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SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING

IN THE REALM OF MIDDLE SCHOOL REFORM

by

Eileen Theresa Geraghty

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
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As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Eileen Theresa Geraghty

entitled Site-Based Decision Making in the Realm of Middle School Reform

and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

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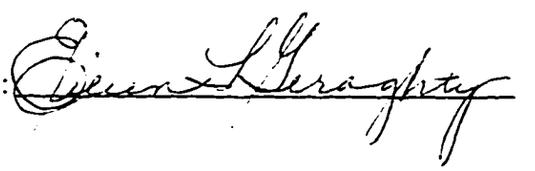
SIGNED: 

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify the current level of implementation of site-based decision making (SBDM) in middle schools in a large Southwestern urban school district. These middle schools were in the process of establishing elements of the middle school concept as defined by the district. Implementation of site-based decision making had brought the responsibilities of daily decision making and problem solving as well as the challenge of making decisions about middle school philosophy much closer to the classroom.

Implementation of SBDM in these middle schools had also brought an increase in the amount of teacher involvement in the deliberations that affected their lives in school. The primary purpose of SBDM may not be to improve student achievement but to improve the quality of life for the various staff who are responsible for improving student achievement. The instrument employed in this study measured the degrees to which teachers and staff perceived their actual and desired levels of participation in SBDM.

It is necessary to measure growth and progress of SBDM for administrators to create a focus for future planning. The survey information indicated key areas of importance to school staff and served as a determinant of the climate in the district's exemplary middle schools. Administrators must delegate leadership roles and trust pedagogical expertise to teachers. The change in paradigms to transformational leadership allows for this empowerment of teachers and the possibility for SBDM to emerge. SBDM gives the decision-making community a sense of ownership of the

innovation. Leadership practices potentially contribute to the outcomes to which schools aspire for students.

Teachers' actual and desired levels of participation in SBDM differed substantially on almost every item in each subscale of the survey instrument. Desire for more participation was indicated in the areas of curriculum, instruction, goal setting, standards, staff development, and staffing. Less interest in participation was exhibited in budget management, evaluation, and making decisions about staff development. Respondents did not consider their sites to be strong examples of the district's middle school concept.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Site-based decision making (SBDM) has become a pivotal plank in educational reform platforms. The topic of site-based decision making is receiving much attention from researchers and practitioners alike. The premise of this decentralization movement in educational policy is that those at the school site have the information necessary to make decisions that will enhance educational performance. Potential exists for stimulating teacher empowerment, parental and community involvement, and school leadership (Ferris, 1992). Collaborative school cultures make an important contribution to both the success of school improvement processes and the effectiveness of schools (Little, 1982; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Rozenholtz, 1989). The collaborative activities generated by site-based shared decision making lead to healthy interpersonal situations in which staff members can work together effectively to create changes and transfer those changes to the classroom (Herman, 1990).

Statement of the Problem

In a large Southwest urban public school district, site administrators were directed by central administration to establish site-based councils to serve as decision-making teams. The district formed a Site-Based Decision Making Joint Committee in August of

1989. State legislation (ARS, Article 3.1, Section 351, 1994, entitled Decentralization Process) later required school councils for the purpose of site-based decision making.

Concurrently, the middle school regional administrator met with other middle school administrators to develop a vision of the ideal middle school. This middle school concept was reviewed and accepted by the school board, and site administrators were directed to reform to this vision.

These two reforms required collaborative planning, experience, and a change in leadership as well as developing teaching paradigms over time. The reform directives in decision making and middle school education were intended to improve public education.

This study was conducted to develop a snapshot of the progress of site-based decision making reform in middle schools in this district.

The national concern for educational excellence has made site-based management a primary focal point for the improvement of public education. Bacharach (1990) reported that the more teachers are involved in governing schools, the better schools appear to function, although there is not sufficient quantitative data to substantiate improved student academic performance. The purpose of site-based decision making is not primarily to improve student achievement but to improve the quality of life for the various staff who are responsible for improving student achievement. Bacharach cautioned that although downsizing, resulting in heavier teacher workloads, may appear to give teachers greater control, true teacher involvement is a better model for implementing a shared decision-making process. The conceptual framework for the site-

based management process is consistent with the growing demands for increased efficiency and productivity by schools. School district staff must have a common understanding of the concept and the process of site-based management to develop common expectations (Clark, 1989).

SBDM continues to be a priority in state and district reform efforts across the country, yet there is scant evidence linking SBDM to improved school performance (Fullan, 1993; Ogawa & White, in press). "Since studies neglect political perspectives and enactment processes, the political dimensions of SBDM remain essentially unchartered terrain" (Malen, 1994, p. 249).

The available evidence has come from research at the elementary and secondary levels. It is scarce at the middle school level and has not been connected specifically to middle school restructuring efforts. It is difficult to determine the relationship between administrators' leadership style and the direction of change effected, i.e., the adoption of reform without a measure of the direction of change. In this study, the survey instrument is the tool that measures the direction of change, that is, site-based management in the realm of middle school reform. Not all site-based decision models involve teachers in meaningful decision making. A principal may work with a school advisory council yet remain the site-based leader who is ultimately accountable for decisions and performance. Principals can facilitate or block new and emerging relationships. This dissertation addressed SBDM in the educational setting during a period of concurrent reform and the acquisition of the middle school concept.

Background Information

Middle school education is experiencing a period of growth and positive change. Progress is being made toward making middle schools more responsive to the needs of young adolescents. Educators and others responsible for the education and welfare of this group must become more knowledgeable about the nature of the experiences they need at school. Many principals have decentralized much of the daily decision making and problem solving in middle schools (George, 1990). Now these activities take place much closer to the classroom where they are likely to be more timely and effective.

Implementation of the SBDM concept in middle schools has brought a sharp increase in the amount of teacher involvement in the deliberations that affect their lives in school. The change to a team structure which affords increased site-based decision making will produce a climate more hospitable to administrator-teacher collaboration and cooperation. Team leaders become an integral part of the system or organization, instruction, and governance in reforming middle schools, in large part transforming and expanding the role formerly played by departmental chairs. Teachers, through their team leaders, now more ably support the principal in school discipline, governance, public relations, and many other areas where this assistance was previously not felt. Collaboration and cooperation also increase.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative study addressed the deficiencies noted above by examining decision making in the context of middle school reform. It examined whether any notable differences existed between teachers' perceptions of their participation in the site-based decision-making process and the level of involvement they felt they should have for their school to be a truly site-based/shared-decision-making school. All schools in this district were directed to establish some form of site decision-making team; however, the schools recommended for participation in this study were identified by district experts as exemplary middle schools. Therefore, they should have implemented reforms under the leadership of a site administrator using some decision-making process.

The study examined the degree to which teachers and ancillary staff were involved in school-wide decision making and assessed the desired and perceived levels of involvement using a measurement instrument in survey form. The site-based management process was assessed to measure growth and progress and to create a focus for future planning.

Significance of the Study

The survey instrument used in this study was designed to measure the actual involvement of teachers in decision making as well as the level of involvement teachers would like to have in decisions made at their site. The study is important to current and future educational leaders because it examined specific aspects of site-based management as an educational reform process used to restructure and downsize school districts. The

results provide baseline data that may be used to identify issues requiring administrative attention. They may also be useful in establishing the effectiveness of the administrator in creating an environment of participatory decision making and monitoring the progress toward site goals, particularly at the middle school level. The results may also indicate key areas of importance to school staff. The survey information serves as a determinant of the climate in this district's exemplary middle schools following the establishment of site-based decision making (leadership) teams.

The use of an adapted survey instrument as described in Chapter 3 allows educational researchers to examine shared decision making in a somewhat more scientific manner by measuring its effects on educational outcomes. In the field of educational policy, agencies, state educational departments, and others can monitor the implementation of shared decision making in schools. The effects of shared decision making can then be determined and used to influence future policy formation. At the school level, the instrument can be used to examine the involvement of staff members in decision-making activities related to specific components of the school program. This information can be used to identify areas where staff members have not had adequate input and to inform management practice (Russell, 1992). The present study can be useful, then, by providing an analysis of shared decision making at the middle school level and for gaining an understanding of the true impact of restructuring on schools. Additional areas of assistance for educational leaders may include the following.

1. Designing staff development models for site-based decision making.

2. Developing and implementing shared decision-making models.

3. Providing an evaluation tool to identify strengths and weaknesses of shared decision making and its implementation.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions.

1. What are the attitudes of middle school staff with regard to site-based decision making?

2. What are the information mechanisms of site-based decision making?

3. Do teachers' actual and desired levels of participation in setting goals, visions, and mission through site-based decision making differ?

4. Do teachers' actual and desired levels of participation in setting standards through site-based decision making differ?

5. Are there differences between teachers' actual and desired levels of decision making related to curriculum and instruction?

6. Are there differences between teachers' actual and desired satisfaction with the facilitating procedures implemented in connection with site-based decision making?

7. Are there differences between teachers' actual and desired opportunities for staff development in the site-based decision-making model?

8. Do teachers' actual and desired overall impressions about site-based decision making differ?

9. Do respondents' actual and desired personal involvement in curriculum and instruction decisions differ?

10. Do respondents' actual and desired personal involvement in staff personnel decisions differ?

11. Do respondents' actual and desired personal involvement in staff development decisions differ?

12. Do respondents' actual and desired personal involvement in school community relations differ?

13. Do respondents' actual and desired personal involvement in budget management differ?

14. Do the perceptions of school staff about the middle school concepts in place differ?

Limitations

The following limitations of this study are acknowledged.

1. It is not known whether SBDM and the middle school concept survive changes in administration.

2. The definition of what constituted a middle school as well as the definition of some elements of SBDM were specified by a middle school regional superintendent who has since moved to another school district.

3. The site-based decision-making design in this district may have been the decision of the site administrator or a site council.

Definition of Terms

Achievement. For the purposes of this study, achievement is defined as the measure of the administrator's ability to implement SBDM as directed by the school district central office.

Consensus. A decision-making process in which all persons who participate support the process if not the decisions that result from the process.

Middle School Concept. The middle school concept as adopted by the school board in this study is defined as combinations of sixth, seventh, and eighth grades having interdisciplinary team organization (ITO), that is, teams of three or more teachers of different instructional content areas who share the same group of students. These classes may be multi-graded. Sixth grade classes were to be taught in cores of content classes with outside classes such as art, physical education, or band. Seventh grade students were to attend exploratories, that is, a sampling of high-interest classes. Eighth graders were to participate in rotations or nonacademic high-interest classes that were more in-depth than exploratories. Initially, eighth grade scheduled were designed to be similar to high school departmentalization. Block scheduling made class schedules more flexible and assisted teachers in integrating their instruction within their ITOs. Advisor/advisee programs provided time for students and teachers to meet in small groups to allow relationships to develop and to create a support system so students would know a responsible adult to whom they could turn.

Shared Decision Making. A system of governance in which central and site administrators share authority for school policy making.

Site-Based Decision Making. It is significant that there appear to be no absolute guidelines for the definition of SBDM in the literature. One complication is the absence of a common definition of a model and its operational process (Jenni & Mauriel, 1990). Rather, each school or school district determines the success of the implementation of SBDM. A variety of components involved in the SBDM process have been identified by investigators, e.g., site-based budgeting, development of an advisory council, and teacher and community involvement in the decision-making process (Hansen & Marburger, 1989).

Site-based decision making is neither a new idea nor a single operational process, although new terminology about the process of decision making and site-based management has developed. SBDM is one of many terms used to describe an educational philosophy that has existed for decades. For the purpose of this work, the term site-based decision making refers to the process of decision making (governance) in which legislative and executive decision-making power is shared by the site administrator(s), teachers, parents, students, community members, and educational support personnel.

Site-Based Decision-Making School. According to the terminology of the Association and the district, a site-based decision-making school is one that has been accepted into the district's SBDM program and been placed in one of the four phases of the plan by the District Teacher Association Joint Site-Based Decision-Making

Committee. The district involved in this study developed the following expectations for site-based decision making in its schools:

> The purpose of SBDM is to share responsibility for educational improvement. [The district's goals for implementing SBDM were]
>
> Goal 1: To improve the effectiveness, productivity, and professional practices of employees.
>
> Goal 2: To improve student learning by creating environments responsive to diverse student needs.
>
> Goal 3: To enrich the educational climate.
>
> Goal 4: To encourage commitment to and involvement by the extended community (staff, students, parents, and interested citizens). (Confidential school district publication)

The Association and the district agreed that all employees function more effectively and are more productive when they are given increased responsibility for making decisions affecting their day-to-day affairs. An atmosphere where decision making is a shared collegial process fosters an exchange of ideas and information necessary for effective professional practice and for an improved educational process. The Association and district also agreed to continue to pursue the development of a site-based decision-making program jointly during the period of their consensus agreement (July 1, 1996-July 30, 1998).

