly represented. Some principals assemble such groups and then either occupy their time with petty matters or retain veto power over their decisions. (p. 3)

There were other variations which further added to the confusion about what school-based management meant and the sometimes contradictory findings that it produced.

Cotton (1992) explained that in spite of the confusion, researchers concur that school-based management: "Is a form of district organization; alters the governance of education; represents a shift of authority toward decentralization; identifies the school as the primary unit of educational change and moves increased decision-making power to the local school site" (p. 3).

Kuehn (1996) identified four models of site-based management, commonly advocated by groups reflecting differing interests. He noted that: "while any particular situation may have elements of more than one of these models, it is likely to have features of one more than others" (p. 1).

The first model was collegial, participatory, democratic and involved all school staff in making decisions, whether through committees or full-staff

processes. This model was advocated by the Alberta Teachers Association, and the two major teacher (USA) unions, NEA and AFT, and supported professional control.

The second model was principal directed site-based management, which may have involved some consultation with staff and parents, but was ultimately controlled and directed by the principal and other administrators. This summarized the Alberta model, and was an example of administrative control.

Model three had a parent committee operating as a board of governors. In many cases these committees were elected, as in New Zealand and Australia (Menzies 1996), and were often part of reforms that eliminated or reduced the role of a school district and strengthened local community control. In some situations there was a similarity between this model and charter schools.

The fourth model had some form of school-based committee that operated with a limited mandate, but had significant influence in that area. This committee was responsible for a program and budget area such as special education, or managed specially designated funds which came to the school from non-traditional sources.

The many manifestations of school-based management were not confined to North America. Evidence of the widespread popularity of school-based management was found in New Zealand, parts of Australia, England and Wales, and Israel. Combined with forty four American States, and the provinces of Alberta, and Newfoundland and Labrador the popularity of school-based management was growing. Examples of administrative control of

school-based managed schools were found in Alberta, Newfoundland and Labrador, Kentucky, Memphis, Columbo (Ohio), Miami and Los Angeles. Community control of school-based managed schools was noted in New Zealand, Australia, England and Chicago (Murphy & Beck, 1995).

Implementation of School-Based Management

Transition to school-based management brought about large-scale change. It altered the functional capacity of the school by increasing the involvement of the school community in managing the school and improving its performance.

Implementing such change (restructuring) was not a simple process. Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1994) reported that: "It is a gradual iterative process of introducing and refining changes until all aspects of the organization support this new way of functioning" (p.7). The transition to school-based management was deep change, because it entailed fundamental restructuring of people's understanding of the school and their role in it. Principals and teachers, found new ways of leading and influencing, and became managers of change. Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1994) cautioned that the introduction of instructional change was not an automatic consequence of establishing school-based management.

Successful schools laid the foundation for change by realizing they would have to be effective in meeting the needs of their clientele and their communities. They also took time to educate themselves regarding different approaches to achieving valued outcomes by visiting and exposing themselves

to different organizations, and considering findings from both education and private sector sources (Orvano, 1994).

School-based management, in many cases, brought profound change to how and where decisions were made (Oswald, 1995, p. 2), although effective decision-making was not an automatic consequence of decentralizing decisions to the school. Successful schools developed processes which increased the school communities' ability to give input and get involved. Decision-making was not confined to one individual or a narrow group of people who composed the school council.

The ability of a school to successfully implement school-based management was in part a measure of the organizations willingness to acknowledge and confront barriers that impeded progress toward building effective decision-making, sound communication, and a safe and caring school community. The next section outlines these potential barriers and reviews their nature and affect.

Barriers

Much of the literature on school-based management was concerned with the problems school districts and schools had experienced. Some were implementation problems, some were in connection with school-based management structures, and others revolved around the failure of school-based management to meet stakeholder expectations (Wohlstetter and

Mohrman 1994, p. 273). Effective school-based decision-making was identified as pivotal to success.

Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1994) observed three types of barriers to effective decision-making: "(1) Principals who were autocratic or who failed to utilize input; (2) staff factionalism, including competition between departments or divisiveness between those in favor of reform and those opposed; and (3) staff apathy and unwillingness to get involved" (p. 7). The effective use of decision-making was only one of the challenges that personnel, operating school-based management, had to overcome to be successful. Considerable analytical effort was made to identify and describe obstacles to success with school-based management. Sources were found in the work of Malen, Ogawa and Krantz (1990); Ceperley (1991); White (1989); and Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1994).

Ceperley (1991) felt that: "The greatest source of trouble was time .... which required school staff to devote additional hours every day on top of an already hectic schedule" (p. 8). The activities associated with school-based management and the stress produced by the extra time demanded led to pessimism and burnout, in some settings, particularly on the part of teachers.

Unrealistic expectations were a commonly reported barrier to success. Schools, in their first year or two of operation, undertook too many projects and procedural changes. The research indicated that full institutionalization of a school-based management process may take as long as five years or more.

Insufficient support for site councils was also cited. Site councils were

often given extensive responsibilities, but lacked the qualifications to carry them out. Typical problems included:

1. Lack of knowledge of school operations particularly in the areas of school policy, budgets, and personnel.

2. Lack of group practice skills involving group decision-making, conflict resolution, and problem solving; and

3. Lack of clarity about their role: Was it decision-making or advisory? If decision-making, could it make decisions on all aspects of the school, or only some of them? What were the mandates and policy that governed their actions? Site councils were often asked to function without answers to these fundamental questions. (Cotton 1992, p. 6-7)

Schools were sometimes required to implement school-based management while continuing to function within the constraints imposed by existing federal, provincial, school board, district, and teacher union regulations. In these situations, school personnel sometimes found there was little left to manage. Research has shown that increased flexibility, and selective waiving of policy, and contractual constraints, was associated with more successful school-based management efforts (Herman & Herman, 1993).

Along with insufficient time, training, and professional flexibility, another obstacle frequently encountered in school-based management systems was a lack of adequate financial resources. Cotton (1997) felt:

This may take the form of insufficient release time for planning or insufficient time and/or insufficient resources to implement plans once made. At worst, these constraints can lead school personnel to view

school-based management as unreal, the same old thing,

masquerading as innovation. (p. 7)

If authorities did not extend considerable decision-making latitude to

schools, or they failed to provide the resources to enable staff to carry out

decision responsibilities, school-based management became, in the words of

Lindquist & Mauriel (1989), "Just another moderately helpful public relations

and communications vehicle tinkering with the peripheral issues of school

governance and management" (p. 414); or as observed by Taylor and Levine

(1991): "only a cosmetic attempt to improve the school" (p. 394).

The level of funding during the implementation process, was an

important element of this study. The reforms set in place by Alberta Education

were enacted at a time of significant fiscal restraint which was mandated by the

Provincial Government of Alberta. Participants were surveyed to ascertain

the degree to which funding, in their view, effected the implementation process.

Programs and Student Outcomes

Program changes proposed as a result of the implementation of school-

based management were frequently not addressed. This was particularly true

of instructional program initiatives about which Malen and Ogawa (1990) felt

that site participants had failed to address subjects central to their instructional

program. They pointed out that school-based management impeded the

development and implementation of instructional improvements in settings

where it diverted attention from teaching and learning.

The common failure of school-based management efforts to improve

instruction was related to another aspect of this problem which was the tendency of staff implementing school-based management to forget that it was not an end in itself, but a means of improving student performance by improving the quality of schooling. Speculating on the reason for this loss of perspective, Mojkowski and Fleming (1988), reiterated that the implementation of school-based management is a complex undertaking:

> Considerable time and energy will be required to negotiate the details of new responsibilities and relations. There is a tendency, therefore, to place inordinate attention on the "technology" of school-site management and forget the goal: an improving school where students learn at their potential. (p. 14)

In its common forms school-based management was not necessarily connected to educational change. The rationale was that principals and teachers would simply make better decisions about how to use certain resources, when freed from District constraints. Brown (1990) suggested that schools would, indeed, make different decisions than did district offices, but that these changes would often be at the margins. Levin (1991) gave the following example: "Schools may change the ways libraries are staffed, or access teachers have to photocopiers. The evidence did not suggest that school-based management efforts resulted in significant changes in educational goals or practices" (p. 2).

Cotton (1997) felt that the ultimate measure of the value of school-based management would be the outcomes observed in students who attended school-based managed schools. As noted by Arterbury and Hord (1991), "site-

based decision making should be explicitly considered as a means to increase learner outcomes" (p. 7).

To date, researchers, Arterbury and Hord (1991); Collins and Hansen (1991); Malen, Ogawa and Krantz (1990); and Taylor and Levine (1991), have not identified a direct link between school-based management and student achievement or other student outcomes, such as attendance. Cotton (1997) noted that: "in some settings student scores (on standardized or local tests) have improved slightly, in others they have declined slightly, and in most settings no differences have been noted" (p. 9). Peterson (1991) noted that "research as a whole did not indicate that site-based management brought consistent or stable improvements in student performance" (p. 2). Summers and Johnson (1995) agreed and concluded there is "virtually no evidence that school-based management translates into improved student performance" (p. 1).

Participants were asked to reflect on the effect that school-based management had on student performance in Alberta. As this was one of the rationales, quoted by Alberta Education, in support of school-based management it seemed reasonable to include information on this parameter in this study. It was expected that the implementation of school-based management would have little effect on student performance.

Stakeholder Roles and Functions

This study included three major school-based stakeholders, at the school level, as participants. As representatives of management, staff, and

parents, participants had a major leadership role within their school community. How school leadership evolved and how was it utilized during the three years of implementation of school-based management was a primary focus of this study. School-based management, by its nature and design, implied a greater degree of collaboration between school-based leaders and a greater sharing of authority and decision-making. In Alberta, collaboration and sharing began with changes to the School Act.

The amended School Act in Alberta (1994) added an increased weight of law to the roles and responsibilities of school principals. It stated that a principal of a school must:

* provide instructional leadership in schools

* evaluate or provide for the evaluation of programs offered in the school

* ensure that students have the opportunity to meet prescribed standards of education

* direct the management of the school

* maintain order and discipline in the school and on the school grounds and during activities sponsored or approved by the board

* promote cooperation between the school and the community it serves

* supervise the evaluation and advancement of students

* ensure the instruction provided by teachers is consistent with the courses of study and education programs prescribed, approved or authorized pursuant to the Act

* evaluate the teachers employed in the school

*   carry out those duties that are assigned by the board in accordance with the regulation and requirements of the school council and board (Section 15, p.21).

Two important items were added by government to the roles and responsibilities of principals [see italics]. The first empowered school councils to be part of the duty setting process that principals were assigned, and the second charged the principal to have students meet prescribed standards. Increased school-based responsibilities were an integral part of trends commonly found in North America (Hord, 1992; Kolsti, 1991; Lewis, 1989; and Malen, Ogawa & Kranz, 1990).

Hart (1993) noted a number of trends appearing in North American school systems. One of these was an increased diversity of structure and goals within public schools. Charter schools, magnet schools and other choice-option schools were part of this expansionist trend. A second trend was the growing popularity of school-based management, which included parent governance. A third trend identified by Hart was an increased demand for documentable outcomes rather than procedural compliance. In Alberta, the growth of provincial achievement testing, the development of new teaching competency descriptors and a revised teacher evaluation policy were examples of this trend.

School-Based Management and the Principal

In Alberta, principals were now required to perform their duties in a system transformed by externally mandated reforms aimed at increased

accountability, by achieving economies of operation and relocating some of the primary mechanisms of decision-making and governance.

Increased public attention changed the role of everyone who worked in schools. This attention, according to the Alberta Teachers' Association (1998), included: "ranking of schools using achievement tests, debate about the purpose of schools, education versus training, direct involvement of business in schools, competition with private schools and questions about funding for education" (p. 3). With increased attention came increased expectations, expressed as concerns, from parents, school councils, community leaders and special interest groups which required time and attention. Each group expected a positive and immediate response to its issue in spite of often contradictory demands.

The amendment to the School Act in 1995 which made school councils mandatory and advisory to the principal altered the role of the principal who became responsible for ensuring that a school council was in place and operating effectively. School councils had an increased involvement in many aspects of school life which brought challenges and opportunities. Both proved to be time and resource consuming.

Concurrent with the School Act (1995) amendment came government regulations requiring more accountability in the form of school plans, strategic plans, technology plans, student achievement comparisons, school results reports and additional reports and reporting. Much of the administrator's time was taken completing paper work required by this form of accountability. Although the legal role of the principal required they be instructional leader, practice often determined that the role of administrators had a management

focus.

These views were substantiated by a number of studies, (David, 1989; Easton & Bennet, 1994; Wohlstetter & Mohrman, 1994), which indicated positive and negative outcomes concerning principals involved with school-based management. Under all models of school-based management , administrative, professional, and community control, principals have taken on additional managerial roles, relayed more information, and experienced increased flexibility and discretion. They also managed greater workloads.

Increased accountability for performance among principals, was indicated in all three models of school-based management, but as Menzies (1996) reported, mainly with community control, where in some situations they could be hired or fired by the school council. Principals indicated that under professional control of school-based management they also experienced greater accountability for their actions. A loss of principal power was experienced in both community and professional forms of control (David, 1994).

Rallis and Goldring (1993) noted that restructuring and reform have created a paradox for school leaders. One thrust of reform urged them to take matters into their own hands while, concurrently, increasing regulation appeared to put greater control beyond their grasp. Ginsburg and Thompson (1993) identified a similar anomaly affecting school leaders who were held accountable for improved student test scores while managing schools with static or reduced financial resources.

If school leaders take on new roles and responsibilities they must be adequately prepared. Bolton (1990) and Fullan (1991) stressed the importance of recruitment, on-the-job training, and mentoring in the development of school

principals, and other leaders, to enable them to meet the challenge of their positions.

Stufflebeam and Nevo (1993) believed that the training of future principals was vital to their success. They strongly promoted a model of individualized, problem-centered education that involved five steps. Townsend et. al. (1997) described these:

1. Identify needs for professional development by assessing performance in key areas of the job.

2. Develop a learning contract to target and resolve particular job-related needs.

3. Obtain and study pertinent materials such as research findings and exemplary practices.

4. Network with experts and peers to obtain advice and assistance.

5. Evaluate the experience and provide evidence that learning objectives have been achieved. (p. 5)

Cross and Reitzug (1995) warned that the successful implementation of school-based management depended greatly on the ability of leaders in schools to "build a climate of trust, create meaningful avenues for involvement, and let go of destructive relationships" (p. 16). Other authors, Spillane & Thompson (1996), offered persuasive evidence of the importance of the personal commitment of educators, the power of social and emotional relationships to effect change initiatives, the elusiveness of authentic collaboration in school reform, and the cumulative impact of an unrelenting reform agenda upon the enthusiasm of even the most dedicated educators.

Valesky and Cheatum (1993) reported that: "Support from principals is

fundamental to implementation of any programs at the school level. Therefore, how principals perceived the process of school-based decision-making impacts its success" (p. 1). It has also been found that the principal's leadership style is directly related to successful implementation (Valesky, Etheridge, Horgan and Smith, 1993).

In Alberta, decreases in funding to public education expanded the role of principal to chief fund-raiser or lobbyist for funds in the community. The Alberta Teachers' Association (1998) reported: " this is connected to the pressure now felt to be competitive with private schools, with schools in other systems and even with schools within the system" (p. 4). A competitive market system demanded a different role for principals than did a collaborative one.

The decrease in funding experienced in other social service areas increased the need for services at the school level. The school principal used some time and resources, to meet students' medical, social and emotional needs. Examples from my own experience included; administering medication for students, counseling children and families, referring students to other helping agencies, diagnosis of learning disabilities, seeking child welfare and mental health placements and consulting with law enforcement agencies.

Other sources of pressure on schools leaders were further initiatives from Alberta Education. These included frequent curriculum change, provincial testing, new teacher evaluation policies, implementation of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and education information exchange. Potentially positive for schools these initiatives were implemented simultaneously with no increase in resources and impacted the ability of the principal and the school staff to provide an effective program for students. The

Alberta Teachers Association (1998) reported: "The administrator {principal} may experience a conflict in his or her role, between being an advocate for children, a supplier of information and promoter of provincial programs" (p. 4).

If real, these change factors have already impacted the role of the principal and may be seen as role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload. These self same factors may also have affected teaching staff who have adapted to the differing demands of school-based management.

School-Based Management and the Teacher

The role of teachers in school-based management was vaguely defined but universally acknowledged. Teachers were consistently identified as important partners in school-based management models (Leithwood & Menzies, 1996). A wide variety of reform measures have reflected on the teachers position as the primary provider of instruction, but school-based management extended the potential role of teachers beyond the classroom.

Under school-based management, teachers were often required to assume leadership roles in staff development, mentoring, and curriculum development, and became key partners in school and staff supervision and evaluation (David, 1990). Programs of this type were designed to elevate the professionalism of teachers, increase morale, add prestige and recognition, and ongoing opportunities for professional development (Ovando, 1994). Teacher collaboration was a major tenet of school-based management.

Johnson (1990) reported that policy makers often site school-based management as a means to draw from teachers unused expertise and expand

their professional influence in curriculum, staffing and school organization.

Smylie and Tuermer (1992) reflected this view and used Hammond, Indiana, as an example where teacher participation in decision-making provided crucial information closest to the school, and classroom, and improved the quality of ideas and decisions. They stated that teacher participation in school-level decision-making promoted a "commitment to new programs and policies and increased motivation to implement them" (p. 6). They felt that one simple reform had the potential to decentralize governance, increase teacher professionalism and improve instruction.

Predicted Effects

A primary purpose of school-based management was to improve teaching and learning. Since students learn in classrooms, not school board offices, teachers should be deeply involved in the decision-making process. A predicted effect linked teachers' practical understanding of classroom complexities with the presumption that they would focus on programs that improved achievement (Liontos, 1994).

Griffin noted that teaching was a "culture of isolation" in which teachers, in the privacy of their own rooms, made their own key instructional decisions using their own professional judgment. The practitioners he interviewed believed their own methods were effective. They took a "live and let live" attitude towards the practices of others, including colleagues (1995). This isolation impeded the progress of change within schools. Wiess (1993) suggested that teacher caution might be justified. Their experience taught them to be wary of

innovative new ideas that they would be expected to make work, often without assistance from the system.

A second prediction highlighted increased job satisfaction for teachers. Involvement in decision-making would create ownership, commitment and a sense of empowerment, as collaboration led to new roles and relationships (Blase et. al., 1995). At best, school-based management, has promoted equality and turned schools into democratic workplaces.

A third prediction that school-based management would create new forms of leadership was advanced by Liontos, who felt that not only teachers would be brought into the process. Principals would also devise new strategies based on facilitation and trust, rather than direct authority. "Letting go" was a major administrative priority (1994).

Almost one-third of school district respondents to a National Education Association survey (1991, p.1) reported some kind of site-based decision-making involving teachers. However, research suggests that school-based management was difficult to implement and its effects hard to substantiate. Malen, Ogawa and Kranz (1991) agreed. They concluded that school-based management was "empirically, an elusive notion" (p. 296), and that there was "little evidence that [it] altered influence relationships, renewed school organizations, or developed the qualities of academically effective schools" (p. 289). Little long term evidence exists that teachers exert meaningful influence in schools which may either work for or against such initiatives as school-based management.

Although school-based management was designed to encourage school personnel to take charge of their own organizations, ironically, the

prevailing model for achieving this change was top down with district officials delegating authority and responsibility. Johnson & Boles (1994) reported that aside from operational differences this "transaction was widely understood to be a one-way move of authority, opportunity, and resources from the central office to the schools" (p. 112). This movement of power from central office to local schools was a popular tenant of school-based management to which a majority of proponents subscribed.

Lawler (1991) believed that power was only one part of a success model which included information, rewards and knowledge. Decentralizing power alone limits the ability of school-based management to work as a successful reform. By exercising system-wide control of information, especially political, and managing rewards, and limiting knowledge, school districts may have unwittingly negated their reform efforts. In Alberta, education reforms were mandated by government. School districts, uncooperative to government dictates, had means by which they could slow down the pace of reform without appearing to be directly opposed to it. In much the same way teachers had their own sources of power, knowledge, and information which could be used to support, or oppose school, restructuring efforts.

Boles (1991) found that a Brookline, Massachusetts restructuring project illustrated teachers' power to exercise collegial influence and to make profound changes in their work with little support from the system. This was in sharp contrast to Potter's (1991) study of a high school staff decision not to join the Coalition of Essential Schools which demonstrated teachers' power to

refuse opportunities to participate in school reform advanced by school officials.

Districts may delegate to schools the formal power to select a curriculum, but teachers already had the power to determine the fate of the curriculum in their classrooms (Cuban 1990). The district may provide schools with information about system-wide goals or test results, but teachers already possess information derived from school-based planning and their own assessment of student work. The district may offer knowledge in the form of in-service workshops, but teachers have their own knowledge, based on pedagogical expertise, that can be used to inform the system. Finally, the district may dispense the extrinsic rewards of pay and promotion, but the schools are a place where teachers work and gain satisfaction from students and colleagues (Johnson 1990).

Johnson & Boles (1994) felt that the majority of literature on school-based management focused on power issues and whether school staffs, particularly teachers, had it. In their view only a few school districts, in the U.S.A., delegated both the formal authority and the budgetary means to effect change in school organization, staffing, and programs. In these districts there was substantial shifts of power from the central administration to the school site. In addition, there were significant differences in the strategies used and the range of decisions that schools were empowered to make. Other variances in districts running school-based management programs included: the degree to which schools were directed by district guidelines, the extent of fiscal responsibility they exercised and the number of schools who participated. Reflecting on this variation, Hill and Bonham (1991) observed:

Many key issues remain unresolved: Most site-managed schools

controlled their own budgets and had freedom to select new staff

members who fit into a school's academic program and social climate.

May a site-managed school create its own curriculum, or should it be

guided and constrained by goals and principles of instruction set

elsewhere? May a school community, including staff and parents, define

the grounds on which performance will be evaluated, or must it continue

to be judged by central authorities on standard performance measures.

(p. 6-7)

In a study of three small school districts, White (1992) found that more

than 90% of the teachers interviewed reported that staff had a lot of involvement

in school budget decisions and school curriculum decisions. Teachers held

the majority of positions on school-site councils as well as district and school-

site budget, curriculum, and hiring committees. White (1992) concluded that

decentralization plans that "emphasize teacher involvement rather than

community involvement may have a greater capacity for allowing teachers

increased input as well as influence" (p. 80). Positive effects on teachers were

reported mostly in the professional control model of school-based

management but also in administrative and community control. Menzies (1996)

reported that: "an overwhelming number of studies reported a much heavier

workload for teachers, especially in the professional control of school-based

management" (p. 2).

Teachers responding to a survey conducted by the Consortium on

Chicago School Research (1991), after one year of reform, reported that 60

percent of teachers agreed that their school was getting better and that they

were more optimistic about continued improvement than they were when reform began. Prior to school reform many teachers feared that radical reform of school governance, using school-based management, would result in negative consequences.

Whether or not teachers acquired new power from the central office, or from their principals, or in Alberta's case from the provincial government, Johnson and Boles (1994) indicated that reports on school-based management reform supported the contention that teachers already held and exercised power of their own, which was not delegated from central office. Therefore, although certain new powers can be delegated under school-based management, teachers had the power to decide what to implement, confront peers with new expectations, and experiment with new forms of leadership. If true, they could also use the same power to disregard district initiatives, and weaken school improvement agendas.

In 1994, Johnson and Boles stated: "Successful SBM depended not only on the district [or the government] decentralizing authority to the schools and principals sharing power with teachers, but also on teachers exercising influence at the school sites and, through their efforts, made SBM work for the district" (p.123).

Teacher Satisfaction

Throughout the literature teachers reported that they were pleased when they had a chance to influence school decisions, leading them to feel both respected and empowered (Griffin 1995). Collaborative teacher efforts were

often taken seriously, and the results of those decisions were more likely to be supported (Weiss 1993). However, Weiss et.al. (1992) found that school-based management often created conflict among teachers. Disagreements that once could be politely ignored now had to be resolved. New alliances changed the balance of power, with enthusiastic rookies having as much influence as veteran teachers (Lashway 1996, p. 2). Often valuable time and energy were drained by the effort needed to learn new ways of doing things.

Lashway (1996) felt that it might take several years before teachers learned to manage this new approach. The learning curve was not smooth. Weiss (1993) agreed. She did not see linear progression in the school-based management schools she studied. "Everywhere there were ups and downs, movement and relapses, optimism and disenchantment .... school-based management is not a process that, once introduced, necessarily matures and flowers" (p. 72).

School-based management almost exclusively means that professional staff share power with parents through the mechanism of a school, or site-based council. In Alberta, voluntary school councils have been commonplace since 1988. The new parent leadership role existent in Alberta is a focus of this study.

School-Based Management and Parents

Commonly, the vehicle for parent governance in a school was the school/site council. In the myriad of school-based management models, parent input was focused in the governance activities undertaken by school

councils (White 1989). Governance, in this study, included any activity which provided parents the opportunity to take part in decision-making about school policies, programs, and activities. This included being a member of a parent advisory group, a local school improvement committee, an active Parent Teacher Association member, or a elected school council representative.

Cotton (1997) reported that: "Parents and community representatives have been relatively uninformed and underutilized regarding decisions and operations" (p. 6). This was particularly noted in the literature dealing with the professional model of school-based management (David, 1996; and Wylie, 1995). Other models made increased use of parent/community input, and provided training to help them become more capable participants in school planning and decision making. Leithwood and Menzies (1996) agreed with Cotton who confirmed that:

Eighteen studies identified negative and positive outcomes of SBM related to parents .... more opportunities for input and leadership roles, however, nearly as many studies reported parents had few opportunities for real input and played a limited role, with little change from traditional parent/professional relationship patterns. (p. 2)

How school councils performed seemed to echo how involved parents were in terms of governance issues. Some of the positive results of school-based management on school councils, reported by Jenni, 1991; Kannapel, Moore, Coe, & Aagaard, 1995, indicated positive results included hiring the best qualified principals and involving teachers in the selection of principals. Negative results included councils dealing with an excessively narrow range of decisions, unclear about their responsibilities, and unsuccessful in getting

decisions implemented (David, 1990; Wohlstetter & McCurdy, 1991). Menzies
(1996) added that:

> Under the administrative control model (advisory school councils)
>
> studies reported council members played an observational and
>
> discussional role only and were also unclear about their
>
> responsibilities. With professional control SBM councils were still
>
> reported to be unclear about their responsibilities and dealing with a
>
> narrow range of decisions, mostly related to teaching and learning. (p. 3)

In this review, no examples were found of programs in which parent
participation in decision making roles could be directly linked to improved
student achievement. The relationship between parent participation in decision
making and student achievement is not as extensively researched as the
effects of parent involvement in students' learning.

Cotton and Wikelund (1989) summarized other benefits that were found
to arise from involving parents in school governance. These included:

> 1. The elimination of mistaken assumptions parents and school people
>
> may hold about one anothers motives, attitudes, intentions and abilities.
>
> 2. The growth of parents' ability to serve as resources for the academic,
>
> social and psychological development of their children .... with the

potential for much longer term influence (because of continued

interaction with their children over time).

> 3. The increase of parents own skills and confidence, sometimes

furthering their own educations and upgrading their jobs, plus providing improved role models for their children.

4. The increase in parents serving as advocates for the schools throughout the community. (p. 7)

School leaders, who engaged school-based management as a mechanism for school reform, believed school-based management would improve the quality of educational decision making by utilizing those closest to the action (Levine & Eubanks, 1989), and solicited parents to become partners in some form of decision-making. The success or failure of school-based management rested on the degree to which parent decision-making was utilized.

School Councils in Alberta

In 1988 Alberta's School Act was amended. A significant area addressed by those changes was school councils. The changes aimed at making school councils advisory bodies that served the school. Despite government intentions some school councils had problems surviving with the result that a review of the "School Council" section of the Alberta School Act was conducted.

The government publication, Framework for our Children's Future: The School Act. 1988, set the stage for school councils:

The new School Act was designed to reflect the important fact that parents must be involved in a meaningful way in important decisions about their children's education. No changes have been made which

would in any way compromise the parent's role in the education of their children. But many people, including parents, told us that as long as there was a provision for the establishment of school councils, there was no need to specify how they should be established, what their membership should be, and what role they should play. These decisions can and should be made locally and can vary across the province depending on the wishes of parents and school boards. Consequently, changes have been made in the School Act which retain the right of parents to establish school councils but allow for flexibility. Decisions about the formation and operation of school councils are left to parents and their elected school boards. (p. 4)

The 1990 review of the impact of school councils, conducted by the Policy and Evaluation Branch of Alberta Education, found a number of factors confounded the operation of school councils. These included, school council legislation that was vague and poorly defined relationships between school boards and school councils which became troublesome and resulted in needlessly formal management of school councils. Other school stakeholder groups were suspicious of parent motivations, with regards to council formation and operation, and feared the potential for an uncontrolled "parent directed political group" to interfere between school districts and their schools.

The Legislation governing school councils found in The School Act (1988), amended September 1990, stated:

1. Parents of students attending a school may establish a school council for that school.

2. The majority of the members of a school council of a school must be parents of students attending that school.

3. A school council may:

   (a) advise the principal of the school and the board respecting any matter relating to the school, and

   (b) perform any duty or function delegated to it by the board in accordance with the delegation.

4. The parents of students attending a school may dissolve the school council of that school in accordance with rules made under this section respecting the dissolution of the school council.

5. The board shall make rules respecting the establishment of a school council, the election of members and the dissolution of the school council.

6. A school council may, subject to any rules made under this section, make by-laws governing its meetings and the business and conduct of its affairs. (p. 15, section 17)

The 1990 review generated recommendations for stakeholder groups but did not change the legislation. At the time it was felt that school councils could be successful by utilizing existing policy and procedures. The

maintenance of school councils was left to local stakeholders who continued to operate them with varied success.

The 1994 restructuring gave school councils legislated powers. The "new" school council was an important component of the decentralization process that the Government of Alberta enacted to give parents, and other stakeholders, a greater voice in the operation of schools. School councils, although dealt with separately in the legislation (Bill 37), became an integral part of school-based management across the province. The intent of the first draft of Bill 37 was to give school councils the power to make any changes they deemed necessary for the education of their children and accountability for that change. This draft was later modified due to feedback that Alberta Education (1994) received on the Roles and Responsibilities: A Position Paper.

Bill 37 was changed from "a school council shall" in the original document to: "a school council may" in the school Amendment Act (Government of Alberta, 1995, Chapter S-3.1). This allowed school councils to maintain their advisory capacity, or assume additional responsibility for decision making if desired. It was also made necessary for school councils to consult with school principals on school matters rather than assume full responsibility and authority for changes as indicated in the first draft. Substantial parent power was granted by government when school-based management legislation was first introduced, then taken away. The irony of this action was twofold. Taxpayers, in the form of school parents, gained and then lost power over local schools due to the ambivalence expressed by other taxpayers in their roles as parent representatives on school councils.

Summary

Educational restructuring efforts, in Alberta, involved taxpayers who were primarily represented by school parents. As mandated, it was up to the building principal and other participants to accommodate the increased involvement of parents, staff and in some cases students, in decision-making for their school. The role of the principal as facilitator of staff and parental input into decision-making was deemed to be paramount. If and how that interaction occurred is a focus of this study which attempted to answer: how did the implementation of school-based management shape the roles, functions and attitudes of principals, lead teachers, and school council chairpersons?

Regardless of leadership style, school leaders were required to make rational decisions which had to be shared collaboratively with other elements of the school community. Progress towards shared decision-making between staff and parents, and the interaction among and between, school leaders, was another focus of this study. Sharing power and supporting the learning efforts of all stakeholders in education was considered crucial to the success of school-based management in Alberta.

One of the objectives for this review of the literature was to find the links that existed between school-based management internationally and school-based management in Alberta. The development of school-based management as a restructuring tool for public education systems has evolved in different ways. Diversity, and the resultant confusion around such matters as definition, role, and function of school-based management, and who has the actual power and authority to make and act on decisions, are factors which

complicate efforts to make sense of current S.B.M. trends and developments.

Chapter III presents the method for site and subject selection and protection of human subjects. It describes the interviews, observations, and documentation which profile the collected data.

Chapter III

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate how government mandated school-based management has effected the governance of public and separate schools in Alberta, by conducting in-depth interviews of a sample of school principals, lead teachers, and parents who were school council chairpersons. Specifically, the purpose was to develop an understanding of how school-based management shaped the roles, functions, and attitudes of the participants about school governance.

A focus of this study was the leadership role of each principal, lead teacher and school council chair. Of particular interest was each participants role in decision-making, sharing decisions with other school leaders, and the changes which occurred as a result of how decisions were made. The description of participant involvement in decision making added to current research data and gave this study its significance.

Chapter 1 outlined how school-based management was mandated as part of the Government of Alberta education restructuring program. The change from a traditional, top-down, authoritarian decision-making model to one that was school-based and collaborative had the potential to reshape the nature of

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schools, and the skills, attributes and training that school leaders required to work collaboratively with each other and other members of the school community. The school council's strengthened status in school governance required school leaders, administration, staff, and involved parents, to meet the increased challenge of making school-based management and program decisions in a time of rapid change and increased fiscal restraint.

The participants in this study included school principals, lead teachers and school council chairs (parents). A set of four research questions guided this study.

1.   What leadership issues arose from the mandatory implementation of school-based management and how have they affected the participant's role and function within the school community?

2.   How have participants revised or adapted decision making models, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of school-based management?

3.   What barriers have participants encountered while implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers?

4.   What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have participants acquired, or still need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management?

This chapter discusses the research design which consists of a multi-site case study of approximately eighteen school related personnel representing three school based leadership groups; principals, lead teachers,

and parents serving as school council chairpersons. The data collected from the case study interviews are analyzed and composed as a descriptive analysis, in chapter four, using the research questions as a guide.

According to Strauss & Corbin (1990), "qualitative descriptive case study can be used to gain novel and fresh slants on matters about which a lot is known. It can also be used to uncover and understand new phenomena" (p. 19). For this study, interviews were conducted with eighteen participants selected from two schools representing three selected school districts.

