A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF
THE NATURE OF SHARED DECISION
MAKING IN TERMS OF CONTEXT AND OUTCOMES IN SELECTED
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN A LARGE SUBURBAN
VIRGINIA PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

by

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Blacksburg, Virginia

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(ABSTRACT)

This study was undertaken to produce a "snapshot" description of shared decision making in elementary schools in a large suburban public school system in Virginia; to identify schools for participation in indepth studies; and to provide examples and information to others who may wish to engage in shared decision making. The research questions guiding the study were:

- How do elementary school principals perceive shared decision making in their schools?

- How do principals, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers not currently serving on the decision-making team in selected schools perceive participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?

- What similarities and/or differences in participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness) appear to exist among principals, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers not serving
currently on the decision-making team, within each selected school and across the selected schools?

Major findings revealed that there was much less shared decision making going on in elementary schools in the school system than what was claimed by the principals. Although the context of the shared decision-making committees at each of the three schools studied in depth varied, some outcomes across the three schools were similar. The predominant indicator of teacher satisfaction reported by twenty of the twenty-one principals, team members, and teachers interviewed was increased/improved collegiality. The researcher concludes that the shared decision-making committees provided opportunities for principals and teachers to come together to discuss issues, give input, and make decisions, and as a result, collegial relationships began to form. The predominant indicator of organizational effectiveness reported by nineteen of the twenty-one principals, team members, and teachers interviewed was satisfaction with the decisions that emerged from the committee. The researcher concludes that the shared decision-making committees provided opportunities for teachers to join principals in making decisions, so for the most part, teachers had positive perceptions about the decisions that were made.
DEDICATION

DEDICATED

TO THE

MEMORY OF MY BELOVED HUSBAND,

JON STANLEY BERTRAND
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The publication of A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform in 1983 sparked the nation's interest in school reform initiating the momentum which continues into the 1990's and the subsequent publication of reports on school reform. One of these reports, A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century (1986), is often cited by reformers to support the call for greater teacher involvement in decisions that affect their schools. Shared decision making is seen as one "piece of the larger puzzle that may produce the desired reform outcomes called for by the national, state, and local groups demanding change" (Lange, 1993, p. 98).

In the literature on reform, shared decision making is frequently discussed in relation to school-based leadership, school-based management, site-based management, shared governance, the professionalism of teaching, and the empowerment of teachers. The new terms are used to describe an old educational philosophy: local control of schools improves the quality of education (ERS, 1991). While the idea of involving teachers in decision making is not new and, in fact, can be traced back to the management of the earliest multiple classroom schools in the eighteenth century by a principal teacher and other teachers (Taylor & Divine, 1991), school improvement now
adds the dimension of collegiality to teacher participation in expanded
decision making (Conley & Bacharach, 1990).

Collegial group decision making provides a professional work
environment different from the isolation experienced by teachers from
Colonial days (Maeroff, 1988; Lortie, 1975). This improved environment
provides teachers with opportunities to work as colleagues and involves them
in school planning (Lieberman, 1986). In Tomorrow’s Teachers (1986) the
Holmes Group concludes that schools will have to change their existing
structure, the working conditions of teachers, and the division of authority
between principals and teachers if a genuine profession of teaching is to
emerge. The research literature on school-based management indicates that
many schools are adopting this approach in some form, including the
establishment of school advisory councils and the involvement of teachers in
decision making.

**Background of the Problem**

Local school councils, often called school advisory councils, emerge in
the literature as the political structure wherein shared decision making takes
place. School advisory councils "need to establish a shared decision-making
process" (ERS, 1991, p. 4). Carl Marburger (1985) states that the
mechanism of a school council is used by most schools working with school-
based management. Marvin Cetron (1991) explains that shifting "power from
the established bureaucracy to local school councils" (p. 38) was a key feature of the program to restructure Chicago's failing schools. James Guthrie (1986) argues that although "school advisory councils are not crucial to school-based management" (p. 307), they are a means of encouraging employee participation.

Faculty Advisory Councils were established in a large suburban public school system located in the Commonwealth of Virginia through an agreement between the school board and the local teachers' Education Association in July, 1971. The purpose of the agreement to establish Faculty Advisory Councils was to keep conflicts and grievances to a minimum in the rapidly changing climate produced by rapid pupil growth during the late 1960's, which necessitated the employment of a large number of teachers and new administrators.

There may be selected in each school building a teacher committee which will meet at regular intervals with that school's administration for the purpose of discussing matters of mutual concern which pertain to the operation of the school and its instructional program (Agreement Between the County School Board and the Education Association, Inc., 1971, Article 14, p. 20).

Periodically, the agreement was revised to reflect the following changes which expanded and articulated the parameters of the agreement:

There may be elected in each school building a Faculty Advisory Council which will meet at regular intervals with that school's administration for the purpose of discussing matters of mutual concern which pertain to the operation of the school and its instructional program. Whenever such a Council is
organized, the members will be elected, at large, by a secret-ballot election conducted by the Association (Agreement Between the County School Board and the Education Association, Inc., 1973, Article 20, p. 26).

There may be elected in each school building a Faculty Advisory Council which will meet at regular intervals with that school's administration for the purpose of discussing matters of mutual concern which pertain to the operation of the school and its instructional program. **Whenever such a Council is organized, it shall consist of not less that three (3) nor more than seven (7) educational staff members from each school and shall be elected in a manner determined by the Association, provided that all educational staff members shall be eligible on an equal basis for membership in the Faculty Advisory Council. Voting will be by secret ballot** (Agreement Between the County School Board and the Education Association, Inc., 1976, D, p. 19).

The 1977 Virginia Supreme Court decision in **Commonwealth V. Arlington County Board** concluded that school boards had neither the statutory nor constitutional authority to enter into collective bargaining agreements. In response the school board adopted all agreed to practices, currently in place, as either policies or regulations, rather than strike down areas agreed to previously with the local teachers' Education Association. The part of the agreement relating to the establishment of Faculty Advisory Councils was translated into Regulation 4010.5 in 1982, and updated in Regulations 4451 in 1986 and 4451.1 in 1988. The permissive "may be" used in the Agreements in 1971, 1973, and 1976 was strengthened to "shall be" in Regulations 4010.5, 4451, and 4451.1. Principals as leaders and
managers of their schools, were expected to involve the staff in an advisory capacity through the Faculty Advisory Council.

In 1985, the teachers' Education Association viewed the appointment of a new division superintendent as an opportunity to rejuvenate Faculty Advisory Councils and change the emphasis from "discussion" to "advise and consultation". Principals of schools, identified with smoothly operating Faculty Advisory Councils, and selected members of the teachers' Education Association took part in joint inservice training. The next year, 1986, the training was put on hold in order to focus on a new teacher performance evaluation program adopted by the school system. Renewed emphasis on Faculty Advisory Councils in 1987 resulted in a revision (in 1988) of the regulation (4451.1) requiring the establishment of Faculty Advisory Councils in its current form.

In many instances the function of the original Faculty Advisory Council had been, and still may be, perceived by staff as advising administrators prior to their making unilateral administrative decisions. Principals are provided assistance upon request from the Office of Research and Policy Analysis to develop a collaborative model based on shared decision making, but a few principals simply developed collaborative models that subsumed the Faculty Advisory Council.
Problem Statement

In response to the educational reform movement, the increased occurrence of shared decision making as a topic in the literature generates questions about the nature of shared decision making. In a large suburban public school system in Virginia, school board policy provides for the establishment of Faculty Advisory Councils in the various work locations (Regulation 4451.1, 1988). School board members, administrators, the Office of Research and Policy Analysis, education associations, and teachers are interested in the range of shared decision making within the school system. The problem is that the extent of shared decision making actually taking place in elementary schools is not known. A study that describes the nature of shared decision making in terms of context and outcomes in elementary schools in the district could be useful in providing such information.

Purpose

This study is divided into three parts. The first produces a "snapshot" description of shared decision making in elementary schools in a large suburban public school district in Virginia in Spring, 1991. The second identifies schools for participation in indepth studies. For the purpose of providing examples and information to others who may wish to engage in shared decision making, the third part of the study describes the context
(a. purpose, b. committee structure, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness) of shared decision making in those schools that appear to have the most advanced form of this management process.

**Research Questions**

Six research questions guide this study:

1. How do elementary school principals perceive shared decision making in their schools?

2. How do principals in selected schools perceive participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?

3. How do teachers on the decision-making team in selected schools perceive participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?

4. How do teachers who do not currently serve on the decision-making team in selected schools perceive participation in shared decision making relative to context?
5. What apparent similarities and/or differences exist in participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness) among principals, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers not currently serving on the decision-making team, within each selected school?

6. What similarities and/or differences do principals, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers who do not currently serve on the decision-making team, across the selected schools, perceive in participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness).
Definitions of Terms

Shared Decision Making

Shared decision making is the process by which principals, teachers, and increasingly, parents, students, and others with a stake in the school, engage cooperatively in solving problems and making decisions about operational and instructional issues at the school level. Shared decision making is often linked with school-based management in the literature on educational reform. Carl Marburger (1985) establishes the link between school-based management and shared decision making by describing two essential features of school-based management: a number of policy and budgeting decisions are made at the local school level; and, all those involved with the local schools participate in making decisions. Adrianne Bank and Richard Williams (1989) state that "school-based management requires, among other things, high levels of teacher involvement in decision making" (p. 17). According to Finn (1991) shared decision making refers to a strategy used to restructure schools: "The theoretical foundation...of school restructuring closely resembles the principles of organizational success....Typical strategies include devolution to the building level of decisions previously made centrally, and more collegial relationships among staff members" (p. 48). In his book, Educational Renaissance: Our Schools at the Turn of the Century, Cetron (1991) links educational reform with shared decision making, "The idea is that decisions should be made by the people
most directly affected by them, because reforms work best when the people
carrying them out feel that they 'own' the new system and are personally
responsible for results" (pp. 34-35). In John Goodlad’s report on school
change, A Place Called School (1984), he states his belief that staff
involvement in dialogue about issues, decision-making, actions taken, and
evaluation of results is central to school improvement. Frank Ambrosie
(1989) in an article written for the National Association of Secondary School
Principals (NASSP) bulletin, defines shared decision making as equitable
participation by teachers and principals in decisions related to the educational
program (p. 57). For purposes of this study, the terms "school-based
management," "site-based management," and "school-based leadership"
include the component of increased teacher involvement in decision making.

Shared decision making occurs in a structural context--usually a
committee. The committee's purpose is to engage in the process of shared
decision making. The function of the committee is to make decisions.
Training in group process for participants may or may not be included, and
obstacles to the process may surface.

The components of context are clarified as follows:

1. Structure - The structure of the committee is composed of its
   members and the procedures that guide their operations.
   - Membership:
     - Who serves on the committee?
- Procedures:
  - How are committee members selected?
  - How is the chairperson selected?
  - When and how often does the committee meet?
  - Where does the committee meet?
  - How are issues brought to the attention of the committee?
  - Who sets the agenda? Who determines what issues are discussed?
  - How are committee activities reported to the rest of the staff?

2. **Purpose** - The purpose delineates the reason(s) for engaging in the shared decision-making process, such as making group decisions, assisting in management, advising the principal, and exchanging information.

3. **Function** - The function of the committee is to address school operational and instructional issues through a shared decision-making process. School operational issues include making decisions about budget, personnel, staff development, supervision of teachers, student discipline, assignment of
students to classes, (Carnegie, 1988) schedules, and calendars. Instructional issues include making decisions about "how to organize the instructional process so that students learn what they're supposed to and more" (Finn, 1991, pp. 266-267).

3. **Training** - Training includes formal and informal staff development for principals and teachers in the areas of group process, changing roles, leadership styles, and communication skills.

4. **Obstacles** - Hindrances, at least initially, to shared decision making include too little time to plan and meet, the need for training in the areas mentioned above, and lack of trust between teachers and principals (Bank & Williams, 1989). There may also be legal obstacles in place such as state laws, school board regulations, and union or teacher association negotiations (Smith & Scott, 1990).

Several researchers, Barth (1990), Smith and Scott (1990), and Ceperley (1991) suggest that participation in shared decision making results in more teacher satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. The outcomes of shared decision making identified in the literature and reported in this study include teacher satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.
Teacher Satisfaction

For the purpose of this study, teacher satisfaction includes ownership, commitment, creativity, collegiality, and professionalism.

Organizational Effectiveness

For the purpose of this study organizational effectiveness is defined as productivity, communication, and decisions.

Limitations of the Study

Because this study is based on the voluntary responses of elementary school principals and teachers in a large Virginia public school system, generalization outside of that population is limited. Also the results are not necessarily applicable to middle schools or high schools in some school systems.

The population examined to answer Research Questions Two through Six was composed of three elementary principals and eighteen elementary school teachers. This small sample requires that generalizations based on the results of the study be limited.

Overview of Chapters

Following this introduction, the specific components of the study are presented in Chapters II through V. Chapter II provides a review of the
literature. Chapter III describes the populations, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and procedures for analyzing the data. Chapter IV presents the analyses of the data. Finally, Chapter V summarizes conclusions, implications, and recommendations.
CHAPTER II

SHARED DECISION MAKING:
A SELECTED REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the literature on shared decision making. The chapter is divided into two sections: context and outcomes. Under context, structure, purpose, function, training, and obstacles are discussed. Within structure, two components are reviewed: the composition of committees, including the roles of committee members, and the procedures committee members use. Two areas, changing roles and group process, are reviewed under training. Trust and time are reviewed as obstacles to shared decision making. Under outcomes, the topics include teacher satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. Ownership, commitment, creativity, collegiality, and professionalism are reviewed as related to teacher satisfaction. Areas reviewed relating to organizational effectiveness are productivity, communication, and decisions.

Context

Shared decision making in the school environment takes place within an organizational context. Typically, a school council is created to provide the structure, determine the purpose, and set guidelines on the function of shared
decision making. Members of the council may or may not be trained on how to participate in the process of shared decision making. Obstacles to the process may emerge as the group engages in shared decision making.

**Structure**

The shared decision-making body in the local school is identified by many names in the literature, including "school site council," "school improvement committee," and "faculty senate". The structure of the shared decision-making committee has two components: (a) the composition of the committee, including the roles performed by its members, and (b) the operating procedures for the members of the committee to conduct school business.

An analysis of the composition of the committee addresses the "who" questions:

- Who serves on the committee?
- Who do committee members represent?
- Who chairs the committee?

The composition of membership on shared decision-making committees "may include various combinations of the principal, teachers, support staff, parents, community members and students" (ERS, 1991, p. 4). Patrick O’Rourke, a Hammond, Indiana high school teacher, in an interview with McPike (1987)
describes an example of the composition of the shared decision-making committee:

The teams are made up of teachers, administrators, parents, and to a lesser degree, students. The size of the committees varies. In a large high school of...one hundred teachers, the core team is usually composed of about ten to fifteen people of which the majority would be teachers.... There is...an attempt to identify the strong parent advocates in the community, people who have a long history of involvement in the school and who can be counted on to bring other parents into the process. In addition, where applicable, students who are respected by their peers and who have an interest in school improvement are identified (p. 9).

The composition of West Virginia's local school improvement councils (mandated for every school in 1990 by the legislature to engage in site-based decision making) is described by Gene Hall and Gary Galluzzo (1992), "Members include the principal, three teachers, two school service personnel, three parents, two community representatives, and one student at schools housing seventh grade or higher" (p. 1).

Once a council is formed, "some decisions need to be made about how to operate" (Marburger, 1985, p. 48). "As a first step, a council should establish bylaws that outline the procedures and regulations to be followed" (ERS, 1991, p. 4). Decision-making structures must be created in which teachers, acting as professionals, identify problems, negotiate with each other, resolve conflicts, and contribute to solutions if school-site management is to succeed (Conley & Bacharach, 1990). The operational procedures used
by the committee answer some of the "who", "how", "when", "where", and "what" questions:

How are committee members selected?
How is the chairperson selected?
When and how often does the committee meet?
Where does the committee meet?
How are issues brought to the attention of the committee?
Who sets the agenda? Who determines what issues are discussed?
How are committee activities reported to the rest of the staff?