Site Council. (1) An advisory body to the site administrator. (2) The legislative body at the school site that makes decisions according to a written constitution/bylaws for that site.

Leadership and Change

School restructuring requires first- and second-order changes. Instructional leadership focuses on what school improvement researchers refer to as *first-order changes* such as changes in core technology (Fuhrman, 1993; Miles, 1993). These changes are thought to be necessary elements of any reform strategy likely to benefit students. Within the school restructuring agenda, forms of instruction designed to teach for understanding are examples of first-order changes.

Interdisciplinary teaching, schools within schools, block scheduling, cooperative learning, and special programs for at-risk students are all reform strategies designed to make middle schools more responsive to students. There is now, however, an impressive accumulation of evidence demonstrating that an almost exclusive focus on first-order changes is an important part of the explanation for the failure of most change initiatives--especially the failure to institutionalize such changes after their implementation.

Attention to *second-order change* is essential to the survival of first-order change. Otherwise, chaos results, and "standard operating procedures" displace promising first-order changes such as site-based management. Second-order changes include leadership that is sensitive to organization building: developing shared vision, creating productive work cultures, and delegating leadership to others. Transformational approaches to

school leadership are especially appropriate to the challenges facing schools now and through the remainder of this decade (Leithwood, 1994).

Middle Schools and Transformational Leadership

It is past time to address the unique challenges of middle school leadership. Transformational leadership, emphasizing the empowerment of one's colleagues, encourages administrators to focus their energies on the capacities and motives of those in a position to direct leadership within their organizations (Hunt, 1991).

The professionalization of teaching is at the center of the school restructuring agenda. Professionalization seems warranted for many reasons, including the widespread failure of traditional forms of administrative supervision to contribute to teacher development, especially for the future (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1992); the results of recent teacher leadership initiatives (e.g., Smylie & Brownlee-Conyers, 1992); and as an incentive for highly talented prospective candidates to join the teaching ranks (Ogawa, 1993). Instructional leadership demands an active role in classroom practice based on high levels of pedagogical expertise. The professionalization of teaching aims to delegate this leadership role of pedagogical expertise to teachers. Because teachers are contributing more in leadership roles, it becomes increasingly difficult to justify the dying paradigm of instructional leadership images. Leadership practices potentially contribute to the outcomes to which schools aspire for students. This leadership will almost always

be mediated by other people, events, or things such as teachers' commitment or school culture (Leithwood, 1994).

Transformational leadership directly affects the attitudes and beliefs of staff, as well as their perceptions of school characteristics. The objects of these attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions are school goals, school culture, school decision-making processes, programs and instructional policies, and organization and resources. According to Leithwood (1994), these variables have emerged as critical in explaining variations in the success of school restructuring. Teachers' commitment to change, as conceptualized from the theories of motivation in the work of Bandura (1977, 1986) and Ford (1992), is also critical. Transformational leadership practices have significant direct and indirect effects on progress in school-restructuring initiatives and teacher-perceived student outcomes. Transformational leadership has also shown strong direct and indirect effects on teachers' personal goals.

A study by Leithwood and Steinbach (1991) which compared the group problem-solving processes of expert and typical samples of principals identified quite dramatic differences insofar as they were likely to be empowering (or transformational) for teachers by providing intellectual stimulation and fostering the acceptance of group goals.

The thinking of experts is shaped by a set of attitudes: toward colleagues as major sources of good ideas, openness to new ideas regardless of their source, and self-confidence resulting from successful experiences. SBDM provides staff an opportunity to shape proposed innovations to fit the practices and culture of the school. Thus, the

match between the innovation and the school environment is improved. SBDM gives teachers a sense of ownership of the innovation when they buy into what they amend and adopt.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

During the 1970s and 1980s, there was little doubt among educators that the principal was the school leader. The leadership literature showed that effective principals who emphasized learning produced high achievement scores, understood the school's mission, set high expectations for quality curriculum, protected learning time, spent time in classrooms, monitored student performance, and much more (Hallinger, 1992).

In the late 1980s and into the 1990s, a new leadership rhetoric emerged. It echoed much of the effective schools language about test scores, time on task, school missions, and goals but added some new terms to the educator's vocabulary: Collaboration, customers, consensus, facilitation, teamwork, involvement, participation, ownership, site-based management, and strategic planning (Cohen, McLoughlin, & Talbert, 1993). A new culture has thrust teachers and parents into powerful leadership roles. Principals must rethink their role and create a new role as a leader of leaders. In this new role, principals have two primary responsibilities. They must, first, recognize leadership potential; then they must develop leadership capacity in their school's new leaders and create conditions under which they can transfer authority to them. Shared decision making requires principals to recognize the need to improve the leadership ability of those with whom they work on a continuing basis. SBDM is intended not only to give

teachers more power but to bring about improved teaching and learning in the school. The expectation of its advocates is that teachers' participation in school decisions will focus attention on instruction and curriculum and thus lead to important changes in the classroom (Barth, 1990).

SBDM tends to level the playing field between administrators and teachers because it allows each person to contribute. SBDM is permeated with notions of equality of participation. Ideally, a group of people comes together with mutual respect to reach a consensus on what is best for students.

Without SBDM, principals can implement changes more rapidly because they need not negotiate with teachers. Reforms do not go through heated debates nor are they diluted or slowed to meet teachers' objections. Principal-mandated changes, however, evoke suspicion and uncertainty and often lead to bitterness or disregard for the reform.

Site-based decision making has evolved over the last decade into a process of decentralization in which the school becomes the primary unit of management and educational improvement. This improvement occurs through a redistribution of decision-making authority within a school district from central office superintendent and staff to individual sites--principal and staff (Conley & Bacharach, 1990).

Evidence of Site-Based Decision Making

Epps (1995) used the Teacher Involvement and Participation Scale (TIPS2) to determine whether congruency existed between the perceptions of principals and teachers regarding the extent of site-based decision making in elementary schools in South

Carolina. The data indicated that teachers and principals agreed that site-based decision making was commonly used in the areas of curriculum, goals, staff development, and standards. They also agreed that teachers were less involved in the areas of budget, facilitating procedures, and personnel. A major finding of the study suggested that principals perceived that they relinquished more power than teachers believed they were afforded.

Districts such as Dade County, Florida, have confirmed that implementing SBDM resulted in improvement in the areas of achievement, attendance, and climate. Assessments have also identified some common problems: (1) unrealistic expectations, (2) lack of preparation to deal with whole-school rather than classroom-level problems, (3) difficulties assuming new roles, (4) problems conducting meetings, (5) increased workloads, (6) burnout, (7) feuding, (8) pressure on the principal (accountability without authority), and (9) problems of size (Dade County Public Schools, 1991).

A study conducted in the Edmonton (Canada) Public Schools (Strembitsky, 1990) concluded that aside from the management style and philosophy of the superintendent, other factors influenced the adoption of SBDM in a school district:

1. The increasing desire among teachers and administrators to participate in management decision making.
2. The delegation of some curriculum decisions to the site level.
3. The ability to diversify school programming.
4. The requirement that schools implement some form of program budgeting.

5. The development of technology and its utilization in cost accounting.

6. The accountability movement, financial restraints of the guidelines, and the rapid change that comes with restructuring.

7. The change of central staff from a directive component to a supportive component.

Bellevue, Washington Public Schools and the Bellevue Education Association developed a collaborative educational and managerial plan with the board of education, the teachers, and the community (Clark, 1989). The conceptual framework for the Bellevue model was designed to empower schools, enabling individual building sites to accomplish the following:

1. Decision making at the site where the students are educated.

2. Participation of those most directly involved with students.

3. Restructuring within the context of the district and state framework of policies and laws which surround the school (Clark, 1989).

In 1987, the State of Washington legislated a program called *Schools for the 21st Century*. Schools could operate free of state regulations if they established a formal collaborative management concept in the district (Clark, 1989). The Bellevue SBDM process was designed to facilitate decision making in the following ways.

1. The design of an instructional program for children and youth that developed their individual potential.

2. The organization of course content, programs, and curriculum to provide appropriate direction for the instructional process.

3. The organization of schools and classrooms to make the most effective use of the time and talents of students and teachers (Clark, 1989).

Within the areas of professional expertise where decisions that significantly alter the instructional environment are made, employees are expected to contribute to the educational program of the district by participating actively in various ad hoc and continuing advisory and developmental groups. This decision-making process includes open dialogue in which issues are presented, defined, discussed, and resolved (Schoeppach, 1990).

An important aspect of the school-centered decision-making process in Bellevue was to consider staff development as a key to staff and parental participation. It was believed that collaborative groups must be able to utilize group process skills, negotiate and implement conflict resolution techniques, and practice sound management concepts (Clark, 1989).

The Rochester (New York) City School District (1989) developed a model of SBDM around three essential qualities designed to serve all students in the school district.

1. Ownership: Staff members' commitment to achievement for each child.

2. Responsiveness: Schools' ability to engage each student in learning and support each child's success, acknowledging that children learn and develop differently.

3. Connection: Schools' relationship to the world and the ability to demonstrate to students the connection between the behavior required of learners and that required by responsible adults.

The core concept for the redesign within the Rochester City School District (1989) utilized the operating principles of decentralization and entrepreneurship, including the following.

1. School-Based Management: Shift of authority for decisions that affect student achievement, such as assignment of staff, allocation of funding, curriculum emphasis, placement and grouping of students, instructional design, and use of instructional time, from central administration to school sites.

2. Decentralization of District Organization: Replace traditional centralized district authority with a structure that directs all resources that bear upon student performance.

3. New Expectations for Staff: Principals must demonstrate an ability to build collaboration and consensus and to create a climate of innovation. Teachers must participate in the governance of schools, help set standards for their profession, and accept responsibility for the instruction of students.

4. Accountability: Quality of performance and service is the basis upon which the effectiveness of schools, units of organization, departments, and individuals is determined.

Common Elements in Site-Based Decision Making

Three major elements appear to be common to the process of site-based decision making: instructional planning, finance/budget, and personnel. Instructional planning, including curriculum design, textbook adoption, and instructional materials, is an area in which school sites have been given some autonomy. The SBDM process is inhibited in school districts that have stringent constraints on the adoption of textbooks, course requirements, or state-controlled time elements. Budget is an element for which some schools obtain waivers from the district, the bargaining unit, or state regulatory agencies to meet the needs of students (Hansen & Marburger, 1989). Budget funds are generally flexible and can be used to meet the operational needs of a site as determined by a site advisory council. Central offices, however, usually do not allocate much beyond what is required to meet fixed and mandated expenses. The third common element in SBDM is personnel management. Selection of staff by personnel at the site allows for a best-match concept with regard to site goals, attainment of mission, and educational philosophy. These three areas are thought to be the most critical in the management of the school site and are related to the effectiveness of school-site management (Rochester City School District, 1989).

Research Findings Related to Site-Based Decision Making

Research on SBDM has provided evidence of improved or increased teacher communication, involvement, and climate building. One such study of several school

districts in southern states (Oliver, 1992) demonstrated that principals and teachers in SBDM schools were overwhelmingly more positive in their attitudes toward SBDM when sites were involved in decentralized decision making in four areas: budget, personnel, curriculum, and staff development. Teachers' and principals' attitudes, perceptions, and concerns about schools with specific SBDM operational procedures were examined. In all of the schools surveyed, there was a positive "feeling" about the implementation of SBDM, but there were also some common concerns about the SBDM implementation practices, including insufficient time, insufficient training, and lack of hierarchical support.

In a study conducted in Texas (Lopez, 1992), decisions made at the building level versus those made at the district level were investigated. The study also identified policies, rules, and regulations that were in place to support the implementation of SBDM in the school districts and reviewed the extent to which reorganization had occurred as a result of the utilization of SBDM.

The Lopez (1992) study utilized a questionnaire to determine the perceptions of participants in individual schools. The following findings were identified.