The researchers intention was to gain insight about the changing role of school leaders, the methods used for decision making, and the changes incurred in each school as the participants perceived it. This information helped clarify the changing role of the principal, the lead teacher and the parent who chaired the school council. Participants descriptions of how each became involved in the process of collaborative decision-making helped to determine the degree to which each school was committed to their own unique school-based management process. The information gathered from the first set of interviews was used to formulate questions for the second round of interviews to help obtain a more complete picture of each participants viewpoint. Two interviews were conducted with each participant to extent interview time and facilitate participant interaction with transcribed responses.

Research Design

The research design for this case study included the identification of six schools, three elementary and three secondary, situated in three public school

districts. The school districts were chosen from the southern half of the province. Demographics of larger schools within each district were gathered, from Alberta Education documents, and potential candidate schools were identified. When contacted by letter, fifteen school principals volunteered their school for inclusion in this study. Eight schools were chosen using the criteria described on page 88. This sample included two pilot schools who acted as test subjects for a trial round of interviews and data collection.

A major factor in selecting the subject schools was the knowledge that each participant, principal, lead teacher and school council chair, had been at the school prior to 1994 and had experienced pre and post mandated school-based management eras. This information was gathered and confirmed by telephone interviews with the school principals.

Potential participants, especially lead teachers, were interviewed in person from lists supplied by each school principal. All volunteered. After confirming a set of participants for the study I proceeded to collect data from the pilot group and then completed the first round of study group interviews and collection of artifacts in the form of written material on school-based management produced at the school or for the district. Second round interviews took place three months later.

Information from interviews, observations and artifacts was used to cross check and corroborate information collected. This form of triangulation is used as a credibility check and according to Guba and Lincoln (1989, p. 241): "should be dedicated to verifying that the constructions collected are those that have been offered by respondents." Further cross checks were done by comparing school and school district artifacts collected from each school.

Participants reviewed their own transcripts and were allowed to make changes as they saw fit. The data was collected between February and July of 1998. The data was arranged according to the research questions and summarized in a case record. The case record, according to Patton (1981), pulls together and organizes a mass of case data into a comprehensive primary resource package, which includes all the material used to complete the case analysis and case study. A follow-up interview was requested of each school principal during the following school year. These were completed in May of 1999.

Summaries of interviews were organized according to: the role of each type of school leader, principal, lead teacher and school council chairs, and emergent issues that covered decision-making, barriers thwarting change, and new attitudes, knowledge and skills.

Methodological Overview

Qualitative Research

When considering the type of research methodology to use, qualitative methods appropriately matched the research questions. Gaining insight into the experiences participants had while implementing mandatory school-based management and comparing and contrasting emergent leadership data would provide an opportunity to gain knowledge about decision-making at the school level, and the changing roles of school principals, teachers, and parents.

The impact of education restructuring initiatives during the period of the first three year plan (1994-97) produced significant system-wide reorganization.

How school leaders coped, adapted and managed change and provided leadership during this period provided data useful to educational leaders planning to introduce school-based management as part of a restructuring process. The nature of the research questions, in the context of examining educational change, led to the adoption of a case study method as an appropriate research device.

Case Study

The case study method is the research design of choice for this study because of its descriptive and evaluative strength in educational settings, its qualitative character, and its flexibility. The naturalistic approach of case studies provides the flexibility to study the emergence, implementation, and development of school-based management on members of a school community.

Merriam (1988) stated that case study evaluation of educational issues has been popular since the 1970's. She explained that case studies are valuable when (a) the future of a program is contingent upon an evaluation being performed, and there are no reasonable indicators of programmatic success which can be formulated in terms of behavioral objectives or individual differences; (b) the objective of the evaluation is to develop a better understanding of the dynamics of a program; (c) it is important to leave a descriptive account; and, (d) when a common language is desired to allow the results of a study to be communicated more easily to non-researchers.

The flexibility of the case study allows the researcher to approach the

participants with predetermined questions which can be adjusted in progress to match the "needs" of the research. Because the development of school-based management in Alberta deals with program implementation, and personal and professional growth of participants, a qualitative, flexible process of exploration was needed. Human growth and change is a complex, multifaceted process and as Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggest, the power of the case study is its ability to "deal with the presentation of multiple social realities, with the construction of those constructions, with deciding how to make a case for each construction, and with deciding about what data can or may be marshaled to support, defend, or render uncredible any given construction" (p. 135-136).

The case study approach allowed the researcher to describe and analyze school-based leadership within and between schools in qualitative, complex and comprehensive terms. This approach focuses on meaning in context and "requires a data collection instrument sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data" (Merriam, 1988, p. 3). These methods included interviewing, observing, and analyzing artifacts. Credibility checks, as described by (Guba and Lincoln, 1998), were used to reduce researcher bias by employing multiple sources in an attempt to improve the validity of the study.

Researchers are a "vital part of research because they are the data collection instrument" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981). The researcher uses a number of data-gathering methods, within a natural setting, to observe/record normal occurrences to arrive at reasonable interpretations of the data. However, a case study method has the potential to misinterpret data or lead

readers to infer that the part discussed is reflective of the whole construct (Merriam, 1988). It is important to be aware of this potential for oversimplification or exaggeration of a situation. According to Merriam (1988), the case study is the "best methodology for addressing those problems in which understanding is sought in order to improve practice" (p. xiii). Understanding must be framed in a construct of trustworthiness which gives the study rigor and validity.

The first round of interview questions (Appendix E) were based on the original research questions. The questions related to the roles and functions of school-based leaders, decision making, and the acquisition of new attitudes, knowledge and skills. They were directed to school principals, lead teachers and parent chairpersons of school councils.

Supplementary questions for participants were derived for the second interviews based on the information collected from the first interviews. These questions enabled the participants to enrich previously collected information by providing an opportunity to further expand their experience. All the interview questions were directed at finding answers to the original research questions. In addition to the prepared questions used to guide the interviews, probing and follow up questions were utilized to further investigate participants' thoughts and recollections.

Criteria of Trustworthiness

The search of the literature revealed several models for dealing with the criteria of soundness, or trustworthiness, of qualitative research (Kirk & Miller,

1986; Guba, 1981; Leininger, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Patton, 1990).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to trustworthiness in qualitative study using

four constructs; credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

These constructs are similar to the quantitative terms of internal validity

(credibility), external validity (transferability), reliability (dependability), and

objectivity (conformability). This study contains all four of the constructs of

trustworthiness.

Credibility

Credibility, internal validity, measures the congruence between the

research data, the analysis and the reality of the situation. To determine the

credibility of a study, we must first define reality. Lincoln and Guba (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). Participant experience, their reality, is a

complex set of mental images that only they access. For the researcher to

attain credibility within a study the researcher must show that multiple mental

constructs are "represented .... accurately" (p. 168).

To achieve as much credibility as possible in this study, the researcher

used triangulation, observation, participant checks, and acknowledged his

researcher bias as advocated by Merriam, (1988). When interview transcripts

were completed, an outside analyst reviewed them for transcription accuracy.

Participants were also asked to check their individual transcripts and make

corrections, additions, or deletions.

Transferability

Transferability, or applicability, represents the extent to which a study's findings can be applied to other contexts or groups. Conceptually, transferability is akin to external validity in quantitative research which Patton (1981) explained as the extent that findings from a study can be generalized to the sample's population. For some researcher's, applicability or generalizability of qualitative studies, given the naturalistic setting, few controlling variables, and the uniqueness of each situation, is not relevant (Sandelowski, 1986; Wolcott, 1990). The purpose of qualitative research is to describe a phenomenon, not to generalize to others. The researcher uses the findings from sample participants to make studied inferences about the population from which they were drawn. What is transferable, to another study setting, depends on the degree to which data collection and analysis in the first study is guided by concepts and models, and the relevancy of their respective settings.

In this study, the collective experiences of participant school leaders may be transferable to similar educational settings in which mandated restructuring reforms include the introduction of school-based management. Individual leadership experience (teachers, principals, and parents) may also be transferable to peer groups in other public (K-12) education settings.

Dependability

In quantitative research consistency or, reliability, is defined as the extent to which repeated administrations of a measure provide the same outcome, or

the extent to which a measure administered once, but by different people, produces equivalent results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

By comparison, qualitative studies attempt to learn from the participants rather than control for them. The researcher and the participants are the instruments assessed for dependability (Silverman, 1993). Because variability was anticipated in qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1989) explained variability in terms of trackable variability or dependability. Trackable variability meant variability that could be identified from its source so that "outsider reviewers of such an evaluation can explore the process, judge the decisions that were made, and understand what salient factors in the context led the evaluator to the decisions and interpretations made" (p. 242).

In a case study, dependability (reliability) is defined as the extent to which the findings can be replicated. This study does not match this definition, for if repeated it may not give the same results. It is not possible to replicate the results of this study because human experience is individually unique and not static (Merriam, 1988, p. 170).

Confirmability

Confirmability is parallel to the conventional criterion of objectivity, which is concerned with assuring that data, interpretations, and outcomes of inquiries are rooted in contexts and persons apart from the evaluator and not products of the evaluator's imagination (Lincoln & Guba, 1988). A qualitative research study should respond to concerns that the researcher will shape the research. The strengths of this study were built in by the researcher who controlled for bias in

interpretation, by utilizing the following amended guidelines, originally suggested by Marshall & Grossman, (1989, p. 147-148):

1   a research partner was used to act as guide and critical analyst of researcher's conclusions.

2   a constant search for negative instances was maintained.

3   value-free note taking or recording was used to try to parallel the objective record with notes that allowed the researcher to impose a conceptual theme. The aim was to be more creative with the data in ways that might prove useful for more formal analysis.

4   simple tests were used to check analyses. Questions were asked about the data and confirmed with participants.

5   the guidance of an experienced mentor was used to control for data quality.

6   an audit of the data collection and analytic strategies used was conducted by the researcher and his mentor.

7   Triangulation of data was accomplished by comparing government and school district artifacts, internal school documents with a variety of school district communications, and contrasting the data from the two pilot schools with the schools from the main study.

Study Timeline

Dissertation and Human Subjects approval - November 1997

Pilot Interviews - January and February, 1998

Interviews - March to June, 1998

Transcriptions completed - April, 1999

Dissertation defense - November, 2000

Completion - January, 2001

Site Selection

Deep personal interested lead the researcher to conduct a case study of school based leaders responding to the mandated implementation of school-based management. In January, 1998, six schools whose principals had indicated a willingness to take part in this study were identified. In discussions with the principals it was reconfirmed that the schools were situated in three school districts, located within the southern half of the Province of Alberta. Each of the three pairs of schools was made up of an elementary school (Grades K - 7), and a secondary school (Grades 10-12). All six schools had a student population greater than 450 students. All six schools had school council chairpersons who had been involved with their respective schools before or since 1994, the year in which school-based management was first mandated.

The three school districts chosen were selected on the basis that they represented a city jurisdiction (15,000 students), an average county jurisdiction (5000 students), and a small rural jurisdiction (1500 students). The researcher believed that schools, both elementary and secondary, with a student population greater than 400 students from this range of jurisdictions, would contain a representative group of participants, (principals, lead teachers and school council chairs), and be reflective of their Alberta peers. The final choice

of pilot schools was determined by selecting one elementary and one secondary school located close to the researchers residence who had personnel willing to serve as advisors to the study. The six participant schools were chosen because of their geographic location, the demographics of the school district they were located in and individual school size.

Permission to conduct research within the six schools was obtained from each school principal. District approval to conduct research of this nature was not required but the researcher met with each of the three local superintendents of schools to explain the nature of the research.

Selection of Subjects

School principals and their respective schools were chosen using a number of telephone interviews. With the selection of each school came an automatic identification of school council chairpersons, who were contacted in person by the researcher. All agreed to participate. In this study, all school council chairs were parents with a child/children attending the school. A number of potential lead teacher candidates were identified in each school, by their school principal, and were interviewed by the researcher who "selected" lead teacher participants by ballot. The willingness of the school principal's to assist with this research study and their cooperation with participant selection, indicated a sincere interest in the topic under research.

<u>Protection of Human Subjects</u>

In order to adhere to the protection of human subjects. Approval from the Human Subjects Committee at the University of San Diego was requested. The researcher applied for expedited consent permission and followed the approval procedure. Permission was officially granted (see Appendix J). Next the researcher sought permission to conduct research in each of the three selected school districts. District approval was granted, in principle, with the stipulation that school principals were authorized to grant, or not grant, approval for research conducted within their individual schools. Approval was granted, by the site principal, in all six sites.

A consent form (Appendix A), which all participants signed, guaranteed confidentiality of the information received. What was being investigated was made very clear to each participant and, that their involvement in the project was voluntary. Participants could withdraw at any time without negative repercussions. Concurrently, participants were informed that they could skip any question they were uneasy about answering. In addition, they were made aware there was always the opportunity to edit the comments they had made during each interview when they reviewed their transcript.

It was also made clear that the source of information given during the interviews was confidential. All participants were advised that they would not be identified by name in any use the researcher may make of their responses.

Participants would simply be referred to as principal, lead teacher, and school council chair.

The researcher was the only person to have access to the data collected, with the exception of the person who checked the accuracy of a sample of transcripts. The researcher alone transcribed the tapes and was the sole recipient of school based artifacts in the form of documents, manuals and memorandums.

Data Collection

Before attempting the data collection required by this study the researcher ran a set of Pilot interviews with six subjects from two nearby schools. Each interview was approximately one hour in length and was designed to test a number of factors related to the study. Interview questions, length of interviews, interview sites, recording and audio sound levels, and note taking techniques were all explored. From this pilot experience, the researcher determined how to structure and conduct data gathering for the study.

The interview questions focused on four areas: 1) What leadership issues arose from the mandatory implementation of school-based management and how have they affected the participant's role and function within the school community? 2) How have participants revised or adapted decision making models, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of school-based management? 3) What barriers have participants encountered while implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers? 4) What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have

participants acquired, or still need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management? The interview questions were reviewed, as recommended by Spradley (1979), and new amendments incorporated. Two rounds of interviews were conducted and each interview was recorded. All interviews were transcribed, then checked, as were the personal notes taken during each interview.

The interviews were semi-structured and open-ended, to allow for individual responses, because the world is often defined in the unique ways when individuals share challenges and experiences. Van Maanen (1982), wrote that: "Ethnographic inquiry is cultural description .... It calls for the acquired knowledge of the always special language spoken in that place there, and most critically, a deep reliance on intensive work with a few informants drawn from the setting" (pp. 103-104).

Interviews

The eighteen informants for this study included six principals, six lead teachers, and six school council chairs. The purpose of the study was to gain participants perceptions of the roles of school-based leaders undergoing the transition from traditional principal centered school leadership, to the more collaborative leadership expected of restructuring models such as school-based management.

All interviews were recorded on site. The researcher visited each school four times which included an introductory visit to meet participants, two interview visits, and an exit visit to pick up reviewed transcripts and thank

participants. Clarifications related to interview data was accomplished by direct telephone calls to participants. This means of seeking clarification, checking data, and confirming information was an important and valuable adjunct to the collection of interview data. Every effort was made to have the researcher be an efficient data collection instrument (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

The protocols for the participant interviews are included in Appendix B. The two sets of semi-structured interview questions are included in Appendix E and F. The interview questions were not amended from those used in the pilot of this study. They were however divided into two parts to fit a two interview per participant format, rather that the one interview used in the pilot. Two interviews per participant gave more time for participant reflection and discussion and made for a more comfortable interview scenario.

Interview transcripts were coded by number only. Participants had the opportunity to read their transcription and to make corrections. Two way telephone contact enabled the researcher to keep the study on track and help participants feel part of a useful process. Edited transcripts were returned to the researcher at the exit meeting. Only individual participants and the researcher had access to transcription tapes and transcripts.

Documentation

Additional data was gathered in the form of school handbooks, school-based management manuals (district and school), school council policy statements and minutes of meetings, administrative memos, and material that

had been distributed to teachers and parents. Documents shared between participants were of particular interest.

These documents were reviewed and used as supportive background evidence to corroborate information gathered from interviews. For example, when a participant indicated that their school district had provided school leaders with a professional development program on school-based management, the scope and sequence of that program confirmed by district documents.

Data Analysis

The goal of data analysis is to bring order, structure and meaning to the information collected (Marshall & Grossman, 1989), and is ongoing during a naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A studied consideration of the data was undertaken to discover significant classes of things, persons and events and their inherent characteristics.

Prior to the in-depth scrutiny of the data, the researcher examined information as it was received to search for thematic issues and patterns that highlighted aspects of school leadership or governance; decision making; new attitudes, knowledge and skills, and barriers to implementation. Data from interviews, observations and documents from each source were coded according to the research question format and emergent issues. Domain and taxonomic analysis, were used to examine data (Spradley, 1979).

Analytic procedures can be described in four modes: organizing the data; generating categories, thematic issue patterns; searching for alternative

explanations of the data; and writing the report (Marshall & Grossman, 1989).

The aim of the analysis was to bring structure, meaning and order to the data collected, for this study was comparative and confirmatory in nature. The triangulation process along with use of key informants, member checking, auditing material, and researcher reflection were aids which helped clarify collected information. The data, as organized provided a case record related to the roles and functions of participant school leaders, and the component factors of school leadership or governance; decision making; new attitudes, knowledge and skills, and barriers to implementation.

For this study, data was organized into categories matching each of the research questions. These categories, or domains, were further broken down into sub-categories as defined by each participant's role. Within each domain, and among participants role, items were further grouped by similarity or difference in responses by individual participants, thus developing contrasting data. Every effort was made to further organize data by elementary and secondary fields, so that school type comparisons could also be made. By contrasting categories, sub-categories, participant roles, types of school, and individual responses it was possible to present data in a logical and straight forward manner.

Document Analysis

Information concerning the roles of school leaders during the initial three year implementation of school-based management (1994-97), was found in a variety of original source documents, which were collected from schools and

school district offices. These documents included school or staff handbooks, school council minutes, school and district budgeting manuals, school education plans, and school council guidelines and regulations.

In each case, individual school districts volunteered yearly district reports, communication packages, school-based management manuals, district budget details and memos relative to school based management issues. Districts also shared information on the respective professional development programs they offered to school leaders to help facilitate the implementation of school-based management in their schools.

The final report is a descriptive account of the phenomenon under study using the role designation of participants as a point of focus. Bogdan & Biklen (1982) reported that there are three kinds of focus for a case study which they described as thesis, theme, and topic. A thesis is a proposition put forward to be argued and defended. A theme is an overarching concept or theory that has merged from the data analysis. A topic is descriptive rather than conceptual and tends to deal with a specific aspect of the study. "How did the change to school-based management affect school principals?" is a sample topic related to this study. Merriam (1988) reports that "a topical focus is likely to have the most appeal to practitioners" (p. 190). The final report is a rich description of the participants individual and combined experiences (by topic area) with the introduction of school-based management as a mandated governance strategy for public schools in the province of Alberta, Canada.

Limitations

The first limitation considered was researcher bias, which was reduced by following good interview protocols and sound interview techniques which helped ensure that the researcher refrained from leading participants, and resisted any inclination to influence their responses. The researcher refrained from leading participants toward his biases and resisted any inclination to influence their responses. The study transcripts are an accurate, and verified, reflection of participant perceptions.

Another limitation of the study was the small sample of representative school/site leaders which was increased from six participants (two schools) to eighteen participants (six schools) on the advice of professor. David Thompson from the University of Lethbridge. This increase in the number of participants helped improve the applicability of this study to other school-based leaders. Care was taken to neither oversimplify or exaggerate the reporting of this study in an attempt to mitigate another limitation of the case study, which occurs when readers mistake the case study as an account of the whole rather than a small segment of life.

This study examined aspects of school-based management which were introduced at a time of great change in public education in Alberta. Concurrent with mandated school-based management was the legitimization of school councils, the consolidation of school districts and a significant reduction in operating and capital expenditures through-out the province. These changes may have impacted the school-based management implementation

process and influenced the development of school based management within the province.

Summary

This chapter describes how sites and participants were selected and protected. Along with data collection methods, interview questions were made explicit, as was information from other sources, such as, documents from schools, school districts and school councils. Strategies for data analysis were described.

Participant perceptions, and their worthiness, were assessed by comparing a variety of sources, particularly school and district documents. Other sources for credibility checking included an Alberta Teachers Association survey on school-based management and a University of Lethbridge study entitled In the words of Alberta's principals.

Transcription accuracy was improved by having participants review them for errors and omissions. Each school leader was also given Chapter IV, the summary of findings, to check for accuracy of information. Checking information and ensuring that data is as accurate as possible lends credibility to this study.

In Chapter IV, the case study of each participant group is presented, first by providing a detailed description of the group, then by systematically addressing results using the research questions as a guide. Common themes are developed and emerging issues are presented.

Chapter IV

Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to investigate how government

mandated school-based management has effected the governance of public

and separate schools in Alberta, by conducting in-depth interviews of a sample

of school principals, lead teachers, and parents who were school council

chairpersons.

In this chapter, findings are presented in two sections. Section one,

records the findings of nine participants from three elementary schools.

Section two, records the findings of nine other participants from three

secondary schools. Sections one and two, are proceeded by a composite

description designed to describe the general nature of each group of schools.

Remarkably, the two groups of schools were amazingly similar in physical

plant, quality of grounds, and outdoor facilities. Without exception, the six

schools were new or recently modernized, and equipped at, or above, Alberta

Education standards.

The results are presented using a domain analysis which grouped data

by domain, or category. For example, elementary lead teacher or secondary

principal. Domains, or categories, were related to each research question. The

four research questions are: (a) What leadership, role, and function issues

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arose from mandatory school-based management? (b) How did participants change decision-making models? (c) What barriers did participants encounter and how were they overcome? (d) What new attitudes, knowledge and skills were acquired by participants? Data from each case is presented describing emerging themes developed through domains established by the research questions.

All participant interviews were conducted at their school. The pilot experience lead me to split the questions into two rounds. First round questions were faxed to participants. Second round questions, with some additions, were given out on the day of the second interview. Interviews were taped, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using the four research questions as a guide. Findings were categorized by type of school, elementary or secondary.

Data were then compiled in a case record which collated specific information collected from the transcriptions and documents used for this study. Each of the summary statements from the case record was cross-referenced to the original transcripts. Information from the case record was organized to present the findings according to the four research questions.

The six schools involved in this study, three elementary and three secondary, were located in the southern half of the province of Alberta. The schools looked relatively new. All participant schools were built after 1988, or had undergone recent renovation. Buildings, grounds and facilities were of high standard and met or exceeded Alberta Education specifications. While unique to their community, each school had much in common with other participant schools. For example each school was built on one level, had its own landscaped grounds and buildings that were clean and well maintained.

Parking lots were paved. Trees and large shrubs provided shade, shelter, and decoration. The participant

schools were situated in suburban areas in town-sites serving 5000 people or more, or in one case a city of 125,000 people.

As a researcher, I made several observations prior to the main interviews. Each principal was extremely interested in this study. They shared that they had just endured three of the most challenging years of their careers and while individual enthusiasm was high, regarding school-based management, they were still working long hard hours trying to develop and refine school-based management practices. Deep interest in this study was also echoed by parent and teacher participants who made themselves available for two interviews each, and completed their review of transcripts with dispatch.

Other members of staff wanted to participate. I received numerous requests from teachers to be included in the study. Everyone wanted to discuss the implementation process and share their views on how it unfolded and how it could be improved. The chance to talk to an "outsider" seemed to be important.

The pilot interviews provided useful insight about process and the kinds of questions needed to be asked. Process refinements aside, I was delighted with the spontaneity and cooperation of pilot participants who willingly shared their successes, and failures, in a frank and forthright manner. The pilot

participants helped to improve the interview process and refine study questions.

Initial interview times and locations were organized by each school principal, who went to considerable trouble to find interview sites that were quiet and free from interruption. All interviews were conducted at the participant's school. Two visits to each school were completed. Following the first set of interviews, transcriptions were sent to participants for review, correction, and clarification. These transcriptions were returned and the information was verified for accuracy. Transcription checks were organized by telephone and conducted by mail.

In this chapter, reporting is by school type, not chronological interview order. To protect those interviewed, names have been omitted and replaced with participant role and code number. Table Three gives the role, education and occupation of elementary participants.

Table 3

The Role, Education/Occupation of Elementary Participants and the Number of
Years Served at their Respect Schools. 1998.

#	Role	Years at School	Education	Occupation
101	Principal	4	B.Ed. M.Ed. Ed.D.	
108	Principal	2	B. A. B.Ed. M.Ed.	
115	Principal	4	B.A. B. Ed	
103	Teacher	14	B. Sc. B. Ed	
110	Teacher	13	B. A. B. Ed.	
114	Teacher	4	B. Sc. B Ed. M. Ed.	
102	S.C. Chair	5	B.A.	Paralegal/Parent
109	S.C. Chair	3		Parent/Homemaker
116	S.C. Chair	5	B. Sc. Nursing.	Nurse

A brief biography of elementary participants is included in Appendix G. In
Alberta, all school principals and teachers are certified, as teachers, by the
province. School council chairs are elected at public meetings. In this study, all
school council chairs were parents. It is interesting to note that all the
elementary participants in this study were female. Two of the three participant
schools had male vice principals who were not included in this study. All
schools had male teachers but none were identified as lead teachers. Few

men were actively involved in participant school councils and none served at the executive level. Please note that information regarding participants was current as of June 30, 1998.

Data Analysis

In researching the effect of mandated school-based management in Alberta on school leadership the research questions dealt with five areas: (a) leadership issues that arose from implementation, (b) affects on participant role and function, (c) decision making models, (d) barriers, encountered and overcome, (e) and new attitudes, knowledge and skills. The information from interviews, observations, and artifacts form the study data. These data have been summarized and presented in the order of research questions. Question #1 on Leadership issues has two parts; therefore, the findings are presented as (1a) What leadership issues arose from the mandatory implementation of school-based management? (1b) How did implementation of school-based management affect participant's role and function? (2) How have participants revised or adapted decision-making models as a result of the implementation of school-based management? (3) What barriers have participants encountered while implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers? (4) What new attitudes, knowledge, and skills have participants acquired, or still need to

acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management?

The next section presents information regarding leadership issues arising from the implementation of school-based management which is presented in two parts. The responses of elementary school participants are recorded first. They followed by the responses of secondary school participants.

The nine elementary participants had differing views on the leadership issues that arose from the implementation of school-based management. Their perspectives were influenced by the role they played within their school community.

The role of school principal is described by the provincial government, (see page 55) and local school district policy. Teachers have roles and responsibility guidelines, also set by government and local school district policy, but these guidelines do not reference special responsibilities related to school-based management. School parents can form a school council, which is advisory in nature, and are expected to work in tandem with the principal and school staff. The duties of school council executives are defined by their council and do not have the same "weight of law" as principals and teachers. Throughout this study, participant school leaders have been designated by their role description: school council chairperson, lead teacher and school principal. A composite description of participant schools by type: elementary or senior secondary is presented as an introduction to each section.

<u>Elementary Section</u>

<u>Composite Elementary School</u>

The front of the school presents an impressive decorative exterior which greets me and invites me to step inside. My eyes acknowledge the standard aluminum flag pole and the Canadian flag flying proudly in the ever present prairie wind. Above the front door of the school is the school name. The wide double doors open to reveal a boot room beyond which lies the rest of the school. The "please report to the office sign," reminds me that this is a place which protects kids. I do as told and find the main office complete with school secretary, her desk covered with work, busy talking on the phone and at the same time placing a band aide on the finger of a small boy. He thanks the secretary, who nods, listens a bit then hangs up. I am greeted, explain my business, and quickly escorted to the principals office. I can't help but notice the bright clean floors, the off white interior strongly contrasting with the multicolored notices covering the display boards.

The principal's office has a bank of windows. Her desk is also cluttered with papers. She greets me with a warm smile I suspect that I am a welcome relief in a hectic working day. Through the door and down the hallway the walls are lined with student photos which are labeled. The photos draw attention from a couple of parents who move, point and talk about what they see.

She and I share the day, the job, and the kids as strangers withy common interests sometimes do. Shortly thereafter, I am guided to the staff room for coffee and introductions. I meet members of staff and get a special

introduction to the other two participants. We chat, and confirm meeting times. Back in the hall, we proceed to our meeting room. We pass a ramp for students in wheelchairs, and a large wooden box marked "Lost and Found." It is full of assorted clothing, mitts and touques.

Student work is proudly on display everywhere. An "Awards Board" proudly lists the names of former students on the honor roll, as well as citizenship and athletic awards. Student recognition is obviously important to the school. Safety devices are also in evidence. Motion detectors blink a silent red. Fire cabinets, also red, seem to complement the red exit signs that point the way to safety. The floors shine with caretakers pride and very little "extra" paper litters the hallway.

Lockers line the corridors like ranks of soldiers, their doors closed to prying hands and eyes. Water fountains dot the decor. Students move about in orderly fashion. A class passes, on its way to the gymnasium, with gym strip firmly in hand. Some students break into a sprint near the gym doors. The supervising teacher makes a choice and turns a blind eye to this breach of etiquette. Further down the main hallway we pass a number of classrooms all busily occupied and buzzing with the sound of students at work. The classrooms are organized according to student age, with Kindergarten starting in the west wing, and finishing with Grade six in the east wing. There are two classes of each grade. More central to the school are a large library and a computer lab, which along with Special Education and smaller meeting rooms

complete the bulk of the school. The Gymnasium is on the periphery of the building near the front entrance way.

At last we come to the designated meeting room. It is equipped with two computers, one of which is connected to the Internet. There is also a telephone in the room as well one wall of windows which face south and allow in plenty of light. A round table, next to a power outlet, has been made ready for my use. The setting is most satisfactory. I unpack my things and we begin.

The next section presents information detailing elementary participant responses arising from the implementation of school-based management.

Elementary School Council Chairperson Perspectives

Research Question 1a: What leadership issues arose from the mandatory implementation of school-based management?

Elementary participants reported a period of inaction following the 1994 announcement of school-based management, with no real action occurring at the school level until 1995. School District's across Alberta were reeling as a result of other restructuring measures, which included: the amalgamation of small school district's into geographic larger entities, electing new school trustees, redesigning internal structures to prepare for the new reality, and dealing with a smaller, restructured Alberta Education.

Leadership Issue One

The first issue for school council chairs was the reorganization of School Councils, within a school-based management framework, in tandem with other restructuring changes. School council chairs first experienced these educational changes when their schools attempted to put into place "new" school councils. "The primary leadership issue for me, was how do we adapt and redesign ourselves to meet the new expectations. At the time (Fall, 1994) the regulations on school councils, from Alberta Education, were somewhat vague and difficult to understand" (Personal interview 102, February 25, 1998).

Participant 102 referred to this time period (Fall, 1994) as "managing the storm," because normally sedate Parent Advisory Groups became venues for "the quiet war" which emerged between parents and teachers seeking to solidify power. In reaction to the stress caused by these events school districts tried to assist schools. Two, of the three, elementary school chairs, reported that their school district's provided leadership to school councils by circulating data on school-based management from the Internet and other sources. "The other district continued to struggle with the reality of amalgamating four, soon to be defunct, boards and had little apparent concern for our problems." (Personal interview 116, June 12, 1998). Regardless, "school districts were directed to let

decisions be made at the school level. They were in no position to do otherwise" (Personal interview 102, February 25, 1998)

Leadership Issue Two

The second issue for school council chairs was managing the "Turf War." between teachers and parents. Teachers seemed both heartened, and frightened, by the complexity of school-based management. School council participants reported that "some teachers were really angry at the increased role for parents .... fear that parents would take over the school" (Personal interview 109, June 8, 1998). The leadership issue was how do school council chairpersons allay suspicion and get teachers and parents working together. Participant 116 felt "it was clear that parents, involved with school councils, welcomed the increased responsibility that government offered. This was a chance to be really involved in the running of the school. Parents became functionaries not flunkies" (Personal interview, June 6, 1998).

In the view of participant 116, "teachers fell into two camps. Some feared for their jobs, for drastic fiscal cuts were underway, and rumors that parents might become involved in teacher evaluation had been broadcast. Other teachers wondered why we couldn't just all work together and get through these difficult times" (Personal interview, June 12, 1998).

By the summer of 1995 teachers began to formalize their representation on school councils. Participants reported that teacher representatives began to monitor school council meetings and started to initiate strong formal ties with parent and other community representatives. Three stakeholder groups

emerged. Parents, teachers and administrators. In participant elementary schools, students were not given representation within school-based management systems. By the middle of the first three year school-based management plan (1995-96), school councils were able to concentrate on more routine school matters, unrelated to individual stakeholder power issues.

Leadership Issue Three

The third leadership issue identified by elementary school council chairpersons was the challenge of representing and involving all stakeholders in the business of school council. Participant 109 defined the issue as follows, " It was clear that we (school council chairs) had to be seen as representing all stakeholders, by offering stakeholder groups equal access to meetings and equal time during debates" (Personal interview, June 8, 1998). The need to operate more democratically lead to a real need for political acumen and sound meeting management. The development of these skill were "really trying and created great personal stress" according to participants. "Without the principal to help me, I don't know what I would have done, resign I suppose" (Personal interview 116, June 12, 1998).

Leadership Issue Four

The fourth leadership issue for school council chairs was developing collaborative decision-making among stakeholders. The legislation of 1994 was intended to empower parents to become part of school-based decision-

making. The vehicle used to accomplish this increased involvement was the school council. When details were released, participant school council chairs understood that parents were to have a greater role in school management. "We thought that by changing Parent Advisory Groups into School Councils, we would have a much greater influence on school budgets, school rules and regulations, and possibly even teacher evaluation. We were expecting to give direction to the Principal. It all sounded so grand" (Personal interview 116, June 12, 1998). As stakeholder power plays began to emerge, school council chairpersons "across the province were reporting real dissension between stakeholders groups. This is not what I wanted to do!" (Personal interview 109, May 8, 1998). As a result of the polarization between stakeholder groups "some activist parents left school councils. Our teachers breathed a collective sigh of relief because what they feared was about to take place was a teacher witch hunt" (Personal interview 116, June 12, 1998).

Much of "this quest for power" was alleviated by the action of the Minister of Education who introduced Bill 37 to the Legislature in April, 1995. Bill 37 clearly stated that the school councils were to be advisory in nature and work in consultation with the principal.