Purpose

Principals and teachers will do business as usual unless they are brought to an understanding of the purpose of sharing decision making. Principals must think through the purpose to be served by involving teachers in making decisions (Herman, 1989). Kenneth A. Tye (1992) states that when we restructure schools, principals and teachers, "working with their communities, will have to learn to make collective decisions and to take collective action" (p. 14). Leonard T. Burns and Jeanne Howes (1988, p. 8) assert that the following research principles provide the foundation for practicing shared decision making:

- The school is the primary unit of change.
o A healthy school climate is an important prerequisite for effective improvement.

o A positive social climate, high trust level, open communications, and a holistic concern for people promote effective improvement efforts.

o Significant and lasting improvement takes considerable time.

o School improvement requires personal and group commitment to new performance norms.

o In effective schools, teachers and principals believe that all their students can master the basic learning objectives.

o The role of the school principal is the key to effective improvement.

o Collaboration, dialogue, school decision making, and adaptability characterize school improvement.

o Efforts to change schools have been most effective when they have been focused toward influencing the entire school culture in a risk-free collegial atmosphere.

o Change in the total organization is fostered through worker participation in project planning and implementation with strong, active encouragement, commitment, and acceptance of the results from superiors.
Chester Finn (1984) states that to foster the organizational dynamics and institutional characteristics that are associated with school effectiveness, the people who staff the school should be empowered to make important decisions about what happens within it. Sharing in decision making can promote better decisions, help establish communication channels, allow teachers to achieve a sense of ownership followed with a commitment to implement decisions, improve employee satisfaction and school climate, increase trust and respect among staff members, create an open atmosphere of sharing and experimentation, and reduce conflicts and frustration (WVEA-AEL Site-Based Decision Making Casebook, 1991).

Function

The most common function of shared decision-making councils is solving problems. "Most councils are advisory in nature but a few are created with authority as powerful as the hiring and firing of the school principal" (ERS, 1991, p. 4). Frequent problems addressed include operational and instructional issues. Usually, the members of the council begin the process by identifying problems and assessing the needs of the school. The needs assessment forms the foundation for a school plan which sets goals and objectives, proposes solutions, specifies activities, and defines accountability of progress (Marburger, 1985).
An example of a shared decision making-process is described by Bank and Williams (1989, p. 20):

Once a climate in which individuals feel included, influential, and respected has been established, problems can be talked out in a multi-step sequence. Each person defines the problem from his or her own perspective and lists concerns. Areas of agreement and disagreement are identified, and brainstorming produces suggestions about how to deal with the disagreement. Negotiation and discussions follow. These lead to the sequence and priorities for next steps.

The need for administrators and teachers to be trained to take part in shared decision making is expressed frequently in the literature, although Vann (1989) comments that shared decision making is a function of the administrator's personality and philosophy rather than training.

Training

Training should cover changing roles and group process. Without proper training, principals, teachers, parents, and students may find it difficult to meet new responsibilities and adjust to new roles (White, 1989). Alice G. Foster (1991) says that no change takes place without considering how it affects the roles of teachers and principals. Gary S. Heller (1993) states that "the principal's role in fostering professional collaboration is to create an open and risk-free environment for staff members" (p. 97). Effective group training must include the identification, analysis, and practice of leader and member roles (Benne & Sheats, 1978). Several researchers, Aronstein, Marlow, and Desaiets (1990), assert that as the principal's role shifts from ultimate decision
maker to facilitator, the faculty's function shifts from advising to legislating. The "usual relationship between administrators and teachers, where administrators decide and teachers carry out, is turned upside down when participative decision making is encouraged" (Bank & Williams, 1989, p. 20).

Little in the training or job experience of today's principals and teachers prepares them for the new roles of leadership they must fill to bring about lasting change in schools (Lewis, 1991). "Many of the problems associated with site-based management are related to difficulties in adapting to new roles" (ERS, 1991, p. 5). Participants learn new roles as well as principles of group process.

Since most of the business of school site councils is done in meetings, principals and teachers identify participation in effective meetings as an area in which they need training (ERS, 1991). Effective meetings are more likely if the principals and teachers have learned some of the basic principles of group dynamics (Marburger, 1985). Training in group dynamics is not only important but must be ongoing (O'Rourke, 1987). William R. Daniels (1990) observes, however, that little research has been done on small group dynamics and processes as they relate to regular groups and meetings in the context of ordinary organizational operations. Studies of small group phenomena occurred primarily in the controlled environment of the laboratory and focused on leaderless groups. "Although such settings have immediate
relevance for the dynamics and processes of task forces, they are well removed from the weekly staff meeting" (Daniels, 1990, p. 157).

As a result of his research, Daniels (1990) discusses three areas of responsibility useful to those who participate in regular meetings: attitudes, participant skills, and critical thinking skills. His three recommendations in the area of attitudes are (a) "act from your formal role, not just your personality"; (b) "act as though you were responsible for all the functions represented"; and (c) "when the meeting starts, be ready" (p. 32).

The basic skills needed for group participation are organized by Daniels (1990) into task-related skills and maintenance-related skills. Task-related skills help the group process information and include initiating, providing information and opinions, asking for information and opinions, clarifying, elaborating, summarizing, and compromising (Daniels, 1990, p. 33-34). Maintenance skills keep a group's dynamics properly balanced. These are gatekeeping, harmonizing, testing the group's norm state and encouraging (Daniels, 1990, p. 34).

Daniels (1990) says, "The members of regular meetings need to be especially good at critical thinking" (p. 34). This is his third area of responsibility. Principals and teachers who do not understand their roles and how to participate in group process activities may become obstacles to shared decision making.
Obstacles

From the literature, we find many obstacles to shared decision making. John R. Hoyle (1994, p. 37) states, "It is naive to assume that the democratic process of managing site-based schools should be any smoother or contain less than the democratic process in government." Michael G. Fullan and Matthew B. Miles (1992) report that "serious education reform will never be achieved until there is a significant increase in the number of people—leaders and other participants alike—who have come to internalize and habitually act on basic knowledge of how successful change takes place" (p. 745). Phillip C. Schlechty (1991) states fundamental change is unlikely "unless a developmental system—a change system—is invented and installed" (p. 97). Beth E. Woolworth (1989) discusses possible obstacles: labor contracts; state law; school board policies; accreditation standards; equity among schools; central office personnel who are unwilling to let go of their authority; principals who lack strength or the necessary leadership skills; teachers uninterested in change; and hesitancy on the part of staff. Uninformed parents can become obstacles to the school's efforts if they feel they have not been included in "educational decisions that affect their children" (ASCD Update, September, 1992, p. 5). Since the community involvement movement is often allied with school-based management, educators need to explain the rationale behind restructuring efforts to community members (Lindelow, 1989). Trust and time frequently are identified as obstacles to
shared decision making at the school level and a discussion in more detail follows.

Mutual trust of principals and teachers for one another to make sound educational decisions must develop if efforts with shared decision making are to be successful. Eventually, this trust must be extended to include parents and students in the decision-making process. Roland Barth (1988) asserts that principals must not violate the trust they place in teachers by reasserting their own authority "when the going gets rough" or teachers will not become leaders in the school (p. 640). Terry D. Stimson and Richard P. Appelbaum (1988) observe that when "a principal reacts negatively to feedback from teachers, the communication flow quickly dries up. Since hierarchy by nature builds distrust, a principal often has to go to extremes to demonstrate a desire to receive honest feedback" (p. 316). According to Bank and Williams (1989), teachers need continual reinforcement "that they are valued participants in an ongoing schoolwide process, especially if they find themselves expressing a minority view from time to time" (p. 20). James Mitchell (1990) observes that some "will see the principal in the role of manipulating the process to still get what he or she wants" (p. 24). A potential weakness to shared decision making identified by Herman (1989) is the reluctance of some administrators and teachers to allow parents and students to have a role in areas traditionally "considered their private authority areas" (p. 63).
Teachers and administrators need time to participate in shared decision making, as well as time to be trained in how to take part in the group process required by shared decision making. Initially, decisions made through a group process take more time than decisions made in a hierarchical manner. Some individuals will not be willing to put in the time required to share in decision making (Herman, 1989). James Mitchell (1990) confirms that involving staff in decision making is time consuming, especially in the early stages of participating in the group process. According to Bank and Williams (1989) "The school day and school year as currently organized usually do not contain sufficient time for such continuing participation on the part of teachers" (p. 18). It is important to determine which decisions are worth the extra time required for group participation and those decisions that are best made by the principal (Meadows, 1990). Anne Lewis (1991) summarizes concerns about time, "The big issue for leadership at all levels is time—time to train and retrain, time to put that training into action" (p. 43).

**Outcomes**

Shared decision making produces results in greater teacher satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. Frank Ambrosie (1989) describes "a very strong, research-based triangular relationship between collaborative decision-making, organizational satisfaction (school climate), and organizational effectiveness (the manner in which schools perform)" (p. 56). In his research,
Kershaw (1989) cites several studies (McGowan, 1980; Warner, 1981; Thierback, 1980; Knopp, 1980; Bacharach, Bauer, & Shedd, 1986) that report a significant relationship between teachers' satisfaction with work and participation in decision making. There is evidence suggesting that when the personnel in each school cooperatively help to improve one another's skills and the performance of the school as a whole, a number of things happen: principals and teachers enjoy their work more, their skills improve, and they perceive themselves as more effective (Smith & Scott, 1990, p. 70). Carol H. Weiss (1993, p. 87) says shared decision making "yields benefits in professionalism, morale, and commitment." Patricia Ceperley (1991) states that "site-based decision making results in increased teacher satisfaction and professionalism" (p. 7). Phillip C. Schlechty (1990) argues that participatory leadership increases organizational effectiveness, "What leaders in American business are learning, and what educational leaders must learn...is that treating employees as important contributors to the enterprise, valuing their contributions, and involving them in the decision-making structure...increases not only productivity but employee satisfaction" (pp. 51-52).

The glossary of America 2000 (1991, p. 37) defines "School as the Site of Reform:

The individual school is education's key action-and-accountability unit. The surest way to reform education is to give schools and their leaders the freedom and authority to make important decisions about what happens, while being held accountable for making well-conceived efforts at improvement and for achieving desired results.
**Teacher Satisfaction**

Areas for review under teacher satisfaction were selected because they appear frequently in conjunction with discussion on shared decision making. These areas include ownership, commitment, creativity, collegiality, and professionalism.

Sharing power "through collaboration and participative decision making, can give teachers a sense of ownership" (Stinson & Appelbaum, 1988, p. 316). Teacher leadership ensures "that all teachers are given ownership for a responsibility about which they care deeply" (Barth, 1990, p. 136). Adrianne Bank and Richard Williams (1989) report that their research convinces them of "the truth of the maxim, 'The one who owns the problem must own the solution'" (p. 20).

Several researchers link commitment and shared decision making. Marilee Rist (1989) reports that in the Dade County (Florida) school-based decision-making program teachers often spend longer hours to develop plans for running their schools better. These teachers work harder and longer because they are excited about coming up with their own solutions to problems. Teachers and administrators who have not had a part in a decision "have no commitment to its fruition" (Marockie, Jones, & Abermann, 1989, p. 41). Roland Barth (1990) supports the research which suggests
"that the greater the participation in decision making, the greater the productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment" (p. 130).

The connection between shared decision making and creativity (risk-taking) is made by Lagana (1989) who says very little risk taking and change in schools will occur without empowering teachers. Anne Lewis (1989) confirms that principals must share authority if the latent creative talents of teachers are to be released. As well, Meadows (1990) underscores that principals must model risk taking and admit mistakes as well as announce successes.

Shared decision making goes hand in hand with fostering collegiality and "breaking down the isolation that keeps teachers separate and prevents the networks from developing that might move teachers closer to professionalism" (Maeroff, 1988, p. 53). In schools where the culture is collaboratively shaped by teachers and administrators, collegiality, risk-taking, and experimentation tend to be celebrated (Liebermann & Miller, 1990, p. 762). Before teachers become leaders, especially in the area of instruction, they will have to "become responsible professionals, willing to devote the time and the energy that leadership requires, willing to be held accountable for the decisions they make, and willing to listen to one another and to accept leadership from within their own ranks" (Rallis, 1988, p. 643).

Shared decision making results in increased teacher professionalism (Ceperley, 1991). There is much potential for teachers to become more
professional through taking part in decision making (Vann, 1989). Although many teachers feel overworked and under-appreciated, they need to develop a culture in the school that encourages professional growth. They need to consult with one another and to solve problems together, like doctors and lawyers do (Rallis, 1988).

**Organizational Effectiveness**

Selected topics for review relating organizational effectiveness to shared decision making include productivity, communication, and decisions.

Shared decision making provides incentives for administrators and teachers to increase productivity (White, 1989). There is evidence suggesting that when a principal and teachers cooperatively help to improve one another’s skills and the performance of the school as a whole, a number of things happen: their skills improve, and they perceive themselves as being more effective (Smith and Scott, 1990, p. 22). "The energy, the fun, and the commitment that leadership engenders come from brainstorming one’s own solutions and then trying to implement them" (Barth, 1988, p. 640).

Although initially, shared decision making "requires that large numbers of people make what may seem an inordinate effort at communicating" (Aronstein, Marlow, & Desilets, 1990, p. 63), shared decision making "improves communication among staff and the community" (White, 1989, p. 4). Spencer J. Maxcy (1994, p. 49) states that those affected by decisions
should be free to discuss issues and resolutions to them. And although shared decision making may be interpreted to mean that the principal loses authority, the principal's sphere of communication and influence actually increases. "When a principal makes a decision alone, he or she is also alone in trying to implement it. By contrast, when the group makes the decision, the group is ready to get to work on it" (Strauber, Stanley, & Wagenknecht, 1990, p. 66).

The essence of school-based management means bringing the responsibility for decisions as close as possible to the school. This requires defining how school staffs can work collaboratively, and creating ownership for those responsible for carrying out decisions by involving them directly in the decision-making process (Harrison, Killion, & Mitchell, 1989). Resolutions to problems as a result of taking part in shared decision making "are usually superior in quality to the thinking of any individual member and are usually implemented with greater commitment and efficiency" (Daniels, 1986, p. 9).

**Summary**

This chapter reviewed the literature on shared decision making relative to context and outcomes. After a brief description of context, research findings on structure, purpose, function, training, and obstacles were presented. Within structure, the composition of committees, including the roles of committee members, and the procedures committee members used
were discussed. Under training, two areas expanded upon were changing roles and group process. Trust and time were selected as obstacles to be reviewed. The research on outcomes, particularly areas related to teacher satisfaction and organizational effectiveness, was then reviewed. Under teacher satisfaction, areas included were ownership, commitment, creativity, collegiality, and professionalism. Under organizational effectiveness, areas reviewed were productivity, communication, and decisions.
CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study is defined in three parts which answer the research questions guiding the study. These three parts 1) produce a "snapshot" description of shared decision making in 129 elementary schools in a large suburban public school district, 2) identify schools for participation in indepth studies, and 3) conduct indepth studies in identified schools to provide examples and information to others who may wish to engage in shared decision making. This third part is accomplished by describing shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles); and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness) in three schools that appear to be advanced in the implementation of shared decision making. There are six research questions:

1. How do elementary school principals perceive shared decision making in their schools?

2. How do principals in selected schools perceive participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and
outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?

3. How do teachers on the decision-making team in selected schools perceive participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?

4. How do teachers not serving currently on the decision-making team in selected schools perceive participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?

5. What similarities and/or differences appear to exist among principals, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers not serving currently on the decision-making team within each selected school in participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?

6. What similarities and/or differences are perceived among principals, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers not serving currently on the decision-making team, across the
selected schools in participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?