1. Many decisions that should be made at the site level were still being made at the district level.

2. A significant majority of the schools had school-site councils.

3. A majority of school site councils had parents, teachers, and administrators as members.

4. A majority of school site councils were chaired by the principal.

5. A majority of school site councils had advisory functions and little authority.

6. A majority of school districts had policies, regulations, and rules that supported school-based management.

7. A majority of school districts had not reorganized to accommodate school-based management.

8. School districts had school-based and central-office-based training to accommodate the implementation of school-based management.

9. There was no evidence to support the premise that school-based management improved student achievement.

Stowe (1992) and Kastler (1993) studied the effects of teacher involvement in decision making and the relationship between teacher involvement in participatory decision making and career satisfaction. Kastler's study examined teacher involvement in the site-level decision-making process and its effect on the organizational climate at the school site. To determine the relationship between teacher involvement in the decision-making process and the organizational climate, five dimensions were examined.

1. A review of the organizational climate.

2. A study to determine actual and desired involvement in the decision-making process.

3. The degree of school-based management at the building sites.

4. A review of the relationship between the organizational climate and the degree of site-based management.

5. A comparison of teacher involvement and the degree of site-based management at the school level.

The findings suggested that when teachers were involved in the decision-making process in their school, the organizational climate for the specific site scored higher on Kastler's scale.

Stowe (1992) reviewed teacher involvement in the participative decision-making process and its relationship to career satisfaction. He contended that participation in the decision-making process at the site level increased the self-worth and self-confidence of the teachers involved, as well as increasing their satisfaction with the organization and their own career. He also contended that teacher participation would enhance the parameters of the change process, but it was not a necessary condition for change. Stowe's findings included the following.

1. There was a significant relationship between teachers' participation and their level of job satisfaction.

2. There was no significant relationship between teachers' career stage and their actual desire to be involved in the decision-making process.

3. There were significant data to support the notion that teachers have a greater interest in instructional matters than managerial matters.

4. Data supported the premise that teachers would like to be more involved in the decision-making process.

Rosenholtz (1989) supported the contention that building-level administrators who are interested in positive change should concentrate on involving teachers in the decision-making process at the site level. Although studies do not confirm that teacher involvement in site decision-making has a profound impact on student achievement (Bacharach, 1990), research does indicate that teachers do a superior job when workplace conditions are supportive (Rosenholtz, 1989).

An enhanced environment for teachers is connected to personal responsibility for work outcomes and performance attributable to one's own efforts. This relates to workplace freedom, independence, and individual discretion in job performance. Jobs that provide more autonomy and discretion enhance the performance and esteem of the individuals involved (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Kanter, 1977; Rosenholtz, 1989). There is evidence that professional independence and discretion enhance teachers' motivation, responsibility, and commitment (Rosenholtz, 1989). When teachers sense that they have opportunities for choices, they develop a perception of control over their organizational life, and their work-related activities are enhanced as they interact with students at the school site (Rosenholtz, 1989).

Although there has been little research on student achievement or improved management as a result of site-based management, there have been publications

describing how school districts have improved their decision-making models. A study conducted by Ringo (1994) showed the following results.

1. In districts where the board and district office had shifted power and defined roles, there were less tension and conflict than in those districts that had not. The authority shift and role definitions impact the levels of trust between the board, the district office, and the sites.

2. Strong leadership from the superintendent is of paramount importance.

3. SBDM is a fragile, vulnerable process, and in three districts it was significantly impacted by external forces. The importance of outside power brokers emerged as a means for minimizing or countering the external forces that may impact the authority structures or the governance of the district.

4. Shifts in governance are not permanent. Functions such as curriculum may become more centralized after having been highly decentralized.

5. SBDM places ongoing demands on the system to train personnel and create time for decision-making processes.

6. Second-order changes such as evaluation and accountability methods are not addressed at the onset but occur years later.

7. SBDM appears to impact student learning positively at individual sites but has yet to make a district-wide impact.

8. Stakeholder participation is dependent on the form of SBDM adopted.

Zeplin (1995), in a study of Texas schools, stated that site-based management was handed down by the state legislature for immediate implementation in an effort to improve educational outcomes through collaborative efforts and decentralized decision making. A lack of clarity and definition was identified by school administrators as the most important barriers to the implementation of site-based decision making in schools. A difference in perceptions of site-based decision making and disagreement about the primary focus of site-based decision making were also identified. One aspect of SBDM demonstrated by this study was that the perceived level of understanding of site-based decision making by campus-level educators was low.

Banville (1996) found that SBDM without transformation further damages the work environment. In effective transformed sites, an integrated and shared "vision" becomes the influencer. SBDM training that focused on communications and integrative strategies was effective in socializing and bonding participants for effective decision making. Effective sites had principals who were facilitative, supportive, and committed to site-based decision making. The principal's critical role in achieving success and the need for the principal's involvement in planning from the onset were demonstrated. Involvement of classified staff members was linked to an effective sense of interdependence.

Conclusions About SBDM

Site-based management (SBM), shared decision making (SBDM), and participatory decision making (PDM) are processes used to involve school-site personnel

in the decision-making process at the site level. The National Education Association (NEA, 1989) provided a working paper on site-based decision making/management concepts for their member agencies to include in their training and bargaining frameworks. The NEA defined SBDM as a joint planning and problem-solving process that seeks to improve the quality of working life and education. As a result of SBM, decentralization has become one of the most commonly utilized tools of the educational reform movement. Decentralization rests upon two major premises. First, by moving decision making and accountability closer to the child and the classroom, education will improve (Purkey & Smith, 1983). Proponents of SBDM and decentralization maintain that the reallocation of decision-making power to the site level will involve the key stakeholders in the school and that these educators and parents will develop a legitimate claim to developing quality education in their school (Stinnette, 1993). The second assumption related to the decentralization concept is that the persistent problems in the educational setting are attributable to the educational structure itself and are deeply ingrained in the system and how it is organized to deliver services to meet the diverse needs of public education (Ornstein, 1989). Each of the varied processes of site-based management is being utilized to meet the needs of each diverse school district. SBM has no absolute guidelines for implementation because there is no single "best" model being practiced. However, several characteristics should be reviewed when a school district addresses SBDM for site or district implementation.

1. Formal authority to control budget, personnel, and instructional programming should be granted to individual schools.

2. Formal authority to circumscribe existing policies, procedures, and regulations should be granted to individual schools.

3. Formal authority to exert substantial influence over school policies and procedures should be granted to individual school participants.

4. There should be sufficient time for training and planning to allow a site team to address issues such as (a) instructional improvements, (b) development of characteristics of effective schools, (c) academic achievement of students, and (d) enhancing employee morale and motivation (Malen, Ogawa, & Kranz, 1990).

It is evident that the common characteristics of the SBDM process must be formally planned prior to a site or school district implementing a decentralization plan. Decentralization in public education has occurred for several reasons:

1. Demands from powerful constituencies like parents, community, business, teachers' unions, and legislators for more input and control at the site level and more stringent accountability measures.

2. Strong agreement among these constituencies that the current educational structure is not effective in increasing student achievement.

3. The inability to move massive bureaucracies because of centralized policies, common work rules, and top-down decision-making structures.

4. The rapidly changing nature of work and the workplace and the concepts and perceptions that schools are not keeping pace with the demands and needs of society.

5. The growing issue of competition from the private sector for public school dollars and students (Educational Research Service [ERS], 1991).

Although SBDM has been utilized for some time, there is limited evidence relating to the actual operational effectiveness of the concept (Malen et al., 1990). For site-based management to be effective, school districts must address some vital areas of policy and procedural development, delegation of authority, provision of planning time, staff training, budget formatting and authority, and organizational structure and support (ERS, 1991).

Educational policy analysts argue that the ability to make informed decisions is severely compromised by the lack of data collection and assessment activities surrounding the effects of reform initiatives. Klebacha (1994) found that Florida, like many states, invested a considerable amount of time, effort, and resources in the development of legislation that was founded on the fundamental belief that the redirection of decision-making authority and control would have a positive impact on school performance and/or student achievement. According to Klebasha, this assumption has never been proven.

Vandehey (1994) formulated nine working hypotheses for administrators to use as guidelines in implementing site-based decision making. The first four, (1) developing a shared vision or plan; (2) giving administrative support; (3) providing information on

site-based decision making; and (4) allowing time to plan, train, and implement site-based decision making, were judged to be essential for implementing SBDM in a New York school district. The other five, (1) providing financial support, (2) creating emotional support, (3) developing consultation, (4) establishing an accountability system, and (5) providing group process training, were posited to increase the likelihood of success in institutionalizing SBDM.

Ramirez-Lopez (1994) described the implementation of SBDM at the district and campus levels in relationship to the principals' leadership skills. Participants in the study included 25 principals and 1,284 teachers from 25 schools in Texas, 17 elementary, 5 middle/junior high, and 3 high schools. Data were collected through the use of questionnaires designed to reveal information about skills/behavior that the literature indicated were associated with SBDM. Participants were asked to rate their perceptions of their own skills/behavior used since the introduction of SBDM on a five-point Likert scale. Teachers were asked to rate their principals on these same skills. Additional questions examined the current situation at the campus and district levels and factors that influenced the development of SBDM.

Results from the open-ended questions and the questionnaire indicated that SBDM implementation is difficult because of the complexity of the innovation and reported differences in the knowledge, skills and perceptions of the teachers and principals. The study also found disagreement regarding the changes in roles, goals, and objectives throughout the implementation process. In addition, because of poor

directions and lack of SBDM definition, principals and teachers have experienced frustration. Overall, however, teachers and principals reported positive results (Ramirez-Lopez, 1994).

The complexities of SBM need to be addressed in the early developmental stages of SBDM. Site-based management/shared decision making are programmatic processes that require proper attention and resources for planning and training. Training experiences in performance management, participatory decision making, and working with team leaders should be developed for successful implementation and maintenance of site- based decision making. Principals should be taught to anticipate the problem of teachers who seem reticent to accept the components of the SBDM model.

Communication is another vital component of site-based management. It is essential for the success of a paradigm change using SBDM as the restructuring process for change. Pronounced and subtle operational changes are required for district teaching and support staff personnel. Communication can provide them with a complete understanding of the changes and functions of SBDM and their roles. Without a comprehensive understanding of the restructuring process, teaching and support staff fail to discern or support the complex implementational procedures. Aspects of SBDM that should be considered as possible impact indicators include school climate, student achievement, student attendance, and staff development.

Finally, concepts such as the following should be reviewed prior to implementation of SBDM.

1. A clear definition of who reports to whom. An individual in the organization should generally report to only one supervisor.

2. People should be encouraged to seek information or assistance to enhance job performance.

3. The organization should avoid undue uniform implementation of rules, practices, and regulations that are designed to protect the organization from mistakes.

4. The structure of the management and operations should encourage participation and decision making at the site. Program focus and support should be generated toward improved services and customer satisfaction (Strembitsky, 1990).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

According to Russell (1992), practitioners can formulate plans for developing dimensions of SBDM by assessing teachers' perceptions of their present level of participation in site decisions. The work of Alutto and Belasco (1972), Bacharach et al. (1990), and Conley (1991) helped to identify four facets of effective measurement.

1. The instrument must characterize the way in which decisions are made.

2. The instrument should permit measurement of actual and desired levels of shared decision making.

3. The instrument should be sensitive to the multidimensional characteristics of shared decision making.

4. The instrument should measure a wide range of discrete decision areas in the school setting, decisions that represent structural as well as process aspects of decision making.

Effective instrumentation in measurement involves identification of three kinds of information: (1) Data indicating what teachers perceive to be in place, (2) the level of participation they desire, and (3) how decisions are made.

Assessing the level of teacher participation is necessary to relate SBDM to the progress and achievement of the school (Russell, Cooper, & Greenblatt, 1992). In this

study, achievement is viewed as the administrator's ability to implement SBDM as directed by the central administration. Russell (1992) constructed an instrument, The Teacher Involvement and Participation Scale, Version 2 (TIPS2) to provide schools with the information they need. The instrument was developed from the work of Conley and Bacharach (1990), David (1990), and Sirotnik and Clark (1988).

Reliability for the entire instrument was determined to be .9572. The reliability for each subscale surpassed .70. The content validity of the instrument was determined to be at least .80 per item. Reliability and validity have been established if individual items from categories are not deleted. TIPS2 has demonstrated high reliability and validity for the instrument as a whole and in each of its dimensions. Russell et al. (1992) used this instrument to collect baseline data and to identify issues that needed attention in an effort to improve school achievement through heightened teacher morale.