Leadership Issue Five

The fifth leadership issue was promoting and maintaining open communication between stakeholders. When recalling these times, participant 116 concluded that "we needed to be much better communicators than we had been. The leadership issue for everyone, including us (school council

chairpersons), was open and forthright communication between and among teachers, parents and administrators" (Personal interview, June 19, 1998).

Leadership Issue Six

The sixth leadership issue was dealing with stress related to the new activities and responsibilities faced by school council chairs who reported that their roles became more demanding after the implementation of school-based management. We "felt pressed to run a tight ship, maintain accurate written minutes, and be unbiased at council meetings" (Personal interview 102. February 25, 1998).

Prior to 1994, effective school councils kept active by assisting teachers and fund raising for the school. These duties, continued as other responsibilities were added. The reality of increased responsibility and heavier workload for school councils created increased stress levels for parent leaders. Leading school councils that were experiencing change proved very stressful. This point was emphasized by school council chairs as they recounted the first weeks of school-based management, and the resultant "fight for turf" that took place between teachers and parents. Participants were careful to stress that in their specific situations no real rancor was openly expressed by their teachers or parents at school council meetings. "The pressures I experienced were covert but in some ways more stressful than an open fight" (Personal interview 116, June 12, 1998).

<u>Related Participant Observations</u>

Elementary school council participants made reference to the following observations. The first observation was that the principalship was a particularly challenging role in the early days of implementation. Participant 116 felt "they (school principals) were quick to realize that decision-making must become more collaborative. The rules were unclear so they had to use their own initiative: (Personal interview, June 6, 1998). When challenged, school council chairs routinely called on their principal to help them adjudicate. "Many dicy issues were resolved because of the leadership shown by individual school principals who sought patience and understanding from competing groups" (Personal interview 102, February 25, 1998). Another observation was the principal as mentor. "The principal was my mentor. Without her, I would never have survived" (Personal interview 109, May 8, 1998). Participant 109 went on to add, "it wasn't because we couldn't handle differing points of view that made us feel inadequate, it was the lack of definitive information from government, and guidelines from local school boards, that initially tied us up" (Personal interview). Participant 109 reflected that "school principal's were the "voice of sanity and reason. I don't know what we would have done without the help and direction of our principal. She (school principal) had little to go on except the interest of our school, the welfare of our students and a good sense of right and wrong" (Personal interview 109, May 8, 1998). In all three cases, the relationship between elementary school council chairpersons and their

principals became stronger as information was shared and mutual trust developed.

The knowledge needed to ensure that parents on school councils could assist with sound decision-making was another observation. "Knowledge was the currency of power. If you knew what was going on and understood the related issues you were in a power position, kind of like how teachers are when discussing school things with parents" (Personal interview 109, May 8, 1998).

Finding time to share knowledge was also noted. Parent participants, in their role as school council chairpersons reported that they spent many additional hours, with administrators, going over policies, regulations, position papers, proposals and official documents. Two participants reported that teacher representatives also required their time, so that "teacher matters" could be fully discussed in private and relayed to other school council members. Research Question 1b: How did the mandatory implementation of school-based management affect the participant's role and function within the school community?

The role and function of school council chairpersons was significantly affected by the introduction of school-based management. In schools, where the transition to school-based management was relatively uneventful, council chairpersons were required to improve meeting management and deal with the process issues arising as a result of school-based management. In larger schools, council chairpersons found themselves managing conflict and dissension between stakeholder groups at school council meetings.

Primary Leadership Role

The first role for school council chairs was becoming a competent school council chairperson. As school restructuring progressed, school council chairpersons were increasingly expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. In the face of increasing tension between stakeholders, elementary school council participants reported that they felt pressured to preside firmly over school council meetings, use official rules of order, and ensure that business was addressed equitably.

All three participant elementary schools used school-based teams to undertake the bulk of the work connected with school-based decision making. Parent representatives on the school-based team were usually the school council chair, a member of executive and a member at large. School-based team parents were well informed and quickly became knowledgeable on a wide variety of issues. At school council meetings these parents became parent leaders.

Leadership Role Two

The implementation of school-based management required stakeholders to become knowledgeable about and accept new responsibilities. Parents, and teachers, had to understand budgeting and funding mechanisms. Parents had to review programs and curriculum. Communications between stakeholders had to improve, and ways in which information was gathered refined. These realities greatly increased the

learning curve for school council chairpersons. For the first time, many important school matters were discussed in open forum. Dealing with an increased volume of information was also reported as a change which significantly affected school council chairpersons role and function.

Leadership Function One

School council chairs reported that efficiently managing school council meetings was their primary function. Managing meetings dealing with contentious issues was initially poorly done by school council chairs. Throughout 1994 and 1995 school council meetings were often fraught with dissension and did deal with highly contentious issues. Participant 109 stated that:

> "It seemed like we were always under fire from some group or other. Fund raising became a real sore spot as money grew scarce. Canceling or modifying field trips proved troublesome. Should $25,000.00 be spent on a half time equivalent teacher, or be used to beef up the field trip budget? (Personal interview, May 8, 1998).

Leadership Function Two

Another important leadership function identified by participants was peace making. "We were always polite to people and strived to keep everyone happy at the old school council meetings. After implementation came along we quickly learned to control council business, give equal time to opposing points

of view and became less anxious to please as we strived for fairness for all" (Personal interview 116, June 12, 1989). Participants felt that, for the good of the school, dissension had to be managed.

Related Participant Observations

The following participant observations were noted. School councils served as advisors to the principal. In participant schools, it was acknowledged that members of the school-based team made the final recommendations and thus made the decisions. Parents attending school council meetings supported this conclusion. "The authority has stayed with the principal, but is shared with the school-based team. The school council simply formalizes the agreed upon action" (Personal interview 116, June 19, 1998).

Parents held mixed views about school councils. For less involved parents, the school council remained an advisory body, under the control of the principal and staff, whose role and function had changed little since 1994. For parents who were school council executive members, and school committee representatives, the school council expanded beyond giving advice and played a significant role in school governance.

Research Question 2: How have participants revised or adapted decision-making models, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of school-based management?

Participants responded to this question with a remarkable degree of similarity. No new decision-making models were reported. In each case

existing structures and processes were ammended to accommodate the new reality.

Adaptation One

The primary adaptation made to assist decision-making was the development of more specialized committees. In every case, participant schools decided to accommodate school-based decision-making using specialist committees. A common example, was the budget committee which in each school gathered requests for operating and program funds as well as capital expenditures. The committee function included consulting stakeholders, gathering multi-source information, developing and recommending priorities, reviewing same with stakeholders and preparing final recommendations for approval by school council. Each committee was made up of representatives from administration, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and sometimes community members.

The work of each committee was shared with stakeholders through their representative personnel. Committee reports were tabled at school council, or staff meetings, where they were discussed, amended, approved or rejected.

Participant 102 stated that "parents might easily misinterpret the representative nature of the school-based committee structure. If they attended school council meetings infrequently, they could be forgiven for assuming that important school business was conducted elsewhere, probably behind closed doors" (Personal interview 102, March 23, 1998). The representative nature of this process became an effective means of conducting a large volume of

business for and on behalf of a complex organization. School-based management was intended to allow the customers, parents and sometimes students, to have a voice in the operation of the school. Using a representative committee model to conduct the bulk of the school's business might be effective, but the attainment of effective communications between stakeholders became a real challenge.

Adaptation Two

The second decision-making adaptation was the metamorphosis of a new decision-making forum named the school-based team. The school-based team was central to the new decision-making process because it coordinated the activities of all school committees and governed the school. It was common to have the school council chairperson as a member of the school-based team. In participant elementary schools, a school-based management team typically consisted of: two parent reps from the school council, a teacher representative from Division One, a teacher representative from Division Two (and Division Three if appropriate), a support staff representative and the principal or designate. The school-based team was usually chaired by a school administrator.

Adaptation Three

The third decision-making adaptation was making effective use of the school council. School councils have been utilized more successfully since

1995. They became a public forum for school governance although they did not have the power to govern. Councils became "the sounding board of the school community" explained participant 116. "In my opinion they have been quite successful in this relatively new role". Another participant expressed the belief that the role of the "new" school council has more to do with having parents understand school life "by getting used to school operations and becoming more comfortable with school processes and procedures" (Personal interview 116, June 19, 1998).

Adaptation Four

Decision-making adaptation number four was directed at improving the quality of communication between stakeholders. Accountable decision-making became an important goal for school councils. Parents wanted to know how decisions were arrived at, and who was responsible for making them. School councils provided that communications forum, according to study participants. "Parents have access to council meetings and can directly question members on issues of concern. We don't think we have anything to hide. Our processes are sound and can stand investigation" (Personal interview 102, February 25, 1998).

Related Observations

In participant elementary schools, the decision-making model mirrored the representative system of government found in Alberta. The most

responsible person was the school principal, but decision-making under school-based management was shared with stakeholders and became more collaborative than in the past. Participant 102 reflected that "its great that administrators, teachers and parents can work on things together" (Personal Interview, March 23, 1998).

Research Question 3: What barriers have participants encountered while implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers?

Participants reported a number of barriers were addressed. Some barriers were overcome by reorganizing administrative processes at the school. Other barriers had their roots in the change process and were found in the mind set of stakeholders.

Barrier One

The primary barrier encountered while implementing school-based management was overcoming the reluctance to deal with change. The implementation of school-based management required members of the school community, individually and collectively, to face change in a positive manner. Initially, the impetus for change involved a shift in the power relationships that existed between parents, teachers and administrators.

Barrier Two

The second barrier was the dissension that emerged between teachers and parents. Early in 1994, teachers and administrators learned that parents would have a stronger voice in the operation of schools. Visions of parent power caused a polarization of viewpoints which resulted in what one participant called "a turf war." School council chairs found the covert nature of these stakeholder battles to be a real barrier to progress. Participant 116 explained:

> You never knew what would happen when an issue was raised at a council meeting. At times, I felt that staff used parents as unwitting stooges to ask questions which would provide the opportunity to attack some initiative or spread dissension amongst the group. It was very unsettling and quite disruptive. (Personal interview)

> Everything seemed to hang on money or power. "Even our well established fund raising rules were brought into dispute. We had operated for years without problems but in 1994 things really changed" (Personal interview 116, June 19. 1998).

Barrier Three

The third barrier was stakeholder reluctance to change well established decision-making processes. Under the stress of change, schools wanted to make quick adjustments to accommodate stakeholders, but the process required time. "When we built the new committee structure, it took a long time

to really get working. With little guidance, we develop rules and operating procedures. It took a lot of time and energy" (Personal interview 109, May 8, 1998). Large parts of 1994 and 1995 were taken up trying new systems and improving school operation. By the time school council legislation was amended, in 1995, participant schools had school-based teams in place supported by a small number of working committees. Attaining a satisfactory level of efficiency took time and was hard won. School council chairs were particularly mindful of these early struggles which challenged the goodwill of all concerned.

> Teachers had their traditional staff meetings, where in conjunction with administrators, they operated the school. Parent power, which I think was myth anyway, meant that the school used small representative committees to conduct business. These committees reported to the new school-based team (committee) with the result that the staff meeting became less important. (Personal interview 109, May 22, 1998)

Some teachers liked the security offered by autocratic, principal centered, decision-making. They felt the extra time taken to meet, discuss, and share ideas was wasteful and non-productive. One staff meeting a month was all some teachers wanted to give. Many parents felt the same way about school council meetings. Meetings became more frequent, longer, and were sometimes contentious. "You could not be a casual attender at school council meetings and keep well informed, for issues were constantly changing" explained participant 102. The barrier of reluctance to increased personal

stakeholder commitment to help address new school expectations, such as decision-making was quite real.

Barrier Four

The fourth barrier was fiscal restraint. School council chairs felt that *funding cutbacks, which accompanied the implementation of school-based management, was a significant barrier.* "It is very hard to build something when it seems that everything is being taken from you. Everywhere we turned it seemed that lack of funds hampered our ability to solve problems" (Personal interview 102, February 23, 1998). Staffing cuts, reduced operating *funds and stakeholder conflict made decision-making difficult.*

Barrier Five

The fifth barrier was the increased workload and the resultant lack of *working time. Restructuring schools was one of several initiatives government* enacted to "make public education more accountable to the public." School leaders, particularly administrators, undertook increased workloads. School council chairs were involved in more consultation, more meetings and had to spend more time trying to grasp school philosophy, aims and objectives. Participant 102 reported that: "*I read everything coming out of Alberta Education,* the Alberta Teachers Association and the Alberta Schools Trustees Association. The stuff seemed endless. Then some teacher, or parent, would

ask me to read their program/issue proposal and respond to it, before they took it to council for discussion" (Personal interview).

Barrier Six

The sixth barrier was school size, and location. Two school council participants felt that school size was a barrier to the implementation process in small schools, under 200 students. They explained that under the new funding formula small schools lost any ability they once enjoyed to be creative with school funds. The new funding formula tied monies to student numbers, which meant that school districts stopped subsidizing small schools. The result was that smaller schools, had little surplus funds and needed to fund raise to survive. "In my view, survival, and introducing school-based management were competing issues. Small schools had to cut programs, consolidate classes and reduce staff. This was not a good time to introduce school-based management" (Personal interview 116, June 12, 1998).

Smaller schools were commonly situated in rural areas. When budget cuts occurred many parents relocated their children to larger urban schools, simply by providing their own transportation to a school that maintained a variety of programs and services.

Related Observations

School council chairs observed that most barriers to implementation rose from human instinct to protect status and resist change. Participant 116

reflected on her experience by saying, "whenever a problem occurred it always seemed to have a human dimension. Teachers fearful for their jobs, parents wanting more authority to run things and administrators running around putting out "emerging fires." I was really glad when everyone realized that school-based management was not going away. We finally got together to make things work" (Personal interview).

Research Question 4: What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have participants acquired, or still need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management?

New Attitude One

The primary new attitude identified by school council chairs was a desire for directed training to become more efficient leaders. School council chairs felt that they were the school leadership group that needed the most training to prepare for school-based management. Other stakeholder groups brought skills and knowledge to school council meetings, that could rarely be matched by the average parent. When school-based management was introduced professional staff simply adjusted their working reality and utilized the skills they already possessed. Parents, on the other hand, were not as well equipped to handle the new responsibilities expected of school council leaders.

New Attitude Two

New attitude number two was the realization that position of school council chair was significant school leadership position. Participants were united in their belief that present day expectations of school council chairpersons are much more demanding than experienced before 1994. Participant 116 explained her current duties thus:

I am expected to set agendas, in consultation with the principal, keep my executive fully informed, reg ularly communicate to parents, professionally manage school council meetings, prepare reports for other school councils, meet regularly as a member of the school-based team and undertake public relations tasks as assigned by the school (Personal interview, June 19, 1998). She went on to indicate that these

duties represent a huge increase in workload as compared to pre-1994 expectations. "I know we are now more capable, better educated in school affairs and much more business-like in presiding over meetings."

New Attitude Three

The third new attitude was a heightened interest in having leaders who are grounded in respect for others, had the ability to find good in people, and held personal values which honored trust and sought truth. In one participant's words "really good moral people" (Personal interview 109, May 22, 1998). Other attributes contributed by school council chairpersons seem to combine skill and knowledge. School leaders needed to be good managers who were able

to use their time productively. They also needed to be good communicators. Basic business skills were listed as desirable, as was the ability to utilize modern technology.

New Skill One

School-based management required school council participants to be effective listeners, who accept a wide variety of viewpoints. Consultation with other school groups became the norm, and colleagual decision-making the style. Participants identified active listening as a newly required skill. As school leaders developed an increased regard for the value of active listening, its use spread throughout the school community.

New Knowledge One

School council chairpersons reported that two knowledge areas were vital. The primary area of new knowledge was a complete understanding of school-based management. Participants listed factors such as: leadership roles, expectations, and responsibilities, the realities of school governance, the special role of parents, specific committee functions, working on school program plans, and the decision-making processes.

New Knowledge Two

The second area of new knowledge was an deeper understanding of Public Education, both local and provincial. Participants listed factors such as: understanding provincial trends and initiatives, education financing, special education, and individual school processes, programs, and community politics.

Related Observations

Elementary school council participants reported that school-based management was a reasonable way to run schools. They felt that progress to date supports their faith in the future of school-based management, but they seek further change. The change they seek includes: more control by parents over school operations and decision-making; elevation of school councils to the final decision-making forum; more training for parents on school-based management; more community people involved in the life of each school; and more financial support of schools by the provincial government.

Elementary Lead Teacher Perspectives

Elementary teacher participants were leaders who contributed to their school by serving on school-based teams or by being teacher representatives on school council. For the purposes of this study they have been designated lead teacher in recognition of their professional stature within their schools.

Research Question 1a: What leadership issues arose from the mandatory implementation of school-based management?

Leadership Issue One

For elementary teachers the primary leadership issue to emerge from the *implementation of school-based management was the expanded "political"* activity of teachers who suddenly felt they had to represent themselves at stakeholder meetings. How should teachers respond to school-based management? Who would represent teachers at school council meetings and how would teacher issues be addressed? Participants reported that at first *there was a period of inactivity that followed the announcement of school-based management.* During this time teachers researched school-based management, from a variety of sources, and came to the conclusion that it *might work.*

Concern was expressed about the increased role given to parents, through reconstituted school councils, which lead to speculation that parents were interested in being involved in teacher evaluation, and controlling school business, by using the authority of parent dominated school councils. Participant 103 volunteered this observation, *"we were concerned for* ourselves. We did not want parents, especially our favorite parents, having anything to do with running our school, or running us" (Personal interview, *February 25, 1998). Another participant recalled:*

> We were a little paranoid about parents taking control of our school. No one knew the answers to our questions. Our School Board and the

Teachers Association seemed unable to help. We had to kind of come

up with our own answers and they were not always correct.

(Personal interview 110, May 5, 1998)

When school council legislation was amended, in April, 1995, it was

clear to all stakeholders that parents would not be "taking control" of public

schools. As school-based management guidelines were developed, and came

into effect, stakeholder groups adjusted to the varied demands of school-

based management, and a general redefining of leadership roles began.

Leadership Issue Two

The second leadership issue for elementary teachers was coping with

an increased workload. Under school-based management elementary school

organization became more structured and formalized. Communications

between stakeholders increased and became more frequent and more

complex.

How were teachers to deal with the increased responsibility and

workload? Teachers, as a group, were expected to serve on committees,

undertake action research, represent the interests of other teachers and

maintain teaching standards with an increased pupil teacher ratio and reduced

funding. As decisions were increasingly made at the school level, teachers

were expected to become major contributors. Participant 114 observed:

We seemed to be caught up in waves of meetings. Committee this,

school council that. It seemed to go on and on. Eventually we got smart

and chose teacher representatives to work on our behalf. I guess in the

early days of school-based management we all need to attend

everything. We had been made fearful and didn't trust anyone, even our

own colleagues it seems. (Personal interview, June 19, 1998)

School-based management had the effect of creating more formal

teacher leadership roles within schools. As participant 110 explained:

The teacher group dynamic underwent a shift after the implementation of

school-based management. The old guard who seemed to rule the

monthly staff meetings were replaced with more activist teachers who

used the new committee structure to advantage. They were prepared to

work hard, meet often, make demands of other stakeholders, and

actively represent our interests. It was good! (Personal interview, June

19, 1998)

In contrast, as some teachers were really contributing to their schools

others simply looked after their classroom responsibilities, and whenever

possible ignored the changes taking place around them. Some teachers

wanted to lead, others were content to follow.

Leadership Issue Three

The third leadership issue identified by participants was increased

involvement in decision-making. In pre-1994 days, teachers and the school

principals made decisions for the school. School-based management directed

school administrators to share decision-making among stakeholders, which at

first was relatively easy, but as power was transferred from District Office, to

individual schools, the volume of work addressed by schools increased. One of

the ways in which the increased work load was handled was to develop a school-wide representative committee, called the school-based team, to which other specialty committees reported. Thus budget decisions were handled by the budget committee, curriculum decisions were addressed by the curriculum committee. Each committee required teacher representatives so, over time, the collective work load of most teachers increased.

Stakeholders on the school-based team played a major role in school-based decision-making and quickly came to be seen as school leaders, with the result that by the 1996-97 school year, principals, lead teachers, and school council chairpersons were routinely members of the school-based team. Research Question 1b: How did the mandatory implementation of school-based management affect the participant's role and function within the school community?

When school-based management was introduced, the expectations of school staff were high. School personnel were expected to embrace school-based management and work hard to have it succeed.

Function One

The primary affector of teacher leader function was a significant increase in the workloads of participants, who were unanimous that the increased workload resulted from the implementation of school-based management which greatly impacted the non-teaching function of elementary teachers. Teachers, while adapting to reduced operating funds, larger classes and fewer support staff, also had to deal with more committee work, and extra preparation

to ensure that they were ready to make sound decisions, as knowledgeable teacher representatives.

Function Two

The second affector of lead teacher function was the additional role of in-school teacher representative and advocate. Participant 103 recalled her time of being a teacher representative:

> I seemed to be always running. To school in the morning, to class, to committee meetings, the administrators office, to a parents house and home to sleep. We had planning meetings, budget meetings, school-based management training meetings, staff meetings, school council meetings, school team meetings and special events meetings. We were "meeting" to death! (Personal interview, February 25, 1998)

This activity seemed to peak during 1995 and eased significantly by the beginning of the 1996-97 school. By this time, school processes were set, tested, and refined by use. Concurrently, some of the initial workload directly associated with the implementation of school-based management was completed. Teacher work loads eased, as tasks were shared more equitably among teachers.

Function Three

The third affector of lead teacher function was the development of teacher cohesiveness and group power that came as a direct result of the

implementation of school-based management. Participant parents freely acknowledge that they were consulted and that their representatives sat on important school committees, but they were clear that it was really teachers who held power within their schools. When asked specifically, participants, without exception, ranked principals and teachers as equal, in the power hierarchy, with parents lagging behind. Students did not rate.

Teacher participants felt that they did exercise a large degree of control over school-based issues. This was an initiative that teachers worked towards following the implementation of school-based management.

Participant teachers reported that they experience a school-wide emphasis on team building, and work sharing as a result of the implementation of school-based management. "After the initial months of not doing much, we were really co-opted into the school-based management thing. Committees were formed, teacher representatives appointed and meetings flourished. Those of us that were active really started to feel like we were part of a team" (Personal interview 114, June 6, 1998).

Sharing duties and representing teacher interests, at the school level, was another issue that affected teachers' role and function. After working through the chaotic first months of school-based management, a significant number of teachers pooled their efforts and labored to make school-based management work for them. One participant stated that she felt that she was, "working to ensure that our teachers were a strong group within the school which, along with the administrators, could help keep the school on track and flying right." When asked to elaborate she went on to state, " I did not want parents to become a decisive force within our school. We were good, hard

working teachers, deserving of respect, especially from parents" (Personal interview 110, May 17, 1998). The early tension that existed between parents and teachers as a result of school-based management lingers. This tension, still serves to motivate teachers by reminding them that they must work with other stakeholders to maintain positive relations within the school community. Research Question 2: How have participants revised or adapted decision-making models, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of school-based management?

Adaptation One

The primary adaptation identified by participant elementary teachers was the metamorphosis of school-wide decision-making. All elementary participants reported that since the implementation of school-based management schools have developed processes which include more people in decision-making. They reiterated the view that before 1994, principals "ran the show." "Now there is much more collaboration between administration and staff, and to a lesser degree parents" (Personal interview 103, March 23, 1998).

Typically, a committee structure was used whereby small representative committees, made up of representatives from all stakeholder groups, discussed issues, and reported their conclusions to the school-based team. The team reviewed each report and sent it out to school council for review by parents, and to the principal for review by school staff. The issue, in original, revised, or amended form was then returned to the school team for final approval. If the issue is specific to one stakeholder group, the school team

requested that group give final approval. i.e. A teacher issue is discussed, amended, and approved at a full staff meeting and the result communicated to the school team for their records.

Adaptation Two

The second adaptation was the inclusion of all stakeholder groups in the decision-making process. By initially using a number of small representative committees, issues were discussed, researched and advanced on merit. The majority of issues were reconsidered at the school-based team level and again at larger stakeholder meetings. Participants felt that this process encouraged stakeholder input and cast a "wide decision-making net" across the school community. Participant 110 explained, "We are much more careful about the decision-making process, including, making decisions, maintaining open communications, and consulted each other. Everyone's sensibilities are respected and time is taken for interaction and exchange" (Personal interview). Another participant said, "School-based management systems are healthier than what existed before. There are not so many top down decisions being made. Committee and stakeholder meetings do the work and call the shots" (Personal interview 103, February 25, 1998).

Adaptation Three

The third adaptation was a tacit acknowledgement that teachers did not want "book keepers" managing schools. Participant 110 stated, "Teachers

didn't want financial wizards running our schools (accountants), they wanted

principal teachers who had children in mind when they planed their work.

Using paraprofessionals as business managers and accountants is also a

mistake" (Personal interview, May 17, 1998). Participant 103 stated, "Decisions

really rest on, do the professional teaching staff have enough time? Do we

have facilities? Do we have money? Money has been a large factor influencing

the effectiveness of school decision-making, since the original cut-backs of 1994"

(Personal interview). The crisis surrounding the implementation of school-

based management did result in the reaffirmation of the principal as the chief

executive officer of the school.

During the first Three Year Plan (1995-97), schools developed and

refined school operating processes which supported school-wide decision-

making. Related to the sharing of decision-making, was a heightened need for

improved communications. School community members could not make

sound decisions without good communications. Participants felt strongly that

the two went hand in hand.

Adaptation Four

The fourth adaptation was making time to conduct business and

improve communications between stakeholders. Time was the factor that

linked communications with sound decision-making. Participants reported that,

"time was a real issue especially when we represented other teachers. How

did we find the time to read, research, discuss and report back to colleagues.

Making decisions took time, and time for us was in short supply" (Personal

interview 114, June 6, 1998). School-based management decentralized decision-making and increased the work load of individuals within the school community, especially teachers. " I don't know if our model of decision-making is new or simply changed. The style of decision-making has changed and communications have improved. We are more collegial, more consultative, and have better communications" (Personal interview 103, March 23, 1998).

Research Question 3: What barriers have participants encountered while implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers? The issues identified by lead teachers as barriers to the implementation process, had their roots in inadequate school finance, increased work load for teachers and power issues with parents.

Barrier One

The first barrier identified by elementary lead teachers was the impact of the government's fiscal restraint program. 1994 saw the beginning of a series of cut-backs in education. Education funding was severely reduced as the implementation of school-based management was mandated by government. Teacher participants stated that fiscal restraint, initiated at the outset of implementation, was a major barrier. "Just when we thought that schools would be able to take care of themselves, through the introduction of school-based management, we found ourselves managing cut-backs and laying off staff" (Personal interview 103, March 23, 1998).

Teachers became preoccupied with many aspects of school finance. Under a new school allocation system monies were budgeted for schools

based on student population. Significant cuts to staff and programs occurred. Pupil teacher ratios increased and support staff were reduced. "It seemed to us that the government had arranged things so that we could manage our own decline. As I recall, 1994-95 was a most unhappy time" (Personal interview 114, June 19, 1998). This "painful" introduction to school-based management did little to encourage teachers to embrace collaborative decision-making.

Barrier Two

The second barrier was the inequities found within the new funding system. The allocation system, which funded schools based on student population, was intended to equalize educational opportunity across the province by directing funds to schools. Small schools found their funding further reduced because they stopped receiving supplementary small school support grants from their school district, who prior to 1994, subsidized their operation. Small rural schools were hit hard.

Barrier Three

The third barrier identified by elementary lead teachers was the growth of competition between schools. "We quickly became aware that we were competing with other schools for students. Even schools in our own district. Around here, the traditional scrap between the Catholic system and our own got really intense." Participant 110 continued, "we attracted students from local rural schools and, because of our programs, gained students from the school

across the block" (Personal interview June 12, 1998). Competition for students was intense and negatively affected long term relationships, between schools, which had formerly been amicable.

Barrier Four

The fourth barrier was reduced funding of support programs. An example which caused distress was the new Special Education allocations which were reduced and also capped at levels set by Alberta Education. This meant that funding for a school population of special education students would not be fully covered, if that population was in excess of the capping formula. Funds for Capital expenses were frozen, and maintenance and repair allotments slashed. Participant 114 offered this summation:

> The situation looked bleak. We were being punished by a government that seemed anti-education. Teachers became fearful. The introduction of school-based management and the concurrent reduction of funding, lead to staff layoffs, downsizing of programs and increased class size. We had no control of what was going on! (Personal interview, June 19, 1998)

Barrier Five

Teacher participants reported that the fifth barrier to implementation of school-based management was an increased workload for staff. In the words of participant 114, "we spent huge amounts of time deciding how to use our

money." Increased decision-making, and related meetings, meant that more and more time was used to design and implement new processes and improve communications. The reduction of support staff, had teachers doing tasks that previously been done by non-teaching personnel. Student supervision became more demanding as support staff were laid off. Teacher work loads, and stress levels, increased.

Barrier Six

The sixth barrier to the implementation of school-based management was the positioning for power that occurred between parents and teachers. When school-based management was first announced guidelines were vague, but early legislation gave some authority to parents through school councils. Teachers feared that parent action might erode their position within the school community. A great deal of teacher energy was directed at maintaining a strong voice on school council and school committees. The more overt dimensions of this "battle with parents" subsided in 1995, but teacher and parent participants acknowledged, three years later (1998), that both parties were still sensitive about their relationship.

Barrier Seven

Teacher participants stated, that school-based management had "built-in" barriers which were less troublesome than those noted, but still irksome to most teachers. Participant 103 mused:

> I found myself caught between wanting more money (salary) for my efforts, yet knowing that teacher salaries were part of the pot of money allocated to my school. It made it very difficult to balance my personal needs against the needs of my students. I resented being forced by school-based management strictures to deal with this kind of issue. (Personal interview 114, June 12, 1998)

Teacher participants also expressed resentment over spending imposed on schools. For example, spending directed by Alberta Education and the local School Board, to upgrade school office computer hardware so that schools could electronically report to Alberta Education. This loss of school authority, over part of their school budget, was viewed as intrusive and against the basic tenants of school-based management.

Barrier Eight

The eighth barrier identified by elementary lead teachers was the inability to hold unused funds for use in the following year. New accountability factors built into school-based management processes were seen to be unnecessary and needlessly time consuming. The loss of the ability to hold

monies saved at the school was reported as a significant barrier to efficient school-based management.

Barrier Nine

Participant 110 described another barrier to school-based management: *My colleagues found some decisions very hard to deal with. Deciding staffing numbers and cutting programs was painful and upsetting. We were not used to this kind of pressure. A few teachers refused to take part and absented themselves from the process. We often left decisions to the principal. We got a good insight into the unpleasant decisions administrators sometimes had to make.*

(Personal interview 110, March 23, 1998)

Issues related to personnel and program reductions were very difficult for staff to address and were a substantial barrier to full staff participation in decision-making. The ill will caused by this aspect of school-based decision-making lingers still.

Research Question 4: What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have participants acquired, or still need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to school-based management? The first two years of implementation revealed the new knowledge and skills required to make school-based management a success, but negative attitudes formed about school-based management were pervasive and hard to change.

Attitude One

Arising out of the initial power play between teachers and parents was a realization that stakeholders needed to work together for the collective good of the school. Teachers felt obliged to voice their opinions, give collective input, and support or not support issues. Teacher representatives on committees learned they were also obligated to make decisions based on what was best for the school, not just teachers. One participant who served as a teacher representative on her school council, recalled that being a staff representative was quite challenging:

> I remember a couple of times when the view of teachers was opposite to those expressed by parents. As teacher representative I was asked to explain our viewpoint. Trying to convince 45 tense parents that they were wrong, and needed to change their view was really challenging and very stressful. In those days, the two groups often seemed angry with each other. (Personal interview 110, June 19, 1998)

Knowledge One

The learning curve, relative to school-based management, highlighted the need for schools to openly compete with other schools. Attracting and maintaining students became an important fiscal reality. Good public relations became a necessity. The competition among schools, for students, became intense in some locales. Teacher participants reported that, in their view, the inter-school completion for students was more damaging than constructive.

Participant 114 concluded that her staff quickly came to the belief that competition between schools for students was a "fool's effort. We found our *success simply increased our class sizes and did little to increase school-based funds*. What we won was more kids, more work, and little financial gain" (Personal interview, June 12, 1998).

Knowledge Two

An other dimension of this competition was the reality that relationships *between schools, within the same school district, became strained*. Schools, that had previously worked together, found themselves at at loggerheads over recruitment of students.

Knowledge Three

Elementary teacher participants were adamant that the development of *school-based teams was a significant learning experience for teacher* representatives who became more knowledgeable about school-based management by working through the birth and growth of school-based teams Participants felt that the implementation of school-based management was an important stimulus which moved school communities to be more collaborative *in nature, thereby increasing the amount of shared decision-making within the* school, and being more responsive to the needs of stakeholders.

Skill One

Participants agreed that teachers had to acquire management skills. One participant reported, "that school-based management caused us to become an arm of middle management. It was modeled on a business approach to organizing schools. I feel this business model is inappropriate for schools because it caused stakeholders to focus on process rather than students" (Personal interview 103, March 23, 1998). Skills, such as how to run meetings, read financial reports, keep track of funds and distribute resources, became critical for some teachers. Teacher activists sharpened their public speaking skills and became more effective advocates.

School-based decision-making required teachers with financial skills. As reported, money matters became a major preoccupation with some staff. Budget lines, allocations, resources for field trips, and ancillary programs such as swimming were all reviewed, debated, and financed when appropriate. Much of this work was undertaken by teachers on school budget or school-based teams.

Skill Two

Teacher participants indicated that collective problem solving was a new skill that teachers had to refine. Resolution of differences, between stakeholder groups, required problem solving and conflict resolution skills. Participants felt that teacher representatives had to gain these skills in order to be effective.

The three participant elementary schools quickly adapted to the imposed change of school based management by using their school councils as a forum for joint decision-making. As the first Three Year Plan came to an end, all three schools had developed a school-based team which became the decision-making forum for the school, and returned their school council to an advisory stakeholder group.