This chapter includes a discussion of both survey research and case-study research used to answer the above research questions, as well as an introduction to and descriptions of, the population, instrumentation, and procedures for data collection and analysis for all three parts of the study. Permission to conduct this study was granted by the school division’s research screening committee under the direction of the Office of Educational Planning (Appendix A).

**Part One - The Survey**

**Introduction**

In order to answer research question 1, a survey-research approach was used to collect data on the status of principals’ perceptions of personnel participation in shared decision making in terms of context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness) in their schools in Spring, 1991.

Sharon Merriam (1991, p. 7) explains that “survey research typically assesses a few variables across a large number of instances....Survey
research is deductive in nature—that is, variables are selected for investigation from a theory or conceptual model before the study. Hypotheses about the extent, nature, frequency, and relationships among variables often guide this type of research. Findings are then presented quantitatively."

Floyd J. Fowler, Jr., (1988) proffers that survey data collection is an interaction between a researcher and a respondent and that with a self-administered survey the researcher speaks directly to the respondent through a written questionnaire (p. 76). Fowler goes on to state that good questionnaires have the following properties:

1. The researcher’s side of the question and answer process is fully scripted, so that the questions as written fully prepare a respondent to answer the questions.

2. The question means the same thing to every respondent.

3. The kinds of answers that constitute an appropriate response to the question are communicated consistently to all respondents (p. 76).

Survey questionnaires were used because they are efficient, require little time to answer, and permit collection from a large population. The population included all 129 elementary schools in a large suburban public school system in Virginia.
**Instrumentation: The Principal Questionnaire**

A four-page questionnaire includes three pages representing a different condition of decision-making practices in elementary schools and one page for "other". This was designed for principals to identify and select the one condition most descriptive of their schools (Appendix B). The three conditions are defined below:

**Condition 1:**

The Faculty Advisory Council as described in Regulation 4451.1 is the one committee used to provide a direct line of communication between the principal and staff members to raise and discuss concerns.

**Condition 2:**

Other committees, e.g., Team Leaders, in addition to the Faculty Advisory Council, provide a direct line of communication between the principal and staff members to raise and discuss concerns.

**Condition 3:**

One committee, e.g., School Improvement Team or Effective Schools Committee, subsumes the function of the Faculty Advisory Council to resolve concerns and also addresses broader issues related to instruction and school operations.

The development of the questionnaire began in October, 1990. Like parts of a mosaic used to compose a complete picture, items selected for inclusion in the questionnaire were prompted by Regulation 4451.1, the
literature on shared decision making, discussions with colleagues and university professors, and personal experiences in shared decision making.

The first draft (Appendix B) of the questionnaire constructed in October, 1990, was limited to one side of a page and concentrated on questions about Faculty Advisory Councils with a final question about the use of "other faculty groups or committees".

In November/December 1990, as a result of discussions with dissertation committee members regarding clarity of the instrument, the questionnaire was revised to include descriptions of three potential conditions of shared decision making that might exist in the studied school. Principals were asked to select one condition and complete the items related to that condition. Revisions included eliminating those items related to demographics, which were considered unnecessary for this part of the study but appropriate for later use in the case studies. Items were added to increase information about the context of the committees.

The third draft, January, 1991 (Appendix B), revised the definition of each condition, included a description of the conditions in the cover letter, and paraphrased a description of the condition at the top of a color-coded page. The format of the questionnaire was changed from one white page to three colored pages - blue, yellow, and pink. The box layout for the items, with a space to the left for responses, was changed to a list of the items down the left side of the page with an answer column down the right side. In this draft,
the principal would first select the condition that described his/her school and then complete the corresponding colored page of the questionnaire.

Revisions included eliminating an item on training as unnecessary for this portion of the study. Minor changes related to format, specificity, and inclusiveness of all possible responses were made in eight items. Directions on how to respond were added to the items that did not have them. A section for "Other Comments" was added to allow for responses not covered in the conditions or items.

Between the third and final versions, two principals and one assistant principal were asked to fill out the questionnaire on an informal field test basis. It took them fifteen minutes or less time to complete. Suggestions for clarity included further defining of the conditions, reducing the number of settings for locations, and adding a line for teachers in special programs.

The final version (Appendix B) of the questionnaire was completed in March, 1991. It refined the definition of the three conditions and added a form, "Other", for principals to use if they perceived that the three conditions did not apply.

In its final form, the questionnaire was a stapled packet of five duplicated pages. The first page was the cover letter (Appendix B) on white paper, followed by a blue page for the Condition 1 form, a yellow page for the Condition 2 form, and a pink page for the Condition 3 form, and a green page for "Other" responses.
Data Collection Procedures

All 129 elementary school principals were given an opportunity to respond to the Principal Questionnaire (Appendix B). The questionnaire was presented to 98 principals at three principals’ meetings in March and April, 1991. It was mailed to the remaining 32 principals through the county’s internal mail system. All principals were given a red, letter-sized envelope (Appendix B) in which to return the questionnaire. Inside the envelope was a colorful pencil imprinted with "Learning is Fun" intended as a "Thank You" to the principal for completing and returning the questionnaire.

At the principals’ meetings in March and April, 1991, the questionnaire was distributed to 98 principals after a short presentation. The same explanation of the purpose for the questionnaire was used at all of the meetings (Appendix B): (a) to provide a "snapshot" of shared decision making across the school division and (b) to identify schools to participate in follow-up, indepth studies.

The agenda for the March 13 meeting, held with 35 principals, was full and after a brief introduction, the standard presentation (Appendix B) was given. There was little time left for questions. At the end of the meeting, there was informal interaction. Questions and comments included, "Good luck!" "When will you be finished?" "This looks interesting." and "With Condition 2, you described my school perfectly". By the end of the meeting, 14 principals of 35 in attendance had returned the questionnaire. (Two
principals were absent from the meeting.) Eventually, 36 of 37 principals returned the questionnaire.

Due to poor weather, arrival times at the March 14th meeting were sporadic. The questionnaires were distributed and explained to individual principals as they arrived. With nine principals present, the meeting began and, as in the first session, the standard presentation (Appendix B) again was delivered. Later in the meeting, after the standard presentation, three more principals arrived and they were given individual explanations about the purpose of the questionnaire. Comments included, "It must be fun to go to the different principals' meetings," and "Good luck!". By the end of the meeting on March 14, eight principals of 12 present had returned the questionnaire. Eventually, all 12 principals in attendance returned the questionnaire.

At the last of the three meetings on March 15, 1991, 16 principals were present when the meeting began. The standard presentation (Appendix B) again was given and at the end of the meeting, a brief explanation was provided for three principals who arrived after the meeting was underway. By the end of the meeting, six principals of 19 present returned the questionnaire. (One principal was absent from both meetings. He was later mailed a questionnaire and returned it.) Eventually, 15 of 19 principals in attendance returned the questionnaire.
At the April meeting, the presentation of the questionnaire was the last item on the agenda. This allowed time for questions and comments such as, "Would Self Study be the kind of global committee described in Condition 3?" and "All of my committees are school-wide decision-making groups." By the end of the April meeting, 17 of the 32 principals present returned the questionnaire. Eventually, 31 of 33 principals returned the questionnaire.

Twenty-five principals did not return their questionnaires by April 11 and were sent a follow-up letter (Appendix B) and an additional questionnaire with a revised cover letter to reflect the need for an April 22 return date. Between March 15 and April 26, 72 questionnaires were returned via the internal mail system. An additional questionnaire was returned on May 21. A total of 118 Principal Questionnaires (91%) were returned from the initial mailing, presentations, and the follow-up mailing.

Analysis of Data

Data collected from 118 questionnaires were entered into a database. The data revealed the number of schools under each condition as shown in Table 1. One principal, in an informal discussion, indicated that her response should be included in the Condition 1 response group, rather than the Condition 3 response group she selected initially. This correction was made by the researcher before entering the data in the database. Also, the researcher, principal of an elementary school in the school system
Table 1. Number of Schools Selecting Each Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 118

*includes the researcher's school
participating in the study, included the data, from her school in the database so that the "snapshot" would be most accurate. For obvious reasons, the researcher's school was not considered for in-depth study.

Data collected from the questionnaire served two purposes. The first was to provide a "snapshot" of shared decision making across the school division. The second was to identify schools for participation in a follow-up survey: Telephone Survey of Principals Responding to Condition 3 on the Principal Questionnaire (Appendix C). Subsequent sections of this chapter describe procedures for Part 2 and Part 3 of the study.

**Part Two - Telephone Survey of Principals Responding to Condition 3 on the Principal Questionnaire (Appendix C)**

**Introduction**

In order to address research questions two through six, this part of the study used a survey-research approach to identify schools for participation in in-depth studies. The population included ten principals who responded to Condition 3 on The Principal Questionnaire (Appendix B).

**Instrumentation**

The principals were interviewed by telephone in August and September, 1991, with the Telephone Survey of Principals Responding to...
Condition 3 on The Principal Questionnaire (Appendix C). The survey was designed to confirm that principals correctly selected Condition 3. The schools of those principals verifying their choice of Condition 3 constituted the pool for in-depth studies. The survey consisted of six questions on one side of a page with space for the researcher to record responses.

Data Collection Procedures

Each of the ten principals was called on either August 13 or 14, 1991. At two schools, no one answered the phone. One of the two principals who did not answer the phone had transferred to another school at this time. For this reason, that school was dropped for consideration as a site for case-study research. The other principal who was not available on August 13 or 14, was interviewed by phone on September 30. The eight available principals were read the opening statement which explained the purpose of the call:

I am following up on the Principal Questionnaire (Appendix B) given in the Spring. You were one of ten principals who selected Condition 3 on the Principal Questionnaire (Appendix B), indicating that you have a committee, such as a School Improvement Team or Effective Schools Committee, which subsumes the function of the Faculty Advisory Council.
The statement was followed with an open-ended question: Would you tell me how that works in your school? The principals' response to this question verified whether or not the principal had correctly represented their school as a Condition 3 school. Each call took two to three minutes to complete. The responses from the nine principals who took part in the Telephone Survey of Principals Responding to Condition 3 on the Principal Questionnaire (Appendix C) were recorded on a single form prepared for this purpose.

Data Analysis

Five of the nine schools reported that the Faculty Advisory Council was a separate committee or was combined with team leaders. Because the Faculty Advisory Council function was not subsumed under a School Improvement Team or Effective Schools Committee, these five schools were dropped as possible sites for case-study research. The remaining four, Schools A, B, C, and D, indicated that the Faculty Advisory Council had been subsumed as part of the shared decision-making committee governing the school. From this group of four schools, the researcher selected three, Schools A, B, and C, as sites for the case studies. School A is a large school (882 students, K-6) in an upper middle class neighborhood. The principal, a male between the ages of 45-55, had been assigned to the school for three years. He and the staff have been involved in shared decision making for
three years. Neither the principal nor the staff had been formally trained in shared decision making.

The teachers interviewed included three teachers serving on the decision-making team: a second grade general education teacher, a third grade general education teacher, and a physical education teacher; and three teachers not serving currently on the decision-making team: a first grade general education teacher, a fourth grade general education teacher, and a fifth grade general education teacher.

School B is a middle-size school (631 students, K-6) in a lower middle class neighborhood. The principal, a male between the ages of 45-55, had been principal at the school for nine years. He and the staff had been involved in shared decision making for three years, even though they received only one half-day of formal training in shared decision making.

The teachers interviewed included three teachers serving on the decision making team: a kindergarten teacher, a third grade general education teacher, and a fifth grade general education teacher; and three teachers not serving currently on the decision making team: a fifth grade general education teacher, a first grade general education teacher, and the librarian.

School C is a middle-size school (548 students, Head Start-6) in a middle-class neighborhood. The principal, a male between the ages of 45-55, had been assigned to the school for three years. He had been involved in
shared decision making for three years and the staff has been involved in shared decision making for four years. The principal received formal training along with the staff in shared decision making for one and one half years. The staff received formal training for three years which began under the leadership of the former principal.

The teachers interviewed included three teachers serving on the decision-making team: the librarian, a first grade general education teacher, and a fifth grade general education teacher; and three teachers not serving currently on the decision making team: a kindergarten teacher, a pre-school special education teacher, and a third-fourth grade special education teacher.

School D was dropped as a site for indepth study because it was a K-3 school, and the concern that the culture in a K-3 school might be inherently different from that in K-6 schools.

Data collected from the Telephone Survey of Principals Responding to Condition 3 on The Principal Questionnaire (Appendix C) served two purposes: The first was to verify schools as Condition 3 schools, and the second was to identify schools for participation in the case studies.

**Part Three - The Case Studies**

**Introduction**

In order to respond to research questions two through six, this part of the study used a case-study approach. Three schools, A, B, and C, were the
subject of indepth studies to provide examples and information to others who might wish to engage in shared decision making.

Robert K. Yin (1984) defines case-study research as an empirical inquiry that:

- investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when
- the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which
- multiple sources of evidence are used (p. 23).

Sharon B. Merriam (1991) delineates the nature of case study as a research design:

Case studies are particularistic in that they focus on a specific situation or phenomenon; they are descriptive; and they are heuristic—that is, they offer insights into the phenomenon under study. Philosophical assumptions underlying the case study draw from the qualitative rather than the quantitative research paradigm. Qualitative inquiry is inductive—focusing on process, understanding, and interpretation—rather than deductive and experimental (p. 21).

Robert K. Yin (1984) states that case-study research has a distinct advantage when "a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control" (p. 20).
Population

The population for the case studies included principals and teachers at three elementary schools in a large suburban public school system in Virginia. These schools (cases A, B, and C) were identified by the principals' responses to Condition 3 on The Principal Questionnaire (Appendix B) and the principals' answers to the Telephone Survey of Principals Responding to Condition 3 on the Principal Questionnaire (Appendix C) combined with demographic data about the schools.

At each of the three schools, the researcher interviewed the principal, teachers who serve on schoolwide decision-making teams, and teachers who do not serve currently on such teams with The Interview Protocol (Appendix D).

Instrumentation: The Interview Protocol (Appendix D)

Questions for The Interview Protocol (Appendix D) instrument were developed from the literature on shared decision making, discussions with colleagues and university professors, and personal experiences in shared decision making. In March, 1992, as a result of discussions with dissertation committee members, the first draft of the instrument took on a two-part design. The first part contained three open-ended questions (1, 2, and 3) that were scripted only, and not tape-recorded. The second part, questions 4-25, were tape-recorded and later transcribed.
The second version of The Interview Protocol (Appendix D) was used in the field test at School D, the school not included for indepth study because it is a K-3 school. The field test was included to identify changes needed to "improve item clarity and understanding; avoid the perception of item duplication; re-evaluate purpose of item; practice delivery to reduce negative responses; time the interview length; and finally, to alter item sequence for smoother delivery" (Hartley, 1987, p. 48). The principal was interviewed on March 25, 1992, because she would not be available on April 3, 1992, when the teachers at School D were interviewed. The teachers included a preschool teacher, a kindergarten teacher, a first grade teacher, a second grade teacher, a physical education teacher, and the reading teacher.

The data from the field test at School D were shared with the dissertation committee members on April 14, 1992. The main finding from the field test was the need to allow at least one hour for the interviews. The dissertation committee members suggested adding questions which allowed the principals or teachers to give views on each other's perspective on certain questions. The suggestions were incorporated into the third and final version of The Interview Protocol (Appendix D), which was designed to elicit the perceptions of principals and teachers relative to shared decision making in terms of current experiences, context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness) in schools A, B, and C.
Data Collection Procedures

The researcher

- Contacted the principals of the three schools to ask if they would be willing to have their school used as a site for indepth study. (Before agreeing to take part in the indepth studies, the principals consulted with their staffs.)

- Asked for staff lists identifying teachers serving on schoolwide decision-making teams at the three selected schools.

- Selected, at random, three teachers who were serving on schoolwide decision-making teams at the three selected schools.