The instrument was developed for two distinct purposes: (1) to collect data about what was actually happening with SBDM in the field and (2) to develop an instrument that would enable practitioners to assess the dimensions of decision making already in place and to plan for future implementation. A demographics section was included to enable analysis of particular segments of the school community (Russell, 1992).

A second instrument was developed by Ferrara (1991), The Teacher Decision-Making Instrument (TDI). Total scale reliabilities on Ferrara's instrument range from .95 to .98. Reliabilities on the three actual scales and dimensions range from .77 to .92. Reliabilities on the desired scales and dimensions range from .81 to .96. Reliabilities on

the difference scales and dimensions range from .80 to .96. Face and construct validity were established through the cooperation of five experts in the area of shared decision making who agreed to serve as judges. Construct validity was addressed through factor analysis. (Dimensions were identified via factor analytic techniques.) No attempt was made to determine criterion-related validity, either concurrent or predictive, within the survey author's study (Ferrara, 1991).

The instruments developed by Russell (1992) and Ferrara (1991) were combined to create an instrument effective for a middle school sample. This adapted instrument (see Appendix A) was used to identify differences between what middle school teachers perceived their decision-making participation to be and the level of involvement they desired. Therefore, the "desired" category from Ferrara was added to the Russell instrument (TIPS2). A difference in scores denoted whether the level of desired participation was higher or lower than the actual level and whether participation in SBDM was perceived to be adequate.

The Decision-Making Beliefs and Attitudes Scales from Ferrara (1991) were included to obtain genuine perceptions of respondents toward SBDM. Ferrara developed these scales because she found no available instrumentation. Section IV-B in the adapted instrument was taken from Ferrara's instrument to investigate further respondents' personal level of satisfaction with participation in school business.

The Middle School Concept, Section V, is a questionnaire used by the school district to assess the level of middle school reform achieved. This study used the

actual/desired format to assess survey participants' perceptions of progress toward middle school concepts at their site. In addition, the "desired" category was used to assess participants' understanding and appreciation of the middle school reform.

This type of instrument allows educational researchers to examine shared decision making and its effects on educational outcomes in a somewhat more scientific manner. Thus, agencies, state educational departments, and others in the field of educational policy can monitor the implementation of shared decision making in schools. The effects of shared decision making can then be determined and used to influence future policy formation. At the school level, the instrument can be used to examine the involvement of staff members in decision-making activities related to specific components of the school program. This information can then be used to identify areas in which staff members have not had adequate input to inform management practice (Russell, 1992). Therefore, this study can analyze shared decision making at the middle school level and provide an understanding of the true impact of restructuring on schools.

The data collected in this study were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (Norusis, 1994). The following section defines the dimensions used in the adapted survey which are taken from Russell's (1992) instrument.

Dimensions of Shared Decision Making

According to Russell (1992), decision making occurs across eight dimensions: (1) goals/vision/mission, (2) standards, (3) curriculum/instruction, (4) budget, (5) staffing, (6) operations, (7) facilitating procedures and structures, and (8) staff development.

Participants were asked to respond to these dimensions when relating actual (perceived) level of participation and desired level of participation in site-based decision making. Following is a brief description of each dimension except budget and operations, which are not included in the adapted survey instrument because Russell reported moderate to weak support for these two subscales.

Goals/Vision/Mission

Equating leadership with authority is a common mistake. Authority is the means by which one obtains compliance, but it does not necessarily produce good followers. Authority will not produce an environment that is conducive to good shared decision making. James McGregor Burns (1978) offered a view of leadership that provides a more realistic basis for establishing an environment that will allow for shared decision making. In transformative leadership, leaders and followers are united in the pursuit of higher-level goals that are common to both regardless of their special interests and goals. Transformative leadership takes the form of leadership as vision building. Associated with transformative leadership are empowerment and shared decision making. Although transformative leadership allows for the implementation of shared decision making, shared decision making must operate within the shared vision of the school (Fullan, 1992). In shared decision making, the leader does not prescribe specific remedies for the problems that arise in a school. Rather, the leader encourages all stakeholders to engage in a search for solutions, guided by the shared vision that defines the mission of the school (Robinson & Barkley, 1992).

The Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy (1986) suggested that engaging teachers in shared decision making is consistent with the profession of teaching.

> 1. Teachers should be provided with the discretion and autonomy that are the hallmarks of professional work.
>
> 2. State and local governments should set clear goals for schools and greatly reduce the bureaucratic regulation of the school process.
>
> 3. Teachers should participate in the setting of goals for their schools and be accountable for achieving agreed upon standards of performance. (p. 381)

Standards

Standards provide a measure of the progress a school has made toward achieving its goals, vision, and mission. Glenn (1989) maintained that increased school-level autonomy forces the state and the district to insist on well-designed measures of accountability at each school. The literature stresses that teachers, then, must assume greater accountability in return for increased participation in the decision-making process (Armstrong, 1990; Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986).

Before introducing shared decision making as a means of school-site management, administrators must recognize that teachers are professionals and that organizational success depends on cooperation and exchange of information with these professionals (Conley & Bacharach, 1990). Shared decision making requires risk-taking and experimentation to transform schools into dynamic, self-renewing organizations

(Armstrong, 1990). With the increased accountability and authority that shared decision making brings, teachers are required to share in setting standards for their own behavior, for student performance and discipline, and for the overall performance of their students (McWalters, 1992).

Curriculum/Instruction

The selection of textbooks and other instructional materials; development of core curriculum, including its sequencing and goals; and classroom pedagogy are all facets of the curriculum and instruction dimension. The traditional model of curriculum development pits experts against practitioners and is based on the premise that knowledge belongs to the experts and is handed down to practitioners. Delegating control of the curriculum to schools stimulates the creation of new ideas and materials, which requires new lines of communication and committees of teachers to coordinate curriculum (Wissler & Ortiz, 1986).

Staffing

With shared decision making, members of the school community may be asked to choose teachers and administrators to fill vacancies, as well as to define positions that best meet their schools' needs (Torres, 1992). School-based management policies can give principals and teachers control over hiring when, traditionally, contracts, seniority, affirmative action plans, and other constraints have made the process rigid and centralized (Phillips, 1989). Specific contract language can be changed, or unions could allow

waivers of specific provisions that would block shared decision making in staffing decisions on a school-by-school basis.

Facilitating Procedures and Structures

Shared decision making requires structures that allow teachers to identify problems and access the resources needed to solve them (Conley & Bacharach, 1990). It also requires granting staff time to acquire new knowledge and skills as well as the time to put them to use. To provide the time necessary to implement shared decision making successfully, some districts incorporate plans for reducing teachers' work loads, thereby providing time for professional development. Mechanisms for shared decision making can vary from committees to more formal structures. Typically, a school forms a school site council. Methods for selecting members to serve on these committees and members' responsibilities vary considerably across and within districts (Clune & White, 1988).

Staff Development

The development of teachers as effective participants in the decision-making process involves providing them with greater opportunities to obtain useful information (Hallinger & Richardson, 1988). Access to new knowledge is vital to those who are involved in a decision-making process. Teachers who were accustomed to working in isolation are now being asked to work collaboratively to make essential decisions in all areas of the school program. The instrument used in this study provided teachers an occasion to identify their staff development opportunities.

The Research Sample

The research sample of exemplary middle schools was chosen by a team of experts, the middle school superintendent, school superintendent, school board president, and the deputy superintendent of a large, urban school district in the southwestern United States (see Appendix B for the district's approval for the research study). The definition of a middle school was left to the discretion of the experts. The middle schools were all in the process of adopting the middle school concept defined and approved by the local school board.

The survey instrument was personally delivered to each principal. Teachers, support staff, and others identified by the site administrator as being involved in site-based decision making were asked to participate by responding to the survey. Follow-up included a second letter, a second visit to each principal, individual notes to each participant, and a mailing of surveys with return postage paid to all intended participants. Approximately 140 surveys were distributed three times, twice during April and by mail in May. Principals explained that it was a burden for teachers to have to complete a survey at the end of the school year; however, 47 completed surveys were returned.

The adapted instrument was designed to discern the perceived participation by teachers and staff in site-based decision making at their individual sites. In addition, it examined the desired involvement in site-based decision making of this same sample.

The survey was lengthy, in part because respondents were asked to indicate both actual and desired participation for most questions. Therefore, the administration of the

questionnaire was timed. Those who piloted the survey completed it in 20 minutes. Demographics were also collected because these data could be analyzed to determine whether a relationship between these factors and SBDM existed.

Chapter 4 reports the findings of this survey, and a discussion of the research questions takes place in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Chapter 4 presents the findings of this research endeavor following the questions of the instrument administered to the participants. Findings are presented for each of the study's research questions.

A total of 47 respondents participated in this study (30% male, 70% female). Most were between 40 and 59 years of age (4% were 20-29, 26% were 30-39, 33% were 40-49, and 37% were 50-59 years of age). A majority had between 11 and 15 years of teaching experience (19%,1-5 years; 21%, 6-10 years; 28%, 11-15 years; 13%, 16-20 years; 19% more than 20 years). Most of the respondents (60%) had spent from one to five years in their current school, and 40% had spent more than five years in the school.

The presentation of the data follows the form of the questionnaire: Section I: Demographics; Section II: Decision Making Beliefs and Attitude Scale; Section III: Information Mechanisms, Representation, Procedures; Section IV-A: Site-Based/Shared Decision-Making Survey (Goals/Vision/Mission, Standards, Curriculum/Instruction, Facilitating Procedures, Staff Development, and Overall Impressions); Section IV-B: Curriculum (Curriculum and Instruction, Staff Personnel, Staff Development, School/Community Relations, and Budget/Management); and Section V: Middle School Concept.

Research Question 1

What are the attitudes of middle school staff with regard to site-based decision making?

Over half of the respondents "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with each of Questions 1-5 and Question 8 of the Decision Making Beliefs and Attitude Scale. This indicated that teachers believed they had input into decision making (48% agreed), but they were seldom consulted before decisions were reached (55% agreed). Clearly, teachers felt they should have the opportunity for input into decisions (67% strongly agreed); however, they did not agree that their input should be limited to instructional matters (52% strongly disagreed) or that decisions should be made by an administrator (59% strongly disagreed) (see Table 1).

Research Question 2

What are the information mechanisms of site-based decision making?

The information mechanisms of site-based decision making most often mentioned were regular faculty meetings (61%), standing committees (51%), ad hoc gatherings (35%), and appointed councils (33%). Other forms of information mechanisms were mentioned infrequently (see Table 2).

The groups most often cited as serving on the shared decision making body were the teachers (84%), the principals/officials (75%), and the parent representative (59%).

Table 1

Decision Making Beliefs and Attitude Scale

		Percentages				
	Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	Teachers have input into decisions.	11%	9%	11%	48%	22%
2.	Building administrators should share decision making.	2%	4%	2%	33%	59%
3.	Administrators share decision making with teachers.	9%	17%	15%	39%	20%
4.	Teachers are seldom consulted before decisions are made.	20%		16%	55%	9%
5.	Teachers should have the opportunity for input.		4%	4%	24%	67%
6.	Teacher participation is restricted mostly to instructional matters.	16%	33%	20%	22%	9%
7.	Decisions are made unilaterally by administrators.	35%		15%	46%	4%
8.	Teachers should be consulted in decision making.			2%	50%	48%

Table 1--continued

Questions	Percentages				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
9. Teacher input should be limited to instructional matters.	52%	41%		2%	4%
10. Decisions should be made unilaterally by administrators.	59%	30%	7%	2%	2%

Note: N = 46, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

Table 2

Mechanisms Used to Make Shared Decisions

Response	Percent
1. Ad hoc gatherings	35
2. Regular faculty meetings	61
3. Appointed council	33
4. Standing committees	51
5. Elected by department or grade	14
6. Elected at large	18
7. Elected by other means	8%

Note: N = 49. Respondents could select more than one category.

Other groups mentioned were the community member (24%), the support staff (35%), and the paraprofessional staff (18%) (see Table 3).

Respondents ranked the person/group who determined what decisions would be made by the shared decision making body as the principal (67%), the teachers (26%), and others (18%) (see Table 4).

The manner in which shared decisions were reached was indicated by the respondents. A two-thirds majority was the most-selected option (41%), followed by a simple majority (37%) and consensus (25%) (see Table 5).

The decisions made by the shared decision making body were subject to veto by the principal (41%), were advisory (37%), or were generally adopted and implemented by the school (37%). Only a few decisions were subject to veto by three central office staff members (12%) (see Table 6).