Research Question 1a: What leadership issues arose from the mandatory implementation of school-based management?

Leadership Issue One

The primary leadership issue for elementary principal participants was gaining school community support for school-based management in a time of great change. Simultaneously, school leaders had to deal with the effects of several mandated initiatives which created great stress. Leading school stakeholders to support school-based management, as the effects of other troublesome issues were experienced, was a difficult challenge. Separating school-based management from school funding cuts, staff reductions, and reduced school programs was almost impossible. Participant 115, had this response,

> I had no idea how to sell school-based management when it first
>
> started. As staff debated cuts to personnel, and programs, there was
>
> little enthusiasm for government initiatives including school-based

management. I decided to really stress school-wide decision-making

and co-opted the school council for this purpose.

(Personal interview, June 12, 1998)

The spring of 1995 became a turning point. The first round of the

restraint program was in effect and schools were compelled to find

collaborative ways to prepare for the next school year.

Leadership Issue Two

The second leadership issue was the need to have a school-wide

decision-making forum. In response for the need to develop representative

decision-making, school principals used school council meetings as initial

forums for stakeholder consultation. As one participant explained:

I simply did as advised by Alberta Education, which was to use the

school council as the major meeting place for staff and parents. After our

earlier battles at school council meetings, parents and staff were ready

to work together to help reduce the negative effects of fiscal restraint.

(Personal interview, participant 108, May 22, 1998)

Participant 101 gave this rationale:

I was one of those people who believed that decisions are best made at

the level where the decision has the greatest impact. This is the

message I tried to sell to my school community. Even in our darkest

days, we felt that it was better for us to have a say in what was

happening than to give decisions over to some other agency. The idea

must have struck a cord with some of my people for we have been

solidly into school-based decision-making since early 1995.

(Personal interview, February 17, 1998)

Leadership Issue Three

The third leadership issue was who makes important decisions. Initially

school personnel only wanted to make the "easy" school-based decisions. As

the first round of cut backs was initiated most of the decisions relative to staff

and reductions were made by school principals or district staff. School staff did

not want to debate their colleagues employment. Parents were not directly

consulted about this issue in 1994, although there were strong indications

coming from school council meetings that parents would like a larger role in

determining staffing and other matters.

The level of decision-making that stakeholders should be part of was a

challenging leadership issue for principals. Each school had to exercise its

own judgment as to what stakeholder groups could discuss and make

recommendations about. Personnel matters were kept confidential, but some

program issues saw parents clearly indicating which staff they would prefer to

leave the school as opposed to who should stay. Principals, and school

council chairs, quickly came to realize which issues could be handled in open forum, and those needing a more private debate.

Leadership Issue Four

The fourth leadership issue was who held leadership power. Initially, some confusion was experienced by participants about who was really in charge of their school. The three participant principals indicated that they believed in the basic tenant of school-based management, collaborative decision-making, well before it was mandated by the government of Alberta. For participants, the implementation of school-based management was, theoretically, a welcome change. However, the competition for control of their school seemed surreal, if short lived. The reality of school life after implementation was not simply the implementation of school-based management as a process (model), but the sum total of dealing with the initiatives that accompanied it. It was inevitable that elementary participants would struggle through the early days of change before stakeholders were prepared to address the challenges initiated by the provincial government.

Leadership Issue Five

Participant elementary principals expected that increased decision-making responsibility would bring greater accountability for those involved. School-based stakeholders began to participate in decision-making to a degree not realized before 1994, but only the principal was held accountable for

the actions of the school. Staff and parents, while partners in decision-making were not held directly accountable for school-based decisions. School-based management, in Alberta, held school principals accountable for all school-based decisions and was perhaps the reason that school principals retained a large measure of power. Participants noted the irony. They were expected to share power (decision-making), but remained accountable for the results.

Leadership Issue Six

The sixth leadership issue identified by participants was improved communications. The framework that held school-based management together was a judicious mix of collaborative decision-making and efficient, and open communication. Principals were expected to incorporate stakeholders into school decision-making which meant that open, balanced communications became a necessity. Participant 108, felt that:

> To hold parent and staff groups together in working harmony required an effective communications system. Notes, memos, reports and questionnaires had to be circulated to all stakeholders, in a manner which allowed regular and timely review of issues, and responses. Debates and discussions needed to be recorded accurately. This placed a large leadership responsibility on the principal, who was maintaining regular duties as well as the new ones. Delegation of some tasks occurred but the ability to delegate was determined in part by the

receptiveness of staff, and parents, to undertake the duties assigned.
(Personal interview, May 22, 1998)

Elementary principal participants willingly shared the leadership issues
that arose from the implementation of school-based management. As
pragmatic leaders they chose pragmatic responses to the challenges they
faced.

Research Question 1b: How did the mandatory implementation of school-
based management affect the participants role and function within the school
community?

Role One

The primary role of the school principal was facilitating school-wide
decision-making. One elementary participant stated that she had come from
"being a dictator to a facilitator," as a result of the implementation of school-
based management. Other participants echoed this same viewpoint in
describing their work to improve decision-making. Stakeholders expected to be
involved in decision-making and principals were expected to ensure that they
were.

Related Function

As competing stakeholder groups jockeyed for positional power the
principal was required to acknowledge stakeholder concerns and provide the
means by which their aspirations might be met. Developing ways that decision-

making between and among stakeholder groups was efficient was a primary responsibility of school principals.

Role Two

Role two was being the most responsible person within the school community. Principal participants were expected to be the most responsible person for school-based management. By administering this process, principals were adopting a different role than simply making decisions by themselves. School-wide decision-making proved to be a complex process that required constant attention.

Participant 115, gave this description:

I found myself constantly managing committee meeting schedules, minutes of meetings, sending out progress notes and arranging for communiques to be sent home with students. The coordination of in-school groups was a huge addition to my work load. So was communication. I was like the ring master bringing order to the Big Top. (Personal interview 108, May 8, 1998)

Related Function

The coordination of all school-based functions, either directly or by delegation. For example, managing the day to day interaction between the school council, the school-based team, several school committees and coodinating related meetings. The role of most responsible person, which

initially, made delegation problematic meant that the increased number of specific functions added greatly to the stress of being a school principal.

Role Three

The third role addressed by elementary principal participants was being the "coach" for school-based management. Participants expressed surprise at this reality, which secondary principals described as being "Keepers of the Dream." School-based management was implemented without warning in Alberta. Educators were not included in change initiatives and were as surprised as other members of the school community when they were announced. Only principals had to accept full responsibility for the introduction of school-based management in public schools. Province-wide, school districts had a variety of responses to implementation that ranged from fast moving acceptance and compliance, to slow moving "inaction" through the first Three Year Plan.

Related Function

The function related to the role of school-based management coach was instructing other stakeholders in their new duties and demonstrating by example how they could be successfully completed. Participant principals were credited, by other stakeholder participants, as being the most significant supporters of school-based management. This new dimension of the

principalship, in Alberta, represented a significant change to both the role and function of the public school principal.

Role Four

Role four was managing a greatly increased workload. Managing time and increased workloads were factors that changed participants roles and increased work related stress. Elementary principal participants, cited examples as: increased decision-making, managing new communications, managing a more complex committee structure, supervising stakeholder activity, development and distribution of education plans, accounting for school finances and liaising with the greater school community. The implementation of school-based management also required significant revision of school policies and regulations as applied to special issues such as school fees, student charges for program service, fund raising, field trips and the level of sporting activity. These factors caused a significant increase in workload and position responsibility which began in 1994.

Related Function

New accountability measures meant that duties were required to be officially supervised, which incrementally increased the time needed to manage them. For example, financial management of minor school accounts was cited. Formerly, these accounts were simply managed by staff and audited by administration. Now all school accounts must be in care of the principal and

audited by an "outside" agency. What was once a one hour task per year has grown into regular monitoring and official accounting, taking many hours per year. Participants found the additional responsibilities of this nature to be draining and difficult to delegate.

Accountability for all school matters greatly increased the workload for principals. Participant 108 stated:

> On reflection, it was the hundreds of little tasks that I was responsible for that really increased my stress levels. These tasks had always been done but were not managed closely. Meeting district deadlines and keeping things 'spick and span" was really frustrating and seemed like busy work. I grew angry with a system that was dragging me down with trivia as I was trying to get the important things completed.
>
> (Personal interview, May 22, 1998)

The commonly adopted school-based team committee structure, required principals to monitor committee activity to ensure that they communicated with other committees and stakeholder groups. This increase in committee, and stakeholder monitoring added to each principal's workload. Research Question 2: How have the participants revised or adapted decision-making models, at the school level, as a result of school-based management?

Two elementary principal participants reported that their school's decision-making evolution was closely linked to a progression of events that began with decisions being initially made at the principal-staff level, then moved to the school council forum, and finally the school-based team.

Adaptation One

The primary development of school-based decision-making involved the deliberate development of the school-based team. The school-based team became the focal point of school decision-making which used a number of small committees who conducted specific business, took decisions, and made recommendations to the team. Stakeholder groups including administrators, teaching and support staff, parents, and community members who each held their own stakeholder meetings then reported to the school team.

In one participant school, the school council continued to coordinate this function. Participant 115, acknowledged the efficiency of the small committee structure, but added that:

> For us, the school council worked as a decision-making body. We had a relatively peaceful introduction to school-based management and got through fiscal restraint painlessly because of our constantly increasing enrollment. My staff and I had a good relationship with our parents so we have stayed with the school council, however we are the only school in our district of twelve schools to do that. (Personal interview, June 16, 1998)

Adaptation Two

The second adaptation was the refinement of school policies to encourage full stakeholder participation. Participant 101, reported that: "School-

based decision-making took a lot of work to set up. Staff and parents wanted guidelines and clear procedures and a description of how decision-making went from initial debate, to final resolution" (Personal interview, February 25, 1998). Decision-making, as part of school-based management was refined by practice, and actively monitored to ensure that all stakeholders had appropriate input and timely access to important school issues.

Adaptation Three

In their collective attempts to make decisions collaboratively stakeholders, even with the direction of the principal, battled over "power" issues. Participant 108, explained, "during this time, even when I was actively chairing the meeting, bad feelings would break out between teachers and parents. Regardless of the issue, people from these two groups would draw lines in the sand which they would not cross" (Personal interview, May 8, 1998). Principal participants were quick to blame themselves but pointed out that it was sometimes unclear who had authority over what:

> I knew I was the principal in charge of the school but also knew I was
> expected to share decision-making with others, particularly parents.
> When I asked stakeholders to help me make decisions the debates
> became personalized and unproductive.
> (Personal interview 108, February 8, 1998).

Dissension lead to distrust. Parents and teachers backed away from helping principals to make hard decisions. Consultation between stakeholders became superficial and principals reverted to working with district officials to

resolve difficult decisions.The third adaptation was power sharing. When school-based teams were developed to help alleviate stakeholder dissension one of the critical issues was, "could the school-based team make their own decisions?" Participant 101 told her experience, "there was lots of controversy and lots of input from staff about how the school-based management team should work before we even got it organized, and about whether or not they would be making decisions that would override staff decisions" (Personal interview, June 17, 1998).

Throughout the first Three Year plan participant schools developed, and refined, structures focused on collaborative decision-making. The level of dissension around decision-making and stakeholder power, was a distinct feature of the implementation of school-based management in Alberta. Research Question 3: What barriers have participants encountered while implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers?

Elementary principal participants defined four areas as barriers to implementation of school-based management. They were, reactions to change, funding, working with an expanded school community, and work related stress.

Barrier One

The primary barrier to implementation of school-based management was the "conflict" between staff and parents which manifested itself early in 1994. The power struggle between these two stakeholder groups resulted in

reduced trust between the groups and a reluctance to cooperate. Decision-making became the major victim. Participant 115 stated that:

> Making hard decisions in a collaborative manner became almost impossible. I found I was left to make all the difficult decisions, particularly involving staff and program cut-backs. I sometimes managed to get consensus on an issue, but got little by way of public support from either group. It was a hard way to begin the school-based management process with these two groups fighting.
>
> (Personal interview, June 6, 1998)

Barrier Two

During 1994 a curious anomaly was at work. Both parents and teachers had indicated a wish for greater inclusion in school decision-making, but did not want to be part of the early, difficult, and challenging decision-making era. This was the second barrier to school-based decision-making. Stakeholder reaction to the changes, initiated in 1994, was the catalyst that hamstrung collaborative decision-making and prolonged the implementation process. Participant 108, mused that:

> Teachers and parents sensed they had been given something by the restructuring initiatives of 1994, and then had something taken away by some of the other measures concurrently initiated by government. This swing of fortunes seemed to divide parents and teachers and made them defensive of their turf. Parents actively worked to strengthen the school council. Staff sought active representation on all school

committees, including the school council, in an effort to negate parent influence.

(Personal interview, May 22, 1998)

Barrier Three

The third barrier to school-based decision-making was the reduction of school-based funds. Severe budget cuts accompanied the implementation of school-based management. While not directly part of the process, fiscal restraint was a major tenant of the governments restructuring process and was a significant impediment to the transition to school-based management. It was the result of these funding cuts which fueled stakeholder anger.

Barrier Four

The fourth barrier to school-based management was the time spent managing money which absorbed stakeholder interest and took time and energy away from other decision-making. School operating funds were reduced and schools were increasingly charged with the task of balancing expenditures and living within their fiscal means. Decisions had to be made at the school level. Stakeholders were obliged to share their opinions and advise the principal. Many stakeholders were reluctant to discuss staff reductions, and program cuts. Debates became antagonistic, issues became personal, and collaborative decision-making difficult to achieve. Parents and staff refused to take responsibility for the drastic measures needed to balance budgets, so

decisions were left to principals, and in some cases district staff. Participants reported that two principals made the early budget decisions on their own, and one sought help from district staff. Participant 108, reflected:

> My working life from 1994 to now has been a total struggle with money. Since the early days of school-based management decisions had to be made which had at their center the monetary bottom line. Some of the decisions I made flew in the face of my personal biases and beliefs, yet I still had to make them based almost solely on balancing budgets. The early days were hard because I was essentially alone. Now with the school-based team in place decisions are shared and I get help with tricky issues. The responsibility hasn't gone, just the sense of isolation. (Personal interview, June 8, 1998)

Participants acknowledged that lack of funds was at the heart of almost every school issue since implementation. "We have come to know that education in Alberta was seriously underfunded. My school has really addressed school-based management which is now working well, but it is hard to see us being able to progress further without some positive changes to provincial funding formulas" (Personal Interview, Participant 115, June 19, 1998).

Another aspect of the effect of funding on school-based management was the steady deterioration of capital and building related items. School buildings have not been maintained throughout the first Three Year plan and capital replacement of items such as stoves for cooking classes, or special equipment for special education groups continues to age beyond usefulness. Participants believe that in the immediate future, school districts will be faced

with huge repair and replacement costs which they will be unable to fund. In 1998, the fiscal restraint program was still in place half way through the second Three Year Plan (1997-2000).

Barrier Five

The trilogy of fiscal restraint, stakeholder anger, and forced implementation, produced barriers which impeded school-based management. The fifth barrier was unexpected and came about because school-based management increased the active number of stakeholders regularly taking part in decision-making. School-based management required principals to seek advice from all stakeholders in the school community. This expectation increased the number of actual contacts that principals made with community representatives. Not only did the number of contacts increase, so did the quality of these contacts. Meetings were recorded, records kept, correspondence exchanged and a new degree of sophistication was added to intra-school community relations. In much the same way as communications between stakeholder groups became more formalized, so to did the interaction between other, less obvious, stakeholders.

Not all these contacts were stressful. Participant 108 reported that she actively encouraged the relationship between the school and a local chapter of the Lions Club. When school fund raising efforts started to lag, she contacted the Lions Club and asked for help:

They were delighted to assist the school. They came to a school council meeting, asked our needs and then promptly went to work to meet them.

In return they asked for an officer to sit in on school council meetings

and act as a liaison between the club and our school. Due to their efforts

we got new equipment, and a revitalized school playground.

(Personal interview, May 22, 1998)

Participant 108 further reported that:

It was such a relief to have someone take over a bothersome area and

make a success of it. A great load was taken off my shoulders. I stopped

being shy about asking for help after that. The success of the Lions

helped me to assist other stakeholders to be successful. It was a magic

moment for me. (Personal interview, May 22, 1998)

Before 1994, these kinds of positive interactions did occur between schools

and their communities, but since the implementation of school-based

management formal contact with stakeholders from the larger school

community have greatly increased. Increased stakeholder numbers complicate

decision-making and increased the workloads of elementary principals.

Barrier Six

Stress was the last barrier reported by elementary principal participants.

Stress resulting from change, restructuring initiatives, new legislation, revised

school board policy, and increased stakeholder assertiveness. All participants,

reported increased stress levels due to the implementation of school-based

management. Personal stress was the most enervating. "I felt as if I had

somehow failed to look after the needs of my school. As the most responsible

person, the onus was on me to solve problems and resolve difficulties without

pain. Clearly this was impossible" (Personal interview, participant 101, June 17, 1998). Participants had to also deal with their own stress. Coping with increased ambiguity within the system and the initial lack of support from district staff, left school principals having to sustain themselves, often in isolation. Difficult decisions, hard choices and expanded expectations challenged school principals to achieve at all costs, or if possible at no cost. Elementary principal participants wanted the challenge of school-based management, but were not ready for the Alberta reality.

Research Question 4: What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have participants acquired, or still need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management?

Attitude One

Participant elementary principals reported that they came to like school-based management. This was the primary attitude expressed by all participants. School-based management helped participants reshape their schools during a time of economic upheaval. Related initiatives, announced concurrently with school-based management, sometimes served to impede the implementation process. The impediments elicited negative responses which are still remembered. "My new attitude is that I am really excited to have the opportunity to work with school-based management, but I find I'm taking a walk through the forest not really knowing where the path is .... I don't really have a clear idea of how best to implement S.B.M " (Personal interview, participant 101, June 17, 1998). Other participant attitudes towards school-

based management are similar. The simple organizational processes, and decision-making using representative committees, is positively supported by participants, *but the subtle nature of school-based management is still proving a challenge to school leaders.*

Attitude Two

Be it attitude, knowledge or skill, one of major challenges was the *requirement for the principal to be the chief school-based facilitator.* This changed the nature of the principals work and required a new attitude of collaboration and sharing which was not required before 1994. Participant 115 shared:

> Suddenly I was supposed to initiate everything. That without my constant supervision, issues would not be resolved and work would stop. I found it very frustrating. At the very time I needed individual staff initiative and motivated self starters, everyone waited for me to assign *tasks and rationalize activity. Once assigned, I found that I was expected* to follow individual and group progress closely and give feedback on a regular basis. That was when I realized how "wounding" the governments restructuring initiatives had been. (Personal interview. June 6, 1998)

Other participants reported similar experiences. It seemed that staff, and active parents needed to be reassured that their actions were appropriate and worthy of support. "For weeks, I didn't seem to do a thing except go around and talk with people. In time, I gave away some of my more concrete tasks and

made myself the school coach, by simply helping people to get on with things"
(Personal interview, participant 108, May 19, 1998).

Skill One

Participant elementary principals showed their pragmatism by naming a
number of skills they needed to attain. The primary skill area identified was
business management and related skills. Skills such as understanding formal
accounting procedures, how to run effective formal business meetings, how to
provide training for other school community leaders, how to use technology to
improve communication between stakeholders, and how to implement action
research. "In some ways I have become a business manager," reported
participant 115, "In larger schools, the vice principal often fills this role, but in
elementary schools, it's the principal that is expected to manage accounts"
(Personal interview, June 19, 1989). "Some of us were ill prepared for the
challenges of school-based management. Making important decisions with
little by way of support, being responsible for school finances and the arbiter of
staffing and school programs was a trial" (Personal interview, participant 108,
May 22, 1998).

Skill Two

Skill two was expressed as a deeper understanding of business
methods and philosophy. This need came with the realization that if
government adopted business models to finance and restructure public

education, then school-based leaders needed to become familiar with the same business methodologies and practice.

Skill Three

Participants stressed the need for effective people skills. Patience, being a good listener, showing an interest in people and encouraging them to give their best. It was the participant with sound interpersonal skills who handled the challenges of implementation most effectively. Elementary principal participants were pleased that their natural people skills helped them through the implementation process but more shopisticated skills were required. These included, being an active listener, a good public speaker, and an excellent developer/presenter of reports.

Knowledge One

Participants attached great importance to people and business skills. However, they were keenly aware that school-based management required school principals to also be competent counselors of adults. The primary area of new knowledge, expressed by participants, was personal counseling. The implementation of school-based management in Alberta was accompanied by other measures that created inordinate stress among school stakeholders in their role as most responsible person. School principals needed sound counseling skills in order to help peers, colleagues and other stakeholders.

The gaining of an working knowledge of personal counseling was viewed as being pivotal to administrative success.

Secondary Section

Composite Secondary School

The school office made it clear that this was a secondary school. Through the small glass framed opening sat three women busy at their work stations name signs proudly announcing their official status as office staff. As I waited to be acknowledged, the efficiency of the place stood out. Everything labeled, filing cabinets, shelves with books, work stations, doors to offices and meeting rooms, supply room, even the staff. Unable to make eye contact with any of the office ladies I look around. Two wide hallways merge from opposite directions. I can just hear the rhythmic pounding of running feet. The gym must be close. Everything is well lit. The decor is bright complete with accent stripes. The stripes, I later find out, guide you to distant departments and school facilities.

"Hi! How may I help", awakes me from my introspection. "I'm here to see the Principal." I am escorted through the main office and down a short corridor where offices abound. We stop at the largest office and I am introduced to my colleague. My escort wishes me well and leaves. I am ushered to a seat and we talk. I muse as the formalities begin. This is the den of a man of power and influence. Organized, decorated with items of home and family. Queen

Elizabeth graces the wall behind his desk. Two computers sit snugly into a far corner. Yes, this is his place!

I am treated well. Offered coffee which is delivered by Mrs. Rogers and comes with cream and cookies. Mr. Brodrick and I talk. Would you like a tour if the school? Away we go. We follow the yellow line, past a number of classrooms. They are full of students working in care of their teachers. Everyone seems occupied. Busy noise abounds. The Career and Technology Services area turns out to the a collection of very well equipped shops. We enter the Auto shop and thirty some pairs of eyes come our way. Work stops. We are silently perused and activity returns to near normal. I am glad that I dressed well today. Obviously Mr. Brodrick is important and I look important. We are noticed wherever we go.

We tour labs, two gyms, Career and Technology areas 2 and 3 and return to the main school office via the art, drama and music departments. Nine hundred and fifty students, fair size school. The building is impressive, staff are friendly, but reserved. They won't begin to relax until they know why I am here. As we pass Mrs. Rogers we are told the the other two participants await us in the staff room. The four of us meet. I outline my dissertation, describe the interview process and answer questions. They are keen to begin!

After the interviews and before I drive home, I stroll the grounds. It's cool outside with a steady prairie wind. The trees, newly leafed, frame the buildings and take the harshness out of concrete walls and small energy efficient windows. The Maple Leaf flaps in the wind as kids, who are really young men and women, exit in small groups. This is an impressive place. It looks important. It is one of her Majesty's many, Canadian Secondary Schools.

Table four gives the role, education/occupation of secondary

participants, and the number of years served in their respective schools.

Table Four

The Role, Education/Occupation of Secondary Participants and the Number of

Years Served at their Respect Schools. 1998.

#	Role	Years at School	Education	Occupation
104	Principal	10	B. Sc. M. Ed.	
111	Principal	4	B.A. B. Ed.	
112	Principal	5	B. Sc. B. Ed. M.Ed.	
105	Teacher	7	B.Sc. B.Ed.	
107	Teacher	5	B.A. B.Ed.	
118	Teacher	8	B.Sc. B.Ed.	
106	S.C. Chair	4	B.A.	Homemaker
113	S.C. Chair	4	Commerce Cert.	Accountant
117	S.C. Chair	4	B.A.	Librarian

A brief biography of secondary participants is included in Appendix H.

It is interesting to note that all the secondary principal participants are male.

Two, of the three, lead teachers are male. All the school council chairpersons

are female. Of the eighteen participant leaders in this study, thirteen are female and five male.

The nine secondary participants had views more in common with each other than their elementary peers. Professional staff, valued school-based management as a process which provided order and structure to school operations. This perception was not shared by school council chairpersons. The next section presents responses from secondary school participants arranged by participant role, and research question.

Secondary School Council Chairperson Perspectives

Research Question 1a: What leadership issues arose from the mandatory implementation of school-based management?

Secondary school council chairpersons experienced the same period of inaction following the 1994 announcement of school-based management. They felt that the period of inaction was longer for them than it was for administrators and school staff. In secondary schools, timetable development was underway and normal functions continued unchanged.

Secondary Administrators were possibly the first stakeholder group to begin to work on school-based management. Participant 106 reported:

> Our principal had several meetings with my school council executive so that we could be kept up to date with the latest SBM release. He also encouraged us to stay on council, by letting our names stand for the 1994 Fall elections. (Personal interview, April 15, 1998)

All three participants concurred that the first work they undertook involving school-based management was preparing a new school council charter.

Leadership Issue One

The primary leadership issue, for parent participants, that arose from the implementation of school-based management was how to change school organization to meet the "requirements" of school-based management. This entailed developing a Charter for each school council as required by the amended School Act.

Leadership Issue Two

The second leadership issue for parent participants was greater inclusion on school committees. As Participant 113 stated:

Our school developed a number of small special committees that reported to a management committee called the school-based team. Representatives from staff, administration, and parents, made up the membership of each committee. For a while, the principal continued to make budget, staffing, and major program decisions. However, by the spring of 1995, parents were actively involved in decision-making. (Personal interview, June 6, 1998)

Another secondary school used the school council as the decision-making forum for their school. "I was kept very busy. I did not have the skills needed to run a tight, well controlled, business meeting. I had to learn real fast"

(Personal interview 117, June 19, 1998). The reorganization of some school management processes was quite subtle. The new committees were relatively informal and reported to the more formal school-based team or school council.

Little reference was made to differences between secondary staff and parents. One school council chair reflected:

Initially a vacuum formed. Some, more active parents thought they might at last be able to make changes at school, but school-based management was not really explained to people. Some thought the principal was going to have total control. Others, thought the parents would run the place, but the majority of people, including teachers, had little idea what school-based management was all about. (Personal interview 117, June 29, 1998).

Traditionally, secondary schools had parent groups which advised staff as required. Their most important function was to coordinate the activities associated with student graduation. All three schools reported that their Parent Advisory Group made the transition to school council without fanfare or rancor.

One secondary school reported that their pre-1994 committee structure suited the representative nature of school-based management. "We had only to add parents to our committees and we were online" (Participant 106). "Our district used our committee structure as a model for other schools to follow" (Personal interview, June 29, 1998). Secondary schools, by their very nature, had to plan at least a year in advance. Large secondary schools, in particular, were slow to adapt because school-based management information was released by government over a span of eighteen months, therefore secondary

schools were still making school-based management adjustments two years into the first Three Year Plan.

Leadership Issue Three

Secondary school council chairs pointed out that the initial school-based management *implementation period was affected by a number of other changes moved by government.* Of these two really hit school hard, fiscal cutbacks and amalgamation of school districts. Managing the effects of fiscal cutbacks and amalgamation was the third leadership challenge for participants. Amalgamation efforts meant that participating school districts *were extremely busy restructuring. This involved relocating* District Offices, reorganizing district management, closing schools, redesigning district services and financial operations. Schools were expected to carry on until the *newly formed district "caught up." Schools however, were also expected to* manage fiscal cutbacks.

In response to the monitory issues related to the implementation of school-based management, participant 113 remembered that, "the first cuts were horrendous, teachers were laid off and programs reduced or canceled. Class sizes increased. Yet it wasn't just the cuts. Somehow they represented all that was mean spirited about government changes to education" (Personal interview, June 17, 1998). Participant 117 recalled that:

> In our school, the principal managed the first set of cuts. He was
> masterful. He did his best to consult with staff and tried to get opinions
> from the school council, but in those early days we were very reluctant to

get involved in making decisions related to staff and program changes. It was only later that we began to help with this kind of decision. (Personal interview, June 19, 1998). Some parents still believed that they had the right to involve themselves in school decisions. Secondary participants reported that their school councils did not mount a serious "bid for power" at this time, but individual members did try. Participant 117, when asked about covert parent action, responded:

> A small number of my parents wanted to make other changes. They were not vocal at meetings but approached regular school council members, on the side, seeking support for the removal of a couple of teachers under the guise of cutting costs. They got little support and the principal was able to deflect their efforts at the next council meeting. (Personal interview, June 19, 1998)

Leadership Issue Four

The fourth leadership issue for school council chairs was the increased commitment of time and energy that school-based management asked of activist parents. Secondary school council chairpersons freely acknowledged that they were ill prepared to be an active part of the schools' decision-making process. They knew that secondary schools were complex organizations undergoing great change, and quickly came to realize that involvement in decision-making regarding staff and program cuts, could be troublesome. Secondary school council chairs were relieved that the legislation was

amended in April of 1995. At the time, all three secondary chairs expressed relief that their role was confirmed as parent advisors to the school.

Leadership Issue Five

The fifth leadership issue raised by secondary school council chairpersons was the role of the school council. The original legislation defining the role of the school council, was amended in 1994 to give parents and school community members a decision-making role in their school. For schools, seemingly caught in the middle of great change, and struggling to cope with budget cuts and staff reductions, the inclusion of parents into what had been previously the prerogative of professional staff was seen as intrusive and somehow punitive.

The idea of shared decision-making was not offensive to participants. Intellectually, professional staff were leaning toward being collaborative and including school councils, in their deliberations. It was the imposition of "parent power" by government that alarmed school personnel. Teachers looked for hidden agendas. Administrators were expected to help lay people understand school processes as they were being revised. District and provincial guidelines were sparse and not helpful.

School council participants were not surprised when principals began to instigate school-based teams whose duties were to coordinate and manage school decision-making. Participant 106 stated:

> I was pleased to be asked to serve on school council as a member of the school-based team. It gave us (parents) a direct line to school

business which was important and really relevant. I was able to report to my council, get their input and report back. The system worked well. I also was able to work with teacher representatives and began to understand how they thought and where they were coming from. (Personal interview, April 15. 1998).

Participant 113 offered another perspective:

I had a very positive experience with the former P.T.A . (parent teacher association), and felt that the post 1995 school councils were very similar in scope and function. The P.T.A. was an integral part of the school as is our school council. But I am aware that this progression is not happening in other places. Some schools are still run by their principal and staff" (Personal interview, June 17, 1998).

Leadership Issue Six

The sixth leadership issue, arising from the implementation of school-based management, was how to fully instigate collaborative decision-making in public schools. Amidst the confusion surrounding the first Three Year Plan, the task of actually putting school-based management in place was significant. School council chairs agreed that the first twelve months were chaotic, but slowly, with the emergence of school-based teams, a representative decision-making process evolved.

Participant 117 felt. "We all wanted our have our cake and eat it too! Principals wanted to share decision-making but keep control. Teachers wanted to run the school without having to do the administrative work. Parents wanted

to have their say and have more control over teachers, but not get involved in the messy stuff" (Personal interview June 12, 1998). Throughout the first Three Year plan this dichotomy between and amongst stakeholders started to resolve itself. Principals took the final responsibility for all matters relating to the school. Staff were involved at most levels of decision-making, as were parents who gave advice and direction to the staff. Parents also had the vehicle of school council to debate issues with other members of the school community.

Related Observations

Secondary participants did not experience the "parent bid for power" that was experienced by elementary participants. Secondary participants felt that the complex and and somewhat secretive nature of secondary school organization inhibited potential bids for increased parent control of schools.

During the span of first Three Year Plan, parents became an integral part of secondary school decision-making process. Parents representatives participated by serving on most school committees and were kept well informed of school related issues.

Research Question 1b: How did the mandatory implementation of school-based management affect the participant's role and function within the school community?

Secondary school council chairpersons identified three areas which affected their role and function. The first was their increased involvement in school decision-making. The second was the major role of school council in the life of the school and the third was their important role in public relations

and communications. As school councils became an important adjunct to school-based management, they shifted from striving to become the focus of decision-making, and developed as an important communication vehicle and information source for school parents and other stakeholders.

Role One

The primary role of school council chairs was being a facilitator for school decision-making. They felt, until school-based management was implemented, that they rarely made important decisions at P.T.A. or Parent Advisory Group meetings. In a matter of months, school councils were being consulted and asked to respond to quite specific school problems and suggest solutions. Even with the advent of school-based teams, school councils continued to refine and use their decision-making skills. As participant 106 explained, "the right to discuss school programs and policy, and to look at, and question, the budget was light years ahead of where we were before the implementation of school-based management" (Personal interview, April 29, 1998).

Related Function

Developing means to assist parents become decision-makers within the school community was a function of the school council chairperson. As school councils became an integral part of school-based decision-making, school leaders needed to ensure that parents were widely represented on

school committees. School council chairs undertook the function of leading parents and community members to serve their school by developing and improving decision-making processes.

Role Two

The second role of secondary school council chairs was adjusting to the volume of important work that school councils did within the school community. Participant school council chairs reported that their positions got steadily more demanding as school-based management evolved. Participant 106 recalled, "I was totally overwhelmed at what was happening. Understanding issues, budget stuff, meetings, meetings, meetings. I was called to school for some reason or other about once every second day. I had some leadership ability but nothing could have prepared me for the first months of the 1994-95 school year" (Personal interview, March 29,1998).

School council chairs, especially those who took office prior to 1994, and stayed in office through the first Three Year Plan, found the transition difficult as stakeholders used the school council for their own purposes. "Everyone was guilty," reported participant 113; "Parents, teachers and administrators used the council as a sounding board, often without notice and sometimes with suspect motives" (Personal interview, June 5, 1998).