- Selected, at random, three teachers who were not serving currently on schoolwide decision-making teams at the three selected schools.

- Contacted the three selected schools to establish visitation dates to interview selected teachers, as well as principals.

- Visited the three schools selected for indepth studies to collect and record data from the principals, teachers who served on schoolwide decision-making teams, and three randomly selected teachers who did not serve currently on such teams using The Interview Protocol (Appendix D) and a tape recorder.
Data Analysis

The data analysis for this part of the study followed a qualitative descriptive approach. To check validity of the responses to the structured questions (questions 4-20) of The Interview Protocol three sets of identical cards containing the responses to the three open-ended questions (questions 1-3) were analyzed separately by the researcher and two colleagues for the most frequently occurring themes related to shared decision making. A summary of the findings are available upon request from the researcher. The themes which emerged from the open-ended questions (questions 1-3) include collegiality; support from administrators; having a voice that is heard; the leadership role of the staff; instructional decision making; a broad, schoolwide perspective; a professional atmosphere; an atmosphere of trust; the need for training in group process and role clarification; and desired changes. The data from questions 4-20 of The Interview Protocol (Appendix D) were transcribed from the tape recordings (transcriptions are available upon request from the researcher), categorized for analysis, and displayed in summary in tables in Chapter IV. There is consistency in the responses relative to shared decision making whether the responses were open-ended or structured.
Summary

A three part study of shared decision making in a large suburban public school system was designed: 1) to produce a "snapshot" description of shared decision making in 129 elementary schools in a large suburban public school district, 2) to identify schools for participation in indepth studies, and 3) to conduct indepth studies in identified schools to provide examples and information to others who may wish to engage in shared decision making.

Multiple data gathering methods based on survey research and case-study research were used to respond to the three parts of the study. The survey research included a written survey delivered to all principals in the school system to respond to part one of the study, and a follow-up telephone survey of ten principals was used to respond to part two of the study. The case-study research used formal interviews of principals and teachers in three schools selected for indepth studies to respond to part three of the study. The selection of the three schools was based on the principals' responses to the surveys in parts one and two of the study.
CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

Introduction

During the spring of the 1991-1992 school year, three principals and 18 teachers at the three elementary schools selected for in-depth study were interviewed. Each of the principals and teachers worked in the same large suburban school district in Virginia. The total school system enrolled approximately 130,000 students. The elementary school student population was distributed across 129 elementary schools. The sample for this part of the study was selected in two steps: first, 129 elementary school principals were given the opportunity to respond to a survey which identified the level of shared decision making existing in their schools; and second, in a follow-up telephone survey to ten principals, four confirmed their response that a shared decision-making committee subsuming the faculty advisory council operated in their schools. One school, composed of grades K-3, was removed from consideration due to concerns that the culture in a K-3 school might be inherently different than the culture in a K-6 school. This school was used to field test The Interview Protocol (Appendix D).

The interviews took place on May 12, 1992, at School A; on May 15, 1992, and June 11, 1992, at School B (two teachers were absent on May 15 and rescheduled for June 11); and on May 19, 1993, at School C. The
principal, three teachers serving on the decision-making team, and three
teachers not currently serving on the team were interviewed for a total of
seven interviews at each school and an overall total of twenty-one interviews.
The interviews were approximately one hour long.

At the beginning of each interview, the researcher, an elementary
school principal in the school system, discussed the purpose of the study: to
provide a "snapshot" of shared decision making in elementary schools across
the school system and to provide examples and information to others who
may wish to engage in shared decision making. The researcher explained
how three schools were selected for indepth study, so that those interviewed
would understand why their school was chosen and how they came to be
asked to take part in the study.

The purpose of this chapter is to answer Research Questions 2-6 with
the data gathered in the interviews. The principal, teachers on the
decision-making team, and teachers not currently serving on the
decision-making team at each of the three schools described the context
within which shared decision making took place in their buildings and the
outcomes which resulted from engaging in the process by responding to The
Interview Protocol (Appendix D). Categories related to context (structure,
purpose function, training, and obstacles) and outcomes: teacher
satisfaction (ownership, commitment, creativity, collegiality, and
professionalism) and organizational effectiveness (productivity,
communication, and decisions), were identified from the responses to three open-ended questions, (1-3--intended to put the interviewee at ease as well as serve as a check on validity) and seventeen directed questions, (4-20--intended to elicit context and outcomes responses) on The Interview Protocol (Appendix D). Responses to the first three open-ended questions were organized by themes. These responses were summarized into categories for display in tables at the end of this chapter. Responses to the directed questions, (4-20), were analyzed, categorized, and summarized for display in tables that follow at the end of this chapter.

**Research Question One**

Research question one asked, "How do elementary school principals perceive shared decision making in their schools?" As stated earlier, a survey-research approach was used to collect data on the status of principals' perceptions of personnel participation in shared decision making. The principals' responses to the survey instrument, The Principal Questionnaire, produced the sample for the research part of the study (responses are summarized in Table 1 on page 43 in Chapter III of this study.

**Research Question Two**

Research question two asked, "How do principals in selected schools perceive participation in shared decision making relative to
context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?

Principals at each of the three schools described the context within which shared decision making took place in their buildings and the outcomes which resulted from engaging in the process.

SCHOOL A

Context

Responding to directed question four, the principal described the structure of the shared decision-making committee: eight staff members were elected to serve on the committee; they represented no given body; a teacher was elected chair of the committee; there was no set way issues were brought to the committee (notes in mailbox to the principal or committee members), the agenda was set by the chair with input from administrators; the committee met weekly on Monday afternoons in the library classroom; committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff in collaborative groups on Tuesday mornings and notes were taken and distributed to everyone.

In response to directed questions five and six, the principal reported that communication was the purpose for engaging in shared decision making and the function was to make decisions.
In response to the first three open-ended questions, the principal indicated a need for training in role clarification.

Responding to directed question seven, the principal cited lack of training as one of the obstacles to shared decision making. In response to directed question eight, other obstacles reported were the large size of the staff, teachers who do not buy into the vision, and time—having to wait for the committee to make decisions.

Outcomes

In response to directed questions, (9-20), the principal expressed satisfaction that the collaborative team made and took credit for decisions (ownership); that trust and openness existed (professionalism); that teachers felt free to express their views (professionalism); and that his relationship with his peers was positive and open (collegiality). However, he did not attribute risk-taking (creativity) by teachers to the existence of a shared decision-making committee, but rather to his hiring teachers who were risk-takers. He expressed that it had been very difficult to get teachers involved in shared decision making.

Regarding organizational effectiveness, responses to the first three open-ended questions resulted with the principal indicating productivity could be increased by dividing the principal’s position into two positions, one
for management and one for support. The principal also stated that there was a need for improved communication.

In response to directed questions, (9-20), the principal indicated that productivity was increased because the eight teachers who served on the committee had the "big picture" and made "wonderful, broad perspective, greater-good, better-school decisions" that took into account all the necessary factors. The decisions made for the most part were not visionary, but more day-to-day operational decisions. The principal reported that he thought teachers felt the same as he about the kinds of decisions that emerged from the committee. However, even though the principal expressed satisfaction that trust and openness existed, he reported that the majority of the staff were dissatisfied with the process and would like to see the committee disbanded because they didn’t trust the members of the committee, whom they viewed as "elitist", to make decisions. The principal perceived that members of the committee dealt with issues and when conflicts arose they were over principles and not with personal differences.

SCHOOL B

Context

Responding to directed question four, the principal described the structure of the shared decision-making committee: grade-level and non-classroom representatives were selected by the principal to serve on the
committee; the principal chaired the committee and set the agenda; issues were brought to the committee through the principal, members of the committee, and teachers not on the committee; the committee met weekly on Tuesday mornings in the library; and the principal took notes which were distributed to the members of the committee, who in turn distributed them or the information they contained, to the teachers they represented.

In response to directed questions five and six, the principal reported that communication was the purpose for engaging in shared decision making and although decisions were made, the function was mainly advisory.

Responding to directed question seven, the only training the principal received was an inservice at the beginning of the year which he arranged for the teachers.

To the first three open-ended questions, the principal responded that, "A nicely laid out twelve months' plan is made a mockery of" with "emergencies" and "putting out fires". The principal underscored this response by listing time and "things over which we have no control" as obstacles in his answer to directed question eight.

Outcomes.

The principal expressed satisfaction that teachers were at the point of thinking about the decisions they wanted to make on their own and those they
wanted someone to make for them (ownership); that he was more comfortable, at ease, relaxed, and felt more a part of the faculty (collegiality); that he could speak "more accurately about what's happening" (communication); that teachers felt more comfortable taking risks because they had "now sat across the table from someone" unfamiliar (creativity); and that his relationship with his peers was a good one (collegiality).

Regarding organizational effectiveness, the principal, in response to the first three open-ended questions, indicated the management team increased productivity by condensing committees and eliminating meetings.

In response to directed questions, (9-20), the principal indicated that productivity was increased because teachers were made aware of what the principal hoped to accomplish through the committee and members of the committee had an opportunity to give input on how the committee would operate. The principal shared that, "This year, the group likes to bring up nitty, gritty things," and "probably feels I should take a stand because I'm being paid more money than they are, so I should be making those decisions and they would be happy to implement the decisions I make."

The principal did not agree with every decision, but believed that teachers felt more comfortable speaking about concerns within the context of the small decision-making committee than they did in a large faculty meeting, and therefore, issues were addressed that otherwise might not have surfaced.
He stated, "I don't think you get a true picture unless you take it to a smaller group."

The principal reported that there was "lots of conflict" but resolutions were found through the small-group interactions which he compared to those that take place in a family. The principal stated that this year, although the committee made decisions, it operated in a more advisory capacity than he would like. However, the principal was hopeful that the shared decision-making committee would work "as we envision it to work....We didn't know where to go" after the first year. "It got fuzzy."

**SCHOOL C**

**Context**

In response to directed question four, the principal described the **structure** of the shared decision-making committee: committee members did not rotate, and when a vacancy occurred by attrition, new members were chosen by the teachers; committee members were not widely representative of the total school staff; two teachers co-chaired the committee and set the agenda with input from the principal; issues were brought verbally to any committee member; the committee met monthly in the library or conference room; and co-chairs took notes and distributed them to the teachers.
In response to the first three open-ended questions, the principal said there was a need for training to clarify the purpose for taking part in shared decision making.

In response to directed questions five and six, the principal said that shared decision making was the purpose and the function for involving teachers in shared decision making. (In an earlier interview at School C, a teacher disclosed that there was a separate Faculty Advisory Council. That was the first time that the researcher was made aware that a Faculty Advisory Council existed at School C. At this stage of the study, the researcher decided to keep School C in the study. During his interview, the principal confirmed that there was a Faculty Advisory Council that he kept in operation, even though he found it redundant, because the teachers wanted it for its union orientation.)

Regarding training, the principal responded to the first three open-ended questions by stating a need for training to clarify roles.

In response to directed question seven, the principal reported that his dissertation, which explored the relationship between teacher satisfaction as a result of shared decision making and teacher militancy, served as part of his training.

Responding to directed question eight, the principal cited strong personalities and teachers who did not share the vision as obstacles to shared decision making.
Outcomes

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), the principal shared his concern that the committee needed to look at the process for shared decision making because consensus was emphasized at the expense of analysis of issues. He said, "It would be easier for the administrators to make decisions, but that is not professional."

The principal expressed satisfaction that a very positive, collegial relationship, in which his influence had been extended, existed between him and the teachers, and that risk-taking had increased over the past three years due to his administrative efforts.

Regarding organizational effectiveness, the principal responded to the first three open-ended questions by indicating that control of the budget would increase productivity.

In response to directed questions, (9-20), the principal reported that productivity had increased because the shared decision-making committee coordinated all other committees responsible for school plan reports and goal setting.

The principal reported that teachers perceived they had a say in most decisions, including making a recommendation for filling the assistant principal position. The principal was "fairly comfortable" with the decisions the committee made, although he "disagreed once or twice". An example of a decision made by the shared decision-making committee that he
disagreed with was having all itinerants come on Friday. The teachers experienced that this practice decreased productivity and asked to have the decision reversed.

Research Question Three

Research question three asked, "How do teachers on the decision-making team in selected schools perceive participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?"

Teachers on the shared decision-making committee at each of the three schools described the context within which shared decision making took place in their buildings and the outcomes which resulted from engaging in the process.

SCHOOL A

Context

Responding to directed question four, team members described the structure of the shared decision-making committee. One team member reported that the committee was made up of the principal, assistant principal, and eight faculty members. Another team member did not know how many members served on the committee. A third team member did not report
numbers, but agreed with the other team members that members of the committee were elected.

A team member stated that committee members "should represent everyone, but I don't always see that." One team member reported that representation was by pods (open spaces surrounded by classrooms) and another team member said that teachers and aides were represented.

All team members agreed that the chair of the committee was elected, but only one team member specified that the chair was a teacher.

Two team members stated that issues were brought to the attention of the committee through the groups the members represented, or directly to the principal or chair of the committee.

One team member reported that the agenda was set by the team members "along with the administrators", and another said that all the members of the committee had input into setting the agenda at a meeting held for that purpose.

All the team members agreed that the committee met weekly on Monday afternoons in the library classroom.

Two members reported that committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff through written notes, which were gone over on Tuesday mornings in the small groups that committee members represented.

In response to directed question five, making decisions was the purpose for engaging in shared decision making for two of the team
members. Another team member said the committee served the same purpose as the Faculty Advisory Council.

Responding to directed question six, two team members described the function of the committee as making decisions or bringing up issues that impacted the whole school. Another team member felt that some things dealt with by the committee were "too petty" and that they "should deal with things that effect the whole school."

Responses to the first three open-ended questions by two team members indicated a need for training in role clarification. One of these team members indicated a need for training in group process.

In response to directed question seven, all team members reported that they had not taken part in formal training.

Responses to the first three open-ended questions by two team members indicated strong personalities were obstacles.

In response to directed question eight, the same two team members were consistent in saying that strong personalities were an obstacle to shared decision making. Other obstacles included time to engage in the process, trying to do too much, and trying to please everybody.
Outcomes

Regarding **teacher satisfaction**, responses to the first three open-ended questions by two team members indicated an increase in the sense of **ownership**; one team member perceived **creativity** had increased; one team member indicated **collegiality** had improved/increased; and one team member perceived **a need to improve collegiality**.

In response to directed questions, (9-20), one team member described her **professional growth** in learning to lead a group of peers and to speak up and dissent within a group setting, "I think giving a person a leadership role is a growth experience. I think it is impacting on me as a teacher because I've given my children far more leadership positions in the classroom, seeing how good it is for me, I think it is good for them, also."

Three team members indicated **collegiality** had improved/increased. One team member expressed that, "being on the shared decision-making team has made me listen to people more carefully and be more self-reflective and not so spontaneous." In describing working relationships with peers, a team member stated, "We get along very well." Another team member said, "We got to know each other better. That was positive."

Two team members indicated that risk-taking or trying new strategies was not an **outcome** of shared decision-making. One team member was not sure there was a direct link between shared decision making and taking risks.
Another team member believed the principal "sets an atmosphere in the school where risks are encouraged."

Team members’ responses differed as to how the committee impacted on organizational effectiveness at their school. Regarding how the committee was working, one team member believed that the faculty was more and more included. Another team member reported that "the shared decision-making committee is disbanding, not because collegiality doesn’t work, but because it wasn’t working to do all of it: the complaints, the concerns, the running of the school, the communication part, the information part." Two team members shared that out of a survey to the staff and the retreat attended by the members of the shared decision-making committee, a decision was made to "break off a Faculty Advisory Committee, so the shared decision-making committee would not be doing everything." In its place, "we’ll have a curriculum team" and "an advisory team".