Research Question 3

Do teachers' actual and desired levels of participation in setting goals, visions, and mission through site-based decision making differ?

Respondents' desire for participation in site-based decision making were compared by examining their selection of "Almost Never," "Seldom," "Sometimes," "Frequently," or "Almost Always" for each item. For each of the questions, there were differences between teachers' actual and desired goals. Teachers' actual participation in shared visions for the school was realized "sometimes" (40%), whereas their desired level

Table 3

Membership of the Shared Decision-Making Body

Responses	Percent
1. Parent representative	59
2. Community member	24
3. Teachers	84
4. Principals/Officials	75
5. Principal, ex-officio	2
6. Union representative	10
7. Paraprofessional staff	18
8. Support staff	35
9. Faculty as committee of the whole	14

Note: N = 49. Respondents could select more than one category.

Table 4

Decisions Made by the Shared Decision-Making Body

Responses	Percent
1. Principal	67
2. Teachers	26
3. Others	18

Note: N = 49. Respondents could select more than one category.

Table 5

Methods for Reaching Shared Decisions

Responses	Percent
1. Consensus	25
2. Simple majority	37
3. Two-thirds majority	41

Note: N = 49.

Table 6

Decisions Made by the Shared Decision-Making Body

Responses	Percent
1. Advisory	37
2. Subject to veto by the principal	41
3. Subject to veto by three central office staff	12
4. Subject to appeal to the central office or Board of Education	4
5. Generally adopted and implemented by the school	37

Note: N = 49. Respondents could select more than one category.

was 58%. Teachers sometimes participated in establishing school priorities (44%), accepted the school's goals frequently (44%), and responded equally to their contributions to the development of school goals in the categories of sometimes (42%) and frequently (42%). Teachers desire greater involvement in establishing school priorities and developing and setting school goals. Other differences between teachers' actual and desired decision making are noted in Table 7.

Research Question 4

Do teachers' actual and desired levels of participation in setting standards through site-based decision making differ?

Teachers differed in their actual and desired levels of participation in setting standards through site-based decision making. Sometimes teachers worked together to set their work standards (36%), but they desired to work together almost always (60%). Teachers sometimes set standards for the school (32%), but they almost always desired to do so (70%). Teachers almost always set standards for their students' work (52%), but they desired to set these standards more often (79%).

Teachers were undecided about their participation in setting standards for student promotion, but they indicated that they should almost always be involved in setting the standards for student promotion (66%). Sometimes staff assumed responsibility for student performance (40%), but they indicated that they should almost always assume this responsibility (68%) (see Table 8).

Table 7

Site-Based/Shared Decision-Making Survey Responses

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
1. Teachers have developed the same shared vision for this school.	Actual	4%	16%	40%	27%	13%
	Desired			3%	40%	58%
2. Teachers participate in the goal-setting process.	Actual	2%	11%	39%	41%	7%
	Desired			3%	36%	62%
3. Teachers help to establish school priorities.	Actual	9%	11%	44%	24%	11%
	Desired			3%	33%	65%
4. Teachers as a group accept the school's goals.	Actual	2%	4%	36%	44%	13%
	Desired			3%	40%	58%
5. Teachers are able to get support from other teachers.	Actual	2%	9%	41%	39%	9%
	Desired		3%	13%	44%	41%
6. Teachers are able to get support from administrators.	Actual	5%	9%	50%	30%	7%
	Desired			10%	37%	54%
7. The school's goals are consistent with my vision.	Actual	7%	4%	27%	47%	16%
	Desired				41%	59%
8. Teachers contribute to the development of school goals.	Actual	4%		42%	42%	11%
	Desired			3%	31%	67%

Table 7--continued

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
9. Teachers play an active role in	Actual	4%	20%	40%	18%	18%
evaluating school goals.	Desired			3%	26%	71%

Note: N = 45. AN = Almost Never, Se = Seldom, So = Sometimes, F = Frequently, AA = Almost Always.

Table 8

Teachers' Standards

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
10. Teachers working together set their	Actual		11%	36%	33%	20%
own work standards.	Desired	3%		15%	23%	60%
11. Teachers contribute to standards	Actual	7%	16%	32%	27%	18%
set for discipline in the school.	Desired			3%	28%	70%
12. Teachers set standards for their	Actual		2%	16%	30%	52%
students' work.	Desired			3%	18%	79%
13. Teachers help to set standards for	Actual	31%	11%	31%	11%	16%
student promotion and/or retention.	Desired			7%	27%	66%
14. Staff assumes responsibility for	Actual		11%	40%	24%	24%
student performance.	Desired		3%	10%	20%	68%

Note: N = 45. AN = Almost Never, Se = Seldom, So = Sometimes, F = Frequently, AA = Almost Always.

Research Question 5

Are there differences between teachers' actual and desired levels of decision making related to curriculum and instruction?

Respondents appeared to desire greater influence in curriculum and instruction decisions than was the actual situation. For example, Question 15 compared the actual and desired authority to adjust curriculum. A total of 20% of the respondents said teachers almost always have authority to adjust curriculum, whereas 55% desired this authority "almost always." Question 18 revealed that only 14% of teachers believed they actually almost always participated in making curriculum decisions, whereas 60% desired to participate in making curriculum decisions almost always. For each of Questions 15-22, greater percentages of respondents believed it was desirable for teachers to have greater influence than was the actual situation (see Table 9).

Research Question 6

Are there differences between teachers' actual and desired satisfaction with the facilitating procedures implemented in connection with site-based decision making?

Greater percentages of respondents reported that teachers desired more influence on facilitating procedures and structures in decision making than they actually had. For example, few respondents (11%) believed that teachers almost always actually had access to the information they needed to make school decisions (Question 29), but over half (53%) believed it was almost always desirable. Respondents appeared to desire sufficient

Table 9

Teachers Curriculum and Instruction

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
15. Teachers have authority to make	Actual	13%	13%	29%	24%	20%
adjustments in the school's curriculum.	Desired			15%	30%	55%
16. Teachers help to determine the pace	Actual		9%	13%	36%	42%
of instruction for students.	Desired			5%	28%	68%
17. Teachers initiate changes in the	Actual	2%	14%	27%	32%	25%
curriculum.	Desired			3%	33%	64%
18. Teachers participate in making	Actual	18%	14%	32%	23%	14%
school-wide curriculum decisions.	Desired			2%	38%	60%
19. Teachers participate in the selection	Actual		14%	27%	30%	30%
of textbooks.	Desired				26%	74%
20. District-wide committees of	Actual	12%	12%	42%	21%	14%
teachers coordinate curriculum.	Desired	2%	2%	21%	31%	43%
21. Teachers participate in curriculum	Actual	2%	21%	17%	38%	21%
development.	Desired		3%	3%	38%	58%
22. Teachers determine grouping for	Actual	19%	19%	19%	26%	19%
the purpose of instruction.	Desired			10%	23%	67%

Table 9--continued

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
23. Teachers determine the instructional activities they use in their classrooms.	Actual			9%	34%	57%
	Desired				13%	87%
24. Teachers monitor the effectiveness of curricula.	Actual	2%	7%	41%	27%	23%
	Desired		2%	7%	21%	69%
25. Teachers have a voice in recruiting and selecting teachers.	Actual	14%	23%	32%	16%	16%
	Desired			12%	29%	60%
26. Teachers help to decide teaching assignments of staff members.	Actual	30%	37%	23%		9%
	Desired	2%	5%	22%	22%	49%
27. Teachers take part in staffing selection decisions, including assistant principals, counselors, special area staff, and teacher assistants.	Actual	32%	16%	27%	11%	14%
	Desired	2%	2%	12%	20%	63%
28. Teachers have a voice in recruiting and selecting administrators.	Actual	45%	14%	19%	10%	12%
	Desired	3%	3%	15%	13%	68%

Note: N = 44. AN = Almost Never, Se = Seldom, So = Sometimes, F = Frequently, AA = Almost Always.

time to share in the decision-making process (Question 31), the ability to obtain contract waivers to participate in school-based decisions (Question 32), and to be able to work together to arrive at decisions based on majority consensus (Question 33) (see Table 10).

Research Question 7

Are there differences between teachers' actual and desired opportunities for staff development in the site-based decision-making model?

Respondents appeared to desire teachers to have greater influence in staff development than was actually the case. For example, for Question 36, few respondents (33%) believed teachers almost always had actual access to current research on effective programs and practices, whereas nearly three-quarters (74%) reported that it was desirable for teachers to almost always have such access. Respondents stated it was desirable for teachers to have greater influence in determining the staff development they would receive (Question 37), in sharing their expert knowledge (Question 38), in participating in staff development (Question 39), and in having access to special training (Question 40) (see Table 11).

Research Question 8

Do teachers' actual and desired overall impressions about site-based decision making differ?

Respondents' overall impressions were that teachers were accountable for decisions made through a shared process (50% agreed and 29% strongly agreed).

Table 10

Facilitating Procedures and Structures

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
29. Teachers have access to the information they need to make school-wide decisions.	Actual	16%	16%	34%	23%	11%
	Desired			5%	43%	53%
30. Teachers are represented on a council that makes school-wide decisions.	Actual	7%	11%	25%	25%	32%
	Desired			3%	23%	74%
31. Sufficient time is provided for teachers to share in decision-making activities.	Actual	14%	23%	43%	9%	11%
	Desired		3%	8%	23%	68%
32. It is possible to obtain waivers from the teachers' contracts for school-based decision making.	Actual	40%	11%	37%	6%	6%
	Desired	3%	3%	34%	28%	31%
33. Teachers working together arrive at decisions on the basis of majority rule.	Actual	11%	21%	29%	21%	18%
	Desired	3%	3%	22%	31%	42%

Table 10--continued

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
34. A decision is not made until almost everyone is in agreement.	Actual	27%	30%	24%	5%	14%
	Desired	6%	6%	26%	29%	34%
35. Decisions are not made until everyone can accept the proposal to some extent.	Actual	31%	31%	23%	8%	8%
	Desired	6%	6%	33%	22%	33%

Note: N = 44. AN = Almost Never, Se = Seldom, So = Sometimes, F = Frequently, AA = Almost Always.

Table 11

Staff Development

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
36. Teachers have access to current research on effective programs and practices.	Actual	2%	5%	47%	14%	33%
	Desired			8%	18%	74%
37. Teachers help to determine the staff development they will receive.	Actual	12%	12%	40%	26%	12%
	Desired			2%	27%	71%
38. Teachers have opportunities to share their expert knowledge.	Actual	7%	12%	37%	21%	23%
	Desired			2%	24%	73%
39. Teachers participate in staff development activities.	Actual	5%	2%	24%	43%	26%
	Desired				29%	71%
40. Teachers have access to special training when necessary.	Actual	2%	16%	30%	35%	16%
	Desired			2%	19%	79%

Note: N = 43. AN = Almost Never, Se = Seldom, So = Sometimes, F = Frequently, AA = Almost Always.

Teachers clearly agreed that their involvement in shared decision making was important for increased professionalism (81% strongly agreed), for school involvement (81% strongly agreed), for better school morale (83% strongly agreed), and for increased job satisfaction (86% strongly agreed). When asked whether shared decision making was working well at their school (Question 43), no clear consensus emerged. Responses ranged from strongly disagree (14%) to strongly agree (14%) (see Table 12).

Research Question 9

Do respondents' actual and desired personal involvement in curriculum and instruction decisions differ?

Teachers responded with a greater desire for involvement in curriculum and instruction decision making. They appeared to desire involvement in choosing content to be considered for curriculum development (53% almost always), choosing content in teaching documents (53% almost always), selecting textbooks (70% almost always), and selecting instructional materials (68% almost always). In almost every area of curriculum and instruction (involvement in determining curriculum, evaluating curriculum, evaluating textbooks, designing curricular change, and reporting pupil progress), teachers desired greater involvement than was the actual case (see Table 13).

Research Question 10

Do respondents' actual and desired personal involvement in staff personnel decisions differ?