Related Function

A function of increased school council duties was the education of parents on how to become more effective members of the school community. School councils played an important role in educating community members. Administrators and teachers expected school council chairs to share information with parents so that they were able to give informed advice. For a time, advice was supplanted by concerns, which did little to build bridges with other stakeholders. School council chairs managed to reshape concerns and have them presented as improvement items. The leadership of school councils was demanding. Participant 117 claimed, "On several nights, after school council meetings, I went home and had a good cry. Not, because the meetings were so bad, but because I felt, that I had let them slip out of my control. When that happened it seemed that people felt free to criticize anything and anyone" (Personal interview, June 19, 1998).

Participant school council chairpersons worked on developing their own skills in order to be better leaders. 'I really tried to improve," participant 113 recounted:

> For me personally, I concentrated on learning formal meeting skills. I studied Roberts Rules of Order, drew up a standard agenda form and made motion slips on which new motions could be written up before being circulated. I met with my Principal on a regular basis, and read all the communications from other agencies. With help from a couple of

teachers I really got better and I thought the meetings did too.

(Personal interview, June 5, 1998).

Role Three

The third role was improving the quality of networking, information gathering and meetings between stakeholder groups to help ensure that sound decision-making was the result of regular consultation and communication. School council chairs wanted to do well. They represented parents and had deep concerns for students. In one school, the informal relationship between school council and the students council was strengthened by the addition of a high school student to the school-based team.

Communication between stakeholders increased the workload of school council chairs. The increase in formally structured meetings and the volume of written communication has already been noted, but since the implementation of school-based management the scope, type and volume of communications also increased.

Related Function

Prior to 1994, a typical chairpersons response to a request from the principal might be a hastily scribbled note giving a short response. After implementation, school council chairpersons found themselves having to respond to issues, requests and recommendations in formal reports which

reflected the wishes of the council, and gave the reader insight into decision

rationale. The volume of communication, in writing, increased ten fold in the

first year of the Three Year Plan. By the end of the plan (June, 97), school

council chairs reported that preparing and producing extensive written

communication, and developing public relations material for the school, and

school council, was a time consuming duty.

Research Question 2: How have participants revised or adapted decision-

making models, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of

school-based management?

The implementation of a new management system such as school-

based management might suggest that a new model of decision-making

would emerge. Secondary school council chairpersons reported that three

adaptations were made to pre-1994 decision-making models and

acknowledged that former models of decision-making were simply modified to

match organizational change.

Adaptation One

The primary adaptation to accomplish school-wide decision-making

occurred when Parent Teacher Associations and Parent Advisory Groups were

reconstituted as new School Councils. In order to meet the requirements of

school stakeholders in school decision-making, school councils became the

venue for school debate and consultation. This change was a significant

challenge to stakeholders who had to learn how to conduct effective business in a larger public forum, than the former P.T.A. meeting.

School council chairs reported that meetings became contentious, and fraught with emotion, as important school decisions were discussed. Participant 117 recounted, "We often could not reach consensus. Parents and teachers bickered over little things that really seemed to rankle them. Hidden agendas seemed everywhere. In the early days of our school council we discussed things, but he (principal) had to make the decisions because we could not agree" (Personal interview, June 19, 1998).

Adaptation Two

The second adaption was a response to the challenges posed by "school council decision-making." School staff moved to a representative committee structure which dealt with school-decision-making and reported to a school-based team. The school council became the part of the new committee structure which represented parents and ceased being the forum for all stakeholders. Secondary school council participants acknowledged the practical necessity of this change. "We became more social in nature. In fact, we sort of went back to the old P.T.A. style of things, but we are much better informed. Our main job was to represent parents and raise funds" (Personal interview 113, June 5, 1998).

Decision-making was managed by the school-based team, which had stakeholder representatives from staff, administration, and parents and usually included the school council chairperson. The school-based team coordinated

all decisions and helped to ensure that stakeholders provided input before a final decision was taken. All three secondary school council participants were members of their respective school-based teams. They reported that for complex secondary schools, the school-based team was an efficient way of getting through a lot of business. Participant 106 gave this account:

> Senior High schools are hard to understand. They are departmentalized, and appear secretive and reluctant to share with outsiders. As school council chair I worked hard to become accepted within the school. After four years in office, two of which I sat on the school-based team, it was my work as a member of the team that suddenly "opened the doors." My school council work is appreciated, but it is my school-based team membership that gave me acceptance within the school.
> (Personal interview, April 29, 1998)

Adaptation Three

The third adaptation impacting decision-making was the structure and function of representative committees. In each participant secondary school, small permanent committees were established to administer specific functions. For example, the budget committee, whose task was to annually set the school budget after conferring, and seeking advice from stakeholders. As required, special needs committees were convened to deal with emergent issues.

Secondary school council chairpersons were positive in their comments regarding school-based committees. Their respective school councils

consistently dealt with requests for advice and recommendations from the school-based team. The school-based team supplanted the school council as the forum for school-based decision-making.

When asked about models of decision-making, participant 113 responded:

> I don't know about models. The process is about the same as pre-S.B.M. days. The real difference is in how the process is completed. Now we have, much better communications, much better delineation of responsibilities, much more timely process, and much better used of informed stakeholders to help us research issues and make good decisions. (Personal interview, June 17, 1998)

Research Question 3: What barriers have participants encountered while implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers? Three major barriers to the implementation of school-based management were identified by secondary school council chairpersons.

Barrier One

Province-wide fiscal restraint, and related budget cutbacks, which began as school-based management was implemented, was given as the primary barrier. Participant 117 stated, "The timing for the introduction of S.B.M. was shocking. As school-based decision-making was being approved by government, so were huge budget cuts which had the effect of severely

reducing the effectiveness of local decision-making" (Personal interview, June 19, 1998). Another participant felt, "It was hard to divorce the idea of S.B.M. from the reality of instantaneous budget cuts" (Personal interview 106, April 1998). Without exception, participants believed that the cuts to school funding that occurred concurrent with the first implementation initiatives were responsible for a lot of the suspicion and negative reaction to change that emerged at school council meetings. School-based management in Alberta is now synonymous with fiscal restraint.

Barrier Two

The second barrier identified by secondary council participants was lack of working time. The implementation of school-based management was rushed. There never seemed to be enough time to meet, debate, research, and to learn. Schools felt they had to act quickly. School councils were hastily reconstituted and put into service. Reaction to change brought about by school-based management, or by the many restructuring measures instigated at the same time, had stakeholders confused and trying to do what was best for schools. It was a time of strife.

As the pressure to complete implementation grew, and workloads increased, the lack of working time became an important factor retarding success. School-based decision-making took time. Involving all stakeholders took time. Adjusting to reduced staff and programs took time. Time was the ingredient that most participants felt they lacked. Participant 113 added:

> I think the early deadlines set for school-based management should

have been extended for at least twelve months. We were not able to deal with the government restructuring measures as well as school-based management. *Restructuring should have come first, then school-based management* (Personal interview, June 12, 1998).

The rush to implement school-based management was also hindered by a lack of knowledge. Few understood the full potential of school-based management. Leaders were forced to seek answers, and develop mechanisms as situations developed. *Few had the time to be proactive.* Gaining knowledge took time. Much of what was initially undertaken had to be amended. The learning curve, as applied to the implementation of school-based management in Alberta, was long, sometimes inefficient, and best described as trial and error.

Barrier Three

The third barrier to school-based management described by secondary school council participants was the struggle for power. School council chairs were adamant that a realignment of power between stakeholder groups was a real issue that they witnessed in their schools. The tension between teachers and parents was obvious, and at most meetings differences of opinion, between these stakeholders, would emerge. In 1994, parents were excited about playing a larger role in school affairs. The new school councils seemed to provide a vehicle which parents could control. Control proved to be the issue.

Who ran the school? Who made decisions? How was school business to be conducted?

Participant school council chairs reported that activist parents and teachers began to clash shortly after the reconstituted school councils came into being. Participant 117 provided this description:

The staff that attended school council meetings were suddenly more active. They spoke at meetings, offered advice, took notes. I don't remember anyone doing that before. Some parents challenged the principal to explain personnel matters, formerly kept confidential. He refused, citing District policy which did not allow personnel issues to be made public. Teachers quickly defended the principal and the meeting became quite noisy as parents and teachers debated the merits of the case. We had many such incidents throughout 1994 and into 1995. (Personal interview, June 19, 1998)

Participant 113 reported that:

A huge row ensued when power changed hands and was given to school councils (parents). The principal of our large high school became more powerful than the Superintendent. Politically it seemed to me that power went from Superintendent and School Trustees, to parents and teachers during 1994. By the time 1995 was done the power seemed to shift to principal and teachers, with some influence being retained by parents. (Personal interview, June 19, 1998)

Barrier Four

Another barrier which impeded the implementation of school-based management was that government misjudged the degree to which parents wanted to be involved in their children's school. Participant 113 made this observation. "In my view, parents didn't want to be as involved in the life of schools as government did" (Personal interview, June 5, 1998). Secondary school council participants felt that the provincial government was remiss in implementing school-based management haphazardly, and in tandem with other wide-ranging changes to public education.

Related Observations

Secondary school council participants made a number of passing references to heightened emotions, anger, and frustration arising from a wide variety of reactions to changes that the move to school-based management created. It is possible that negative emotions arising from the implementation of school-based management was another barrier which impeded progress. Research Question 4: What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have

participants acquired, or still need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management?

Attitude One

The primary new attitude related to the implementation of school-based management was a *willingness to embrace the tenants of school-based decision-making in a collaborative manner which included all stakeholders. Once these factors were accepted and inculcated into school governance, stakeholders needed only to acquire new knowledge and learn to use the related skills.*

Knowledge One

The primary new knowledge needed to implement school-based management was a *complete understanding of the school-based model that was developed in Alberta.* School-based management, as implemented in 1994, was poorly defined with little by way of provincial regulation or guidelines. Part of the reason that the implementation process was slow to start was lack of knowledge. Schools and school systems had to scramble to gather their own data and design a school-based management structure that would work for them, and at the same time meet the demands of Alberta Education. "Over time, parents who served on school councils, came to understand their school's version of school-based management. Non-contact parents still had little real understanding of the process, even four years later" (Personal

interview 113, June 5, 1998). Participant 106 supported this view," We still have a tremendous selling job to do with the public. The great majority of community members have little idea what school-based management is, and how it affects our schools" (Personal interview, April 15, 1998).

Ongoing education about school-based management was seen as vital by participants to help ensure the continuance of this process. It was the belief of participants that school councils were steadily losing members. Secondary school councils have always been small and appeared to be getting smaller. As the parent representative stakeholder group, school councils needed to gain the support of parents and actively encourage them to become involved in the life of the school.

Knowledge Two

The second area of new knowledge, reported by secondary school council participants, was how secondary schools functioned. This new knowledge was gained as participants learned how the adoption of school-based management and related school processes was eventually accomplished. Secondary school parent participants were firm in their assertions that since the implementation of school-based management, administrative and management structures, and processes, have greatly improved. Particular reference was made to decision-making mechanisms. Over time, meetings were better managed, accurate minutes kept and

communication between committees was improved and pertinent information shared with parents.

Skill One

The primary skill was identified as Action Research. School council chairs reported that other stakeholders were regularly engaged in small research projects that impacted the school. The implementation of school-based management was the stimulus which encouraged school council chairs to study issues, and problems, with the result that mini-action reports were developed for the benefit of the school community. One secondary council participant remarked that:

> I was really impressed by the efforts of the committee who conducted research on school report cards. By using Internet, and Alberta Education sources, the committee was able to circulate sixty sample report cards, and supply comprehensive data on what common information was included on secondary school report cards within Alberta. (Personal interview 117, June 17, 1998)

Individual school committees were also identified as undertaking action research projects designed to help them with their work. Participants also noted that the quality of administrative news briefs, and reports, also improved.

Proposals were more detailed and included footnotes giving sources and references.

Skill Two

The second new skill was defined as active listening. Active listening, as described by secondary school council participants, involved a conscious attempt to listen and understand what people were saying, and seeking clarity when communication was unclear. Participants reported that since the early, somewhat unruly, days of implementation, stakeholders have really tried to communicate clearly and precisely. Representative groups, by design, provide individuals the chance to seek clarification of issues and understanding of particular points of view. Secondary school council participants have taken part in school sponsored workshops which taught active listening. They felt the common use of active listening has benefited their school community, and strengthened the effectiveness of school-wide communications. Parents, as a group, want to be heard. In the words of participant 106, "parents want schools to listen to them and to students. We have perspectives worth listening to" (Personal interview, April 15, 1998).

Related Observations

Secondary school council chairs made several references to the importance of other people skills. School leaders, in their view, needed to be excellent listeners, competent public speakers, empathetic to a variety of

opinions and more accepting of stakeholder aspirations and differences.

Management models aside, secondary school council chairs felt that a

personal leadership style which encouraged stakeholders and practiced

catholic inclusion in decision-making was most worthy of support and

emulation. A summary of findings contrasting the views of participant

elementary and secondary parent leaders (school council chairpersons) who

experienced the implementation of school-based management in Alberta can

be found in Appendix J.

The next section provides information on leadership issues as provided

by three secondary teachers. Secondary teacher participants were leaders who

contributed to their school by serving on school-based teams or by being

teacher representatives on school council. For the purposes of this study, they

have been designated lead teacher in recognition of their professional stature

within their schools.

Secondary School Lead Teacher Perspectives

Research Question 1a: What leadership issues arose from the mandatory

implementation of school-based management? Secondary lead teacher

participants identified two significant leadership issues that directly involved teachers.

Leadership Issue One

The primary leadership issue for secondary lead teachers was managing change brought about by the implementation of school-based management. In schools, almost any change impacts teachers. The implementation of school-based management greatly effected the working lives of teachers and helped shaped their reactions to the process. Some schools were ready to adopt school-based management for they had experience with collaborative decision-making and shared responsibility for decisions that involved staff. For them, the shift to school-based management simply required some structural reorganization and process modification to meet government or district requirements. Schools that were managed by an autocratic principal faced greater change and were often ill prepared to adapt to school-based management. The common denominator seemed to be the leadership style of the principal.

Leadership Issue Two

The second leadership issue was the leadership style of the principal. As school communities began to deal with implementation issues it was the principal that was expected to lead the organization through the "process." Participant 105 reported that, "On my staff, most teachers felt that school-based

management was a government initiative that would simply go away. There was initially a large "air of indifference" toward school-based management" (*Personal interview, March 23, 1998*). *Denial and avoidance were common* reactions of teachers to the announcement of school-based management, but as the new school councils came "on line," and budget cuts were announced, teacher anxiety began to mount. Staff cuts and program reductions hit hard. Teaching positions were cut, significant numbers of department head positions were revoked and support staff let go. Concurrently, some school councils became embroiled in dissension as stakeholder groups vied for recognition and power. At the time, teacher participant 118 remembered that, "*my colleagues were convinced that activist parents were trying to take control of the school, to the exclusion of other stakeholders. Our principal came under attack, as did our staff. For a while, we all stumbled trying to decide how to proceed. Existing school-based guidelines were useless. Finally, we just got mad and, as a group (teachers), went after mouthy parents*" (Personal *interview, June 12, 1998*).

During 1994, participants were still using the processes that were in place prior to implementation. Staff and school council meetings were the *school forums for debate, and some decision-making. Most principals made* decisions for the school because staff were resisting change, or busy trying to adjust to it. Many difficult school-based decisions had to be made for the 1994-95 school year. As staff cutbacks and fiscal restraint came into effect the anxiety and frustration increased. School council meetings continued to be unsettled and little was resolved. In April, 1995 the legislation governing school councils was amended and parents responsibilities defined as advisory. As participant

113 mused, "It was now clear that parents, through the school council, would not be running the school" (Personal interview, June 12, 1998). Toward the end of this period of turmoil principals began to reassert themselves and take control of the school-based management process. Participants reported that those principals who philosophically supported shared decision-making and encouraged members of the school community to participant in school business made the quickest transition to school-based management.

Leadership Issue Three

The third leadership issue arising from the implementation of school-based management for secondary lead teachers was the increased need for teacher leaders. During the 1994-95 school year, schools began to restructure themselves. A committee process evolved in most schools to handle collaborative decision-making, which left the staff, and school council meetings, as separate stakeholder vehicles for questioning, debate and development of consensus. Teacher leaders were needed. Specialist committees required more teachers to be part of an expanding representative process. Parent leaders were also needed. More committees, meant more involvement for a greater number of stakeholders. For teachers, managing the change was really managing conflict, both individually and collectively.

Participant 107 reported the leadership of teachers in the development of a working representative school committee structure was important. "My staff worked hard, in cooperation with school administrators, to develop our school-based team and the support committees. Teachers played a major role in

committee development and were instrumental in having parent representatives included in the process" (Personal interview, May 8, 1998). In all three secondary schools, participants acknowledged that the change to school-based management was positively influenced by teacher initiative and action.

Leadership Issue Four

The fourth leadership issue identified by secondary lead teachers was in the area of decision-making related to school budgets and fiscal policy. The implementation of school-based management was truly tested as a result of cutbacks to education funding which occurred concurrently. This meant that the introduction of school-based management had schools managing significant down-sizing of resources for the first time in the history of public education in Alberta. Participant 103 recalled, "the first round of cuts was administered by school principals working with district personnel. Stakeholders were informed of the changes to funding, and were partially consulted on some matters, but major decisions were made by my school principal" (Personal interview, April 6, 1998). In some school districts, central office personnel made staffing and monetary decisions. By the beginning of the 1995-96 school year most major decisions were made collaboratively by school staff and other stakeholders.

The ongoing fiscal restraint policy of the Government of Alberta impacted schools for the term of the first Three Year Plan (1994-97. As decision-making became collaborative, teachers were obliged to take part in decision-making primarily involving staff and program reductions, and managing reduced

operating funds. Participant lead teacher 107 explained that her colleagues "saw the merit in taking an active part in decision-making for it was at least better to make unpleasant local school-based decisions, than it was to have "outsiders" decide our fate" (Personal interview, May 22, 1998). "All teachers are leaders, primarily with children, but also within the greater school community. However, in terms of active teacher representation on school committees, team and council, there are many more teacher leaders now on my staff than there was in 1994" (Personal interview 105, April 6. 1998).

With practice, administrative and decision-making processes improved and became more effective. Stakeholder representation was wide spread and communications between committees and representative groups improved. By the end of the first Three Year Plan, teachers were heavily involved in school-based decision-making and serving as leaders of their school community. Research Question 1b: How did the mandatory implementation of school-based management affect the participant's role and function within the school community?

Participant lead teachers reported that budget cuts related to the implementation of school-based management had a significant effect on teachers' role and function. The program of fiscal restraint which accompanied school-based management affected teachers individually and collectively. Teachers were released, class sizes increased, programs were cut, capital and operating monies reduced, support staff laid off, special education funding reduced, district support staff withdrawn, and district administration costs capped at four percent. Every teacher had an increased work load, with little or

no support services to assist with larger groupings or to help with integrated special needs students.

Teachers felt their jobs were threatened. Larger school jurisdictions developed early retirement plans for older teachers so that young, less expensive, staff could be brought in as replacements. Participant 118 remembered that at his school:

We lost eight senior staff who were replaced by young kids who didn't have a clue. I felt bad, for I think a lot of good people left because they felt if they stayed they would eventually be layed off. Early retirement was the best alternative to what looked like a bad situation. Some of them have since told me it was the worst move they ever made.

(Personal interview, June 19, 1998)

Teacher participants also referred to the anger and sense of betrayal that teachers felt toward the provincial government who on one hand, offered school-based management as a chance to improve the operation of schools and collaboratively work with stakeholders to meet community needs, and on the other hand, acted to gut the system by imposing heavy funding cuts, in the name of fiscal responsibility. It was in this milieu that teachers became aware that they needed to become involved in school decision-making so they could shape school governance, especially in the areas of programs and budget.

Role One

Teaching remained the primary duty of public school teachers but the implementation of school-based decision-making impacted the role of

teachers in public schools. Decision-making began to involve teachers in more meetings, requiring them to be informed and knowledgeable participants. The knowledge and research needed to make informed decisions required additional time, and effort, and lead to the formation of specialist committees which undertook tasks as servants of the school community. Time to conduct school business became scarce and created extra stress for active teachers. Active teachers resented uninvolved teachers. In order to reduce workloads, and conflict, staff were increasingly seconded to committees by school administration. This had the effect of spreading some of the work among more teachers.

Related Function

The post implementation period increased decision-making, and related workload, but when decision-making involved staff and program reductions, and cost cutting, this new function made demands that went beyond increased work time. "I remember those first budget meetings. The shock of being asked to decide between cutting a program or a colleague. It was numbing. We took hours and hours to decide we couldn't decide, so our principal had to. It was then that I realized the awful decisions that administrators sometimes have to make" (Personal interview 118, June 12, 1998). "The investment of time in school-based decision-making also lead to a conscious collective effort to make decisions, once taken, work" (Personal interview 105, April 6, 1998).

Role Two

The increased need for in-school teacher leaders was the second new role described by participants. Participant 105 described these roles as, "being staff representatives and advocates. Since school-based management, impromptu teacher leaders have emerged to chair committees, sit on the school-based team or school council, conduct research and prepare reports for other staff by acting as unpaid administrative assistants" (Personal interview, April 6, 1998). The new structures utilized to manage school-based management were committee based and required increased staff participation to make them work. Stakeholder groups were anxious to have representatives at all levels. In the past, teachers had representatives on Parent Teacher Associations and a variety of professional organizations, but since 1994 school staffs have accepted the need to be more formally represented within their school community.

Related Function

The functions undertaken by these new school leaders were described by participant 118, who stated that teacher representatives have:

Become important people within the school community, especially in large secondary schools. They are the people to see, talk with and advance ideas to. Their support and ability to pass on information and receive communications from other stakeholders has lead to an

increase in the efficiency and effectiveness of school communications. (Personal interview, June 19, 1998)

The advocacy portion of the role of lead teacher cames in three dimensions. One, representing staff at school council meetings, or community meetings. Two, representing a special interest group of staff to other staff, or three, representing staff at meetings controlled by school administration. One participant explained:

> At closed committee meetings, dealing with finance, program, and staff or class size issues, staff representatives sometimes find themselves debating with school administrators. "Battles," between the teacher who researched the issue, and the principal who had direct responsibility for the decision can be stressful. This can be a heavy duty role for a teacher. (Personal interview 107, May 25, 1998)

School-based management provided schools the means to share power more equitably. Collaborative decision-making allowed stakeholders to serve colleagues and other members of the school community. Power and decision sharing increased individual workloads and additional stress. Research Question 2: How have participants revised or adapted school decision-making models, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of school-based management?

Participant response to this question was unexpected. A typical answer down played the concept of a decision-making model and moved to discuss the merits of the school committee model. As teacher stakeholders, they appeared to value the committee-based operating structure over any other

aspect of school-based management. It became clear that the term model was an obstacle to clarity in this question.

Adaptation One

The primary adaptation to pre-1994 decision-making was the restructuring of all school-based committees to effect a representative form of governance involving all stakeholders, with the exception of students. Collaborative decision-making was a basic precept of school-based management and, in Alberta, was introduced by government as a way to increase parent participation in their local schools. Before implementation, decision-making was essentially conducted by school staff under the direction of the principal. Authority was vested in the principal. Shared collaborative decision-making was an expectation of school-based management in Alberta and was implemented in tandem with other major education initiatives. One of these initiatives, reduced education funding, had schools immediately facing budget, staffing and program cuts while they were trying to restructure themselves to accommodate school-based management. The decisions that were made were brutal and effected school stakeholders at every level. The initiatives which accompanied the implementation of school-based management profoundly altered public school education in Alberta. School authorities were charged with dealing with each "alteration" and managing the resultant change.

Participant lead teachers called the months following implementation, "a time of hell," "days of darkness," and "a bleak time." Schools operated much as

they had prior to 1994 but the decisions were more stressful and and created divisions between individuals and stakeholder groups. The merits of school-based management were lost in the painful reality of the day. Participant 118 explained:

> By the spring of 1995, we were starting to see the need to be more collaborative about decision-making. Getting school-based management going was the aim, but a stronger stimulus for us was the fact that some of the decisions made in the early days of implementation were not as good as we thought and in fact negatively effected school personnel who were not consulted. This was not the intention .... we wanted to do better because we were making important decisions and needed all the help we could get. (Personal interview, June 19, 1998).

Participant 105 reported:

> My school moved quickly into shared decision-making. The district made those early budget decisions and our principal concentrated on moving the school towards school-based management. The school council was restructured and staff redesigned our old staff committee system to include parents and community members and away we went. By September of 1995 we were refining our efforts and reporting back to the school-based team, which was lead by our principal. We had some minor upsets at a couple of school council meetings but they were dealt with by the principal. (Personal interview, April 6, 1998).

The three participant secondary schools had instituted school-based teams and a representative committee structure by the beginning of the

1995-96 school year. Across the province other jurisdictions were in varying stages of redevelopment.

Adaptation Two

The second adaptation to decision-making was the joint movement to embrace *collaborative decision-making within school communities*. Participants reported a number of factors that encouraged the move to collaborative decision-making. These included: Making better decisions by involving more people, developing and utilizing stakeholder expertise for the benefit of the school, increasing accountability for decisions made, redirecting the energy expended in power debates and pseudo-issues, and improving communications and increasing knowledge.

In essence, the decision-making model developed since the *implementation of school-based management was a collaborative refinement* of the former representative staff committee concept. The new representative committee structure embraced all stakeholders and shifted decision-making from school district and school principal, to staff and other stakeholders. Research Question 3: What barriers have participants encountered while *implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers?* Participants, as they did with other research questions, framed their responses in the context of the introductory months of 1994. The emotion, *stress and frustration felt by teachers immediately following the initial*

implementation period is well remembered and put a strong emotional stamp on what followed.

Barrier One

The first barrier cited by secondary lead teachers was the substantive reductions to education funding. School districts were allocated less funds and directed to cut operating costs. Monies for capital expenses and major maintenance projects were frozen. It was difficult to engineer the implementation of school-based management, in a milieu of fiscal cutbacks, and system-wide disorder. The dual features of substantial cutbacks, and the rush to implement school-based management, created a systemic need for time to adjust and adapt.

Barrier Two

The second barrier was the role that the school district played in the implementation of school-based management. Secondary lead teacher participants reported differing levels of support for school-based management from their school districts. Participant 105 felt that his school district enthusiastically embraced school-based management, even as they undertook the integration of three school districts into one.

Assistance to schools came in the form of workshops for administrators and teachers. Three models of school-based management were developed, as a District initiative, that schools could use. At the beginning of the 1994-95

school year, schools were expected to manage their own budgets including staffing costs, operating and other expenses. Early in 1995 the district held workshops for school council members, school parents and community members. By 1995-96, District personnel were serving schools in a number of support areas.

Other participant Districts were slow to implement school-based management. Participant 118 reported that:

> My district was slow to respond to school-based management. I think that they were fully occupied with amalgamation issues (four districts into one), and did not deal with perceived school issues. For a while we floundered but slowly school administration started reshaping school committees and we began to decide our own fate.
>
> (Personal interview, June 12, 1998)

By June of 1997, the last year of the first Three Year Plan, several school districts in Alberta had barely begun to instigate school-based management in their schools.

Barrier Three

The third barrier to the implementation of school-based management in Alberta was school type, size and location. Participants made reference to the plight of small schools, less than 200 students, who were harder hit by the 1994 initiatives. Cost reduction measures prevented Districts from subsidizing small schools with the result that some small schools had to close. Elementary schools found it harder to adjust to new funding levels because

they had only one source of finance, school program grants. Secondary schools also received funds for Career and Technology Study credits which augmented their school program grants. Large schools, elementary or secondary, had economies of scale which they utilized. Smaller schools were forced to reduce and consolidate programs to become efficient.

Small rural schools, found that they began to loose students who transferred to larger local schools. Rural schools could not compete with larger schools. Some rural schools closed due to declining enrollments.

The amalgamation of former school districts into larger single entities changed local politics and made it difficult for the new boards to act effectively. School closures and related matters took longer to resolve in newly amalgamated Districts, than in uneffected Districts.

Barrier Four

Participant 118, in effect, summarized the fourth barrier to the implementation of school based management when he responded that, "We didn't really know what school-based management was. Naturally we looked it up as soon as we could but hardly any one knew anything about it" (Personal interview, June 12, 1998). The concepts of school-based management were poorly understood. Which, in addition to the scanty information supplied by Alberta Education, did little to hasten the implementation process. Allied to this lack of knowledge was the general belief that school-based management would simply go away if ignored for a few months. As other restructuring

initiatives evolved, it became clear that the implementation of school-based management could not be ignored.

Barrier Five

The fifth barrier was the time which had to be given for school personnel to deal with change. Individual and collective anger, denial, avoidance, bargaining and acceptance had to be worked through. This unavoidable use of time, meant that most schools made a late start on the first Three Year Plan. When ready, schools began to develop their own versions of school-based management and resolve the issues they faced.

Barrier Six

Barrier six was the significant increase in work-load experienced by teachers. Schools sought assistance to fill the school-based management knowledge gap. Workshop, seminars and training sessions were held to upgrade skills and aid development of school-based processes. For participant 105, it was a busy time of challenge and activity. "I worked like a dog. Meetings, workshops, staff planning sessions and small group work. Together we designed new processes and got them going. After the cutbacks and layoffs it was fun to be busy building a new school" (Personal interview, April 6, 1998). Activist lead teachers were particularly busy. Committee work, action research,

staff meetings and teaching, combined to provided a heavy work load which continued well into 1998.

Research Question 4: What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have participants acquired, or still need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management?

New Attitude One

Participant secondary lead teachers felt that teacher attitudes, while not greatly changed, were refocused on service to the school community. Secondary teachers primarily taught subjects, but since the implementation of school-based management teachers were expected to serve other members of the school community. Participant 107, postulated that:

> Teachers no longer just teach. They also work for each other, as teacher representatives on school committees and school council, and may also serve other parts of the school community. Secondary teachers are becoming more school oriented in the work that they do. This is a great change from being purely subject oriented.
>
> (Personal interview. May 8, 1998)

Secondary lead teachers believed that the role of teacher representative and advocate, increased as school-based management was refined and teacher workload was spread more equitably among staff. School-based management was designed to be collaborative in nature and implied that stakeholders would support each other by working together for the good of the school. School-wide collaboration among stakeholders assumes a collective

attitude which fostered individual and group integrity and respected the rights of all. As participant 105 put it, "Teachers need to show leadership by being good role models who see that all sectors of the school community have value and worth. Great teachers support everyone, not just themselves" (Personal interview, March 23, 1998).

New Knowledge

Participant lead teachers expressed the view that a comprehensive knowledge of the values that underline school-based management as a management model was vital to its success. "Part of the reason it took so long to get started was few people had any idea what it was about," was a reaction from participant 118. "The knowledge required to make school-based management really successful now, and in the future, has to do with school philosophy, aims and objectives, and school community ethics that are developed over time." (Personal interview, June 19, 1998)

Participant 118 further explained that he believed a healthy core of values, and beliefs, were being generated by active members of the school community which all stakeholders will come to understand. He thought that this

was one of the reasons that school meetings at all levels had become less contentious and more productive.

New Skill One

In the area of skills acquired or still to be acquired, lead teachers were adamant in the belief that teachers needed to have strong management and business skills. Public speaking, record keeping, planing, keeping accounts, meeting minutes, and presiding over meetings were mentioned. Participants also identified, human relations skills such as listening and being empathetic, managing conflict, being gender neutral, and encouraging positive group dynamics as being important new skills. Lead teachers were convinced that the role of the teacher was changing. Teachers became instructional leaders and "social engineers," and helped manage humanistic environments in which learning took pride of place.

Secondary lead teachers experienced the implementation of school-based management in a working environment which was more structured than most elementary schools. The pre-1994 secondary school was not able to quickly adapt to school-based decision-making in its fullest sense, but the organizational structure was able to be modified and allowed school decision-makers a means by which directed change could be accomplished. In comparison, most elementary schools quickly modify their school organization,

then needed time to develop new processes not required before school-based management.

A summary of findings contrasting the views of participant elementary and secondary lead teachers who were involved in the implementation of school-based management in Alberta can be found in Appendix K.

Secondary Principal Perspectives

Participant secondary school principals had fifty three years of collective school administration experience. Their senior secondary school populations ranged from 750 to 950 students.

Research Question 1a: What leadership issues arose from the mandatory implementation of school-based management?

Secondary principal participants divided their experience with school-based management into two phases. One, how they "got through" the early implementation stage, and two, how they supported mechanisms which encouraged school-based management.

Leadership Issue One

The first leadership issue identified by secondary principal participants was what is school-based management, and who controls it? Information on Alberta's version of school-based management, and who was to manage it, was an important issue for principals when implementation was announced. In the confusion caused by other major, and related, public education initiatives,

school districts were busy trying to develop responses to change, which appeared punitive and far reaching. For a time, schools were left to fend for themselves. "We just carried on" reported participant 111, "but as the spring of 1994 progressed we needed direction on how to proceed with planning for the 1994-95 school year. No one seemed able to respond so I just gathered my people together, used the data we had and did the timetable" (Personal interview, June 3, 1998). School district officers did not suddenly become useless, but they were severely handicapped by the unprecedented changes to funding and their effects on schools. Secondary schools found their normal preparations handicapped by lack of information. 1994-95 was the first school year of implementation. Significant budget cuts were imposed, staff layed off and programs cut. Schools throughout the province had to make changes on an adhoc basis as directives, aimed at controlling expenditures, came from district office.

In the "turmoil" of 1994, secondary principal participants studied school-based management material in an effort to understand what they were involved in. "I didn't have a clue, but I was reluctant to admit that at the time. I simply kept going. I remember that our school council seemed to become quite active and started asking questions that I could not answer" (Personal interview, 104 March 5, 1998).

In participant districts, major staffing and program cutbacks undertaken by schools were managed by district office. Principals reported they were consulted. In other areas, school principals were in charge of managing their own school reductions.

School councils became the forum for parent questioning and airing of

dissatisfaction with staff and service reductions. Participant secondary principals found themselves the focus for parent anger. "It was not a happy time. I seemed to be always asked questions I could not really answer, without implying that someone else was at fault or didn't know what they were doing. I came across as hesitant and not in control" (Personal interview 112, June 17, 1998).