Three team members felt positive about the decisions that emerged from the committee. One team member shared, "I feel for the most part pleased," and another team member said, "I have always felt very comfortable with the decisions." One team member stated that, "Collegiality does not mean the administrators do not have to make a decision now and then."
Two team members shared their perceptions of how the principal felt about the kinds of decisions that emerged from the shared decision-making committee. One team member said, "I think for the most part he's pleased with them," and another stated, "The principal thinks we've come a long way."

Team members reported that conflict took place in the committee. One team member shared her response to a situation in which she felt a teacher bypassed the scheduling committee and went to the shared decision-making committee. She stated, "I feel secure enough in that group (the shared decision-making committee) to be able to say, 'I wasn't happy about that. That made me uncomfortable. And I don't think that is what we designed this group to do.'" Another team member stated that "I've been frustrated when my voice was dismissed when I had a view."

SCHOOL B

Context

Responding to directed question four, team members described the structure of the shared decision-making committee. One team member reported that the committee was made up of eleven to twelve representatives. Another team member stated that the committee was made up of grade-level representatives, a specialist, and a counselor. A third team member said that the principal picked one person from each grade level, a person to represent
the specialists, and someone to represent English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers.

Two team members agreed that the principal selected the members. One team member said they didn't know how committee members were selected, but thought, "the principal picks different people each year so that everybody has a chance."

All team members agreed that the principal chaired the committee; set the agenda, but at the meeting allowed the members of the committee to bring up issues that may have been brought to their attention by other teachers; that the committee met weekly on Tuesday mornings in the library; and that committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff through notes taken by the principal and distributed to team members, who in turn shared them with the teachers they represented.

**Communication** was the purpose for engaging in shared decision making according to all three team members in response to directed question five.

Responding to directed question six, two team members reported **decision making** as the function of the shared decision-making committee. One team member said the function was "to discuss issues too small to be brought up at faculty meetings."

All three team members agreed, in response to directed question seven, that they **did not receive formal training**.
Responding to directed question eight, one team member did not think there were any obstacles to shared decision making. Two team members indicated that other team members who "speak louder" or "are intimidating" were obstacles.

Outcomes

In response to directed questions, (9-20), three team members expressed satisfaction with their collegial relationships: "I find it very comfortable"; "I feel this is a very comfortable place to work"; and, "I've always felt I had input."

Risk-taking was not seen as an outcome of shared decision-making. One team member said, "I don't see any way that it's connected," and another said, "I've been here many years and most have been risk-takers."

Team members' responses to how the committee impacted on organizational effectiveness were positive. Decisions emerging from the committee were reported by team members as "made by the teachers as well as the administrators"; "fair and meeting the needs of the faculty"; and, "handled well." One said, "I think decisions are made equitably." Another stated, "We all have input." A third team member reported, "I think the vast majority of the decisions I would agree with."

Two team members shared their perceptions of how the principal felt about how the committee was working and the kinds of decisions that
emerged from the shared decision-making committee. One team member said, "I think he is in favor of a shared decision-making committee and he's usually very positive and not just with decisions made but with the issues that are discussed." Another team member stated, "He's happy with it (the committee) and he voices objections if he doesn't agree with us."

Team members agreed that conflict took place in the committee. One team member shared that "religious celebration" was discussed for several weeks because, "some of the teachers could not understand...celebration...is just not appropriate in the classroom." Another team member shared that, "We did have some people on the committee with strong opinions who are very good at expressing themselves and making sure that everybody knows exactly how they feel about things."

**SCHOOL C**

Context

In response to directed question four, the team members described the structure of the shared decision-making committee. Two team members reported that the committee was made up of teachers, specialists, and the administrators. One of these team members added that the PTA president served as a member of the committee. A third team member said that the committee was comprised of "whoever wants to be on it."
One team member reported that committee members were selected by the team they represented. Two team members stated that committee members volunteered to serve on the committee. One team member reported that she represented her grade level, and two team members stated that they represented the staff.

All three team members stated that two teachers served as co-chairs. One team member said that issues were brought to the attention of the committee by teachers who, "drop by your room" or "drop a note in your mailbox." Another team member stated that teachers may "come to the meeting", and a third team member reported, "We're all members of other committees, so we know what to bring up."

All three team members reported that the co-chairs and the principal set the agenda and that meetings were held once a month. Two team members stated that meetings were held in the conference room, and one team member said that meetings were held in the library. The team members agreed that committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff through notes that were put in everyone's mailbox.

In response to directed question give, the three team members differed in their description of the purpose for engaging in shared decision making. One team member said the purpose was so that the, "group might be privy to issues before they're brought up to the total group and take a little vote on how and when the issue should be presented to the total staff." Another team
member stated that the purpose was instructional decision making because, "there is a separate Faculty Advisory Council." A third team member reported that the purpose was to involve teachers in developing the school plan.

Responding to directed question six, one team member reported that the function of the shared decision-making committee was to prepare the school plan. Another team member said the function was "to advise the principal and we make some decisions."

One team member, in response to the first three open-ended questions, indicated a need for training in group process.

In response to directed question seven, two team members reported that they received formal training from the Office of Educational Planning and Services. Another team member said that she attended a CARD (Center for Applied Research and Development) meeting her first year at the school.

Two team members reported that teachers or administrators who don't buy into the concept of shared decision making are obstacles to the process.

Outcomes

Regarding teacher satisfaction, responses to the first three open-ended questions by two team members indicated growth in
professionalism had occurred and two team members perceived an increase in the sense of ownership.

In their responses to directed questions, (9-20), the same two team members who indicated an increase in the sense of ownership in response to the open-ended questions, did so again. One team member expressed that a change she perceived in herself as an educator was that "my voice is heard." Another team member reported that she perceived she had more involvement and ownership.

Regarding teachers trying new strategies as a result of shared decision making, one team member indicated creativity had increased by stating that "the teachers who have bought into it feel an ownership and are risk-takers." Another team member said, "I think there's more sharing going on between committees."

For three team members, collegial relationships were described as "pleasant" due to having input into decisions, although one team member reported a need to improve collegiality. One team member expressed, "I have good relationships." Another team member stated, "It makes for better morale."

Regarding organizational effectiveness, two team members' responses to directed questions, (9-20), indicated that productivity was increased and one team member indicated that communication was
enhanced. Team members, "talk about issues that are presented and then team members report to their groups" for decisions or further discussion.

Two team members reported that most of the decisions that emerged from the committee were instructional decisions. Another team member said, "I think they are positive and they are the kinds of things that are important to the school."

One team member perceived that the principal was positive about the decisions that were made. Another team member said the principal, "is pleased that he has a staff that will make decisions." A third team member shared that the principal sometimes, "brings up that we'll restructure" the committee.

The three team members agreed that they have experienced conflict in the committee. One team member said, "As with any group, it is not unanimous at all times." Another team member shared, "I don't think there's ever been a committee where there hasn't been some conflict."

All the team members agreed that shared decision making works. A team member said, "I think it works, it's worthwhile, it's beneficial, it unites and pulls a staff together and makes everybody feel they are part of the whole, that they have merit and value and that someone appreciates what they have to say." Another team member said, "I certainly have a voice that is heard." A third team member stated, "I think it's a good process."
Research Question Four

Research question four asked, "How do teachers not serving currently on the decision-making team in selected schools perceive participation in school decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?"

Teachers not serving currently on the decision-making team at each of the three schools described the context within which shared decision making took place in their buildings and the outcomes which resulted from engaging in the process.

SCHOOL A

Context

In response to directed question four, the teachers described the structure of the shared decision-making committee. One teacher reported that the committee was made up of seven classroom teachers, one specialist, and two administrators. Another teacher said that six members were elected. A third teacher did not report numbers, but stated that teachers, specialists, and administrators served on the committee. All teachers agreed that the team members were elected.

The teachers did not agree on who committee members represented. One teacher reported that committee members represented "their own group."
Another teacher said, "There are times when portions of the faculty are not represented well." A third teacher stated, "people throughout the school, not just their grade level", were represented.

Two teachers agreed that a teacher chaired the committee, and one teacher said, "It rotates." All the teachers agreed that issues were brought to the attention of the committee through their representative. One teacher added, "People can go to the administrators."

Two teachers said that the agenda was set by the members of the committee. One teacher reported that the chair sets the agenda "with administrator input." All the teachers agreed that the committee met once a week in the library and that committee activities were reported through written notes or meetings.

In response to the first three open-ended questions, two teachers indicated **the need to clarify the purpose** of the shared decision-making committee. Responding to directed question five, three teachers indicated that **teacher input into decisions** was the **purpose** for engaging in shared decision making.

In responding to the first three open-ended questions, a teacher indicated **a need to clarify the function** of the shared decision-making committee.

Responding to directed question six, two teachers described the **function** of the committee as **making decisions**.
Responses to the first three open-ended questions by one teacher indicated a need for training in group process. None of the teachers reported receiving formal training in response to directed question seven.

Responding to directed question eight, two teachers stated that time and the large size of the school were obstacles to shared decision making. One teacher mentioned "the outspoken minority" and "little factions" as obstacles. Another teacher included those who didn't really understand the role or those "who seem to play roles" as obstacles.

Outcomes

Regarding teacher satisfaction, responses to the first three open-ended questions by one teacher indicated a need to improve/increase collegiality. Two teachers perceived an increase in a sense of ownership; one teacher indicated commitment had increased; and three teachers perceived collegiality had improved/increased.

Two teachers responded to directed questions, (9-20), by indicating an increase in the sense of ownership. One teacher said, "There are people who will listen", and another teacher stated, "I wouldn't hesitate to say something to the team and I know they would consider it."
All three teachers described their working relationships with their peers as positive, indicating that **collegiality** had improved/increased. One teacher described the five teachers on her team as sharing "all the time" and working "very closely together." Another teacher reported that his team listened "to one another about problems and ideas."

One teacher perceived growth in **professionalism** when she described a change that came about by exploring "places that were not my strengths and improving on them". Another teacher described her growth in **professionalism** as "feeling good about taking responsibility for decisions". A third teacher did not perceive changes, "I'm not sure there are any."

Risk-taking or trying new strategies was not seen as an **outcome** of shared decision making by two of the teachers. One teacher said, "A lot of the people who came into the school were risk-takers to start with." Another teacher stated, "I think risk-taking is linked to the attitude of the administrator." A third teacher reported, "On the surface, it's easier to be more open. It's an open forum. It's easier to get around in. But that's not always true. Peer pressure seems to play a part." The teacher went on to comment that more opinions were allowed to be shared in the small representative groups than would usually be shared at a faculty meeting, "It can be restraining when you're in front of the whole faculty."

Regarding **organizational effectiveness**, in response to the first three open-ended questions, one teacher indicated that **communication** was
enhanced. Two teachers indicated that they were **positive about decisions**, while one teacher was **not positive about decisions**.

In response to directed questions, (9-20), one teacher reported that **the process was not "smooth"**. Another teacher emphasized that **"a lot of time" was required to take part in the process**. A third teacher stated that **communication between a group of teachers and their representative to the shared decision-making committee was dependent on that representative's interpretations and "interpretations can be different."**

The three teachers shared their perceptions on **how the principal felt about the way the committee was working**. One teacher said, "I think he feels real good," but added, "Sometimes there are some decisions we would just as soon he would make." Another teacher reported, "He's made some changes. It is no longer the shared decision-making committee. He's going to develop a curriculum team to work on instructional issues. Another team will be an advisory group like the Faculty Advisory Council." A third teacher said, "I know he is a firm believer in exactly what we're doing, and he will do anything he can to make it work."

The three teachers gave differing perspectives on the **decisions** that emerged from the committee. One teacher agreed with the decisions, "wholeheartedly." Another teacher stated, "I'd say some decisions take more energy than they require", and a third teacher agreed, "Some of the things
that are discussed could be administrative decisions and people would be happy to accept them."

Two teachers agreed that the principal supported the decisions. One teacher said, "I think he supports them", and another teacher commented, "He always supports the decisions even if it's not his first choice." A third teacher commented, "He will allow teachers to do just about anything as long as they can justify what they're doing."

The teachers reported that conflict took place in the committee. One teacher shared that, "There were times when a decision was made that I was not totally for, but here you get feedback from other grade levels and other perspectives and so you have to be flexible." Another teacher reported a conflict "over scheduling. It was resolved, but it was like a judge and jury." A third teacher shared that "There has been lots of conflict about different issues", and "sometimes issues don't get resolved. They just get carried over for a very long time and then they're dropped."

SCHOOL B

Context

In response to directed question four, the teachers described the structure of the shared decision-making committee. All three teachers agreed that each grade level and the specialists were represented on the committee. Additionally, two teachers included a representative for the
secretaries, and one teacher mentioned the administrators. The teachers agreed that the principal selected the committee members. One teacher expressed, "I have yet to be asked by the principal."

Two teachers said that the principal chaired the committee, and another teacher said the "chair varies." All three teachers reported that they brought issues to the attention of the committee through the principal. In addition, two of the teachers mentioned bringing issues to the committee through their group representative. One teacher said the principal sets the agenda. Another teacher said the chair for the week "makes up the agenda", and a third teacher didn't know who sets the agenda.

The three teachers agreed that the committee met once a week in the library and that committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff through written minutes. Two teachers specified that the minutes were given only to the committee representatives, who in turn shared them with the groups they represented.

In response to directed question five, two teachers stated that making decisions was the purpose for engaging in shared decision making. Another teacher said the purpose was, "in lieu of having a Faculty Advisory Council which at one time caused a lot of problems with collegiality."

Responding to directed question six, one teacher responded that the function of the shared decision-making committee was to serve "as a
vehicle for communication." Another teacher said that the function was to manage the school in a "democratic way."

In response to directed question seven, all three teachers agreed that they did not receive formal training.

Responding to directed question eight, the obstacles reported by the teachers were related to personalities. One teacher said, "People who are not willing to change their opinion" were obstacles. Another teacher stated, "Some people feel more comfortable being vocal about the way they feel." A third teacher responded that her representative was not "strong enough to stand up to stronger personalities."

Outcomes

Regarding teacher satisfaction responses to the first three open-ended questions by two teachers indicated an increase in the sense of ownership; one teacher indicated creativity had increased; two teachers perceived collegiality had improved/increased; and two teachers described growth in professionalism.

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), two teachers perceived collegiality had improved/increased. One teacher described her working relationships with her peers as "collaborative". Another teacher said her relationships with her peers was "comfortable". One teacher described her
professional growth by reporting, "I think over the years, I have allowed my children to do more decision making."

Risk-taking or trying new strategies was not seen as an outcome of shared decision making, although one teacher shared that, "The year I was on the team, we enjoyed working together so much we asked to be put in the same wing. These are the people I share my professional ideas with."

Regarding organizational effectiveness, responses to the first three open-ended questions resulted with one teacher reporting that communication was enhanced.

Responses to directed questions, (9-20), resulted with one teacher indicating productivity had increased. "I know they discuss various things that effect all classroom teachers. Sometimes, it’s just a point of clarification. Sometimes, it’s guidelines for doing something. I feel very good about the way things are done. It eliminates a lot of faculty meetings where you get into a lot of long discussions about things that might not be pertinent to what you’re doing. Time is not wasted....It’s very democratic, actually."

Two teachers were positive about decisions. One teacher stated, "Decisions are made fairly. There’s generally faculty input." Another teacher responded, "I think considering all the viewpoints of the members of the group, they feel they have come to the best decision in light of everyone’s needs in the building."
One teacher shared her **doubts about the committee's effectiveness**, "One teacher is rather overbearing and imposes her viewpoint....I'm not sure it's effective as a vehicle of **communication**." She expressed dissatisfaction with the process, "I feel I don't really have any input....the person who represents me is a little meek."

Two teachers described an issue related to religious holidays as an example of **conflict**.

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**SCHOOL C**

**Context**

In response to directed question four, the teachers described the **structure** of the shared decision-making committee. Two teachers reported that someone from every grade level served on the committee. One of these teachers added, "It's the older teachers who have been here", and a third teacher agreed, that "People who serve are those who have been at the school some time."