Table 12

Overall Impressions

Question	SD	D	N	A	SA
41. I think teachers are accountable for decisions made through a shared process.	7%	7%	7%	50%	29%
42. I think teachers' involvement in shared decision-making is important					
a. for increased professionalism		2%		17%	81%
b. for school improvement			2%	17%	81%
c. for better school morale				17%	83%
d. for increased job satisfaction			2%	12%	86%
43. Overall, I think shared decision-making in my school is working well.	14%	19%	24%	29%	14%

Note: N = 42. SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

Table 13

Curriculum and Instruction

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
1. Choosing content or program areas to be considered for curriculum development.	Actual	16%	22%	22%	22%	19%
	Desired			15%	32%	53%
2. Choosing content to be included in teaching (curriculum) documents.	Actual	13%	13%	32%	26%	16%
	Desired			24%	24%	53%
3. Selecting textbooks.	Actual	18%	18%	21%	23%	21%
	Desired	3%	3%	12%	12%	70%
4. Selecting instructional materials.	Actual	8%	10%	23%	23%	36%
	Desired		3%	6%	24%	68%
5. Determining changes in course offerings.	Actual	18%	21%	31%	21%	10%
	Desired			23%	26%	51%
6. Determining methodologies to be used in delivering the curriculum.	Actual	8%	3%	21%	34%	34%
	Desired		3%	11%	29%	57%
7. Evaluating curriculum.	Actual	19%	8%	35%	14%	24%
	Desired		6%	17%	17%	60%

Table 13--continued

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
8. Evaluating textbooks.	Actual	18%	13%	26%	21%	21%
9. Designing curricular change.	Actual	22%	19%	22%	19%	17%
	Desired		6%	9%	20%	66%
10. Adopting new instructional methods at department, grade level, or school.	Actual	27%	11%	14%	27%	22%
	Desired	3%		11%	20%	66%
11. Determining student placement for instructional programs.	Actual	22%	25%	14%	25%	14%
	Desired		3%	11%	25%	61%
12. Determining recommended student class size.	Actual	46%	24%	8%	11%	11%
	Desired	6%		14%	11%	69%
13. Determining methods of reporting pupil progress to parents.	Actual	8%	22%	27%	27%	16%
	Desired			11%	17%	71%

Note: N = 39. AN = Almost Never, Se = Seldom, So = Sometimes, F = Frequently, AA = Almost Always.

Teachers appeared to desire greater involvement in staff personnel issues. For example, teachers reported a desire for more involvement in the hiring of instructional personnel (46% almost always), hiring administrators (56% almost always), assigning teaching duties (43% almost always), and assigning staff to committees (30% almost always) (see Table 14).

Teachers' expressed less desire to influence certain staff personnel issues, i.e, granting tenure (20% almost always), orienting new personnel (35% almost always), and resolving employee grievances (24% almost always) (see Table 14).

Research Question 11

Do respondents' actual and desired personal involvement in staff development decisions differ?

The patterns of responses in Questions 25-30 show differences between actual and desired personal involvement in staff development. For example, actual involvement in assigning staff to staff development committees (Question 25), ranged from almost never (42%) to almost always (3%). The desired situation was almost the reverse, ranging from almost never (6%) to almost always (31%). This pattern was repeated in each of Questions 25-30. This indicated a belief that it was desirable for teachers to have greater influence in various facets of staff development (see Table 15).

Table 14

Staff Personnel

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
14. Hiring of instructional personnel.	Actual	30%	22%	30%	11%	8%
	Desired		5%	22%	27%	46%
15. Hiring of administrators.	Actual	47%	24%	18%	3%	8%
	Desired	3%		25%	17%	56%
16. Hiring of non-teaching personnel.	Actual	42%	13%	29%	11%	5%
	Desired	11%	5%	30%	16%	38%
17. Assigning teaching duties.	Actual	51%	27%	14%	5%	3%
	Desired	11%	14%	17%	14%	43%
18. Determining duty assignments.	Actual	54%	24%	11%	5%	5%
	Desired	11%	11%	19%	17%	42%
19. Assigning staff to committees.	Actual	42%	18%	24%	11%	5%
	Desired	16%	11%	24%	19%	30%
20. Granting tenure.	Actual	75%	11%	11%	3%	
	Desired	31%	6%	31%	11%	20%
21. Orienting new personnel.	Actual	26%	34%	29%	9%	3%
	Desired	4%	17%	48%	9%	22%

Table 14--continued

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
22. Accessing staff.	Actual	44%	16%	36%	4%	
	Desired		3%	32%	30%	35%
23. Planning agendas for staff meetings.	Actual	42%	13%	29%	11%	5%
	Desired	6%	3%	39%	19%	33%
24. Resolving employee grievances.	Actual	51%	22%	16%	8%	3%
	Desired	19%	11%	35%	11%	24%

Note: N = 38. AN = Almost Never, Se = Seldom, So = Sometimes, F = Frequently, AA = Almost Always.

Table 15

Staff Development

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
25. Assigning staff to staff development committees.	Actual	42%	14%	28%	14%	3%
	Desired	6%	11%	29%	23%	31%
26. Carrying out staff development needs-assessment activities.	Actual	28%	25%	25%	14%	8%
	Desired	6%	3%	17%	29%	46%
27. Designing required staff development activities.	Actual	28%	28%	14%	25%	6%
	Desired		8%	28%	31%	33%
28. Designing elective staff development activities.	Actual	28%	33%	19%	14%	6%
	Desired	3%	3%	29%	34%	31%
29. Implementing staff development activities.	Actual	22%	22%	28%	19%	8%
	Desired	3%	6%	26%	29%	37%
30. Specifying evaluation activities.	Actual	41%	24%	24%	6%	6%
	Desired	3%	3%	45%	18%	30%

Note: N = 36. AN = Almost Never, Se = Seldom, So = Sometimes, F = Frequently, AA = Almost Always.

Research Question 12

Do respondents' actual and desired personal involvement in school community relations differ?

Questions 31 and 32 presented teachers' responses to queries about involvement in school/community relations. These results showed a difference between actual and desired influence, but the differences were not significant. Nevertheless, teachers almost always agreed that business groups (31%) and community groups (29%) should be involved in school activities (29%) (see Table 16).

Research Question 13

Do respondents' actual and desired personal involvement in budget management differ?

The pattern of responses about involvement in budget and management showed a pattern similar to previous responses. For example, Question 33 concerned teachers' influence in formulating building-level budgets. Actual influence ranged from almost never (81%) to almost always (23%). Questions 34-40 indicated that greater involvement was desired in formulating department or grade-level budgets and allocating monies for textbooks, curriculum development, and plant decisions. Teachers also desired more involvement in managing the building-level budget, cutting monies from the budget, and determining priorities for using school facilities (see Table 17).

Table 16

School/Community Relations

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
31. Involving business groups in school activities.	Actual	22%	28%	28%	22%	
	Desired	17%	6%	37%	9%	31%
32. Involving community groups in school activities.	Actual	25%	28%	19%	28%	
	Desired	14%	9%	40%	9%	29%

Note: N = 36. AN = Almost Never, Se = Seldom, So = Sometimes, F = Frequently, AA = Almost Always.

Table 17

Budget/Management

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
33. Formulating building-leveling budgets.	Actual	81%	6%	11%		3%
	Desired	23%	6%	34%	14%	23%
34. Formulating department or grade-level budgets.	Actual	74%	11%	11%		3%
	Desired	14%	3%	31%	26%	26%
35. Allocating monies for textbooks.	Actual	78%	17%	3%		3%
	Desired	17%	6%	37%	9%	31%
36. Allocating monies for curriculum development.	Actual	67%	19%	11%		3%
	Desired	14%	9%	40%	9%	29%
37. Allocating monies for plant decisions.	Actual	66%	11%	17%		6%
	Desired	11%	11%	40%	11%	26%
38. Managing the building-level budget.	Actual	77%	17%	3%		3%
	Desired	23%	9%	26%	20%	23%
39. Cutting monies from budget.	Actual	77%	17%	6%		
	Desired	17%	9%	43%	9%	23%
40. Determining priority use of school facilities.	Actual	58%	25%	14%		3%
	Desired	14%	3%	31%	28%	25%

Note: N = 36. AN = Almost Never, Se = Seldom, So = Sometimes, F = Frequently, AA = Almost Always.

Research Question 14

Do teachers' actual and desired perceptions of the middle school concepts in place differ among school staff?

Differences between actual and desired situations existed with respect to middle school concepts among school staff. Teachers almost always agreed that it was desirable to incorporate an interdisciplinary approach (51%), to expose students to exploratory courses (56%) daily physical education (70%), and to provide a staff skilled in the ability to understand and relate to middle school students (90%) (see Table 18).

Table 18

Middle School Concept

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
1. Incorporate an interdisciplinary approach in teaching of the basic skills courses in grades 7 and 8	Actual	18%	13%	44%	18%	8%
	Desired			5%	44%	51%
2. Provide required exposure to exploratory courses in fine arts and practical arts.	Actual	5%	13%	15%	38%	30%
	Desired		3%	5%	36%	56%
3. Provide a daily physical education program which stresses conditioning activities and team and individual sports based upon the physical development level of the individual student for all students.	Actual	15%	15%	38%	18%	15%
	Desired			8%	23%	70%
4. Teaching staff skilled in the ability to understand, relate to, and work with students of this age group.	Actual		5%	35%	40%	20%
	Desired				10%	90%

Table 18--continued

Question		AN	Se	So	F	AA
5. Provide appropriate planning times for members of the teaching staff, including common planning times.	Actual	3%	15%	30%	35%	18%
	Desired			3%	21%	77%
6. Provide a teacher-student guidance or advisory program that enables each student to relate and interact in a special way with his or her advisory.	Actual	15%	21%	38%	18%	8%
	Desired		3%	11%	32%	55%
7. Utilize a school-wide schedule which includes blocks of time within which teachers have the flexibility to group students in varied ways for specific instructional purposes.	Actual	25%	23%	30%	10%	13%
	Desired			13%	30%	58%

Note: N = 40. AN = Almost Never, Se = Seldom, So = Sometimes, F = Frequently, AA = Almost Always.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In a large Southwestern urban public school district, administration was directed to develop site-based decision making and to implement a middle school concept agreed upon by the district and the school board in grades six, seven, and eight. To develop effectively over time, these two reforms require collaborative planning, knowledge and experience, and change in leadership as well as teaching paradigms. The directives were issued with the understanding that each reform would improve public education.

This chapter discusses the findings of the adapted site-based decision-making survey developed to create a snapshot of the state of site-based decision making in selected middle schools in this school district. This survey instrument was designed to investigate the actual and desired levels of participation in site-based decision making of school staff in the context of middle school reform.

Five middle-level public schools were identified by asking "experts" (the school superintendent, middle school regional superintendent, school board president, and deputy superintendent) which schools they would recognize as exemplary middle schools as defined by their own district's board-approved middle school design. One school principal refused to conduct the survey at her site, and the district would not recommend an alternate school. Surveys for each regular and ancillary staff member were delivered

to the four sites. A total of 140 surveys were delivered with a request for each staff member in a decision-making capacity to respond. Following two personal visits and an additional mailing, 47 completed surveys were returned.

The findings of this study are important to current as well as future educational leaders because they highlighted areas of management in which decision-making teams expressed interest and evaluated whether these teams were satisfied with the level of participation they had been afforded at their sites. The findings also discerned those aspects of SBDM in which the participants were personally involved and identified areas in which they desired a different level of participation. Therefore, the findings may serve as a determinant of the climate in what experts perceived to be exemplary middle schools. The results may serve as a benchmark for the progress of SBDM in becoming an integral practice at the middle school level and may assist in planning future inservices in indicated areas of need. The use of the survey instrument allowed for a more scientific examination of decision making at the sites. By measuring shared decision making, it was able to determine the effects of SBDM on educational outcomes. As a result, school districts, agencies, and state departments of education may influence future policy formation, and others can monitor the implementation of shared decision making in schools.

Site-based decision making has been thought to improve teaching and thus learning. The advocates of SBDM believe that teachers' participation in school decisions

will focus attention on instruction and curriculum, thereby leading to job satisfaction and an improved school atmosphere.

This reform requires transformational leadership which encourages administrators to seek out the ideas of others, empower others, and recognize leadership potential within the school community, thus becoming leaders of leaders. Transformational leadership enables the professionalization of teaching to occur, and as the potential leadership qualities of the SBDM teams are recognized, the likelihood of the success of SBDM increases. This study can be useful, then, by providing an analysis of shared decision making at the middle school level and an understanding of the true impact of restructuring on these schools.

Epps (1995) used the TIPS2 instrument to determine whether principals' perceptions paralleled those of teachers regarding the extent of SBDM in elementary schools in South Carolina. Teachers and principals agreed that SBDM was commonly used in the areas of curriculum, goal setting, staff development, and standards. They also agreed that teachers were less involved in the areas of budget, facilitating procedures, and personnel. A major finding of Epps' study was that principals believed they relinquished far more power than teachers felt they were given.