By the beginning of 1995, participants attended workshops and seminars on school-based management. The role of the principal was clarified. School districts handed more and more authority over to local schools. "1995-96, was the first school year that I really felt in control of our version of school-based management. I had to change how I conducted school business and extended planning time because more people had to be consulted" (Personal interview 104, March 5, 1998). By 1996, the participant secondary principals felt they were in control of school-based management in their schools.

Leadership Issue Two

The second leadership issue was how to inculcate collaborative decision-making into all aspects of the school community. Participant secondary schools restructured their former staff committees to include other stakeholders. The number of committees rose from a low of two to an average of seven or eight. Restructuring existing school processes and formalizing meeting protocols and procedures, was the way that participant secondary schools chose to redesign themselves.

The challenge of adjusting to the collaborative nature of school-based

decision-making was substantive. "It was really difficult, especially in the early months of school-based management, to resist the urge to simply make decisions and enforce compliance" (Personal interview 112, June 6, 1998). Participants reported that "patience was the quality most needed by school-based leaders as they worked to implement school-based management. Involving stakeholders in committee work, planning meetings, coordinating the school-based team and co-opting the support of staff and parents took time and energy. "In the final analysis, I had to delegate some of my duties to my vice principal, department heads and teachers. By making them responsible to me, I inadvertently, managed to build an expectation of shared responsibility which spread throughout the school" (Personal interview 112, June 17, 1998).

Leadership Issue Three

The third leadership issue was dealing with a rapidly increasing workload. Secondary principal participants reported a large increase in the personal workload of school-based administrators. Added to the normal duties of school principals, working in a centrally controlled school system, was the new responsibility of managing staff and program reductions, the direct management of operating budgets that increased from $70,000 to 2.5 million dollars, coordination of school-wide decision-making and restructuring of school processes to promote collaboration between stakeholders. Participant 111 reported that for him, "the work was highly emotive in those first months of school-based management. It seemed that now I was the "most responsible person" and expected to solve any difficulty. The day to day management stuff

was easy in comparison to dealing with contentious monetary decisions and

their ramifications for stakeholders.

(Personal interview, June 17, 1998)

Leadership Issue Four

The fourth leadership issue raised by secondary participants was

leadership style. Only one, of the three participants, felt they had a leadership

style which naturally accommodated the shift to school-based management.

The other two secondary principals reported that they, while intellectually

understanding the rationale behind school-based management were by nature

and training, ill equipped to manage it. For them, the chaotic early months

of implementation were frustrating but did provide some time to learn, adjust.

and practice.

Research Question 1b: How did the mandatory implementation of school-

based management affect the participant's role and function within the school

community?   Secondary school participants listed five factors which affected

their role and function.

Role One

The primary role adjustment noted by participants was becoming the

"head accountant" for the school. "I found that being the most responsible

person for school spending, to be really traumatic. Budgeting and allocating

funds was relatively easy, but I found the responsibility for spending within

budget limits to be a heavy responsibility." (Personal interview 104, March 6, 1998). As shared decision-making increased more people were influencing monetary decisions which were then managed by administrators. Corrective adjustments to budgets required more consultation, than previously needed, and increased workloads. Financial management of school income and expenditures became a significant work load.

Related Function

Accounting, and related duties, increased the nature and scope of administrative work. Principals were responsible for all school operations. Supervision took principals away from processing tasks to managing them. Substantial delegation of specific duties took place. Vice principals and department heads were assigned non-traditional tasks along with their usual duties. Teacher leaders were assigned minor management tasks. For principals, administrative responsibilities increased. These changes to the nature of work actually undertaken by participant secondary school principals was also influenced by the degree of support offered by their school district. Two participants reported that their school district left the majority of the new responsibilities to the school. In contrast, participant 104 reported, that his

school district provided assistance and support to principals to help them adapt to school-based management requirements.

Role Two

The second role description which directly affected participants was the additional stress of working with, and for, stakeholders. School-based decision-making placed a large burden on the school principal. Secondary principal participants reported that they found themselves concerned that stakeholders were kept up to date on issues and were consulted when appropriate. According to participant 104, "Having a larger, more diverse, clientele to report to and consult, was a heavy responsibility" (Personal interview, March 5, 1998). Another facet of this responsibility was the need to treat stakeholders in like fashion, and in concurrent time frames. Stakeholders became resentful when they found that one group had access to information ahead of another. Dissemination of information, and the timing of decision-making meetings became factors that had to be managed, to ensure stakeholder serenity.

Role Three

Role three was a more covert. It was described by participant 112, as follows:

> About a year after implementation, I realized I had become the schools "keeper of the school-based dream." This came as quite a shock for the

whole restructuring thing was thrust upon us without warning and consultation, yet here I was months later explaining, defending, modifying and adapting things so school-based management could work in our school" (Personal interview, June 17, 1998).

After the effects of the initial turmoil had lessened, and some of the hard decisions had been made, secondary principal participants began to realize that school-based management was working and indeed offering some real benefits to their schools.

Related Function

Being the "Keeper of the Dream" lead to subtle changes in personal leadership style. Secondary principal participants found it difficult to examine how school-based management had affected their leadership style but acknowledged that school based decision-making had influenced the way they conducted themselves and altered their perceptions of collaboration, within the school community. School-based management required that autocratic leadership cease and be replaced with a more collaborative leadership style, which encouraged the inclusion of all stakeholders in the life of the school. Research Question 2: How have participants revised or adapted decision-making models, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of

school-based management? Two major endeavors mark the adaptation of school decision-making in participant secondary schools.

Adaptation One

The primary decision-making adaptation was the restructuring of the former staff committee structure into a larger, more specialized group of committees who reported to the school-based team. The school-based team was the representative forum for school decision-making. School stakeholders, staff, administrators, parents and community members, had representatives on most committees. Stakeholders also met as individual groups to consider recommendations from the school team or to conduct their own business. Administrators at administration meetings, teachers, and support staff, at staff meetings, and parents and community members at school council meetings. Specialist committees represented a school department or special interest group such as fine arts. Suggestions, recommendations, and motions were presented to the school-based team who coordinated all decision-making within the school. When appropriate, recommendations approved by the school-based team were sent to the "most affected" stakeholder group for final ratification.

Adaptation Two

The second adaptation affecting decision-making was the collection and dissemination of quality information. Since the implementation of school-

based management, secondary schools have been required to account for all aspects of school financing including: inventory control, and keeping official records pertaining to ordering, purchasing, and spending of school funds. In participant secondary schools these responsibilities also resulted in reorganization of the school office and the addition of a school book keeper, or equivalent position.

The collection of quality information required teachers, and administrators, to undertake a significant amount of research, to help facilitate knowledgeable decision-making within the school. Participant 112 reported that "the expanded use of technology really helped to improve the information used to decide things. I found the Internet, and related technology, to be a quick and efficient help in producing timely information that could be shared with others"(Personal interview, June 17, 1998).

Research Question 3: What barriers have participants encountered while implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers? Secondary principal participants cited three factors, stakeholder reaction, reduced funding, and time management, to describe the barriers encountered while implementing school-based management.

Barrier One

The primary barrier to the implementation of school-based management was the reaction of stakeholders. The actions of people in crisis often shape how an organization will progress once the crisis ends. The reactions of stakeholders did shape the implementation process and did impede it.

School-based management was introduced as part of a number of unexpected public education initiatives mandated by the provincial government of Alberta designed to improve public education by making it more cost effective. When announced, the initiatives included substantial cuts to education funding and a number of provincial restructuring measures which were traumatic for school districts, and individual schools.

Parents, and community members, were the direct recipients of this "education reform." New legislation redefined the role of parents, as stakeholders in the public school system, and gave them the authority to work with the school (principal) as part of the schools decision-making process. School councils were to be the vehicle for this interaction and decision-making. Throughout 1994, activist parents felt they now had the right to expand their interaction into school personnel matters, including evaluation and hiring and firing of teachers. In some communities, the discourse was very disruptive and created divisions between staff and parents.

In participant secondary schools, parents were more reasoned in their approach and did not create great dissension, but did vigorously question school decisions, procedures and actions. Across the province, teacher groups, already concerned about funding cuts, began to resist perceived parental interference in school matters. The dissension within schools, between parents and teachers, was a significant emotional barrier to the implementation process.

As schools attempted to deal with the effects of restructuring measures, school councils were used as decision-making forums, and stakeholders, including parents, began to face the realities of reduced funding. As schools

attempted to deal with staff cut-backs, program reduction and reduced operating fund, parents signaled they were more comfortable in an advisory role. In April, 1995, the legislation was amended to make school councils a parent advisory group in service to the school.

Teachers reacted strongly to most of the announced initiatives. They were clear in their opposition to funding cuts and somewhat unwilling to accept school-based management. On reflection, it became a strongly held belief among teachers that school-based management was implemented so that schools would have to manage "their own demise." Some believed that school-based management was the governments way of punishing politically active teacher groups. Teacher anger, denial, withdrawal and acceptance of change, were noted. Mistrust ruled. Teachers, like parents, expressed their dissatisfaction by questioning everything and supporting little. The implementation of school-based management was impeded by teacher reluctance to share decision-making with parents, and examine the merits of school-based management.

Barrier Two

The second barrier to implementation of school-based management was lack of knowledge. Participants experienced similar reactions to the same measures. School-based management, along with the school council legislation indicated that parents were to have a larger role within the school community. Budget cuts, and program reductions, signaled an era of change during which principals would be expected to provide leadership in a more

collaborative, consultative manner. Participants 104 remembered, "that we just hung around trying to figure out how we would get the school geared up for the 1994-95 school-year. Our district hadn't any answers. The teachers were upset, and parents were demanding that we provide answers we didn't have. For awhile we just did what we usually did" (Personal interview, March 5, 1998). Participant 112, admitted to being confused:

> I just kept my head down and went on as if nothing had changed. In the spring we normally build our timetable, so we designed the timetable. In spring we set staffing levels, so we went ahead and set staffing levels. In response to questions about school-based management, I told people to contact the superintendent. I guess I was in denial, but we didn't really have a lot of information about anything."

(Personal interview, June 3, 1998)

Participants soon recognized that they had time to implement school-based management (the term of the first Three Year Plan), but no time to plan 1994-95 school year reductions. With assistance from district staff, budgets were reduced and staff laid off.

Barrier Three

The third barrier to implementation was holding on to former practices that did not meet the requirements of school-based management. As the summer of 1994 approached and changes were being planned, participants reported that they began to operate on two separate levels:

> One part of me just held on to regular routines and functions. Get grad

done, set up for provincial tests and exams, year-end functions,

assemblies and celebrations. The other part worried about how was

staff going to handle the reductions. Who would tell individual staff they

were laid off? What should I do to begin to really involve parents in

decision-making and keep my teachers happy. I worried like hell about

everything! (Personal interview 111, June 3, 1998)

It was the reductions that forced the acceleration of some school-based

management measures. Districts, overwhelmed with amalgamation issues,

and reduced funding, began to insist that school administrators make

decisions in consultation with their school communities. The 1994-95 school

year became the "sorting out time." Reductions were put in place and the

effects were being experienced. Cost cutting measures were tried and revised.

New provincial regulations were enacted. Larger, restructured school districts

built new management structures and revised their operating regulations.

Secondary principal participants found the 1994-95 school year less

troublesome than their elementary colleagues. The structure and operation of

larger secondary schools required that change be applied slowly so that

students were not denied program continuance and stability. Staff and some

program cuts were made. Class sizes increased, but core programs continued

without disruption to students. In contrast, elementary schools were expected

to adjust to restructuring measures quickly, by reorganizing instructional

groupings and increasing their size. These contrasting actions, resulted in

different rates of implementation in participant secondary and elementary schools.

Barrier Four

In participant districts, secondary schools were reasonably large and well organized. In order to accommodate school-based management they simply amended their existing committee structure by using a school-based team to coordinate and manage committee business, included stakeholder representatives on most committees and used the staff meeting as the major [teacher] stakeholder forum. Elementary schools, who were expected to adapt quickly to school-based decision-making copied the secondary committee structure and organized four or five school committees which reported to the school-based team. The new committees took time to develop, but provided the means by which stakeholders participated in decision-making.

Barrier Five

Reduced funding was a huge barrier to the implementation process. Being central to the decision-making process is an important aspect of leadership. If the results of decision-making are negative then the process looses it appeal to participants. Secondary principal participants were very critical of this aspect of the school-based implementation process as

introduced in Alberta. Participant 112 felt betrayed by government decision-

makers:

> I would have preferred to have the existing [pre 1994] system deal with
> the other initiatives enacted by government. Existing school systems had
> the means to make mandated change. Funding reductions and most
> other cost saving measures could have been undertaken as stage one
> of the process. Stage two could have been amalgamation of school
> districts, then stage three could have been school-based management.
> By beginning the process en mass, the government placed districts, and
> schools in disarray, and forced newly reorganized structures to deal
> with complex issues. (Personal interview, June 5, 1998)

Individual decision makers were confused and lacking guidance.

> In the early days it seemed we were being asked to do the
> governments "dirty work." Staff layoffs were traumatic, and finding
> positive school-based reasons for what happened was difficult. As
> members of the teachers association, we [participant principals] were
> genuinely concerned about the appropriateness of some of our actions.
> (Personal interview 111, June 17, 1998)

Barrier Six

The sixth barrier to the implementation of school-based management
was time. The turmoil caused by education restructuring meant that school
principals were extremely busy managing change resulting from concurrent

issues, as well as introducing new school-based management measures to schools.

> School-based management was a management model designed to share school-wide decision-making among school community stakeholders. The introduction of school-based management would have seen a significant increase in administrative work load, but in tandem with other restructuring initiatives, represented a huge commitment of school administrative time. The result of the combined initiatives being enacted concurrently, created a heavy workload, high stakeholder expectations and the need to make adjustments to accommodate change. (Personal interview 111, June 15, 1998)

Participants saw three time intensive phases which accompanied the implementation process. One was, "time to manage the early days of change,"1994. Two was developing the "school action plan" and training existing committees to undertake new tasks, 1994-95, and three was implementing the change and refining the process. Reacting to crisis, and taking control of change was time consuming and required school-based leaders to utilize all their knowledge and skill.

Research Question 4: What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have

participants acquired, or still need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management?

New Attitude One

Secondary principal participants felt that school-based management was "a work in progress." As late as June 1998, participants were refining school-based management processes and making use of new ideas and suggestions. Secondary principals stated that dealing with system-wide change was the catalyst for a majority of the new attitudes, knowledge and skills they required.

The implementation of school-based management required the restructuring of school decision-making processes. Small committees, made up of representative stakeholders, replaced some functions formerly undertaken by the professional staff. The school-based team replaced the principal as the major decision maker. The school council, and the school staff meeting, became individual stakeholder forums. Almost all significant school decisions are now made in a collaborative manner with representation from all stakeholders, with the clear exception of school students. The management, and coordination of school-based decision-making was a major function of the principal. The ability to coordinate decision-making based on stakeholder consensus was a leadership skill worthy of the twenty-first century.

New Attitude Two

The second attitude change was a commitment to positive change. *Coping constructively with change was viewed to be a combination of attitude,* patience and sense of purpose. Participant 112 recalled that:

> I had an almost numbing reaction to the implementation of school-based management. Anger at reductions and staff cuts, coupled with a sense of betrayal. How were we to keep our schools intact while "this" was going on? The school itself brought me back to reality. We had to get ready for the next school year. Decisions were hard but had to be made. I was lucky. My staff really helped. Old committees took on renewed energy under new people and we "came back to life."
> (Personal interview, June 17, 1998)

Dealing with difficult decisions was the attitudinal aspect of leadership that most improved. School-based leaders were charged with making tough decisions, often for the first time in their professional careers. Staffing cuts, program reductions and loss of operating funds, created intensely emotive responses from stakeholder groups who strongly fought change. Having the authority to make such decisions did not make them easier.

New Knowledge One

The primary new knowledge expressed by participants was how to develop and support consensus building. *The development of consensus* within participant school communities was a special challenge due to the

chaotic events that accompanied implementation. A quiet move to collaborative decision-making may have been easily accomplished had school-based management been introduced in isolation, but the building of shared decision-making, in a time of systemic change, and within the first Three Year Plan schedule was a considerable feat.

Participant 104 reflected that:

> In retrospect, our move to school-based management went extremely well, but there were mistakes and periods of inaction. The tussle between parents and teachers made it hard to get group consensus. However, when both groups saw they were included in the important things they began to work together. The whole thing would have been snap if the money had not been taken away.
>
> (Personal interview, March 19, 1998)

New Knowledge Two

New knowledge two was described by participant as the unique knowledge the principal has of their own school community. School-based management has been made to fit each school. Differences are subtle but exist. Committee structures, decision-making processes and degree of stakeholder representation are shaped by past experience and present need. The days of the autocratic principal have ended. Stakeholders advise the

school principal and staff. A real shift towards functioning democracy has taken place but still excludes students.

New Skill One

Coordinating stakeholder activity was another challenge that forced secondary participants to grow and develop new skills. Chief among these skills was the exercise of patience, both personal and professional. As decision-making became more collaborative, school leaders were required to follow process, synthesize debate, report back to representative groups then arrive at a decision. Waiting, listening, and explaining took time and increased the time to make decisions.

New Skill Two

The second new skill was described as conflict resolution. Resolving "territorial" disputes between stakeholders became important. The emotional "scars" of the initial implementation period were slow to heal and left a legacy of mistrust, which dissipated as representative school-based teams coordinated collaborative decision-making. To progress, conflict between stakeholders had to be reduced. The principal was the senior educator and

was expected to be able to "negotiate" peace among members of the school community.

New Skill Three

The third new skill was coordinating the activities of a more extensive school community. This change in the nature of school administration was described by participant 111, who reported that:

> I found my work to be divided between managing them [stakeholders], taking care of school finances, and monitoring committee work. Keeping stakeholders informed and on track took the largest chunk of my time. Meeting people and trying to get them to understand what we were trying to do was another time consuming task.
>
> (Personal interview, June 17, 1998)

Secondary school leaders barely mentioned students. They focused instead on the stakeholder groups and individuals who had impacted the implementation process, and on the consequences of trying to restructure school operations in the midst of unprecedented fiscal, and system-wide constraint. As for school-based management, participant 104 offered this response:

> S.B.M. is a little more time consuming, but you know that when I go to bed at night there are fewer nights when I settle down and toss and turn, thinking about how I'm going to go about convincing someone at central office or on the school board that we need more funding for this or that, or we want to do this or do that. I very seldom have those kinds of nights

anymore, so I sleep better. (Personal interview, March 19, 1998)

A summary chart of similar and contrasting views of participant elementary and secondary school principals who were involved in the implementation of school-based management in Alberta can be found in Appendix L.

Summary

In this chapter the findings related to interviews conducted regarding the implementation of school-based management in Alberta, Canada, were presented. Perspectives of the participants were summarized and presented in answer to four research questions: leadership issues, roles and functions, decision-making, barriers encountered during implementation, and new attitudes, knowledge and skills. Participants reported that the major leadership issues to arise out of school-based management implementation process were, managing fiscal restraint and the resultant reductions in service, reworking decision-making processes and introducing collaborative decision-making, and resolving power issues between parents and teachers.

Participant school-based leaders acknowledged they were slow to react to implementation, due to the ramifications of other education initiatives enacted at the same time. Principals, parents and teachers reported a significant increase in individual workload and accountability. School council chairpersons felt the extra burden of leadership as they presided over challenging school council meetings, beset with stakeholder confusion. Each participant group, principals, lead teachers and school council chairs, experienced a number of changes to their role and function. School council

chairs became significant school leaders, parent advocates and spokespersons for the school. Their greatest challenge was managing the unrest between some parents and some teachers, as each sought greater decision-making power. The impetus for this dissension cooled after the government legislated changes to the role of school councils in April, 1995.

Lead teachers reported that teacher duties increased due to staff and budget cuts which raised pupil-teacher ratios and eliminated most support staff. The introduction of collaborative decision-making meant that active teachers were serving on more committees and attending more meetings. A lot of staff energy was devoted to financial matters. Spending wisely, making do with less, and fund raising were the dominant issues. Teachers reported that the rebirth of school committees produced a need for representative teacher advocates, as stakeholder groups vied to be represented on school committees. It was teacher advocates who debated with parents at school council meetings and ensured that staff opinion was heard throughout the school community.

Principals were directly impacted by five factors, which were: increased accountability for all aspects of school life, reduced operating staff and funds, implementation of school-based management, shared decision-making, and maintaining regular school programs and operation. Concurrent initiatives, not directly related to school-based management, had a large impact on the initial implementation process. These included: new powers for school councils, amalgamation of school districts, downsizing of district administrative and support staff, and reductions to special education funding. In a time of great

change, principals were expected to initiate school-based management with little guidance and varied degrees of help.

Major role changes for principals were described as: being facilitator-coach for the school, senior financial manager, coordinator of school-wide decision-making, and the school's chief executive officer. At a more personable level, principals were expected to be good listeners, counselors, researchers and managers.

The question on decision-making models cause the greatest confusion among participants. All reported that no new model of decision-making had been developed, but former practice was incorporated into new committee structures which had small special function committees reporting to a school-based team. The school-based team coordinated all committee decision-making, including staff and school council meetings. Membership of the school-based team was representative and included, parents, teachers, support staff, administrators and community members. In only one case was there a student representative.

While participants reported no new model of decision-making it became clear that collaborative decision-making increased among stakeholders and included higher levels of decisions such as comprehensive-impact decisions (see page 39). The six school communities did learn to participate in decision-making which is supported by the contention of Kouzes and Posner (1993), who stated that participation in decision-making promotes ownership of ideas and support for actions taken.

Decision-making at all levels became more collaborative. This necessitated the development of more effective communication which was

assisted by increased use of technology. e.g. email, fax and voice mail communication. All stakeholders reported that workloads increased proportionally in relation to number of meetings attended, research undertaken, reports prepared and presented. Principals maintained a veto right over decisions, but in three years only one veto was used in the six participant schools.

Barriers to the implementation of school-based management included: fiscal restraint, staff and program reductions, lack of knowledge about school-based management, leadership style of the principal, degree of antipathy between staff and parents and the degree of collaboration achieved within each school. Participants rated fiscal restraint and reduced funding as the hardest barrier to overcome. Power issues between stakeholder groups, and the authority and role of the principal, were also given as barriers which slowed implementation.

New knowledge and skills needed by participants were listed as: management and organizational skills, accounting skills, meeting management skills, communications skills and interpersonal skills. New attitudes were harder to define, but covered areas such as empathy for others, listening, counseling, and team building. There was a general acceptance from participants that how they dealt with people was important, and needed to stress trust, open communication and a collaborative approach to decision-making.

School council chairpersons, while agreeing in principle with the move toward school-based teams, were the only group that felt this should be changed. School council chairpersons reported a strong desire to to have the

school council become the main decision-making forum. They felt that greater community participation in school-based management would only take place under the auspices of school councils empowered to make important school policy and regulations.

Chapter V will draw together the findings from Chapter IV and the review of the research as outlined in Chapter II. Chapter V also presents the implications, recommendations, and conclusions regarding the challenging role of school-based leaders as school communities become increasingly involved in decision-making.

Chapter V

Summary, Implications, Recommendations,

and Conclusions

Overview

The purpose of this study was to investigate how government mandated school-based management has effected the governance of public schools in Alberta, by conducting in-depth interviews of a sample of school principals, lead teachers, and parents who were school council chairpersons. Four research questions guided this study:

1. What leadership issues emerged from the mandatory implementation of school-based management and how have these affected the participant's role and function within the school community?

2. How have participants revised or adapted decision making models, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of school-based management?

3. What barriers have participants encountered while implementing school-based management and how have they overcome the barriers?

4. What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have participants acquired, or still need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management?

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A case study methodology was used to explore the four research questions. Interviews, observations, and documentation were collected covering the period of Alberta Educations first three year plan, the school years 1994/95 to 1996/97. Interview data were gathered from February to June, 1998.

Participants in this study exercise leadership within their school communities. Each was part of a constituted group representing either teaching staff, school administration, or parents. The findings describe how a sample of school leaders reacted and adapted, to the province-wide implementation of school-based management. The findings are organized and reported from the perceptions of school principals, teachers and parent leaders and reflect the unsettled nature of the times.

This study examined the first three year plan (1994-97), during which the government of Alberta, Canada restructured public education. Beginning in 1994 restructuring plans called for: reducing the number of school boards in Alberta from 140 to 60; appointment of all school superintendents by Alberta Education; giving schools more authority over decision-making, passing legislation allowing charter schools; expanding achievement testing and diploma exams for students and public reporting of results; strengthening the duties of school councils; increasing reporting on education expenditures by government, school boards and schools; restructuring the Department of Education and increasing the involvement of parents, the community and business in the delivery of education. Allied to these initiatives was a 5% reduction in teachers salaries as part of a 12.4% overall reduction in education funding spread over the three school years 1994/95 to 1996/97.

Mandated school-based management was an important part of the

restructuring process because it was seen by government as the vehicle by which parents, community members and local business could become more actively involved in their public schools. Parents were expected to play a more active role in school-based decision-making. The principal no longer would be able to make arbitrary decisions regarding education. "The principal shares the challenge of making wise decisions with one or more of these groups [i.e., the school board, the superintendent, the teachers and other school staff, the school councils, the students and their parents, and the community]" (Alberta Education 1994, p. 27). School leaders were expected to implement school-based management in a time of great change, as numerous and competing restructuring measures worked to complicate, frustrate and challenge their efforts. The experiences of school leaders during this time of challenge was the impetus for this study.

Analysis of Data Categories

A synopses of the participant's perspectives in this study is presented in this chapter. I incorporate the view of two leadership theorists. First was Rost's (1993) leadership definition and comparisons with management and, second, Block's (1993) theory of stewardship.

Data were summarized using the research questions as guides. Responses of elementary and secondary school leaders have been blended, when similar. Dissimilar observations, are reported separately.

School Council Chairpersons

Participants reported a period of inaction following the 1994 announcement of school-based management, with no real action occurring at the school level until early 1995. School District's across Alberta were reeling from the results of other mandated changes. School council chairs found themselves waiting for school principals to "take charge." School council business proceeded normally but the beginning of change began as activist parents came to understand the leadership potential the new legislation offered school council members. Under the rules (Bill 19, Government of Alberta, 1995), parents were allowed a greater voice in the running of their school. Principals were encouraged by school councils to respond to growing parental pressure and "put into action" new initiatives such as parents reviewing staff performance data.

The primary leadership issue for school council chairs was the development of a strong and effective school council. In the turmoil of the times, this goal was sometimes confused with taking control of the school, gaining power over teachers, putting the principal "in his place" and making sure school finances were "used properly." Naturally, parent leaders expected that along with expanded rights as school council members they would benefit from the promise of school-based management to include them in collaborative decision-making. Once this occurred, the agendas of school council meetings quickly became meaningful to all stakeholders, especially teachers. The

resultant struggle for power was described by Wohlstetter and Mohrman in 1994, who reported that "struggling schools got bogged down in establishing power relationships. They tended to concentrate power in one faculty group, leading to an atmosphere of "us" and "them." Participants agreed that in late 1994, and early 1995, their schools were struggling with power related issues.

The second leadership issue was dealing with increased stress arising from the expanded responsibilities. With little formal guidance from other school leaders, school council chairpersons found themselves in the middle of competing interests. Teachers felt that parents were misusing their newly gained status by trying to take over the running of schools. Teachers decided they should become more involved. A "turf war," both real and imagined began. In the ensuing turmoil, parent leaders found themselves presiding over contentious meetings with the principal being a passive advisor and parents and teachers battling for power.

Prior to 1994, most school council meetings were parent meetings, chaired by a parent, which routinely received reports on school matters. The main stay of their business was school fund raising directed at providing items, or experiences, that would benefit students. The role of the chairperson of the school advisory group, or P.T.A , was not generally viewed to be highly significant. When legislation changed the role of school councils and gave them the potential to be school-wide decision-making forums, the chairperson became an important school leader. People whose skills prior to 1994 were adequate, found themselves running meetings which required real acumen. Participants reported that they worked hard to learn new meeting management

and people skills. Participants reported that dealing with increased time commitments was a challenge.

The third leadership issue for school council chairs was perceived lack of management and business skills. The early months of restructuring placed a heavy burden on parent leaders, which they handled poorly. Each participant expressed their lack of preparedness to manage change. Chairing expanded meetings, adequately resolving a variety of conflicts, knowing rules of order, serving demanding stakeholders, and representing "the school," were stated examples of skills that school council chairs needed and did not possess.

The fourth leadership issue was legitimizing new school councils by obtaining a Charter. Under new legislation, school councils had to submit Articles of Incorporation with the provincial government. The incorporation process forced school communities to access the role of their school councils and encouraged stakeholders to address how school councils should serve their schools. Decision-making difficulties and the tensions and frustrations accompanying "turf wars" caused a significant number of community members to contact the provincial government to share their frustrations with school councils. The government amended the legislation essentially making school councils "parent groups" who advised the school principal. Redefining the purpose of school councils, and clarifying the authority of the principal had the effect of cooling the "turf war." All stakeholder groups now advised the principal and had similar status.

The fifth leadership issue for parent leaders was collaborative decision-making within the school community. School council chairpersons played a significant role in improving the quality of decision-making by helping to

inculcate the values of collaborative decision-making into school council operation. School parents had the most to gain by being included in school-wide decision-making. School councils, as the initial decision-making forums for school communities, came of age during this important stage of implementation.

The sixth leadership issue for parent leaders was learning to represent all stakeholders. As school councils matured, it became clear that council chairpersons were school leaders who served parents and community members but also represented other stakeholders. This change reflected the evolving nature of school councils and the more inclusive nature of school governance.

Observations

Parent leaders relied heavily on the support of their school principal during the early stages of restructuring. Participants observed that their principal took charge during the initial weeks of implementation, even though principals were unsure of their own authority and mandate. Schools leaders felt pressured as a result of fiscal cutbacks and province-wide change. Knowledge of school-based management was sparse and little was known about the scope and type of school-based management that would be practiced locally. School Districts undergoing restructuring were in disarray as administration

was down-sized and districts enlarged. Schools were sometimes left to make do. Principals had to "go it alone." Parent leader participants were strong in their praise for the professionalism of their school principals.

The power struggle between teachers and parents, that emerged at school council meetings, was clearly different at elementary schools than it was at secondary schools. Secondary parent leaders reported some tension between parents and teachers, but open conflict did not show as overtly as at elementary school council meetings. One parent leader reported that secondary parents understood how complex a high school was and felt that they wanted no direct responsibility for running it. Conversely elementary parents felt that they knew their school well and were ready to help manage it. This view changed when the first reality of school-based decision-making was the push for power which placed parents in direct conflict with teachers.

At the organizational level, parent leaders identified another difference between elementary and secondary schools. Secondary schools reacted to school-based management by developing new committee structures to accommodate school-based decision-making. This was an extension of the departmental committees that existed prior to 1994. Once a representative committee structure was in place, secondary schools then worked out the processes by which they would manage decision-making and reporting to stakeholders.

At participant elementary schools the opposite process was noted. Elementary schools worked out the means by which they would make collaborative decisions and then built a committee structure to accommodate that need. For them, the decision-making process was paramount. The

ensuing committee structures were simply a means to support representative decision-making at the school level. It is noteworthy that both sets of participant elementary and secondary schools constructed effective mechanisms to achieve collaborative decision-making.

Teacher Leaders

Teacher leaders also experienced a period of inaction after the implementation of school-based management was announced but their inaction time was cut short by the fiscal and political realities that emerged. Their primary leadership challenge was dealing with the effects of fiscal restraint on their school. Instructional programs were cut, teaching positions eliminated, support staff reduced, and supplies and equipment budgets slashed. Staff were fearful of losing their positions and unsure about their future prospects. Experienced teachers, paid as befitted their seniority, felt vulnerable to layoffs as school systems made serious attempts to reduce costs and stay within falling budget guidelines.

The second issue for lead teachers was the increased work load that teachers were expected to absorb, as a direct result of fiscal restraint. Increased pupil teacher ratios, lack of support staff, reduced program offerings, less preparation time, and the expectation that teacher "volunteers" would take on some of the duties previously undertaken by former staff. As teacher work loads increased so did the level of job related stress.

A third issue faced by lead teachers was the effort to assert teacher decision-making power within the school community. New school council

legislation appeared to challenge the long held practice of teachers to make significant decisions on school related issues. As principals tried to assist parents, through the medium of school councils, to become more involved in school-based decision-making, teachers felt that they were being disenfranchised as important decisions were being made at school council meetings, not staff meetings. The move to have school council become the decision-making forum for the school elicited two responses from teachers. One, they began to attend school council meetings in greater numbers than previously, and two they insisted on being appointed/elected to formal positions on school council executives. Teacher leaders were in the forefront of this endeavor.

The fourth leadership issue faced by lead teachers was meeting the need for staff to formally represent themselves at school-based meetings. Prior to 1994 teaching staff simply attended P.T.A. meetings based on personal or professional interest and reported to colleagues as requested. Effective school-based decision-making made it necessary for staff to be formally represented at all meetings. As decision-making structures and processes were developed to help ensure school-wide collaborative decision-making the need for stakeholder groups to be represented at most meetings, produced the formal teacher representative. Teachers leaders who undertook these duties reported a significant increase in their work load and stress.

Observations

For the first time in Alberta's history, teachers felt they had to be politically active within their own school environments, especially in elementary school communities. At the secondary level, teacher leaders reported that staff undertook representative duties within the school community but they did not feel the kind of "political" pressure that their elementary colleagues experienced.

The first Three Year Plan for the implementation of school-based management came to an end in June,1997. By then stakeholder friction had lessened. All stakeholder groups advised the principal. Collaborative decision-making had been introduced and enabled decisions to be made by the people most effected by them. As school-based management structures and processes were evaluated, and refined, most implementation initiatives were complete and work loads eased. The fiscal constraint program continued and was still in effect in 1998. Public perception still held that public education was underfunded.

The only distinct leadership difference found between elementary and secondary lead teachers was the degree to which school teachers reacted to the politics of their school councils. Secondary schools were slower to react to the change forces accompanying the implementation of school-based management. The activism observed in elementary parents was muted at the secondary level and less obvious. By the time school council legislation had been amended in 1995 secondary parents were absorbed into local school-based decision-making as representative members of school committees,

including the school-based team, and seemed content to advise the school in this manner. Some elementary parents still wanted greater involvement than simply giving advice.