The teachers did not know how committee members were selected. One responded, "I don't know." Another said, "I think they volunteer", and a third stated, "I think they just asked to be on it."

One teacher thought the committee "is co-chaired", and two teachers didn't know who chaired the committee. All the teachers agreed that issues were brought to the attention of the committee through committee
representatives, and two teachers also mentioned "administrators." One teacher stated that "the chair" sets the agenda, and another teacher said, "I think it's the chair." A third teacher reported, "I don't know."

Two teachers agreed that the committee met once a month. A third teacher said, "I don't know exactly." All the teachers agreed that the meeting was held in the "conference room" and that committee activities were reported in writing to the rest of the staff.

In response to directed questions five and six, the purpose and function for engaging in shared decision making was described by one teacher as discussing "what is mandatory as a school system" and deciding "what committee will handle it." Another teacher said the purpose was to "discuss problems, think about them, and make final decisions." A third teacher said the purpose was "to deal with issues" and "to try to improve the services we provide." One teacher reported the function of the shared decision-making committee was to "have a part in decision making."

In response to directed question seven, none of the teachers reported receiving formal training.

Responding to directed question eight, an obstacle to the process for one teacher was "a lack of communication." For another teacher, an
obstacle was not rotating membership on the committee, "I think when some people can’t be a part of it, and when someone has been on it so long."

Outcomes

Regarding teacher satisfaction, one teacher responded to the first three open-ended questions by indicating collegiality had improved/increased; two teachers perceived an increase in a sense of ownership; and one teacher described her professional growth.

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), two teachers indicated increased creativity. Two teachers said that having a voice was a change they perceived in themselves as educators. One teacher linked risk-taking to shared decision making, "As I became more a part of the system, I understood it more, and I saw everyone else expressing their opinion, and I've become more assertive." Another teacher said that teachers were "comfortable with new ideas."

All three teachers described their collegial relationships as positive. One teacher stated, "For the most part, people have been interested in what we're doing. It's part of the atmosphere of the school and I'm sure shared decision making has a part in that." Another teacher said, "I think it's made me closer to my peers because we have something to talk about." And a third teacher reported, "I feel my views are valued." One teacher indicated a need to improve/increase collegiality.
Regarding organizational effectiveness, in response to the first three open-ended questions one teacher perceived productivity had increased and communication was enhanced. Another teacher indicated that communication could be enhanced by improving the flow of communication from the shared decision-making committee.

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), three teachers indicated that the principal was positive about decisions and two teachers indicated they were positive about decisions. One teacher said, "I feel very good about the way they are made." Another teacher reported, "I think it's a good process, and the shared decision-making committee does a pretty good job and the grade levels are well represented."

One teacher indicated communication was not enhanced, "I don't think they report enough to us and they don't get our point of view." Another teacher stated that, "If you have a team that communicates well, then it works wonderfully."

All three teachers perceived that the principal was supportive of the process.

Two teachers reported that conflict took place in the committee. One teacher stated that being a pilot for the new report cards had led to some conflict and another teacher shared, "We've had a lot of conflict over how much to assess math."
Research Question Five

Research question five asked, "What similarities and/or differences in participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness) appear to exist among principals, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers not currently serving on the decision-making team, within each selected school?"

The principal, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers not currently serving on the decision-making team at each of the three schools described the context within which shared decision making took place in their buildings and the outcomes which resulted from engaging in the process.

SCHOOL A

Context

In their responses to directed question four, the principal, team members, and teachers agreed on the following components of the structure of the shared decision-making committee: faculty members and administrators served on the committee; faculty members were elected; representation was not structured; a teacher was elected as chair; and the committee met weekly in the library on Monday afternoons. Differences in
responses among the principal, team members, and teachers included: how issues were brought to the attention of the committee; who set the agenda; and how committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff.

The principal reported that issues were brought to the attention of the committee through notes or speaking to committee members, the chair, or the principal; two team members reported speaking to committee members, while one team member reported speaking to the principal; and two teachers reported using notes or speaking to committee members.

The principal, one team member, and one teacher agreed that the chair and administrators set the agenda. One team member said the chair sets the agenda and two teachers said the agenda was set by committee members.

Notes and small group meetings were used to report committee activities to the rest of the staff according to the principal, two team members, and two teachers. One teacher said that in addition to notes, committee activities were reported at faculty meetings.

In response to the first three open-ended questions, two teachers indicated the need to clarify the purpose of the shared decision-making committee.

The principal, team members, and teachers varied in their responses to directed question five as to the purpose for engaging in shared decision making. The principal responded that communication was the purpose.
Two team members reported that the purpose was decision making. One team member said that the purpose of the shared decision-making committee was to take the place of the Faculty Advisory Council. Three teachers agreed that the purpose was for teacher input.

In response to the first three open-ended questions, one teacher indicated the need to clarify the function of the shared decision-making committee.

The principal, two team members, and two teachers agreed in their responses to directed question six that the function of the shared decision-making committee was decision making.

Responses to the first three open-ended questions by the principal, two team members, and one teacher indicated a need for training in role clarification. One team member and one teacher indicated a need for training in group process.

All the respondents agreed in their responses to directed question seven that they had not received formal training in how to take part in the process.

Responses to the first three open-ended questions by two team members indicated strong personalities were an obstacle.

In response to directed question eight, the two team members who in response to the first three open-ended questions indicated strong
personalities were an obstacle, again reported strong personalities as an obstacle. Related to strong personalities, one teacher said that the "outspoken minority" and "little factions" were obstacles.

The principal reported lack of training and teachers who don't buy into the concept as obstacles. Another obstacle, time, was mentioned by the principal, one team member, and two teachers. The principal indicated the large size of the staff and two teachers indicated the large size of the school as obstacles. Another teacher said that teachers who don't understand or who play roles were obstacles. One team member said that trying to please everybody was an obstacle, and another team member perceived the committee tried to do too much.

**Outcomes**

Regarding teacher satisfaction, responses to the first three open-ended questions by two team members and two teachers indicated an increase in the sense of ownership; one teacher perceived an increase in commitment; one team member indicated creativity had increased; one team member and three teachers perceived collegiality had improved/increased; one team member and one teacher indicated the need to improve collegiality; and the principal perceived growth in professionalism.
Responding to directed questions, (9-20), the principal and two teachers indicated an increase in the sense of ownership; the principal, three team members, and three teachers perceived collegiality had improved/increased. The principal, one team member, and two teachers indicated that growth in professionalism had occurred because of shared decision making.

Regarding organizational effectiveness, one team member, in response to the first three open-ended questions, perceived that increased productivity and enhanced communication assisted her effectiveness. The principal indicated productivity could be increased by dividing the principal’s position into two positions, one for management and one for support. The principal also stated that there was a need to improve communication. A team member stated that the principal supported the decisions made by the committee.

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), the principal, one team member, and one teacher indicated that communication was enhanced; and, the principal, three team members, and two teachers indicated that they were positive about the decisions that the committee made. One teacher was not positive about the decisions that were made by the committee.
Context

In response to directed question four, the principal, team members, and teachers agreed on the following components of the structure of the shared decision-making committee: grade-level and non-classroom representatives served on the committee; committee members were selected by the principal; committee members represented grade-level teachers and non-classroom staff; and the committee met weekly in the library. Differences in responses among the principal, team members, and teachers included: who chaired the committee; how issues were brought to the attention of the committee; who set the agenda; what day of the week the committee met; and how committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff.

The principal, two team members, and two teachers agreed that the principal chaired the committee. One team member said that, in addition to the principal, the assistant principal chaired the committee, and one teacher said that the chair varied.

The principal and two teachers reported that issues were brought to the attention of the committee by speaking to the principal. One teacher reported that notes to the principal were used to bring issues to the attention of the committee. Three team members and one teacher agreed that issues were brought to the attention of the committee by speaking to committee members.
The principal, two team members, and one teacher reported that the principal sets the agenda for committee meetings. Another team member agreed that the principal sets the agenda, but added the assistant principal also sets the agenda. One teacher reported the chairman sets the agenda, and another teacher said she "didn't know" who sets the agenda.

The principal, three team members, and one teacher agreed that the meetings were held on Tuesdays. One teacher said the meetings were held on Wednesdays, and another teacher did not report a day of the week.

The principal, three team members, and three teachers agreed that committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff through notes to team members, and one team member and one teacher added "small group meetings" to their responses.

In response to directed question five, communication was the purpose for engaging in shared making for the principal and three team members. Two teachers reported decision making as the purpose, and one teacher said the purpose of the shared decision-making committee was to take the place of the Faculty Advisory Council.

The principal, team members, and teachers varied in their responses to directed question six regarding the function of the shared decision-making committee. The principal responded that the function was mainly advisory. Two team members said the function was decision making and another team member said the function was to discuss small issues. One teacher
said the function was communication, while another teacher said the function was to manage the school democratically.

In response to directed question seven, the principal reported that the faculty received one hour of training at the beginning of the school year. Three team members and three teachers agreed that no other formal training took place.

The principal, team members, and teachers varied in their responses regarding obstacles. To the first three open-ended questions, the principal responded that, "A nicely laid out twelve months' plan is made a mockery of" with "emergencies" and "putting out fires".

In response to directed question eight, the principal underscored that time and "things over which we have no control" were obstacles. Two team members reported strong personalities as obstacles and similar responses, "people who won't change opinions" and "some people are more vocal", were given by two teachers. One teacher stated that having "a meek representative" was an obstacle to the process.

Outcomes

Regarding teacher satisfaction, responses to the first three open-ended questions by two team members and two teachers indicated an increase in the sense of ownership; one team member perceived
commitment had increased; one teacher indicated creativity had increased; two team members and two teachers perceived collegiality had improved/increased; and the principal and two teachers perceived growth in a sense of professionalism.

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), the principal perceived an increase in the sense of ownership and that creativity had increased. The principal, along with three team members and two teachers, perceived collegiality had improved/increased.

Regarding organizational effectiveness, in response to the first three open-ended questions the principal indicated productivity had increased and one teacher indicated communication was enhanced.

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), one teacher indicated productivity had increased; and the principal indicated communication was enhanced, while one teacher said that communication was not enhanced. The principal, three team members, and two teachers were positive about decisions, and two team members said they believed that the principal was positive about the decisions made by the committee.
SCHOOL C

Context

In response to directed question four, the principal, team members, and teachers agreed on the following components of the structure of the shared decision-making committee: meetings were held monthly and notes were used to report committee activities to the rest of the staff. Differences in responses among the principal, team members, and teachers included: who served on the committee and who they represented; how committee members were selected; who chaired the committee and set the agenda; where the committee met, and how issues were brought to the attention of the committee.

The principal and three team members reported that teachers served on the committee. Two team members included the principal and the assistant principal as members of the committee. One team member mentioned that a parent served on the committee while another team member said "whoever wants to". Two teachers reported that grade-level representatives served on the committee and one of these teachers said that representatives were teachers who have been at the school awhile. Another teacher agreed that "most of the people who serve are those who have been at the school some time." The principal, two team members, and one teacher said that committee members volunteered to serve on the committee.
One team member said that grade-level teams selected committee representatives and two teachers said they didn’t know how committee members were selected.

The principal said that the committee was not representative of the whole school. Two team members and one teacher said that committee members represented the staff, while one team member and one teacher said that committee members represented grade levels. Another teacher reported that committee members represented their “group”. The principal, three team members, and one teacher agreed that two teachers co-chaired the committee, while two teachers reported that they didn’t know who chaired the committee.

The principal, three team members, and two teachers agreed that issues were brought to the attention of the committee by speaking to committee members. These two teachers included speaking to administrators along with speaking to committee members, and one team member added giving a note to the committee representative.

The principal reported that the committee met in the library or the conference room. One team member agreed that the library was used for meetings, and two team members and three teachers stated that the conference room was the meeting place.
The principal responded to the first three open-ended questions by saying that there was a need to clarify the purpose of the shared decision-making committee.

In response to directed question five, the principal, two team members, and two teachers agreed that decision making was the purpose for engaging in shared decision making. A third team member (Team Member 3) reported that developing the school plan was the purpose, and one teacher said that the purpose was to discuss school system mandates.

Responding to directed question six, the principal and one teacher said the function of the committee was decision making. One team member reported that the function was decision making and advising, while another team member (Team Member 1) said that the function was to develop the school plan.

Regarding training, the principal responded to the first three open-ended questions by stating a need for clarification of roles and a team member perceived a need for training in group process.

In response to directed question seven regarding formal training, the principal stated that the subject of his dissertation was in the area of shared decision making. Two team members reported that they received formal training from the Office of Educational Planning, and three teachers stated that they did not receive formal training.
Responding to directed question eight, the principal reported that teachers who didn’t "buy in" were obstacles. A team member agreed, but added administrators who didn’t "buy in". The principal included the practice by the committee of emphasizing consensus over analysis and strong personalities as obstacles. One teacher alluded to strong personalities by reporting that conflict existed over who should make decisions. Not rotating membership on the committee was a problem for one teacher and another teacher stated that a lack of communication was an obstacle.

Outcomes

Regarding teacher satisfaction, responses to the first three open-ended questions by the principal and one teacher indicated collegiality had improved/increased; two team members perceived an increase in the sense of ownership; and two team members and two teachers indicated professional growth had occurred.

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), the principal and two team members perceived an increase in the sense of ownership; the principal, one team member, and two teachers indicated creativity had increased; the principal, three team members and three teachers perceived collegiality had
improved/increased; one team member perceived a need to improve collegiality; and the principal perceived professional growth had occurred.

Regarding organizational effectiveness, the principal responded to the first three open-ended questions by indicating that control of the budget would increase productivity. One teacher perceived that shared decision making had increased productivity and enhanced communication. Another teacher reported that teachers were "knowledgeable about each other's programs", but that the flow of information from the shared decision-making team could be improved.

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), the principal and two team members reported productivity had increased; the principal, three team members, and two teachers indicated they were positive about decisions; three teachers stated that they perceived the principal was positive about the decisions that the committee made; and one team member said communication was enhanced, while one teacher said communication was not enhanced.

Research Question Six

Research question six asked, "What similarities and/or differences in participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and
outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness) are perceived among principals, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers not currently serving on the decision-making team, across the selected schools?"

The principal, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers not currently serving on the decision-making team across the three schools described the context and the outcomes which resulted from engaging in the shared decision-making process.

Context

In response to directed question four, principals, team members, and teachers across the three schools, did not report similarities in any of the components of the structure of the shared decision-making committee.

Faculty members and administrators served on the committee at School A, grade-level and non-classroom representatives, as well as administrators, served at School B, and a parent was included with the staff members and administrators at School C.

The faculty elected the committee members at School A; at School B the principal selected the committee members; and at School C, four out of seven respondents reported that committee members volunteered to serve on the committee.
At school A, four out of seven respondents said that committee members represented "no given body" or "not everyone". At School B, there was agreement among all the respondents that committee members represented grade-level teachers and non-classroom staff. Three respondents at School C reported that committee members represented staff members, and two respondents reported that grade-level teachers were represented.

Seven respondents at School A said that a teacher was elected to chair the committee. Six respondents at School B said that the principal chaired the committee. One respondent included the assistant principal along with the principal, and one teacher said that the chair "varied." At School C, six respondents reported that two teachers co-chaired the committee, and one respondent "didn't know".

At School A, five respondents reported that issues were brought to the attention of the committee by speaking to committee members; two respondents reported speaking to the principal; two respondents mentioned using notes to committee members; and one respondent reported notes to the principal were used. At School B, four respondents reported that issues were brought to the attention of the committee by speaking to committee members; three respondents reported speaking to the principal; and one respondent reported notes to the principal were used. At School C, six respondents reported that issues were brought to the attention of the committee by
speaking to committee representatives; one respondent added speaking to administrators; and another respondent included notes to committee representatives.