A study by Lopez (1992) utilized a questionnaire to determine participants' perceptions of SBDM in individual schools. Lopez found that many decisions that should be made at the site level were still being made at the district level. A majority of the schools had site councils of parents, teachers, and administrators, and these councils

were generally chaired by principals. Most of these school-site councils served only in an advisory capacity, despite school districts' policies, regulations, rules, and training to implement and support SBDM. No evidence supported the premise that SBDM improved student achievement.

Stowe (1992) found a significant relationship between teachers' participation and their level of job satisfaction, and Rosenholtz (1989) maintained that when teachers' work-related activities were enhanced, they developed a perception of control. Banville's (1996) findings suggested that SBDM without transformation damages the work environment and that effective sites had principals who were committed to SBDM.

The methodology of this study utilized a survey research design to assess the SBDM in four middle schools in a large urban school district in the Southwest. The survey instrument employed the major theoretical approach of Russell's (1992) Teacher Involvement and Participation Scale, Version 2 (TIPS2) and was supplemented by the SBDM survey developed by Ferrara (1991), the Teacher Decision-Making Instrument (TDI). Both of these instruments have demonstrated high reliability and validity.

The Survey

The demographics section of the survey illustrated that far more females than males responded. This ratio may represent the population at the sites, it may indicate that females are more likely to participate in survey responses, or it could suggest that females are more likely to become involved in site-based decision making.

Most of the respondents had worked in the same middle school for one to five years; however, one school was less than five years old, and this may have affected the response. The participants had taught in the district between one and 20 or more years and represented a diversity of teaching experience.

Respondents represented the teaching field in their current roles but not the school community as a whole. Teachers far outnumbered other respondents such as parents, community members, or staff other than teachers. Most of the respondents had earned masters degrees plus additional units.

Research Question 1

What are the attitudes of middle school staff with regard to site-based decision making?

Differences between actual and desired levels of participation on each item in this scale confirmed that teachers wanted more involvement in SBDM than they were being afforded. They felt strongly that building administrators should share decision making and that they should have the opportunity for input into decisions concerning site-based matters.

Research Question 2

What are the information mechanisms of site-based decision making?

The major mechanisms used to disseminate information were regular faculty meetings and standing committees. Decision-making bodies were most commonly

comprised of teachers and administrators as well as some parents. The principal usually determined what decisions would be made by the decision-making teams. Shared decisions were most often reached by a simple majority or a two-thirds majority of the participants. The decisions made by the shared decision-making body were usually advisory, subject to veto by the principal, or adopted and implemented by the school.

Research Question 3

Do teachers' actual and desired levels of participation in setting goals, visions, and missions through SBDM differ?

Teachers' actual and desired participation in setting the goals, vision, and mission for their sites differed on almost every count. Teachers had a strong desire to participate in setting goals and developing a shared vision and mission but did not feel they were part of this process. There was little indication that respondents had developed goals, visions, and missions that were shared at their sites, nor was there an indication that respondents felt they contributed to the evaluation of these goals.

Research Question 4

Do teachers' actual and desired levels of participation in setting standards through participation in SBDM differ?

Respondents desired more input into developing shared standards for their schools. Teachers wanted greater involvement in setting standards for work, school, students, and themselves. Work standards for teachers and students, discipline, and

promotion/retention were all areas in which respondents indicated they had little participation and desired much more. Teachers felt empowered only in setting standards for students work, and, even here, greater participation was desired.

Research Question 5

Are there differences between teachers' actual and desired levels of decision making related to curriculum and instruction?

Respondents perceived little participation in instruction and curriculum decisions. Teachers indicated a strong preference for involvement in aspects of curriculum and instruction such as determining the pace of instruction, making changes in the curriculum, and selecting textbooks. They also wanted to be more involved in the recruitment and placement of teachers, staff, and administrators.

Research Question 6

Are there differences between teachers' actual and desired satisfaction with the facilitating procedures implemented in connection with site-based decision making?

Teachers responded strongly to a need for additional access to information, sufficient time to participate in the decision-making process, and representation on decision-making councils.

Research Question 7

Are there differences between teachers' actual and desired opportunities for staff development in the site-based decision-making model?

There were notable differences between the actual and desired participation of teachers in staff development, sharing knowledge, and access to special training. Teachers perceived that they had limited opportunities to share their expert knowledge and strongly desired such opportunities.

Research Question 8

Do teachers' actual and desired overall impressions about site-based decision making differ?

Respondents reported that teachers were in fact accountable for decisions made at their sites, though most did not strongly agree. Teachers felt strongly that they should be involved in shared decision making and that involvement would result in increased professionalism, school improvement, better school morale, and increased job satisfaction. There did not appear to be a strong feeling that SBDM was working well at all sites.

Respondents' Personal Involvement

Research Questions 9-13

Respondents were asked whether there were differences between their actual and desired *personal* participation in curriculum and instruction decisions, staff and personnel decisions, staff development, school/community relations decisions, and budget management.

Respondents desired greater involvement in selecting textbooks and instructional materials, determining class size, and reporting pupil progress. They also indicated a strong desire for participation in determining teaching methodologies, evaluating curriculum and textbooks, and determining student placement.

Respondents did not appear to have a strong desire for involvement in staff development issues such as assigning staff to committees, conducting needs assessments, and designing staff development activities. Teachers did not have a strong interest in budget and management decisions such as formulating budgets, allocating money for textbooks, or cutting money from the budget.

Research Question 14

Do the perceptions of school staff about the middle school concepts in place differ?

Respondents almost always agreed that it was desirable to incorporate facets of the middle school concept. Most respondents indicated that an interdisciplinary approach should be used in instruction at the middle school level. Respondents suggested that an effective middle school should incorporate more daily physical education, a more understanding teaching staff, more planning time, and more teacher-student guidance.

Discussion

This study confirmed Epps' (1995) conclusions in two areas: (1) Teachers would like to be more involved in areas of site-based decision making such as curriculum, goal

setting, staff development, and standards and (2) teachers were less involved or felt less involved in the areas of budget, facilitating procedures, and personnel. Strembitsky's (1990) findings that there was an increasing desire among teachers and administrators to participate in SBDM as well as to delegate some curriculum decisions to the site level were also supported.

The finding that teachers desire greater involvement in most aspects of SBDM may be somewhat unrealistic. Dade County Public Schools (1991) also found that among the problems with SBDM were unrealistic expectations and difficulties assuming new roles. Teacher involvement requires new roles and greater power. Dade County Public Schools identified many problems associated with new power and new responsibilities.

The current findings suggested that teachers would prefer greater involvement in SBDM, thereby recognizing their importance in the decision-making process. This is particularly important in the SBDM model because decision making is distributed away from the central administration. Banville (1996) argued for a shared vision and an integrated approach to SBDM. This sharing of leadership through decision making or transformational leadership allows for the empowerment and professionalization of teachers.

The NEA (1989), Purkey and Smith (1983), and Stinnette (1993) all advocated greater involvement of teachers in SBDM. These findings support the recommendations of other researchers, organizations, and agencies. The present research also found that teachers desired greater involvement in decision making.

It did not appear that the "exemplary" middle schools in this study were perceived by their teachers to be highly involved in the middle school concept. Respondents desired more of the middle school concept to be in practice at their sites. Given the apparent discrepancies between teachers' actual participation and the level of desired involvement in SBDM and the subsequent teacher perceptions of the current level of middle school concept activity as compared to the desired level of middle school concept adoptions, it would be advisable to involve teachers in decision making related to middle school concept development at their sites.

Conclusions

1. Teachers' *actual* and *desired* levels of participation in SBDM differed substantially on almost every item in each subscale of the survey instrument. This disparity may be interpreted as an indication that teachers and staff desire greater participation in decisions made at their sites.

2. It is not possible to predict from the data gathered what problems might arise for administrators, staff, and teachers, such as concern for lack of information, lack of time, conflict of responsibilities between classroom and site, or administrators' loss of control.

3. Desire for participation was indicated in the areas of curriculum, instruction, goal setting, standards, staff development, and staffing.

4. Less interest for participation was exhibited in budget management, evaluation, and making decisions about staff development.

5. There are connections among the above areas, which staff may need inservices to understand. For example:

- ✦ Budget issues drive curriculum, instruction, and related goals.
- ✦ If responsibility for staff development and staffing are afforded to shared decisions, then those involved in these areas of concern may need to accept responsibility for extensions of these responsibilities. For example, participants reported interest in hiring and evaluating peers and administration but did not desire involvement in the tenure or grievance processes, both of which situations may arise once one is involved to the extent to which participants are comfortable.
- ✦ Participants desire more involvement in staff development but apparently do not desire the added responsibility of implementing and evaluating this staff development.
- ✦ The broad picture of responsibility for all such facets of site-based decisions is information that site participants need.
- ✦ The definition of site-based decision making may need to be decided and agreed upon.

6. Respondents did not consider their sites to be strong examples of the district's middle school concept.

7. The level of understanding of the district middle school concept by site administrators as well as that of teachers and staff should be explored and developed.

Site-based decisions about the development of the middle school concept should be shared.

Questions for Further Research and Practice

The present study left many questions unanswered. The following uncertainties might be considered for future research.

1. How should administrators who are directed to or who desire to implement SBDM consider the interests of teachers and staff in the various facets of SBDM?

2. Should formal authority be granted to individual schools to control budget, personnel, and curriculum/instruction? How would teachers' and staff desired levels of participation change if they were aware of how budget drives personnel and curriculum/instruction decisions?

3. If sufficient time and emotional and financial support for training were provided for site teams, would the SBDM teams be more satisfied with their involvement in SBDM?

4. What incentives should be afforded for teachers and staff when they take on the new roles, power, and responsibilities which come with SBDM?

5. How much time is necessary for teachers and staff to develop the expertise to share in decision making and to continue to accomplish classroom duties?

6. What is the potential for conflict between classroom and site expectations due to teachers' desire for increased responsibility?

7. How would the middle school reform and the SBDM reform integrate if principals and staff became increasingly educated in the middle school concept?

8. What relationships exist between SBDM and students' achievement, attitudes, and expectations?

9. What is the relationship between administrators successfully implementing effective site-based decision making and using SBDM to implement middle school reform?

10. What are the leadership qualities of the principals who have achieved the goal of implementing SBDM and the middle school concept?

APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT: DECISION MAKING IN THE REALM OF MIDDLE SCHOOL REFORM

DECISION MAKING IN THE REALM OF MIDDLE SCHOOL REFORM
A Doctoral Study

Dear Colleague:

This questionnaire was developed as part of a University of Arizona doctoral dissertation. The findings will be reported as a study about the progress of the implementation of site-based decision making at exemplary middle schools, including your school.

The questions in the survey ask how decisions are made at your school and your involvement in decisions about goals and school mission, students, your career, curriculum and instruction, representation, and other vital school-related information.

The questions are designed to obtain your perceptions of your work environment and your ACTUAL participation in the decision-making processes. In selected sections you will be asked to rate your DESIRED level of participation. A demographics section is included.

Your individual answers will be kept completely confidential. Selected participants and their sites will not be identified. Please answer each item honestly and frankly. Your participation is critical to the success of this project, although it is, of course, voluntary.

For your convenience, please return this questionnaire to Eileen Geraghty at Wakefield Middle School by interschool mail if you do not return it to me directly.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Eileen Geraghty, Teacher
Doctoral Student

P.S. I fully understand the demands of school's end. Your response is vital to this study. I hope that giving you a return envelope will allow some time for you to be able to complete my survey. I thank you if you have already completed a survey and in advance if you have not.