Another difference was the importance that secondary school lead teachers placed on the leadership style of the principal. For secondary school participants, the collaborative nature of school-based management challenged traditional administrative values and required school principals to adjust to collaborative decision-making among an "enlarged" school community.

Increased work loads were more frequently referenced by elementary school participants. Elementary schools were severely effected by reduced funding and had little recourse to alternative funding. Secondary schools did retain some ancillary funding which, in tandem with economies of scale, helped them manage implementation with less operational stress than most elementary schools.

School Principals

School principals were at the center of the school-based management process. Participants acknowledged that they were at first confounded by the scope of restructuring, the severity of fiscal cut-backs, the amalgamation of school districts, the school council amendments, and the forced implementation of school-based management.

The primary leadership issue for school principals was to keep things running smoothly while school-based initiatives were "sorted out." Confusion surrounded some restructuring measures, which took time to rectify. With little

real information, and in conditions of considerable turmoil, school principals worked to keep their schools functioning.

The second leadership issue was to guide their school communities through the sometimes competing issues brought on by restructuring. These issues included implementing school-based management, fostering school-wide decision-making, developing a viable school council, extending school business into the greater school community and managing the school with significantly reduced resources. Collectively these responsibilities were daunting but principals began to redesign and utilize school mechanisms so stakeholders could participate as directed by government.

The third leadership issue was implementing and refining collaborative school-wide decision-making, which was the common thread that linked two powerful implementation initiatives; the creation of new school councils and implementation of school-based management. During the first Three Year Plan (1994-97), systems were put in place to accomplish this end. School-based decision-making, using representative school-wide committees, was developed and refined.

The fourth leadership issue for school principals was sustaining efficient school operation through the implementation period. Mandated school-based management came as a complete surprise to participants. Province-wide, school principals began to initiate school-based management measures without compromising the operation of their schools.

The fifth leadership issue for school principals was accepting that the responsibility for implementing school-based management was theirs. Without consultation, and little warning, school principals were expected to put in place

a poorly defined consultative management process. The irony of this expectation was clear to participants, if not to government. Another irony was the expectation that school principals would continue to have sole responsibility to administer schools, but should share decision-making with other stakeholders. Provincial regulations required school principals to seek and listen to advice from stakeholders. School-based management implied that decision-making should be collaborative. It was the school principal who shaped how the contrasting factors of responsibility and decision-making would coexist within school communities.

The sixth leadership issue was the development of quality communications between stakeholders. Collaborative decision-making needed to be grounded in good communications and quality information. Ideas and suggestions, shared among stakeholders, required open and honest dialog to be truly effective. Developing and maintaining quality communications between stakeholders was a significant leadership issue.

Observations

Elementary principals were reluctant to talk about increased workloads, although it was given as a source of increased work related stress. Secondary principals did emphasize the multi-faceted nature of the "new" principalship, under school-based management, and indicated that the greater demands placed on school leaders by the implementation of school-based management was a significant leadership issue. A clear difference between participant elementary and secondary principals was the way in which school-based

management was developed. Secondary principals primarily refined existing committees, added a representative school-based team, and over-time evolved a decision-making process which fulfilled the tenants of school-based management. Elementary principals did the reverse. They developed a decision-making process first and then a committee structure was put in place to manage the process. How these differences evolved had a lot to do with the nature and structure of participant schools and the professional relationship that school principals had with their respective staffs.

The hierarchical school leadership model of pre-1994 has been replaced by a more collaborative model, as illustrated in table 8, which reflects a more diverse "chain of command," greater power sharing, shorter more efficient lines of communication and shared decision-making. The principal is central to the collaboration process as the most responsible person for management of the school.

Table 5

Collaborative Leadership Model (Post 1994)

ALBERTA EDUCATION
CURRICULUM
BRANCH

SUPERINTENDENT
SCHOOL BOARD

Reflects: - shared decision-making
                       - power sharing
                       - improved communication
                       - skill and knowledge development
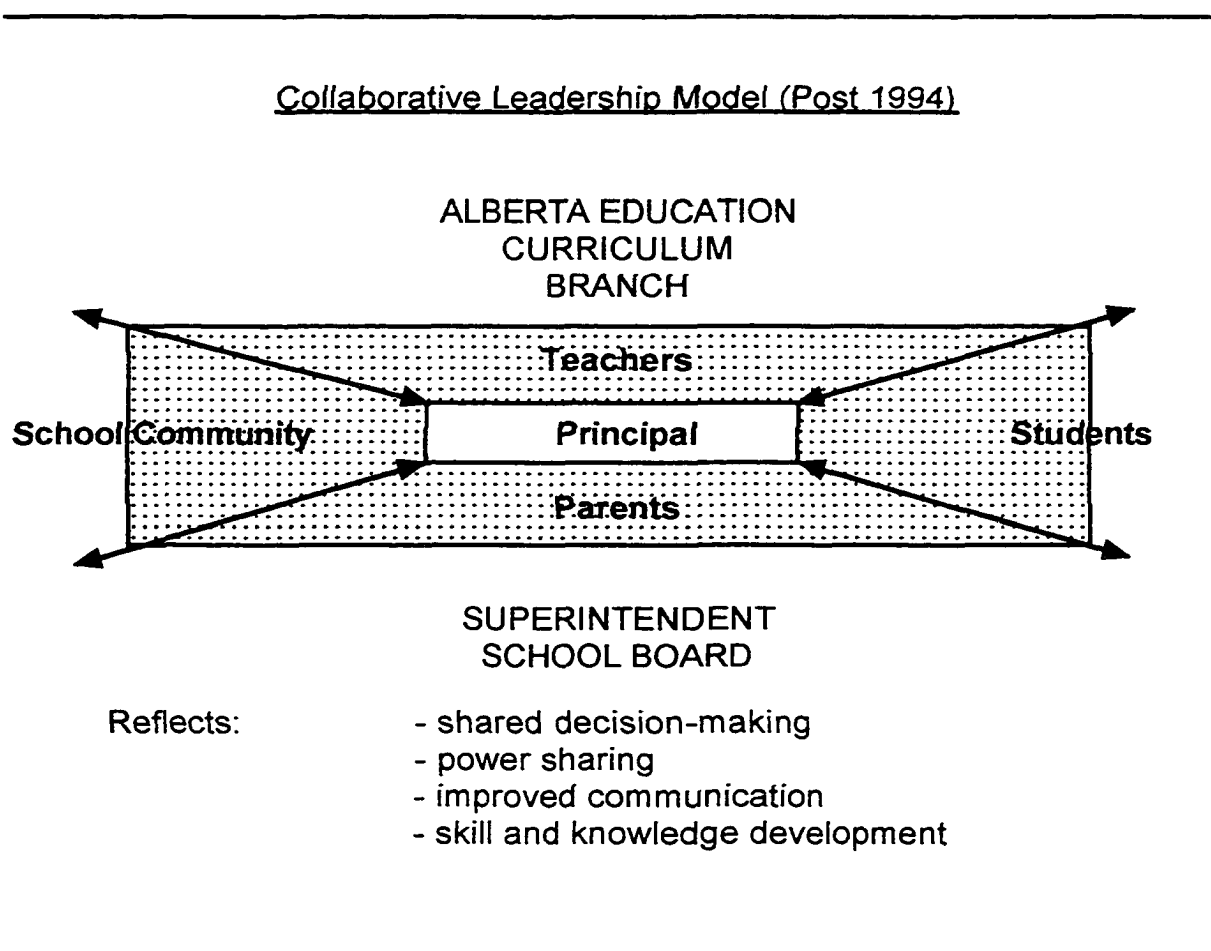
Leadership Roles and Function

Participants in this study shared a number of common leadership roles

and functions. Leadership characteristics, as expressed by school leaders in

one school community were similar to characteristics reported in other

communities. However, leadership qualities varied greatly among participants.

Leadership Roles

Shared leadership roles, arising from the implementation of school-based management included: being a major facilitator of collaborative decision-making; being a role model/mentor/coach for new learning; taking specific responsibility for completing additional duties and new obligations, coping with increased stress, workload, and managing increased communications. School council and lead teacher participants shared an advocacy role as representatives of their stakeholder groups. They were spokespersons for their group and felt that the level and intensity of this responsibility had increased significantly since 1994. Lead teacher participants indicated that their role as advocate and representative of teachers within the school community was a new role that came with the introduction of school-based management.

School principals reported that they became a major advocate for school-based management during the First Three Year Plan time period as public education became school centered and the school the focus of restructuring issues. The school principal continued to be the most responsible person for school-based management and the operation of the school.

Leadership Functions

Common leadership functions were shared by participants. These included: managing meetings, preparing and disseminating communications,

learning new skills, implementing school-based management and collaborative decision-making.

School council participants indicated that learning business management skills was a significant new function. Time management skills and meeting management skills were also noted.

Dealing with the instructional consequences of reduced budgets was a painful new function for lead teachers which sometimes involved teaching new courses outside their area of expertise. Another new function was working to achieve teacher support for collective action, and attaining group consensus around school-based issues that impacted staff. Of all the new functions experienced by lead teachers, working on behalf of other teachers during the implementation of school-based management, was one of their most testing responsibilities.

Participant principals reported their primary new function was actively assisting stakeholder groups to work together. In the aftermath of the "turf war" between teachers and parents it was essential that each group cooperate. School principals were the functionaries who helped divergent groups within the school community to serve the school, by serving each other. Cooperation was the direct result of using decision-making processes that were supported by stakeholders.

Decision-Making

All participants agreed that changes to decision-making processes were vital to the success of school-based management. Several shared

characteristics of decision-making were reported. These included: the universal use by schools of representative specialist committees; the reorganization of Chartered school councils; the formation of school-based teams, and in one case a school council, as the major forum for school decision-making; and the inclusion of all stakeholders in decision-making.

School Council Chairs

School council participants felt that effective communications really helped to improve the quality of decision-making they experienced. The inclusion of parents in school-based decision-making was an important step towards improving the effectiveness of school-based management. The initial power struggle between parents and teachers left a residue of mistrust which negatively impacted the speed with which school-based initiatives advanced. The wide support gained for collaborative decision-making was a positive force which helped reduce stakeholder tension.

School council chairs also strongly supported the representative committee structure utilized by schools. While basic to most democratic structures, truly representative working committees, involving all stakeholders, were quite rare in Alberta schools, prior to 1994.

Observations

School council chairpersons were strong supporters of shared decision-making which they encouraged at the school council, and as spokespersons

for the school. The acceptance of parents as leaders within the school community was largely due to the positive collaboration between school council chairs and principals, who supported parent representation on school committees. In this way, other stakeholders came to realize the contributions that concerned parents could make while working on committees and taking part in important decision-making.

Lead Teachers

Participant teachers viewed the metamorphosis of representative school committees as a powerful initiative leading to the development of school-based management. This decision-making structure allowed stakeholders to meet, discus, and vote on significant school issues utilizing representatives who possessed a wide diversity of interest and experience. Once the initial tensions were resolved, lead teacher participants reported that the quality of decision-making improved significantly as a result of using the school-based team as the focal point for school-wide decision-making. The value of viewing issues in a school-wide context before they were put into effect was beneficial and reduced potential mistakes. The time taken to initiate action was positively offset by the quality of decisions made. For example, formulating and adopting new school policy by involving the entire school community was a lengthy process. However, participants felt that the extra time taken to consult, discuss and vote was more than off set by the commitment that the school community demonstrated towards these policies.

Lead teachers felt that having time to make decisions was a positive

factor that helped ensure the success of school-based decision-making. Lack of time was an unsettling aspect of the early days of implementation. Speedy progress was expected and school leaders felt pressured to implement change as quickly as possible. The speed of these early efforts meant that some decisions were poorly thought out and ultimately ineffective.

Observations

Lead teachers reported that they were not in favor of using the expertise of book-keepers and accountants to help with decisions related to fiscal issues. Lead teachers endorsed the reaffirmation of the school principal as "chief executive officer" of the school and the most responsible certificated teacher. Lead teachers did not want non-certificated employees controlling budgets or dictating the school's fiscal policy. Lead teachers believed that fiscal control of school-based monies should remain the direct responsibility of the principal teacher of each school.

Principals

Elementary principals were impacted by the battle for decision-making power that occupied elementary teachers and parents during the first months of school-based management. The acrimony generated by this conflict was the stimulus which provided school leaders with the motivation to have collaborative decision-making become a reality within their school community. Shared decision-making was a working reality in all participant schools by the

end of the first Three Year Plan. Participant principals credit parent and teacher leaders for helping achieve this important school-based management goal.

Closely related to the success of inclusive school-based decision-making was the development and adaptation, especially by lead teachers, of action research. Action research helped ensure that stakeholders had access to quality decision-making data which provided valuable information and useful statistics. Participant principals linked the success of collaborative school-based decision-making to the production and use of locally developed action research and expanded use of technology.

Observations

During interviews, participant principals frequently acknowledged the combined efforts of all school leaders as contributing to individual school success. School principals were keenly aware that school-based management required the support of stakeholder groups, the trust of individuals and the freedom of stakeholders to debate and help decide school issues. Participant principals felt they were lucky to survive the inactivity of the first months of implementation but have since worked to promote collaborative decision-making in their school communities with positive results.

Barriers

Participants reported a number of common barriers which impeded the implementation of school-based management in their school communities.

These barriers included: the government's fiscal restraint program, increased workloads, increased stress, the struggle for decision-making power, and the lack of knowledge about school-based management. The most time consuming common barrier was reluctance to deal with change. School-based management evoked a wide range of response from school communities, but in tandem with other initiatives became part of a huge change initiative that overwhelmed people, with the result that they had to work through their personal, and sometimes group, trauma cycle before they could reasonably address restructuring issues.

School Council Chairs

School council participants reported one unique item as a barrier to implementation of school-based management. It was the government's aim to strengthen the role of parents in the governance of schools. This initiative sparked the power struggle between teachers and parents which impacted school communities for the first year of the three year plan. This barrier was removed when new legislation made school councils advisors to the school principal.

In partnership with secondary principals, school council participants indicated that the nature, size and location of a school could be a barrier to the implementation of school-based management. Instructional funds were allocated by pupil population. Small schools, particularly in rural areas were unable to utilize economies of scale and thus faced either large reductions in staff and services, or closure. Some smaller inner-city schools were also

affected because as they reduced programs to meet budget demands, students transferred to larger schools to access programs no longer available in their former school.

Lead Teachers

Lead teacher participants stressed the negative impact that fiscal restraint and related issues had on the implementation process. Reduced school budgets had inequities that caused concern. The reduction, and in some cases the elimination, of support staff was a crucial issue. Another was the fiscal inequities between elementary and secondary school funding which held elementary schools to one source of funding, but gave secondary schools another source (funding for pupil credits earned), which created tension between elementary and secondary schools.

Two subtle barriers were mentioned. One was the inability to keep surplus budget money for use within each school. In the first two years of implementation surplus school funds had to be returned to general revenue accounts, which meant that a school could not save over time to achieve their financial goals. The second subtle barrier came with school-based decision-making. Teacher participants found themselves discussing school financing which not only covered supplies, program and equipment costs but also impacted some teacher salaries. Feeling torn between looking after the school's interests (supplies, programs and equipment) and their own interests

(salaries and benefits) was unpredicted, and identified as a barrier to implementation.

Principals

Participant principals agreed that their common focus was money. How best to allocate it, manage it, and balance school budgets. The entire school community became fixated on money. Every decision-making meeting had to have the latest monetary detail before they acted. Money, or rather the lack of it, seemed to take the school's focus away from educational issues that needed to be addressed. This side tracking of attention became a barrier to implementation.

Another barrier was the lack of knowledge about school-based management. Principals in particular felt handicapped by their ignorance about an issue that even government claimed to know. In fact, with the exception of a small handful of school districts, most education authorities were lamentably ignorant about school-based management, as was government. Participants quickly repaired this deficit, but the day to day issues, the resultant questions, and related answers were not easily found. Solutions were tested on site and impacted the operation of schools. Educating people about school-based management was a time consuming and continuous process.

Observations

Participants were deeply involved in the implementation of school-based management in their school communities. As representative school leaders

they took part in an unique venture which was the restructuring of public school education in Alberta. The increased challenge, workload, stress, disappointments and eventual success were won at a significant emotional cost. The instigation of school-based management throughout Alberta was not simply a governmental move to improve schools and schooling. It was a small part of a huge restructuring effort designed to reduce a large provincial debt. Participants, caught up in the process, could not help but be emotionally involved given the politics of the times, and their commitment to their schools. Emotions, and the feelings generated at each stage of implementation, became the "unspoken" barrier impeding the implementation of school-based management.

Shared barriers included; increased responsibility, shortage of working time, increased workload and the resultant stress. Barriers of this kind were overcome by individuals who reviewed, and reorganized their working lives to attain efficiency and reduce stress. Participants reported that this "readjustment" produced positive personal growth.

Overcoming Barriers

Participants reported that most barriers to the implementation of school-based management were overcome by a combination of stakeholder collaboration and hard work. When introduced, school-based management was part of a restructuring program that shocked the province and angered

educators. Within weeks, ways were found to cope with change and local "recovery" initiatives began.

School Council Chairs

School council participants were in the forefront of the power struggle between parents and teachers occasioned by the granting of new responsibilities to school councils. As parent representatives, school council chairs were keenly aware of the aspirations of activist parents and quickly came to understand the opposing view of teachers as presented at school council meetings. Participant school council chairs felt that they were successfully resolving the conflict, between parents and teachers, before amending legislation was passed. With the assistance of their principals, participant school council chairs had become spokespersons for both groups and were seen as facilitators effectively bringing the two groups together. The reduction of tension between teachers and parents at school council meetings was a gradual process that took time. Participants speculated that working peace would have occurred during 1995 without government action. Lots of networking, face to face meetings with activists and working on common agendas helped resolve this issue.

Other barriers were overcome by the collaborative efforts of stakeholders. School council chairs were ancillary to the serious fiscal issues addressed by school principals and their staff, in the first year of implementation. Regardless, school council chairs were an important

resource, who were consulted about school issues and helped communicate school decisions to the greater school community.

Barriers arising from lack of knowledge or skill were resolved by either learning "on the go," or by providing training as needed. The early months of implementation was an apprenticeship for stakeholders. As a need for new knowledge or skills became known, they were addressed by the school or school district.

Lead Teachers

Lead teachers felt they helped overcome the tensions that arose between teachers and parents by asserting themselves particularly at school council meetings. Teacher activism was a natural response from a relatively independent group who felt they were about to be managed by parents. Teacher and parent activists, embittered by each other and disillusioned with themselves, came to see the need to work together and began to accept the school-based team, or school council, as a forum for decision-making. Participants reported the scars from the "turf war" will last a long time. The battle for decision-making power was resolved by the goodwill of stakeholder groups who quickly realized that the issues surrounding the implementation of school-based management were too demanding to be dealt with in an atmosphere of mistrust. Two factors, amended legislation and the use of the

school council as a venue for decision-making, also helped to mitigate this barrier.

Principals

Participant principals needed time to absorb and adjust to the implementation of school-based management. As a group, they felt responsible for the period of inactivity that marked the early days of implementation. Some participants expected that school-based management, would simply go away (denial). It did not. Pressure to address a myriad of emergent issues was the stimulus that overcame this barrier.

Reduced school funding was another significant barrier. As the most responsible person, the school principal had to manage staff reductions, program cuts, setting fiscal priorities and the reallocation of existing funds. The principals in this study worked through this barrier by making the hard decisions themselves and then shifting decision-making into the school community. Developing collaborative decision-making absorbed a lot of leadership time and energy, but did bring about a transition from autocratic to representative decision-making which stakeholders supported.

Participant principals were reticent about the "turf war" between teachers and parents which marked the early months of implementation, because it was another barrier they felt they did not handle well. The up and down nature of the conflict fought, as it was, in the confines of neophyte school councils was embarrassing. Stakeholder relationships also complicated the issue for principals who wanted to be seen as supporting their professional staff, but

also needed to support parents in their efforts to be part of the decision-making process. Secondary participant principals treated school councils as they always had and centered representative school decision-making in the school-based team. Elementary principals encouraged restructured school councils to become the decision-making forums for schools and helped assign appropriate stakeholder roles and responsibilities. Once active, both decision-making systems carried their schools through the first three years of school-based management.

New Attitudes, Knowledge and Skills

Research question four was the hardest question for participants to answer. Attitudes come from perception and experience, while knowledge comes from learning. Participants frequently confused attitudes and knowledge as can be noted from their responses recorded in Chapter IV.

New attitudes, common to all participants were: increased cooperation between stakeholders, more open communication within the school community, strong support for school-based management as a system, a heightened respect for collaborative decision-making, and a growing commitment to serving the school community.

Participant principals viewed school-based management as a "work in progress." School-based management was seen as a positive management model which enabled decisions to be made by the people most effected by each decision, encouraged collaborative decision-making, and supported stakeholder involvement in the school community. Positive participant attitudes

towards school-based management have grown steadily since implementation.

New Knowledge

New knowledge arising from the implementation of school-based management centers on the need to master processes needed to effectively *complete implementation. The following were noted as new areas of* knowledge needed by participants. An indepth knowledge of school-based management, including philosophy, methodology and organizational structures; further education on business methods, including accounting, budgeting, time management, and conducting formal business meetings.

School Council Chairs

School council participants wanted to know everything about school-based management. They beleaved, *if they could master this process they* would be equal to other school stakeholders. School council chairs believed that school-based management improved the quality of administration in schools, and fostered collaborative school governance. School council

participants also wanted to know more about public education in Alberta, including its history, structure, legislation and regulations.

Lead Teachers

Lead teachers felt they gained sufficient knowledge of school-based management by working through the process. The apprenticeship they served was extensive and did provide for real learning. Teacher participants reported one area of new knowledge that other participants did not acknowledge which was the inter-school competition for students.

The changes to education finance directed instructional monies, the bulk of school revenue, to accompany individual students. Competition for students became a reality in public schools during 1995, and in extreme cases generated hostilities between school staff who quickly learned that the loss of trust and goodwill, formerly found between neighborhood schools, was not worth the increase in funds generated by recruitment. Teacher participants were strongly opposed to a funding formula that had schools openly competing against each other for students.

Principals

The principals reported that a major new area of knowledge that they needed to master was the attainment of sophisticated people skills. Examples include: being an effective facilitator, a skilled counselor, a builder of consensus, and the ability to share knowledge with a wide variety of people. It

was surprising to find that principal participants, felt the need to improve their people skills so that they could effectively lead school-based management systems.

New Skills

Most of the new skills reported by participants as being required to successfully implement school-based management were not new, in the sense that they were previously unknown, but simply not possessed by participants. Common to all participants were the following skill needs: business skills, including financial management and planning; management skills; group problem solving skills, and conflict resolution skills.

It was a universal perception of participants that sophisticated people skills were required by school leaders facing the challenge of implementing school-based management. School council chairs reported that action research and active listening were two new skills that they valued. School principals added the skills of personal counseling and team building.

Implications

The implementation of school-based management had a significant impact on the role of participant school leaders faced with the introduction of collaborative decision-making. School principals became less autocratic and more collegial by consulting a larger more representative sample of their school community. The degree of collaboration between school leaders and

followers was determined by several factors including the kind of representative committee structure used to manage the school. In 1993, Rost described four elements which defined leadership. He then contrasted leadership and management using the following descriptors:

1. Leadership is an influence relationship; management is an authority relationship.

2. Leadership is done by leaders and collaborators; management is done by managers and subordinates.

3. Leadership involves leaders and collaborators intending real change in an organization; management involves coordinating people and resources to produce and sell goods and/or services the reflect the organization's purpose.

4. Leadership requires that the intended changes reflect the mutual purposes of leaders and collaborators. Management requires coordinated activities to produce and sell the goods and/or services that reflect the organization's purpose (Rost 1993, p. 6).

Rost argued that "people need both management and leadership in their organizations and societies to survive and prosper .... people need to know which is which and keep them conceptually distinct in order for both leadership and management to develop in organizations" (p. 6). Participant school leaders gained their positions by appointment, or election, thereby accepting management responsibility for the school from those who placed them in authority. Leadership, as defined by Rost, was also expected from participant school leaders.

The uncertainty of the early days of implementation presented school

leaders with mandated change which they were to manage. Site-based leadership was lost in the complexity of the times. Government led by decree, schools followed and school leaders managed the process. Competent principals held schools together and addressed emergent issues. Participants experienced the disquiet of a leadership vacuum and managed their way through it. Implementing school-based management required leaders, but only managers initially came forth.

According to Mohrman (1994):

Large scale organizational change is a multi-step process. This chain of change can be interrupted for many reasons: because the organization does not recognize the need for one or more of the steps, because it lacks the resources to go through the change sequence, or because key stakeholder groups are not involved in the process and are able to undermine the change dynamic (p. 190).

Large scale change was mandated by the government of Alberta in 1994. Many of the initiatives were transplanted from other jurisdictions and formed the basis of the restructuring process. The change was announced without warning and implemented with dispatch. In participant schools, the initial loss of effective leadership was noted. Participants reported feeling the loss, described as inaction in the face of change, and managed as best they could. It was particularly distressing that the people charged with the task of

leading schools were disenfranchised by the actions of their government leaders.

The first implication arising from participant experience was that large scale, mandated change cannot be easily implemented. Participant experience supports the contention that government failed to approach the change process as a dynamic process of gradual redesign and learning over time. School-based management in Alberta had to be adopted en mass, in tandem with other restructuring measures, little consultation, insufficient guidance and short time constraints. Implementing school-based management was difficult, took longer than expected, and is still ongoing.

The second implication arising from participant experience was the pivotal role that decision-making played in refocusing school attention on school-based management. Collaborative decision-making provided the stimulus that school leaders used to refocus school-based initiatives and redefine stakeholder values. As the initial turmoil ended, a time of rebuilding began. Leadership resurfaced with a mission to initiate school-based collaborative decision-making involving school community stakeholders. This initiative was not simply managed but was a deliberate leadership action aimed at producing change. As the "keepers of the school-based management dream," participant school leaders assisted collaborators to solve school problems, research issues, and plan for the future. Small sequential steps were taken over time. The result helped to foster cooperation among stakeholders and resulted in a representative form of collaborative decision-making being built in participant schools.

When major change was imposed in Alberta, in 1994, the reaction was

deep and long lasting. Change impacted everyone with the result that a sense of loss prevailed, driven in part by individual fear of the unknown, uncertainty of earning and positional power, changes in personal and organizational direction, inability to manage new complexities, and a loss of control. Whether real or perceived, the feeling of loss needs to be addressed when implementing large scale, school-wide change.

The third implication was that organizational (group) and individual closure was needed to reconcile the demise of former practices and acknowledge the birth of new ones. Mohrman (1993), supported this contention. She stated: "Changes in belief structures, values and assumptions involve letting go of old frameworks of understanding and replacing them with new ones" (p. 194). Openly acknowledging the forces of change and allowing people to "grieve their loss" is an important factor leading to the acceptance of change and helping them recover.

Deep change is complex. Dealing with personal differences in how people respond to change is a particular challenge in schools, because teachers have historically managed their own classrooms and are at different places with respect to teaching philosophy and methodology. Mohrman (1993), predicted that: "The transition to SBM, added to other education reforms that are introduced, will require much more change for some than for others. Resulting with-in faculty rifts can mean that conflict resolution is an integral part of managing the dynamics of change" (p. 195). Mohrman neatly captured the reality of post 1994 Alberta, (1) school-based management was not introduced in isolation, and (2) concurrent change initiatives negatively impacted the implementation of school-based management and needlessly complicated the

restructuring process.

The fourth implication drawn from participant experience was the change in leadership style that occurred as a result of implementing collaborative school-based decision-making. Participant school leaders used the goal of collaborative decision-making as an important indicator that their school community had successfully adopted school-based management. It is interesting to note that the provincial government initially used the term school-based decision-making when restructuring was first announced in 1994. Participant principals, without exception, placed a heightened value on collaborative decision-making. Positional power, formerly held in the principalship, was shared among stakeholder groups. Leadership became more inclusive in nature as schools wrestled with the challenges of shared decision-making. School organization was adapted to accommodate decision-making and policies and procedures were amended to facilitate increased stakeholder collaboration. The actions of school leaders, particularly school principals, were shaped by perceptions of school-based management which varied from district to district. The metamorphosis from autocratic principal centered management, to a more transformational style of leadership occurred.

The fifth implication arising from participant experience is that school leaders are becoming stewards of their school communities. In participant schools, the implementation of school-based management was not achieved as the result of good management. Simply managing the early turmoil of implementation did little toward producing a functioning form of school-based management. To achieve an acceptable form of school-based management,

participant school leaders had to reach out to collaborators, share a common vision of possibilities, and collectively work to achieve goals. It was the result of competent leadership which grew from the expectation that stakeholders would contribute to the community when they were able to collectively set goals, share decision-making, and work as a team. Participant school leaders, especially principals and teachers, demonstrated that the intent of collaboration was to be of service to each other and be accountable without having to be in charge.

Again, the importance of shared decision-making as a catalyst for change is noted. The conditions surrounding the first months of implementation caused school leaders to become involved by placing themselves and others in service of ideals which produced leadership leading towards stewardship. In 1992, Sergiovanni stated that:

> Stewardship represents primarily an act of trust, whereby people and institutions entrust a leader with certain obligations and duties to fulfill and perform on their behalf .... Stewardship also involves the leader's personal responsibility to manage her or his life and affairs with proper regards for the rights of other people and for the common welfare. Finally, stewardship involves placing oneself in service to ideas and ideals and to others committed to their fulfillment (p. 139).

Participant mentoring, collaborative decision-making, and power sharing, resulted in school leadership which was transforming and encouraged collaborators and leaders to be stewards of the process. In participant schools, stewardship was the style of leadership which evolved during the Three Year Plan (1994-1997).

The sixth implication is that participant stakeholders experienced a

change of traditional roles due to the implementation of school-based management. Each stakeholder group was represented by a school leader whose role, within the precepts of school-based management, became more demanding, more challenging and appreciably more stressful.

Parent leaders found the challenges of school council and related committee work extremely demanding, especially in the early months of implementation. In comparison to former P.T.A. days, current expectations of parent leaders are higher and accompanied by increased responsibilities, workloads, and stress.

Teacher leaders, as part of their regular teaching duties, experienced a significant increase in workload, along with new responsibilities related to being an activist teacher representative. The implementation of school-based management proved to be challenging enough without having to accommodate the consequences of fiscal cutbacks, staff layoffs and program reductions. Teacher leaders found teaching to be more stressful, more frustrating and more time consuming.

Principal participants experienced the greatest role change. As the chief executive officer of the school they were required to involve the school community in school-based decision-making "in order to ensure high levels of student achievement" (Alberta Education Policy 1.8.2, 1997). The role of the principal became more situational and contextual, with the management part of the role predominating for a time then being slowly replaced by leadership. A major factor that complicated the lives of participants was keeping the management function in proportion to other important roles. The difficulty of dealing with competing, and often contradictory issues, lead to role conflict, role

ambiguity and role overload

The seventh implication was that the restructuring measures begun in 1994, including the implementation of school-based management, altered tradition power relationships existent between decision makers of the time. By 1997, school-based leaders where making important decisions unprecedented in pre-1994 days.

How situational and positional power has shifted among decision-makers within public education is not precisely known, but some trends were identified by participants. School council chairs and lead teacher participants indicated that they were more fully involved in school-based decision-making and were better able to influence decision-making at the school level. However, parent participants felt that school-based power was directly influenced by the level of collaboration existent between teachers and the principal. Table 9 indicates how the use of positional power by the principal and teachers is "shared" with district personnel or parents and other members of the school community.

Table 6

Participant View of Situational Power Within School Community

School Board   Parents

Superintendent   School Community

Principal -Teachers
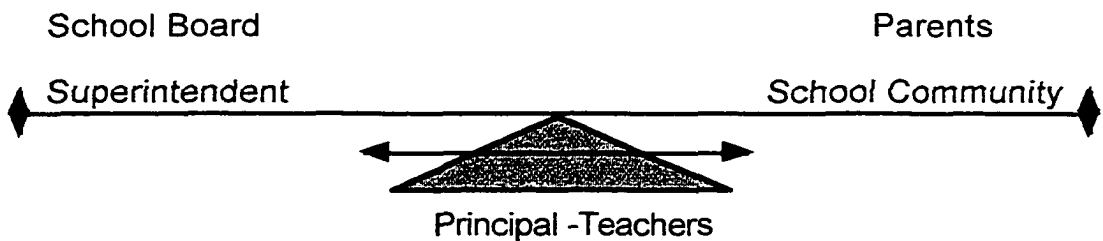
Participant principals reported that as C.E.O's of their schools they were given increased responsibility for the management of schools which came with an unexpected ability to effect change which some described as an increased level of positional power. Principals also reported that system-wide power relationships altered with the implementation of school-based management. At the District level, superintendents and other system level staff, appeared to lose power over school-related issues which was gained by school-based leaders. One principal participant expressed the view that in his district real power now "resided" in the principals group as opposed to the superintendents office.

Participant school leaders acknowledged the emotions, problems, criticisms, challenges and improvements that accompanied the

implementation of school-based management in Alberta. In spite of the quality of the journey, without exception, participants reported that what had been achieved in their respective schools under school-based management was significantly better than pre-implementation times.

The process of implementing school-based management in Alberta, during the first three year plan (1994-97), tested the ability of school leaders to learn and use a mandated management model (school-based management) in tandem with other major restructuring initiatives. The seven implications recorded in this chapter arise from participant experience and highlight the interactions that result when a single complex initiative (school-based management) is part of a larger restructuring movement.

Changes in the positional power of school leaders, the development of shared decision-making within each school community, and the emergence of stewardship as a model for leadership were important aspects which marked the evolution of school-based management in participant schools. School councils expanded parent participation in decision-making within each school because school leadership encouraged collaboration between stakeholders. School-based management, one of many competing restructuring initiatives, was successfully implemented in participant schools by the collaborative efforts of school leaders working to include all members of the school community in collaborative decision-making.