Three respondents at School A said that the chair and administrators set the agenda. One respondent reported that the chair sets the agenda, and two respondents said that the agenda was set by committee members. At School B, four respondents said that the principal sets the agenda. One respondent said the assistant principal sets the agenda with the principal; one respondent reported that the chair sets the agenda; and another respondent didn't know who sets the agenda. At School C, four respondents reported the co-chairs set the agenda with the principal. One respondent said that the chair sets the agenda, and two respondents didn't know who sets the agenda.

Fourteen respondents reported that meetings were held weekly in the library at Schools A and B; and, at School C, two respondents reported that meetings were held monthly in the library and five respondents reported that meetings were held in the conference room.

Five respondents at School A said that notes and small group meetings were used to report committee activities to the rest of the staff. One respondent said notes were used, and another respondent reported that committee activities were reported by the representative at small-group meetings. At School B, seven respondents said that notes to team members were used to report committee activities to the rest of the staff. Two
respondents reported that committee activities were reported at small group meetings. Seven respondents at School C agreed that committee activities were reported through notes to staff members.

In response to the first three open-ended questions, two teachers at School A and the principal at School C indicated a **need to clarify the purpose** of the shared decision-making committee.

Responding to directed question five, **communication** was the **purpose** for engaging in shared decision making for the principals at Schools A and B and three team members at School B. **Decision making** was the **purpose** for two team members at School A, two teachers at School B, the principal, two team members, and two teachers at School C. For three teachers at School A, the **purpose** was **teacher input**. A team member at School A and a teacher at School B believed the **purpose** was to **replace the Faculty Advisory Council**. A team member at School C said the **purpose** was to develop the school plan, and a teacher at School C said the **purpose** was to discuss school system mandates.

One teacher at School A, in response to the first three open-ended questions, indicated a **need to clarify the function** of the shared decision-making committee.

Responding to directed question six, **decision making** was reported as the **function** of the shared decision-making committee by the principal, two
team members, and two teachers at School A, two team members at School B, and the principal, one team member, and one teacher at School C. At School B, the principal said the function was advisory; a team member said the function was to discuss small issues; one teacher said the function was communication, and another teacher said the function was to manage the school democratically. A team member at School C said the function was to develop the school plan and another team member included advising along with decision making.

In response to the first three open-ended questions, the principal, two team members, and one teacher at School A and the principal at School C, indicated a need for training in role clarification. One team member and one teacher at School A and one team member at School C indicated a need for training in group process.

Responding to directed question seven, no formal training in shared decision making was reported by the principal, three team members, and three teachers at School A; three team members and three teachers at School B; and three teachers at School C. The principal at School B reported arranging an hour-long inservice on shared decision making at the beginning of the school year. The principal at School C perceived that work on his dissertation, the subject of which was in the area of shared decision making, served as one form of training for him. Two team
members at School C reported receiving formal training from the Office of
Educational Planning.

Responses to the first three open-ended questions by two team
members indicated strong personalities were an obstacle.

In response to directed question eight, the same two team members
were consistent in saying that strong personalities were an obstacle. Two
team members at School B and the principal at School C agreed that strong
personalities were an obstacle. Related to strong personalities, one
teacher at School A said that the "outspoken minority" and "little factions"
were obstacles, while at School C two teachers included "people who won't
change opinions" and "some people are more vocal" as obstacles.

To the first three open-ended questions, the principal at School B
responded that, "A nicely laid out twelve months' plan is made a mockery
of" with "emergencies" and "putting out fires".

In response to directed question eight, time was reported as an
obstacle to the process by the principal, a team member, and two teachers
at School A. For the principal at School B, time and "things over which we
have no control" were obstacles.

To the first three open-ended questions, the principal, two team
members and one teacher at School A and the principal at School C stated
that there was a need for training in role clarification. As well, one team
member and one teacher at School A and one teacher at School C, said that there was a need for training in group process. In response to directed question eight, the principal at School A reported a lack of training as an obstacle.

A teacher at School A reported "people who play or don't understand roles" as obstacles. At School B, a teacher commented that "a meek representative" was an obstacle. Two team members at School A perceived that trying to please everybody and trying to do too much were obstacles. At School C, the principal perceived that the committee emphasized consensus over analysis and a teacher stated that not rotating membership on the committee was a problem.

The large size of the staff/school was seen as an obstacle by the principal and two teachers at School A. At School C, a teacher reported that a lack of communication was an obstacle. Teachers who don’t buy into the concept were seen as obstacles by the principals at Schools A and C.

Outcomes

Regarding teacher satisfaction, responses to the first three open-ended questions by three team members and two teachers at School A, two team members and two teachers at School B, and two team members at School C indicated an increase in the sense of ownership; an increase in
commitment was indicated by one teacher at School A and one team member at School B; creativity had increased according to one team member at School A and one teacher at School B; collegiality was perceived to have improved/increased by two team members and three teachers at School A, two team members and two teachers at School B, and the principal and one teacher at School C; one team member and one teacher at School A and one team member and one teacher at School C perceived a need to improve collegiality; and growth in professionalism was perceived by the principal at School A, the principal, and two teachers at School B, and two team members and one teacher at School C.

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), the principal and two teachers at School A, the principal at School B, and the principal and two team members at School C perceived an increase in the sense of ownership. Creativity had increased according to one teacher at School A, the principal at School B, and the principal, one team member, and two teachers at School C. Collegiality was perceived to have improved/increased by the principal, three team members, and three teachers at School A, the principal, three team members, and two teachers at School B, and the principal, three team members, and three teachers at School C. Growth in professionalism was reported by the principal, three team members, and three teachers at School A, and the principal at School C.
Regarding **organizational effectiveness**, responses to the first three open-ended questions indicated **productivity** had increased by one team member at School A, the principal and two teachers at School B, and one teacher at School C. **Enhanced communication** was reported by one team member at School A, while the principal at School A reported that there was a **need to improve communication**.

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), one teacher at School B, and the principal and two team members at School C indicated **productivity** had increased. **Enhanced communication** was reported by the principal, one team member and one teacher at School A, the principal at School B, and one team member at School C. A teacher at School B reported that **communication was not enhanced**.

Responding to directed questions, (9-20), **positive perceptions about decisions** were indicated by the principal, three team members, and two teachers at School A, the principal, three team members, and two teachers at School B, and the principal, three team members, and two teachers at School C. A teacher at School A **did not perceive decisions as positive**.

In response to the first three open-ended questions, a team member at School A stated that the **principal supported the decisions** made by the committee.

In response to directed questions, (9-20), two team members and two teachers at School A, two team members at School B, and three teachers at
School C indicated that the principal was positive about decisions that emerged from the committee.
Table 2. Summarized Responses Relating "Context" to Shared Decision Making, Elicited from Respondents’ Answers to Interview Question #4 on the Interview Protocol

Interview Question 4: What is the structure of your shared decision-making committee?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Summarized Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Who serves on the committee?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Faculty members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Faculty members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade-level/non-classroom representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Grade-level/non-classroom representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grade-level/non-classroom representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Staff members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Staff members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Assistant principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Whoever wants to</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Grade-level representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Teachers who have been at the school awhile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. How were committee members selected?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty elects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Faculty elects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Faculty elects</td>
</tr>
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Table 2 (continued)

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<th>Summarized Responses</th>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
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<td>Volunteer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
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<td>Don't know</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Team selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Who do committee members represent?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No given body</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
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<td>All pods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teachers/aides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No given body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grade levels/non-classroom staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grade levels/non-classroom staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grade levels/non-classroom staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not representative of whole school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Grade levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Grade levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Their group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Who chairs the committee?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
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<td>Elected teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
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<td>Elected teacher</td>
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Table 2 (continued)

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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Principal/Assistant principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Varies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Two teachers co-chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Two teachers co-chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
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<td>Two teachers co-chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
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e. How are issues brought to the attention of the committee?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th></th>
<th>Notes or speaking to committee members, chair, or the principal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
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<td>Notes or speaking to committee members, chair, or the principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Speaking to committee members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Speaking to principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Notes or speaking to committee members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Speaking to principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Speaking to committee members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Speaking to principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Speaking to committee members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Notes to principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Speaking to committee members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Speaking to committee members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Speaking to committee members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Note to committee representatives</td>
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Table 2 (continued)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>School</th>
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<td>f. Who sets the agenda?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chair and administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chair and administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chair and administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Principal/Assistant principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Co-chairs with principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Co-chairs with principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. &amp; h. When/how often does the committee meet?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Weekly--Monday afternoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Weekly--Monday afternoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Weekly--Monday afternoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Weekly--Tuesday mornings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Weekly--Tuesday mornings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
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<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 2 (continued)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Summarized Responses</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>i. Where does the committee meet?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
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<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>Library/conference room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Conference room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Conference room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. How are activities reported to the rest of the staff?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Notes and small group meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Notes and small group meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Small group meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>Notes to team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Notes to team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Small group meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Notes to team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
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<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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Table 3. Summarized Responses Relating "Context" to Shared Decision Making, Elicited from Respondents' Answers to Interview Question #5 on the Interview Protocol

Interview Question 5: For what purpose do you engage in shared decision making?

<table>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To take place of Faculty Advisory Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Teacher input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To take place of Faculty Advisory Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To develop school plan</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To discuss school system mandates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context Responses:

Communication
- Principal
- Principal, 3 team members

Decision Making
- 2 team members
- 2 teachers
- Principal, 2 team members, 2 teachers

To Take Place of Faculty Advisory Council
- 1 team member
- 1 teacher

Teacher Input
- 3 teachers

To Develop School Plan
- 1 team member

To Discuss School System Mandates
- 1 teacher
Table 4. Summarized Responses Relating "Context" to Shared Decision Making, Elicited from Respondents' Answers to Interview Question #6 on the Interview Protocol

Interview Question 6: What is the function of your shared decision making committee?

<table>
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<th>Summarized Responses</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To bring up issues impacting the whole school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>Advisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To discuss small issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To manage school democratically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>Decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To develop school plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Decision making/advisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Decision making</td>
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</table>

Context Responses:

- **Decision making**: A--principal, 1 team member, 2 teachers  
  B--2 team members  
  C--principal, 1 team member, 1 teacher

- **Advising**: B--principal  
  C--1 team member

- **To Bring Up Issues Impacting the Whole School**: A--1 team member

- **Discuss Small Issues**: B--1 team member

- **Communication**: B--a teacher

- **Develop School Plan**: C--1 team member
Table 5. Summarized Responses Relating "Context" to Shared Decision Making, Elicited from Respondents' Answers to Interview Question #7 on the Interview Protocol

Interview Question 7: What training did you receive to engage in shared decision making?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Summarized Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No formal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No formal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No formal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>One hour at the beginning of the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No formal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No formal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Formal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No formal training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context Responses:

- No Formal Training
  - A--principal, 3 team members, 3 teachers
  - B--3 team members, 3 teachers
  - C--3 teachers

- Formal Training
  - B--principal
  - C--principal, 2 team members
Table 6. Summarized Responses Relating "Context" to Shared Decision Making, Elicited from Respondents' Answers to Interview Question #8 on the Interview Protocol

Interview Question 8: What are the obstacles to shared decision making in your school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Summarized Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Large size of staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers who don't buy in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Time--having to wait for committee decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Strong personalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Trying to please everybody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Trying to do too much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The large size of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The outspoken minority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Little factions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>People who don't understand/play roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Things over which we have no control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong personalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>People who won't change opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Some people are more vocal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A meek representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong personalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers who don't buy in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emphasizing consensus over analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teachers/administrators who don't buy in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lack of communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not rotating membership on committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Strong personalities</td>
</tr>
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</table>

124
Table 6 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Responses:</th>
<th>A--2 team members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Personalities</td>
<td>B--2 team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C--principal, 1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Factions</td>
<td>A--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Outspoken Minority</td>
<td>A--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People Who Won't Change Opinions</td>
<td>B--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some People Are More Vocal</td>
<td>B--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>A--principal, 1 team member, 2 teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B--principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Size of Staff/School</td>
<td>A--principal, 2 teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators/Teachers Who Don't &quot;Buy In&quot;</td>
<td>A--principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C--principal, 1 team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Training</td>
<td>A--principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying to Please Everybody</td>
<td>A--1 team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying To Do Too Much</td>
<td>A--1 team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People Who Don't Understand/Play Roles</td>
<td>A--1 team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things Over Which We Have No Control</td>
<td>B--principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Meek Representative</td>
<td>B--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Communication</td>
<td>C--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Rotating Membership</td>
<td>C--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emphasizing Consensus Over Analysis</th>
<th>C--principal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


Table 7. Response Categories Relating Shared Decision-Making "Outcomes" to Teacher Satisfaction, Elicited from Respondents' Answers to Interview Questions, 9-20, on the Interview Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Response Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Professionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Professionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher Satisfaction Outcomes Responses:

- Ownership: A--principal, 2 teachers  
  B--principal  
  C--principal, 2 team members

- Creativity: B--principal  
  C--principal, 1 team member, 2 teachers

- Collegiality: A--principal, 3 team members, 3 teachers  
  B--principal, 3 team members, 2 teachers  
  C--principal, 3 team members, 3 teachers

- Professionalism: A--principal, 1 team member, 2 teachers  
  C--principal
Table 8. Response Categories Relating Shared Decision-Making "Outcomes" to Organizational Effectiveness, Elicited from Respondents' Answers to Interview Questions, 9-20, on the Interview Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Response Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhanced communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Enhanced communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Enhanced communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhanced communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Believe principal is positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communication is not enhanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Enhanced communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communication is not enhanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Believe principal is positive about decisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organizational Effectiveness Outcomes Responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increased Productivity</th>
<th>B--principal, 2 team members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced Communication</td>
<td>A--principal, 1 team member, 1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B--principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C--1 team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication not Enhanced</td>
<td>B--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive about Decisions</td>
<td>A--principal, 3 team members, 2 teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B--principal, 3 team members, 2 teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C--principal, 3 team members, 2 teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Positive about Decisions</td>
<td>A--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe Principal is</td>
<td>A--2 team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive about Decisions</td>
<td>B--2 team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C--3 teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9. "Outcomes" Response Categories Identified in "Themes that Emerged from Open-ended Questions, #1-3," on the Interview Protocol

Interview Question 1: What in this setting lets you be as effective as you are able to be?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Response Categories--Teacher Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Professionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>Professionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ownership</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Professionalism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Professionalism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher Satisfaction Outcomes Responses:

| Ownership | A--2 team members, 2 teachers  
| Commitment | A--1 teacher  
<p>|            | B--1 team member |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9 (continued)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Creativity**      | A--1 teacher  
                       | B--1 teacher  |
| **Collegiality**    | A--1 team member, 3 teachers  
                       | B--2 team members, 2 teachers  
                       | C--principal, 1 teacher  |
| **Professionalism** | A--principal  
                       | B--principal, 2 teachers  
                       | C--2 team members, 1 teacher  |
Table 10. "Outcomes" Response Categories Identified in "Themes that Emerged from Open-ended Questions, #1-3," on the Interview Protocol

Interview Question 1: What in this setting lets you be as effective as you are able to be?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Response Categories--Organizational Effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>Productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Members</td>
<td></td>
<td>Productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communication</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
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</table>

Organizational Effectiveness Outcomes Responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Productivity</th>
<th>A--1 team member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B--principal, 2 teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>A--1 team member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C--1 teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decisions</th>
<th>A--1 team member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Table 11. "Context" and "Outcomes" Response Categories Identified in "Themes that Emerged from Open-ended Questions, #1-3,” on the Interview Protocol

Interview Question 2: What in this setting prevents you from being as effective as you are able to be?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Response Categories</th>
<th>Context and Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Team</td>
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<td>Obstacles, Obstacles</td>
<td>Role clarification needed, Role clarification needed</td>
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<td>Members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Obstacles, Purpose</td>
<td>Training in group process needed, Clarification needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Function</td>
<td>Clarification needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Obstacles</td>
<td>Role clarification needed, Training in group process needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Team</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Purpose, Obstacles, Communication</td>
<td>Clarification needed, Training in group process needed, Need for improved communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Members | 1 | Obstacles           | " 
| Teachers |   | " 

Context Responses:

Clarify Purpose | A--1 teacher, C--principal
Clarify Function | A--1 teacher
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obstacles:</th>
<th>Responses:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>role clarification</td>
<td>A--principal, 2 team members, 2 teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>group process training</td>
<td>A--1 team member, 1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>C--1 team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1--2 team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B--principal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Effectiveness Outcomes</th>
<th>Improve communication</th>
<th>Responses:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C--1 teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 12. "Context" and "Outcomes" Response Categories Identified in "Themes that Emerged from Open-ended Questions, #1-3," on the Interview Protocol

Interview Question 3: If you were "King for a Day," what is the one thing you would change?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Response Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Obstacles: strong personalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increase collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increase collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Clarify purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increase collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increase collegiality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context Responses:

Clarify Purpose A--1 teacher

Obstacles:

Strong personalities A--2 team members

Teacher Satisfaction Outcomes Responses:

Collegiality A--1 team member, 1 teacher

C--1 team member, 1 teacher

Organizational Effectiveness Outcomes Responses:

Productivity A--principal

C--principal
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study is a "snapshot" of shared decision making in elementary schools in a large suburban public school district in Virginia. Indepth studies for the purpose of providing examples and information to others were undertaken in those schools which appeared to have the most advanced form of this leadership process. Six research questions were answered from the data generated by a written survey given to 129 principals, a telephone survey to 10 principals, and 21 structured interviews of principals and teachers at three elementary schools.