SECTION I DEMOGRAPHICS

Please provide information about yourself by checking one response in each section:

1. Gender
   a. [ ] female
   b. [ ] male

2. Age
   a. [ ] 20-29 years old
   b. [ ] 30-39 years old
   c. [ ] 40-49 years old
   d. [ ] 50-59 rears old
   e. [ ] 60 years or older

3. Years teaching (including this year as a full year)
   a. [ ] 1-5 years
   b. [ ] 6-10 years
   c. [ ] 11-15 years
   d. [ ] 16-20 years
   e. [ ] more than 20 years

4. Years in this school
   a. [ ] 1-5
   b. [ ] 6-10
   c. [ ] 11-15
   d. [ ] 16-20
   e. [ ] more than 20 years

5. To what extent do teachers participate in decision making at your school?
   a. [ ] very little
   b. [ ] somewhat
   c. [ ] very much

6. To what extent do you participate in decision making at your school?
   a. [ ] very little
   b. [ ] somewhat
   c. [ ] very much

7. My current school role is
   a. [ ] teacher
   b. [ ] guidance counselor

c. [ ] administrator (building)
d. [ ] administrator (central)
e. [ ] support staff
f. [ ] other_____

8. What is your highest level of education?
a. [ ] bachelor's degree
b. [ ] bachelor's plus
c. [ ] master's degree
d. [ ] master's plus
e. [ ] educational specialist
f. [ ] enrolled in doctoral program
g. [ ] doctoral degree
h. [ ] other

9. How many years have you taught in your present school?
a. [ ] 2 or fewer
b. [ ] 3 to 5
c. [ ] 6 to 10
d. [ ] 11 to 15
e. [ ] 16 to 20
f. [ ] more than 20

10. How many years have you taught in your present district?
a. [ ] 2 or fewer
b. [ ] 3 to 5
c. [ ] 6 to 10
d. [ ] 11 to 15
e. [ ] 16 to 20
f. [ ] more than 20

11. Within which content area do you primarily teach?

_____

12. Approximately how many students are enrolled in your school?
a. [ ] 200 or fewer
b. [ ] 201 to 500
c. [ ] 501 to 1,000
d. [ ] 1,001 to 2,500

SECTION II DECISION MAKING BELIEFS AND ATTITUDE SCALE

Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with these statements. Respond with your genuine perceptions rather than what you feel is a desired response. For each item, CIRCLE the response that is closest to your perception.

(1) Strongly Disagree (2) Disagree (3) Neutral (4) Agree (5) Strongly Agree

1.	Teachers have input into decisions made in my school.	1 2 3 4 5
2.	Building administrators should share decision making with teachers as much as possible.	1 2 3 4 5
3.	Administrators in my school share decision making with teachers as much as possible with teachers.	1 2 3 4 5
4.	Teachers are seldom consulted before decisions are made in my school.	1 2 3 4 5
5.	Teachers should have the opportunity for input into decisions made in the school setting.	1 2 3 4 5
6.	Teacher participation in decision making is mostly restricted to decisions relating to instructional matters.	1 2 3 4 5
7.	Most decisions in my school are made unilaterally by the administrators.	1 2 3 4 5
8.	Teachers should be consulted often by administrators in the decision-making process within the school.	1 2 3 4 5
9.	Teacher involvement in decision making should be limited to instructional decisions.	1 2 3 4 5
10.	Most decisions in the school setting should be made unilaterally by administrators.	1 2 3 4 5

DO NOT RETURN TO THIS SECTION.

SECTION III INFORMATION MECHANISMS

1. What mechanisms are used in your school to make shared decisions?
   a. [ ] Ad hoc gatherings
   b. [ ] Regular faculty meetings
   c. [ ] Appointed council
   d. [ ] Standing committees
   e. [ ] Elected group or body
      (1) [ ] Elected by department or grade
      (2) [ ] Elected at-large
      (3) [ ] Elected by other means; specify:_____

REPRESENTATION

2. Who serves on the shared decision-making body?
   a. [ ] Parent representative
   b. [ ] Community member (nonparent)
   c. [ ] Teachers
   d. [ ] Principals' officials
   e. [ ] Principal, ex-officio
   f. [ ] Union representative
   g. [ ] Paraprofessional staff
   h. [ ] Support staff
   I. [ ] Faculty as a committee of the whole

PROCEDURES

3. Who decides what decisions will be made by the shared decision-making body?
   a. [ ] Principal
   b. [ ] Teachers
   c. [ ] Other; specify_____

4. Shared decisions are reached by the following:
   a. [ ] Consensus
   b. [ ] Simple majority
   c. [ ] 2/3 majority
   d. [ ] Other; specify_____

5. Decisions made by the shared decision-making body are
   a. [ ] Advisory
   b. [ ] Subject to veto by the principal
   c. [ ] Subject to veto by three central office staff

d. [ ] Subject to appeal to the central office or Board of Education
e. [ ] Generally adopted and implemented by the school

SECTION IV-A SITE-BASED/ SHARED DECISION-MAKING SURVEY

This instrument is designed to measure the involvement of teachers at your site in decision making. Please read each statement carefully.

In this section, please circle the number that indicates the degree to which you believe teachers in your school participated in each decision during the past school year. Then circle the number that indicates the desired level of participation you perceive among teachers at your school.

(1) Almost Never (2) Seldom (3) Sometimes (4) Frequently (5) Almost Always

I. GOALS/VISION/MISSION

		ACTUAL	DESIRED
1.	Teachers have developed the same shared vision for this school.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
2.	Teachers participate in the goal-setting process for the school.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
3.	Teachers help to establish school priorities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
4.	Teachers as a group accept the school's goals.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
5.	Teachers are able to get other teachers to support their vision of the school.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
6.	Teachers are able to get administrators to support their vision of the school.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
7.	The school's goals are consistent with my vision of this school.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
8.	Teachers contribute to the development of a plan to meet the school's goals.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

		ACTUAL	DESIRED
9.	Teachers play an active role in evaluating school goals.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
	II. STANDARDS		
10.	Teachers working together set their own work standards.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
11.	Teachers contribute to the standards set for discipline in the school.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
12.	Teachers set standards for their students' work.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
13.	Teachers help to set standards for student promotion and/or retention.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
14.	The school staff assumes responsibility for student performance.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
	III. CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION		
15.	Teachers have authority to make adjustments in the school's curriculum.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
16.	Teachers help to determine the pace of instruction for students.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
17.	Teachers initiate changes in the curriculum.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
18.	Teachers participate in making school-wide curriculum decisions.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
19.	Teachers participate in the selection of textbooks.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
20.	District-wide committees of teachers coordinate curriculum.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
21.	Teachers participate in curriculum development.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

		ACTUAL	DESIRED
22.	Teachers determine grouping for the purpose of instruction.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
23.	Teachers determine the instructional activities they use in their classrooms.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
24.	Teachers monitor the effectiveness of curricula.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
25.	Teachers have a voice in recruiting and selecting teachers.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
26.	Teachers help to decide teaching assignments of staff members.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
27.	Teachers take part in staffing decisions including selection of assistant principals, counselors, special area staff, and teacher assistants.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
28.	Teachers have a voice in recruiting and selecting administrators.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

V. FACILITATING PROCEDURES AND STRUCTURES

29.	Teachers have access to the information they need to make school-wide decisions.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
30.	Teachers are represented on a council that makes school-wide decisions.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
31.	Sufficient time is provided for teachers to share in decision-making activities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
32.	It is possible to obtain waivers from the teacher's contract for school-based decision-making.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
33.	Teachers working together arrive at decisions on the basis of majority rule.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

		ACTUAL	DESIRED
34.	A decision is not made until almost everyone is in agreement.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
35.	Decisions are not made until everyone can accept the proposal to some extent.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

VI. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

36.	Teachers have access to current research on effective programs and practices.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
37.	Teachers help to determine the staff development they will receive.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
38.	Teachers have opportunities to share their expert knowledge.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
39.	Teachers participate in staff development activities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
40.	Teachers have access to special training when necessary.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

VII. OVERALL IMPRESSIONS

(1) Disagree Strongly (2) Disagree Somewhat (3) Neutral (4) Agree Somewhat (5) Agree Strongly

41.	I think teachers are accountable for decisions made through a shared process.	1 2 3 4 5
42.	I think teachers' involvement in shared decision making is important	
	a. for increased professionalism.	1 2 3 4 5
	b. for school improvement.	1 2 3 4 5
	c. for better school morale.	1 2 3 4 5
	d. for increased job satisfaction.	1 2 3 4 5

		ACTUAL	DESIRED
43.	Overall, I think shared decision making in my school is working well.		1 2 3 4 5
44.	I would improve shared decision making at my school by _____		

SECTION IV-B

Using the key below, please indicate your response by CIRCLING the appropriate response in each column for each item.

1. How frequently you perceive **you** are involved in making each decision (ACTUAL column).
2. How frequently **you** would like to be involved in making each decision (DESIRED column).

It is important that you attempt to provide a response in BOTH columns for each item. Except where indicated by the wording of a particular item, respond to each item only as it applies to building-level decisions.

(1) Almost Never (2) Seldom (3) Sometimes (4) Frequently (5) Almost Always

I. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

		ACTUAL	DESIRED
1.	Choosing content or program areas to be considered for curriculum development.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
2.	Choosing content to be included in teaching (curriculum) documents.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
3.	Selecting textbooks.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
4.	Selecting instructional materials.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
6.	Determining methodologies to be used in delivering curriculum.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

		ACTUAL	DESIRED
7.	Evaluating curriculum.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
8.	Evaluating textbooks.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
9.	Designing curricular change.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
10.	Adopting new instructional methods at department, grade level, or school.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
11.	Determining student placement for instructional programs.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
12.	Determining recommended student class size.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
13.	Determining methods of reporting pupil progress to parents.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
	II. STAFF PERSONNEL		
14.	Hiring of instructional personnel.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
15.	Hiring of administrators.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
16.	Hiring of non-teaching personnel.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
17.	Assigning teaching duties.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
18.	Determining duty assignments.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
19.	Assigning staff to committees.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
20.	Granting tenure.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
21.	Orienting new personnel.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
22.	Accessing staff.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
23.	Planning agendas for staff meetings.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
24.	Resolving employee grievances.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

		ACTUAL	DESIRED
	III. STAFF DEVELOPMENT		
25.	Assigning staff to staff development committee.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
26.	Carrying out staff development needs-assessment activities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
27.	Designing required staff development activities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
28.	Designing elective staff development activities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
29.	Implementing staff development activities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
30.	Specifying evaluation activities associated with staff development activities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
	IV. SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS		
31.	Involving business groups in school activities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
32.	Involving community groups in school activities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
	V. BUDGET/MANAGEMENT		
33.	Formulating building-leveling budgets.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
34.	Formulating department or grade-level budgets.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
35.	Allocating monies for textbooks.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
36.	Allocating monies for curriculum development.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
37.	Allocating monies for plant decisions.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
38.	Managing the building-level budget.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
39.	Cutting monies from budget.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
40.	Determining priority use of school facilities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

SECTION V MIDDLE SCHOOL CONCEPT

Listed below are several goals and characteristics often used to describe middle-level educational programs. Read each statement, and then assess the statement in two ways. First, mark the degree to which the statement describes what actually exists in your educational setting; then, circle the degree to which you desire a characteristic in your education setting.

(1) Almost never (2) Seldom (3) Sometimes (4) Frequently (5) Almost Always

		ACTUAL	DESIRED
THE MIDDLE-LEVEL SCHOOL SHOULD			
1.	Incorporate an interdisciplinary approach in teaching of the basic skills courses in grades 7 and 8.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
2.	Provide required exposure to exploratory courses in fine arts and practical arts.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
3.	Provide a daily physical education program which stresses conditioning activities and team and individual sports based upon the physical development level of the individual student for all students.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
4.	Provide a teaching staff skilled in the ability to understand, relate to, and work with students of this age group.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
5.	Provide appropriate planning times for members of the teaching staff, including common planning times.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
6.	Provide a teacher-student guidance or advisory program that enables each student to relate and interact in a special way with his or her advisor.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

		ACTUAL	DESIRED
7.	Utilize a school-wide schedule which includes blocks of time within which teachers have the flexibility to group students in varied ways for specific instructional purposes.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Note: All seven questions in the Middle School concept scale were taken directly from a scale of 24 items developed by Clark and Valentine. Because this is copyrighted material, the following attribution is made:

Adapted from Clark, D., & Valentine, J. (1992). Middle level educational programs: Making the ideal a reality. In S. Clark & D. Clark (Eds.), Schools in the middle: A decade of growth and change (pp. 149-154). Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.

APPENDIX B

APPROVAL FOR RESEARCH

April 4, 1996

Eileen Theresa Geraghty
13245 North Como Drive
Tucson, Arizona 85741

Dear Ms. Geraghty:

We are pleased to inform you that your request to do research in the . . . School District has been approved for the site indicated in your proposal.

Project Title: Site-Based Decision Making in the Realm of Middle School Reform

Reference Number: 29 / 95-96

Have the principal fill out the enclosed form and return it to Planning & Assessment. Please remember that the building principals have administrative responsibility and control of conduct for your study in his/her area.

Finally, please provide this Department with one copy of the final report of the completed study.

Sincerely,

Research Evaluator
Planning and Assessment

Enclosure

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