Recommendations

The implementation of school-based management in the public schools of Alberta was a small part of a major restructuring program initiated by Alberta Education at the direction of the provincial government. Restructuring and cost cutting measures were wide ranging and directly affected Alberta Education, all provincial school districts, and all public schools. Participants reported that if cost cutting measures, and related restructuring initiatives, had been undertaken in strategic "chunks" the stress experienced by school communities could have been reduced. Concurrent restructuring measures negatively impacted the growth and development of school-based management because they competed for limited staff time and resources.

Based on the findings of this study, I recommend that Alberta Education, renamed Alberta Learning in 1998, complete change initiatives outside the school community, before beginning internal school change measures. For example, large scale change initiatives such as amalgamating public school districts and revising their financing should have been completed before school-based initiatives where undertaken. It was the magnitude of the 1994-97 restructuring process that impeded the efficient implementation of school-based management in Alberta. Odden (1991) summarized findings about the change process related to school-based management that forecast Alberta's experience. "Implementation was more rapid that expected, and featured top-down strategies that provided direction, coordination, pressure, and assistance

but did not transform the nature of schooling and created minimal improvement in student performance" (p. 217).

Other Alberta Education initiatives such as amalgamating school districts, closing schools and capping district administration costs at four percent, while unrelated to school-based management were implemented during the period of the first year plan and had a negative effect on the ability of school leaders to provide effective programs because they reduced the districts ability to fund, support and assist schools.

I recommend that stakeholders be prepared for impending change and be actively supported throughout the change period. Participants felt that Alberta Education had an obligation to support change activities which they initially failed to do. The skills participants needed relate directly to those described by Rost (1993, p.5). "Influence in relationships, include as many people as possible, take risks, empower others, use power resources to influence, and advocate for the commons (school community?)." New and continuing support of in-service activities related to leadership and change in roles for stakeholders, particularly principals, was seen to be important.

The decentralization typified by school-based management pushed the principal towards increased management and leadership role as demonstrated by the absorption of previously identified district office responsibilities. This downloading of responsibilities came at a time when principals were also expected to deal with faculty issues, renovation problems, staffing at all levels, budget preparation and monitoring, allocation of resources

at the school and spending time mentoring school committees and providing system leadership.

I recommend that principals, as members of the Council on School Administration (CSA), a specialist council of the Alberta Teachers Association (ATA), direct the CSA to find ways to help principals to fulfill their role as C.E.O. of their school. The CSA is in a unique position to help school principals balance the potentially conflicting issues that arise between stakeholders particularly parents and teachers.

I recommend that the degree to which school-based management has been adopted by provincial school districts in Alberta be evaluated by Alberta Learning. Participants frequently reported that other school districts were not as committed to school-based management as their own and that reluctance to fully adopt school-based management, across the province, is ongoing and pervasive.

Most school districts were directly effected by the 1994 restructuring initiatives which resulted in a variety of local responses to school-based management because they had their own issues to deal with that were not school related. However, the decentralizing effect of school-based management with its related shift of decision-making authority from district administration to the school community and the inclusion of school-level constituents in the decision-making process did focus community attention away from school districts and on to schools. An important tenet of school-based management is the expectation that school districts, as they move away

from directing schools, would begin to offer additional support services to help them.

In 1991, Fullen concluded that: "a powerful determining factor is how central office administrators take to the change. If they take it seriously, the change stands a chance of being implemented .... the central staff must provide specific implementation pressure and support" (p. 198). The degree of support that schools received from school districts varied, as demonstrated by the six participant schools, and was reflective of school district reluctance to completely embrace this aspect of restructuring. The level of support from district office had an impact on the role of the principal, especially when provincial funds, held by the district, could be allocated to schools. Adequate school funding was pivotal to the success of school-based management and effected the availability of professional development for all stakeholders, the provision of new technology, and the school's ability to maintain policy supportive of class size and flexible programming initiatives.

Allied to the issue of district support for school-based management is the evolving role of the superintendent. Since 1994, superintendents have reduced personal contact with school communities and concentrated on district administration. The role of the superintendent was not a part of this study but participants reported that the role of the superintendent had changed in that they seemed to remove themselves from the life of the school and served only a district function. Marsh (1994) reflected on this withdrawal. "District leaders must do more than just "let go" to make school-based management work; they must also build conceptual understanding of the organizational dynamic and create a new form of balance between pressure

and support for the system" (p. 220). I recommend that the role of the Superintendent be evaluated in light of the changes that have occurred since the implementation of school-based management.

I recommend that school leaders and school communities be given more time and training to fully implement school-based management. Unfortunately, since 1994, a significant amount of working time has been taken from school leaders who concurrently had to deal with non-school-based management issues. In the beginning, decision-making focused on "survival issues" then moved through a continuum of trivial to more complex SBM issues. This took time. Creating more collaborative school communities also took time.

The need for time to implement school-based management was supported by Huberman and Miles (1984), who proposed resource adding, where the assister (District), provides materials, money, and time, or other resources needed by the receiver (school), as one of eight kinds of assistance to support school-based management in educational settings. Levine and Eubanks (1994) gave inadequate time, training, and technical assistance as a major obstacle to implementing school-based management.

Participant schools used a great deal of time to develop stakeholder trust, increase the level of parent participation in decision-making and develop a school culture based on cooperation. There is more to accomplish, but it is clear to this writer that progress to date, in participant schools is real. It is likely that the next five years will show whether or not school-based management in Alberta has been a success.

I recommend that government fund public education at levels which

reduce the need for school communities to fund-raise for basic supplies and services. Participants expressed their frustration with the reduced levels of education funding that accompanied restructuring.

Current funding levels have expanded the role of the principal to include being the chief fund-raiser or lobbyist for funds in the community. Pressure, arising from the need to be competitive with private schools, with schools in other systems and even schools within the system, shows that a competitive market culture demands a much expanded role for the principal than does a collaborative one.

I recommend that school leaders be provided training to effectively meet the demands of school-based management. Participants identified a number of leadership skills that were needed to help ensure effective school administration. These included: conflict resolution skills, communication skills and human relations skills. The sustained development of skills is noted by Huberman and Miles (1984) who found that "sustained assistance that integrates all types of assistance will be needed over several years of implementation" (p.241). Comprehensive assistance was not available to participants, especially in the form of training and professional development. Participants noted that most training resources were lost to fiscal restraint and have not been reinstated.

The school-based management leader is required to collaborate with stakeholders and utilize the skills of other leaders. The ability to coordinate the efforts of a large number of people and help them reach formal and informal goals requires extensive managerial and leadership training.

Recommendations for Further Study

The impact of mandated change has at least brought the possibility of collaborative decision-making into Alberta's public schools. Teacher, principals parents, and sometimes students, have worked through a process which is complex, emotional and complicated. In spite of government mandate, it is not still clear how widespread the practice of school-based decision-making is in Alberta's public schools. The degree to which genuine collaborative decision-making has really permeated the operation of schools in Alberta would make an interesting study.

The government of Alberta was guided by the fiscal advice offered by officers of the government of New Zealand. Further research could compare the experience that Alberta's school leaders had with the implementation of school-based management to the experience of their peers in New Zealand schools. A comparison of identical measures, with an analysis of similarities and differences could be enlightening.

The six participant schools (three school districts), involved in this study, proved to be quite similar in their approach to the implementation of school-based management. It would be interesting to replicate this study, with a larger sample of schools from Northern Alberta, to obtain an expanded view of the results of the first Three Year Plan.

Restructuring, involving organizational decentralization, entails a shift of power to lower levels of the hierarchy. This is a basic characteristic of school-based management. The potential for power to move was part of the governments emphasis in support of school-based management but other

restructuring measures complicated power issues. A study of relationships between school districts, superintendents and their staff, school principals, teachers, parents, students and other school community members would be valuable. The transfer of power from district to schools is still ongoing and appears to vary greatly between districts.

Finally, I recommend that including school students as part of school-based decision-making be investigated by the Alberta Teachers' Association. Participants indicated that students were left out of the school-based management process because they were represented by their parents. The dictates of democracy suggest that schools play an important role in the inculcation of democratic ideals. In Alberta, little attention has been paid to allowing students to participate in important decision-making processes within the school community because parents are viewed as more important customers of public education than students.

Conclusions

The concept of school-based management and the idea of placing more authority in the hands of the school community is not new. The rationale for school-based management is that moving authority to the same level of the organization where responsibility rests for results, could produce greater efficiency, more flexibility, and greater production. School-based management is consistent with current thinking and writing in organizational theory about the

need to decentralize authority (Fullan, 1997; Arterbury and Hord, 1991; Lewis, 1989; Ogawa and White 1994; Mohrman and Wohlstetter,1995).

When this study began, I was intrigued with the enthusiasm that participants showed towards the study and their role in it. Participant enthusiasm for the subject was subtly matched by a quiet, angry reluctance to credit government or school districts for implementing school-based management. Participant anger openly expressed itself when recalling the parent-teacher conflict from the early days of the new school councils, and when one participant angrily reacted (off tape) to the role of her new school-based team, which took authority away from her beloved parent school council.

The experiences of participants during the troubled months of late 1994 and early 1995 left "scars" that are still healing, which coupled with the ongoing fiscal restraint program have really challenged school leaders to remain positive and committed about their roles in public education. Participants wanted to give their opinions and share their experience. The study granted them that privilege.

First and foremost, the continuing evolution of school-based management will need to be pervasive and deep. Pervasive because change is still required for school communities to live out the promise of school-based management, and deep because most aspects of school life still need to be refined: structures, roles, systems, instructional practices, human resource practices and improving the skill and knowledge of participants. Similar change should also occur within Alberta Learning and local school boards.

Second, students have been left out of the process. They are not considered a significant stakeholder group capable of expressing opinions

and giving advice. According to David (1996), "the goal of transforming schools into communities where everyone has a voice goes beyond issues of school reform to the heart of our democratic society" (p. 6). The development of models of cooperation and collaborative decision-making for students to learn from ultimately benefits not just the school community but society as well. Students need to be included as part of the school-based management process.

Third, participants feel that school-based management is good for their schools. Indicators cited include; more efficient administration, better communication, inclusive decision-making, increased budget control, well thought out committee structure, and better relationships between parents, teachers and administrators. Improvements to school-based management will come if an additional emphasis is placed on increased adult learning, for all stakeholders, and student learning. Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1994) found that "school-based management has not led schools to look critically at the way they deliver teaching and learning services and to question the means they employ .... the seeds for radical reconceptualizations exist in the literature and are being experimented with by a few, but the connection to SBM has not been made" (p. 275). Schools need to consciously connect non-instructional decisions with conditions that maximize learning opportunities. i.e. a decision to invest in classroom telephones to facilitate communication between teachers and parents will also affect students. Linking issues to teaching and learning helps stakeholders stay focused on mission goals.

Fourth, individual participant behavior must continue to adapt to better serve the emerging needs of school-based management. The call for school-

based management came in a context of cuts in resources for public education. The conjunction of budget-cutting and school-based decision-making created a situation where the decision of what to eliminate is pushed down to principals and teachers and sometimes parents. This produced new unique conflicts as different teachers and programs were placed in a position of competing for reduced resources. Kuehn (1996), called this professional cannibalism.

This conflict also produced pressures that loaded the work of teachers. The potential loss of a program or activity, at the school level, heightened the pressure for teachers to add to their workload rather than lose the activity. This pressure is much greater when the decision was made at the school level, rather than a school system level. Pushing down the decision relieves those who decide about total resources from having to face the consequences of their decision to limit funding. Stakeholder behavior adapted to the new reality. Teachers had to reluctantly look after their own interests. Parents became more assertive and principals had to move away from autocratic behavior and become more collaborative and accepting of the behaviors of others.

Fifth, the principal became the chief executive officer of the school. This entailed taking on new management duties and attempting to be a facilitator and manager of change. Principals need to continue to help stakeholders to broaden and sustain the school's commitment to restructuring by encouraging a wider range of community members to be increasingly involved in decision-making. Principals must find ways to motivate staff, create a team feeling on campus, uphold a vision for the school, and shield teachers from selected issues so they can concentrate on teaching.

When reviewing experience using data which is reflective of eighteen differing perspectives, shaped by participant role and function and covering three years of intense work, it is difficult to ascribe a grand leadership model or leadership theme to the actions of the time. However, the emergence of a "sense of stewardship" was apparent. A major tenant of the school-based management model adopted by participants was collaborative decision-making. The drive for collaboration within school communities nurtured, in participant school leaders, a collective response to school leadership which reached out to stakeholders and designed ways to expand planning, decision-making, and day to day operation which was colleagual and more democratic than before. Time will tell if this move towards stewardship as a model of leadership will evolve further in Alberta, but the stress and challenge of the first three year plan (1994-97) did bring participant school leaders together, did serve to help democratize school communities and continues today.

Sixth, the role of the superintendent was discussed by participants. This leadership position was not a primary consideration of this study, but clearly the role and influence of the superintendency has been effected by the implementation of school-based management. Participants indicated that their superintendents distanced themselves from school related matters and became less visible within the school communities.

Fullen (1991) claimed that "schools cannot redesign themselves. The role of the district is crucial. Individual schools can become highly innovative for short periods of time without the district, but they cannot stay innovative without district action to establish the conditions for continuous and long improvement (p.209). The distancing of the superintendent and other district staff from

school related business may not help schools to further improve school-based management within their school communities.

Finally, this study concludes that school leaders are important social "assets" of the greater society that they serve, and must be encouraged to look after their own well-being, especially in times of great challenge and increasing stress. Participants clearly indicated the increased pressure that they felt impacted their roles as school leaders. The need for school leaders to stay healthy is obvious but little formal effort is made to ensure that when leaders are looking after others, someone is looking after them.

The results of this study conclude that school districts have a special responsibility for school-based leaders. They have a social and professional obligation to provide support services for school leaders which include professional development and training, personal and professional counseling, and offers day to day contact with mentoring peers that are not part of the leaders school community. It is important that school leaders be allowed to lead a balanced life in which personal needs are met. These include emotional, spiritual, intellectual, social and physical needs.

Conversely, leaders have an obligation to attend to their own health. The literature is full of helpful references leading to improved fitness, weight loss, stress reduction and guidance for healthy eating. Peer networking is another way to stay grounded while working in a challenging environment.

Participant school leaders acknowledged they were in command of their professional lives at some cost to their personal lives. The personal cost of being good stewards of a school community engaged in major restructuring, and working with a variety of individuals who bring widely divergent views and

assumptions about the role of leadership in public schools is still not clear. What is clear is that the increased responsibility and workload associated with the implementation of school-based management resulted in increased levels of stress for participants and increased use of personal time to meet the demands of their postions.

In the end, it may be that our schools maintained their "health" at the personal cost of their leaders. Smith (1996) agreed that leadership is extremely demanding. "Although people will continue their search for an easy way to lose weight and an easy way to lead, they will soon come to realize that both pursuits are just plain tough-requiring discipline, knowledge, energy, desire, and commitment" P.105).

In the turmoil of the first three year plan, school leaders were challenged to manage change and lead the process of adopting mandated school-based management throughout Alberta. Study participants valued their experience with school-based management and look for the time when fiscal restraint eases and school communities are permitted enough resources to work toward the most elusive goal of school-based management, increased student performance.

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Appendix A:

University of San Diego

CONSENT TO ACT AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT

I understand that Robert Wilson is conducting a research study about the implementation of school-based management on education and the implications for school governance. Since I have been selected, and have agreed, to participate in this study, I understand that I will be interviewed twice by Robert Wilson. I further understand that I will be tape recorded and Robert Wilson will take extensive notes during the interviews. In addition, I understand that I will be asked for artifacts that will assist Robert Wilson in understanding my responses.

I understand that this data collection will take from 60 to 90 minutes per interview. Participation in the study should not involve any added risks or discomforts to me except for the possible minor fatigue, as a result of the interviews.

My participation in this study is entirely voluntary. I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time.

I understand my research records will be kept confidential. My identity will not be disclosed without consent required by law. I further understand that to preserve my anonymity in reporting the results, direct quotes and descriptions will be altered as necessary to protect my identity.

Robert Wilson has explained this study to me and answered my questions. If I have other questions or research-related problems, I can reach Robert Wilson at 1 (403) 534 2343. I understand that I will not be reimbursed for my participation in the interviews.

I, the undersigned, understand the above explanations and, on that basis, I give consent to my voluntary participation in this research.

Signature of Subject   Date

Location

Signature of Researcher.   Date

Appendix B:

Interview Protocol

The duration of each interview will be from 60 to 90 minutes. The schedule for completing the interviews is between February, 1998; and June, 1998. The data analysis phase, including participant verification of the transcriptions will take place between March, 1998; and August, 1998.

Script (*read prior to beginning each interview*):

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study investigating the affect of the implementation of school-based management on your school and school community. To participate in this study, I need to discuss with you, and have you sign, the informed consent form.

(Discuss form here)

Over the next 60 to 90 minutes, I will ask you a number of questions. In each of these questions, please share any insights, and examples, that will assist me in further understanding your responses. As discussed, when we talked about the informed consent form, every endeavor will be made to ensure anonymity.

Special Note:

PLACE PARTICIPANT CODE ON FOLLOWING PAGE.

KEEP IN SECURE LOCATION UPON COMPLETION OF INTERVIEW.

Appendix C:

School-Based Management Study

Participant Information

General Participant Information:

Contact Type:

| | Interview | Phone Call | Letter |

Other

Visit:

Subject Name: Contact Date:

Subject Code: Phone #

Age: Gender   Male - Female

# of Years in Present Position: Address:

Kind of School:

| | Elementary | Jr. Secondary | Sr.. Secondary |

Grade Levels:

| | K - 6 | 7 - 9 | 10 - 12 |

Total # of Years as Administrator:

| | K - 6 | 7 - 9 | 10 - 12 |

Total # of Years as Teacher:

| | K - 6 | 7 - 9 | 10 - 12 |

Total # of Years as School Related Parent:

| | K - 6 | 7 - 9 | 10 - 12 |

Appendix D:

Interview Protocol

Contact Type: Visit #:

Participant Code: Contact Date:

Pilot Questions

1   When implementation of school-based management was announced, how did your school community react? (1)

2   Since the implementation of school-based management in public schools, what shifts in school-based decision making have you observed?   (2)

3   In your opinion, has the government's funding mechanism, in terms of how they fund schools, affected the S.B.M. implementation process? (3)

4   What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have you acquired, or need to acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based management?   (4)

5   Please walk me through a scenario that allows me to see the processes you follow in the decision making model that you use to help govern your school?   (2)

6   In what ways have you shifted or changed the decision making model used to govern your school community as a result of the implementation of school-based management? (2)

7   In your opinion, what role does the principal play in policy, program and budget development at the school level?   (1)

8   In your opinion, what role does the school council play in policy, program

and budget development at the school level? (1)

9   In your opinion, what role do the teachers play in policy, program and budget development at the school level? (1)

10 In your opinion, what role does the school trustee play in policy and program development at the school level?   (0)

11. As the implementation of school-based management has progressed, what are the major factors that have affected your role and function within your school community.? (3) (1)

12. Have you shifted your approach to school governance as a result of the implementation of school-based management?

13. How have you modified or changed decision making models or processes, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of school-based management?   (2)

14 In your opinion, what affect has the implementation of school-based management had on parental involvement in children's learning? (3) (1)

15 What do you think is the future of school-based management in your school community?   (4) (1)

16 What question, or questions, should I ask to gain further insight into the reality of school based management implementation and refinement?

Appendix E:

Interview Protocol

Contact Type: Visit #:

Participant Code: Contact Date:

First Round Questions

1   When implementation of school-based management was announced,
     how did your school community react?

2   Since the implementation of school-based management in public
     schools, what shifts in school-based decision making have you
     observed?

3   In your opinion, has the government's funding mechanism, in terms of
     how they fund schools, affected the S.B.M. implementation process?

4   What new attitudes, knowledge and skills have you acquired, or need to
     acquire, to complete a successful transition to effective school-based
     management?

5   Please walk me through a scenario that allows me to see the processes
     you follow in the decision making model that you use to help govern your
     school?

6   In what ways have you shifted or changed the decision making model
     used to govern your school community as a result of the implementation
     of school-based management?

7   In your opinion, what role does the principal play in policy, program and
     budget development at the school level?

8   What question, or questions, should I ask to gain further insight into the
     reality of school based management implementation and refinement?

Appendix F:

Interview Protocol

Contact Type: Visit #:

Participant Code: Contact Date:

Second Round Questions:

1   In your opinion, what role does the school council play in policy, program

        and budget development at the school level?

2   In your opinion, what role do the teachers play in policy, program and

        budget development at the school level?

3   In your opinion, what role does the school trustee play in policy and

        program development at the school level?

4   As the implementation of school-based management has progressed,

        what are the major factors that have affected your role and function

        within your school community.?

5   Have you shifted your approach to school governance as a result of the

        implementation of school-based management?

6   How have you modified or changed decision making models or

        processes, at the school level, as a result of the implementation of

        school-based management?

7   In your opinion, what affect has the implementation of school-based

        management had on parental involvement in children's learning?

8   What do you think is the future of school-based management in your

        school community?

Appendix G:

Profile of Elementary Participants.

School Council Chair 102 has worked as a school related parent for five years. She has served on fund raising committees and been active in school music and drama productions. Her husband is a manager of a John Deere outlet and they have three young children. As the President of her school council, for the last five years, participant 102 works in close collaboration with her principal and other members of school staff. She is a popular and well respected school leader.

School Council Chair 109 has had an eight year association with her school. She is a strong supporter of public education and has been fighting to preserve school programs that have been threatened by budget cuts. Her husband is a agronomist with Agriculture Canada and they have two high school age children. As President of her school council, for the last four years, she has supported a huge fund raising program that has purchased computers, funded three major school trips, and helped purchase a handi-van for disadvantaged students.

School Council Chair 116 has served as School Council chairperson for the last five years. She was voted parent advisory chair at the first school meeting she ever attended. Since then, she has helped lead the school through the implementation of S.B.M. and the creation of the new School Council. Participant 116, has a high regard for the school's professional staff who she enjoys working with. Her husband is a Chemist and they have one son of high school age.

Lead Teacher 103 has a bachelor of science degree and a B.Ed. She has taught for fourteen years, the last five of which have been in her current school, where she is known as a energetic fund raiser for both the local and provincial science fair program. Lead Teacher 103 has two elementary age children. Her husband is a teacher of mathematics at the local high school.

Lead Teacher 110 has a bachelor of arts degree with a major in English. She started her career teaching Jr. High English but transferred to an elementary assignment because of her love for younger children. Participant 110 has played an active role as an executive officer of the local Alberta Teachers Association and has served on a number of local and provincial Language Arts committees. Her husband is a plumber. They have no children.

Lead Teacher 114 has a bachelor of science degree with a major in Environmental Science. She came to her current assignment four years ago but has taught in a variety of positions throughout the region. Participant 114 has followed her husband as he moved from work site to work site. He is a union millwright by trade and is occasionally required to relocate to find work. Participant 114 is a teacher representative on the school council, is an executive member of the local Alberta Teachers Association and has been active proponent of environmental education throughout her school career.

Principal 101 indicated that her educational background included a B.Ed, with a major in Math and Music, an M.Ed, and a Ed. D in Educational Leadership. She has been a school administrator for 24 years, including a secondment to Central office for three years. Her current school is an amalgamation of her former primary school and an intermediate level population which amalgamated in 1994. Her husband is a Veterinarian and

they have one adult son.

Principal 108 has a B.Ed. in social science and a M.Ed in Special Education. Her experience includes eighteen years working as a school counselor and as a District Special Education Consultant. She has been a school principal for an additional four years, two in British Columbia and the rest in her current school. Principal 108 is a tireless community worker who volunteers her time in service of local and provincial skating.

Principal 115 has a bachelor of arts degree, with a major in mathematics. Her fifteen years of successful teaching and her exemplary service to education gained her appointment to principal in 1994. Principal 115 has three high school age children. Her husband is a Real Estate franchise owner/manager.

Appendix H:

Profile of Secondary Participants

School Council Chairperson 106 has three school age children. One attends the secondary school where she is council chairperson. Her husband is an accountant and owns his own tax business. Chair 106 has served the school by being a major fund raiser. She is also active in the school's drama department which she serves as costume designer and seamstress.

School Counsel Chairperson 113 has presided over council meetings for four years. An accountant by training she is a very successful real estate agent in her community. Her husband manages an Auto Body Shop. They have two teenage sons. Chair 113 is and avid sports person who started her work at school chaperoning students involved in school teams, years before she became interested in school council.

School Council Chairperson 117 is a non-certificated Librarian who works in another local school. Her husband is a farmer. They have two children in Jr. High school. Chair 117 serves on the town library board and is a active curler. Her service to the school includes: fund raising, dance supervision and coaching the schools curling team.

Lead Teacher 105 has taught in the school for seven of his fourteen years. His wife is a teacher. They have one child who attends a local middle school. Teacher 105 is a math teacher and sits on two school committees. A major function, beyond teaching, is chairing the school-based team, which manages school-wide decision-making. He loves sports and is a devoted fan of the Calgary Flames.

Lead Teacher 107 is the schools only teacher of French. She is the only bilingual member of the teaching staff. Her school is a large Composite High school which is situated in an urban environment. She loves drama and is active as staff coordinator of the school yearbook. She also serves on the school-based team. She has two children attending university. Her husband is a commercial pilot.

Lead Teacher 118 has taught for twenty nine years and has served as both vice principal and principal in another school. He is the school counselor. Teacher 118 has four children who have left school and are now working. His wife is a nurse. He has a wide variety of teaching experience which includes both elementary and secondary experience. As school counselor, he is responsible for course and career counseling. Teacher 118 is a skilled hunter who enjoys the annual moose hunt. He is a Warden of his church and a Fellow of the Order of Masons.

Principal 104 holds a B.Sc., and a M.Ed in Administration. His wife is an accountant and works for a local bank. They have five children. Principal 104 has been a school principal for twenty one years. Before that he taught mathematics for five years. He is a skillful house builder and gained his skill building six family homes. He enjoys woodworking and facing the challenges that house building provides.

Principal 111 has a degree in classical studies. He taught for three years and has been a principal for twelve years. Principal 111 has three children who attend his school. His wife is a nurse. Principal 111 loves gardening and is an avid sports fan. In winter, he follows the fortunes of the school's basketball teams, and his sons hockey team. His dearest wish is that

his son will shortly play professional ice hockey.

Principal 112 has a B.Sc. in chemistry and an M.Ed in Administration. His experience includes five years of teaching science and twenty years of school administration. Principal 112 has worked in several parts of Northern Alberta before coming south. He is a past president of the local Lions Chapter and a Warden at his church.

Appendix I:

Appendix I:

Participant Data

No.	Position	School Type	Age	Gender	Years in Present Position	Years as Administrator	Years as Teacher	Years as S. C. Parent
101	Principal	Elem.	50	F	4	24	3	
104	Principal	Sec	47	M	10	21	5	
108	Principal	Elem	45	F	4	4	18	
111	Principal	Sec	38	M	4	12	15	
112	Principal	Sec	47	M	5	20	5	
115	Principal	Elem	44	F	4	22	2	
103	Teacher	Elem	48	F	14		14	
105	Teacher	Sec	38	M	7		14	
107	Teacher	Sec	48	F	5		22	
110	Teacher	Elem	36	F	13		14	
114	Teacher	Elem	42	F	4		15	
118	Teacher	Sec	55	M	8		29	
102	Parent	Elem	35	F	5			5
106	Parent	Sec	45	F	4			4
109	Parent	Elem	37	F	4			8
113	Parent	Sec	37	F	4			4
116	Parent	Elem	43	F	5			5
117	Parent	Sec	45	F	4			6

Appendix J:

Contrasted Views of Parent Leaders

Elementary School Council Chair - Secondary School Council Chair

Leadership Issues: Inaction immediately after implementation
                                    Managing good meetings
                                    Indepth knowledge of S.B.M.
                                    Resolving turmoil with teachers
                                    Overt battle over "turf"
                                    Deciding role of school council (Directing - Advisory)
                                    Principal fills leadership vacuum - takes charge
              Process first - structure last .... Structure first - process last

Role and Function: Active role as Parent Leader
                                    Improving meeting management
                                    Increased volume of work
                                    Gained new knowledge
                                    Gave advice to school - not concerns
                                    Peace making
                                    Became the significant parent leader
                                    Active and vital part of school-based team

Decision Making   No new model - adaptation and process change
Models:
(Revised-Adapted)   Initial use of school councils to make decisions
                                    School council became forum for parent stakeholders
                                    Decisions made by School-Based Teams
                                    Increased input from parents
                                    Parents represented on most school committees

Barriers to   Government fiscal restraint program
Implementation: Working time
                                    School type, size and location
                                    Resistance to change
                                    Lack of knowledge about S.B.M.
                                    Battle for power
                                    Ignorance
                                    Poor communications
                                    Government misread parent/leadership desires.

New Attitudes,   Becoming an effective school leader and representative
Knowledge and Skills: New knowledge of Public Educ. System (local/provincial)
                                    New knowledge of School-Based management
                                    New knowledge of Management and Business Skills.
                                    School Council Chair represents all stakeholders
                                    Active Listening skills required
                                    Refined people skills also needed

Elementary School Council Chair - Secondary School Council Chair

Changes: School councils - become chief decision-making forums. Greater community involvement needed in schools. Increased financial support for public education be provided by prov. government.

Appendix K

Contrasted Views of Teacher Participants

Elementary Lead Teacher - Secondary Lead Teacher

Leadership Issues:	Inaction after implementation announced.
	Reacting to and managing change
	Knowledge of S.B.M.
	Increased workload - reduced support.
	Involved on school reorganization
	Time spent dealing with school council
	Role of school council problematic
	Increased decision-making
	Expanded political activity

Role and Function:	Increased role for teachers as representatives/ advocates
	Increased staff cohesiveness
	Increased sense of group power
	Increased control over decision-making

Overt power issues with parents .... covert power issues with parents
Making do with less - teaching under fiscal constraint.

Decision Making	No new model developed
Models:	Adaptations of pre. S.B.M. structure - process change
(Revised-Adapted)	Strong supporters of new committee structures.
	Staff meeting becomes teacher decision-making forum
	Teachers represented on all school-based committees.
	Teachers influential members of the school-based team.
	Increased input for teachers
	Increased accountability for teachers.

Barriers to	Fiscal restraint
Implementation:	Time
	Increased teacher work load with decreased support staff.
	Size, type and location of school
	Inter-school competition
	Down-sizing of number of school districts - amalgamation.
	Leadership style of Principal.
	Lack of knowledge about S.B.M.
	Suspicion and resistance to collaborative decision-making.
	Inactivity and lack of leadership from School District.

New Attitudes,	Business and management skills needed.
Knowledge and Skills:	Teachers not only teach - now help to manage school.
	Need to develop collaborative decision-making skills.

Elementary Lead Teacher - Secondary Lead Teacher

Changes: Increased funding from government for schools.
Need relief from teaching to complete other duties.
Need for greatly enhanced Prof. Development for teachers.

Appendix L

<u>Contrasted Views of Principal Participants</u>

Elementary School Principal - Secondary School Principal

Leadership Issues: Inaction after Implementation announced.
                                 Provided mentoring in S.B.M. for staff and parents.
                                 Managed greatly expanded school finances.
                                 Had some knowledge of S.B.M.
                                 Developed school-based decision-making.
            Role of School Council directive/advisory .... Role of School Council advisory.
                                 Developed Collaborative Leadership Style.
                                 Managed school councils and school-based teams.
            Process first- structure last ...... Structure first - process last.

Role and Function: S.B.M. Facilitator and Coach of the School.
                                 Increased management time - less instructional
                                 leadership offered.

                                 Keepers of S.B.M. Dream.
                                 Managing school finances.
                                 Being "most accountable person."
                                 Working with all stakeholders.
                                 Had to manage increased working time and stress.

Decision Making   No new model - adaption of former process & structures.
Models: Developed & supported representative committee structure.
(Revised-Adapted)   Held accountable for all school-based decisions.
                                 School council power reverts to school-based team.
                                 Increased administration as result of collaborative
                                 decision-making.

                                 Increased stress due to shared decision-making with
                                 stakeholders.

            Did not always seem in charge .... Was always in charge.

Barriers to   Fiscal Restraint
Implementation: Collaborative decision-making.
                                 Changing leadership styles from autocratic to
                                 democratic leadership.

                                 Managing school finances - working time - increased
                                 stress.

                                 Greatly increased accountability.
                                 Working with a greatly expanded school community.
                                 Lack of leadership from government and school districts.
                                 Lack of preparation for mandated implementation of S.B.M.
            Staff - parent conflicts at school council meetings .... Little real conflict
                                 Leadership style of Principal.

**New Attitudes,
Knowledge and Skills:**

Successful management of change
New skills required - Business, accounting, reporting, communications.

People skills required - Listening, empathy, personal coaching, counseling, and dispute resolution.

"We learned we could do the hard stuff."

Changes:

Time to fulfill duties.
Training to become facilitators, coaches and C.E.O's of schools.

Appendix M

<u>Sample Letter to Principal Participants</u>

October, 1997

Principal
Deeprock Secondary School
Petone, Alberta

Dear Mr. Wilson,

Greetings! I am engaged in conducting research for my doctoral degree, in educational leadership, out of the University of San Diego. My topic is: school-based management in Alberta, the first three years.

I am searching for six schools that have a principal, school council chairperson, and a teacher leader who would be prepared to be interviewed about their experience with the introduction of school-based management in their school.

If possible, all three volunteers would have held their positions prior to September, 1994 and thus be in a position to compare the before and after school-based management implementation period. Identifying the principal and school council candidate is easy, but I will need your help to identify the lead teacher participant. Perhaps you could seek support for this request from the chairperson of your school council and suggest two or more potential candidates from among your teaching staff who I could contact to seek their permission to participate.

This project will take up to two hours of interview time for each participant plus some extra time to clarify responses and check transcribed notes. The mandated implementation of school-based management in Alberta has been a challenge for all school personnel. I hope that you will agree to take part in my project and share your experience with others.

Yours sincerely,

R J. Wilson
Siksika Board of Education
Siksika.