Included in this chapter are findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further study.

Findings and Conclusions

Research Question One

Research question one asked, "How do elementary school principals perceive shared decision making in their schools?"
Conclusion: Using the model of shared decision making described, there was much less shared decision making going on in elementary schools in the school system than what was claimed by the principals.

Evidence: Principals at 118 of 129 elementary schools selected from three conditions on a survey, The Principal Questionnaire (Appendix B), the one condition most closely describing shared decision making in their schools. Thirty-three principals indicated that a Faculty Advisory Council was the one committee used to provide a direct line of communication between the principal and staff members to raise and discuss concerns. Seventy-one principals reported that other committees, in addition to a Faculty Advisory Council, provided a direct link of communication between the principal and staff members. Ten principals indicated that one committee, such as a school improvement team, subsumed the function of the Faculty Advisory Council (to raise and discuss concerns) and addressed broader issues related to instruction and school operation. At these ten schools, the principals’ responses to a follow-up survey, the Telephone Survey of Principals Responding to Condition 3 on the Principal Questionnaire (Appendix C), clarified that three k-6 schools would be used as sites for case studies.
Research Question Two

Research question two asked, "How do principals in selected schools perceive participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?"

Conclusion 1: The principals' descriptions of the structure of the shared decision-making committees varied.

Evidence: Committee members at School A were elected; at School B, they were selected by the principal; and at School C, they volunteered. A teacher was elected to serve as chair of the committee at School A; at School B, the principal chaired the committee; and at School C, two teachers co-chaired the committee. Committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff by both notes and small-group meetings at School A; by notes to team members, who had discretionary power over what to share with those they represented, at School B; and at School C, by notes to staff members.

Conclusion 2: The principals' descriptions of the purpose of the shared decision-making committees varied.
Evidence: The purpose for engaging in shared decision making for the principals at Schools A and B was to facilitate communication. For the principal at School C, the purpose was to involve teachers in making decisions.

Conclusion 3: The principals’ descriptions of the function of the shared decision-making committees varied.

Evidence: The function of the committee, for the principals at Schools A and C was to make decisions. At School B, the function of the committee was to advise the principal.

Conclusion 4: The principals’ descriptions of formal training to take part in shared decision making varied.

Evidence: The principal at School A stated he received no formal training and he perceived a need for the staff to be trained in role clarification. The principal at School B reported arranging for a one-hour inservice at the beginning of the school year, and the principal at School C stated that work on his dissertation served as training.

Conclusion 5: The principals’ descriptions of obstacles to shared decision making varied.
Evidence: Time was an obstacle for the principals at Schools A and B. Teachers who don’t "buy in" were considered obstacles by the principals at Schools A and C. A lack of training and the large size of the staff were obstacles for the principal at School A. "Things over which we have no control" were a problem for the principal at School B. And the principal at School C reported strong personalities and the committee’s tendency to emphasize consensus over analysis of issues as obstacles.

Conclusion 6: Although the context of the committees at each of the three schools varied, there was agreement on two outcomes across the three schools regarding teacher satisfaction.

Evidence: All three principals perceived ownership had increased and collegiality had improved at their schools because of shared decision making.

Conclusion 7: Although the context of the committees at each of the three schools varied, there were similarities in two outcomes across the three schools regarding organizational effectiveness.

Evidence: All three principals indicated that the decisions that emerged from the committee were received positively and that productivity had increased.
Research Question Three

Research question three asked, "How do teachers on the decision-making team in selected schools perceive participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness)?"

Conclusion 1: The team members' descriptions of the structure of the shared decision-making committees varied.

Evidence: Committee members at School A were elected, at School B, they were selected by the principal; and at School C, two team members said committee members volunteered, while one team member said that teams (inferring grade-level teams) selected committee members. All three team members agreed that a teacher was elected to serve as chair of the committee at School A; at School B, all three team members said that the principal chaired the committee with one team member including, as well, the assistant principal; and at School C, three team members agreed that two teachers co-chaired the committee. Two team members said that committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff by both notes and small-group meetings at School A. Three team members at School B said notes to team members were used to report activities, and one team member included small-group meetings. Notes were
used to report activities to staff members according to all three team members at School C.

**Conclusion 2:** The team members’ descriptions of the purpose of the shared decision-making committees varied.

**Evidence:** The purpose for engaging in shared decision making for all three team members at School B was to facilitate communication. The purpose for two team members at School A and two team members at School C was to make decisions. One team member at School A said the purpose was to take the place of the Faculty Advisory Council, and a team member at School C said the purpose was to develop the school plan.

**Conclusion 3:** The team members’ descriptions of the function of the shared decision-making committees varied.

**Evidence:** Decision making was the function of the shared decision making-committee for one team member at School A, two team members at School B, and one team member at School C, who included advising along with decision making. For one team member at School A, the function was to bring up issues that impacted the whole school. One team member at School B said
the function was to discuss small issues. A team member at School C reported developing the school plan as the function.

**Conclusion 4:** The team members' descriptions of formal training to take part in shared decision making varied.

**Evidence:** Two team members at School C reported receiving formal training from the Office of Educational Planning. Three team members at School A and three team members at School B reported that they did not take part in formal training.

**Conclusion 5:** The team members' descriptions of obstacles to shared decision making varied.

**Evidence:** Strong personalities were an obstacle for two team members at School A and two team members at School B. For one team member at School A, time was an obstacle. For another team member at School A, trying to do too much and trying to please everybody were problems. Teachers or administrators who don't "buy in" were obstacles for one team member at School C.
Conclusion 6: Although the descriptions of the context of the shared decision-making committees by the team members at each of the three schools varied, there was agreement on one outcome across the three schools regarding teacher satisfaction.

Evidence: All nine team members interviewed perceived collegiality had improved because of shared decision making.

Conclusion 7: Although the descriptions of the context of the shared decision-making committees by the team members at each of the three schools varied, there was agreement on one outcome across the three schools regarding teacher satisfaction.

Evidence: All nine team members interviewed indicated that the decisions that emerged from the committee were received positively.

Research Question Four

Research question four asked, "How do teachers not serving currently on the decision-making team in selected schools perceive participation in school decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness?"
Conclusion 1: The teachers' descriptions of the structure of the shared decision-making committees varied.

Evidence: Committee members at School A were elected; at School B, they were selected by the principal; and at School C two team members reported that team members volunteered and one team member reported that teams (inferring grade-level teams) selected representatives. A teacher was elected to serve as chair of the committee at School A; at School B, the principal chaired the committee and one teacher included the assistant principal; and at School C, two teachers co-chaired the committee. Committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff by notes to staff members at Schools A and C, and by notes to team members at School B. Small-group meetings were included by two teachers at School A and one teacher at School B. One teacher at School A stated that activities were reported at faculty meetings.

Conclusion 2: The teachers' descriptions of the purpose of the shared decision-making committees varied.

Evidence: Decision making was the purpose for engaging in shared decision making according to two teachers at School B and two teachers at School C. Three teachers at School A said that the purpose was teacher input. Two teachers at School A said there was a need to clarify the purpose of the shared
decision-making committee. One teacher at School B said the purpose was to take the place of the Faculty Advisory Council. Teachers at School C varied in their responses, saying that the purpose was to discuss school system mandates, to discuss problems, to deal with issues, and "to try to improve the service we provide".

**Conclusion 3:** The teachers' descriptions of the function of the shared decision-making committees varied.

**Evidence:** Decision making was the function of the shared decision-making committee for two teachers at School A and one teacher at School C. Communication was the function for one teacher at School B, and another teacher reported the function was to manage the school democratically. One teacher at School A perceived a need to clarify the function of the shared decision-making committee.

**Conclusion 4:** The teachers' descriptions of formal training to take part in shared decision making indicated that no formal training had taken place.

**Evidence:** All nine teachers interviewed reported that they had not received formal training to take part in shared decision making.
Conclusion 5: The teachers’ descriptions of obstacles to shared decision making varied.

Evidence: Time and the large size of the school were obstacles for two teachers at School A. Strong personalities were an obstacle to shared decision making for one teacher at School C. Related to strong personalities, teachers reported as obstacles: people who won’t change opinions, people who are more vocal, and a meek representative at School B; and the outspoken minority and little factions, and people who play or don’t understand roles at School A. At School C, not rotating membership on the committee and a lack of communication were problems for teachers.

Conclusion 6: Although the descriptions of the context of the shared decision-making committees by the teachers at each of the three schools varied, there were similarities on one outcome across the three schools regarding teacher satisfaction.

Evidence: Eight teachers--three each at Schools A and C, and two at School B--perceived collegiality had improved.

Conclusion 7: Although the descriptions of the context of the shared decision-making committees by the teachers varied at each of the three schools,
there were similarities on one outcome across the three schools regarding organizational effectiveness.

Evidence: Six teachers--two at each school--indicated that the decisions that emerged from the committee were received positively.

Research Question Five

Research question five asked, "What similarities and/or differences in participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness) appear to exist among principals, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers not currently serving on the decision-making team, within each selected school?"

School A

Conclusion 1: There was agreement among the principal, team members, and teachers regarding some aspects of context.

Evidence: The principal, team members, and teachers agreed in their perceptions that faculty members and administrators served on the committee; faculty members were elected; representation was not structured; a teacher was
elected as chair; the committee met weekly in the library on Monday afternoons; and that they had not received formal training.

**Conclusion 2:** There were varied responses among the principal, team members, and teachers regarding some aspects of context.

**Evidence:** The principal, team members, and teachers varied in their perceptions about how issues were brought to the attention of the committee; who set the agenda; how committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff; the purpose for engaging in shared decision making; the function of the shared decision-making committee; and the obstacles to the process.

**Conclusion 3:** There was agreement by the principal, three team members, and three teachers on one outcome regarding teacher satisfaction.

**Evidence:** The principal, three team members, and three teachers agreed in their perceptions that collegiality had improved as a result of participating in shared decision making.

**Conclusion 4:** There was agreement by the principal, three team members, and two teachers on one outcome regarding organizational effectiveness.
Evidence: The principal, three team members, and two teachers indicated that the decisions that emerged from the shared decision-making committee were positively received, while one teacher indicated that the decisions made "took more energy than they require."

School B

Conclusion 1: There was agreement among the principal, team members, and teachers regarding some aspects of context.

Evidence: The principal, team members, and teachers agreed in their perceptions that grade-level and non-classroom representatives served on the committee; committee members were selected by the principal; committee members represented grade-level teachers and non-classroom staff; the committee met weekly in the library; and except for a one-hour inservice reported by the principal, there had been no formal training.

Conclusion 2: There were varied responses among the principal, team members, and teachers regarding some aspects of context.

Evidence: The principal, team members, and teachers varied in their perceptions about who chaired the committee; how issues were brought to the attention of the committee; who set the agenda; what day of the week the
committee met; how committee activities were reported to the rest of the staff; the purpose for engaging in shared decision making; the function of the shared decision-making committee; and the obstacles to the process.

**Conclusion 3:** There was agreement by the principal, three team members, and two teachers on one outcome regarding teacher satisfaction.

**Evidence:** The principal, three team members, and two teachers agreed in their perceptions that collegiality had improved as a result of participating in shared decision making.

**Conclusion 4:** There was agreement by the principal, three team members, and two teachers on one outcome regarding organizational effectiveness.

**Evidence:** The principal, three team members, and two teachers indicated that the decisions that emerged from the shared decision-making committee were received positively.

School C

**Conclusion 1:** There was agreement among the principal, team members, and teachers regarding some aspects of context.
Evidence: The principal, team members, and teachers at School C agreed in their perceptions that meetings were held monthly and notes were used to report committee activities to the rest of the staff.

Conclusion 2: There were varied responses among the principal, team members, and teachers regarding some aspects of context.

Evidence: The principal, team members, and teachers varied in their perceptions about who served on the committee and who they represented; how committee members were selected; who chaired the committee and set the agenda; where the committee met; how issues were brought to the attention of the committee; the purpose for engaging in shared decision making; the function of the shared decision-making committee; formal training received; and the obstacles to the process.

Conclusion 3: There was agreement by the principal, three team members, and three teachers on one outcome regarding teacher satisfaction.

Evidence: The principal, three team members, and three teachers agreed in their perceptions that collegiality had improved as a result of participating in shared decision making.
Conclusion 4: There was agreement by the principal, three team members, and two teachers on one outcome regarding organizational effectiveness.

Evidence: The principal, three team members, and two teachers indicated that the decisions that emerged from the shared decision-making committee were received positively.

Research Question Six

Research question six asked, "What similarities and/or differences in participation in shared decision making relative to context (a. structure, b. purpose, c. function, d. training, and e. obstacles) and outcomes (a. teacher satisfaction, and b. organizational effectiveness) are perceived among principals, teachers on the decision-making team, and teachers not currently serving on the decision-making team, across the selected schools?"

Conclusion: Although the context of the shared decision-making committees at each of the three schools varied, some outcomes across the three schools were similar. The predominant indicator of teacher satisfaction reported by twenty of the twenty-one principals, team members, and teachers interviewed was increased/improved collegiality. The researcher concludes that the shared decision-making committees provided opportunities for principals and teachers to come together to discuss issues, give input, and make decisions, and as a
result, collegial relationships began to form. The other indicators of teacher satisfaction identified in the study, ownership, commitment, creativity, and professionalism, were reported to a lesser degree.

The predominant indicator of organizational effectiveness reported by nineteen of the twenty-one principals, team members, and teachers interviewed was satisfaction with the decisions that emerged from the committee. The researcher concludes that the shared decision-making committees provided opportunities for teachers to join principals in making decisions, so for the most part, teachers had positive perceptions about the decisions that were made. The other indicators of organizational effectiveness identified in the study, increased productivity and enhanced communication, were reported to a lesser degree.

**Recommendations**

The recommendations for further research are offered as outgrowths from the analysis of shared decision making in elementary schools.

1. Conduct a follow-up study at the three schools to determine their progress in shared decision making. At schools where progress has been made, determine if shared decision-making practices have been extended to students and parents.

2. Explore the relationship between personality types of principals and participation in shared decision making.
3. Develop models for training principals and teachers in role clarification and group process.
REFERENCES


Barriers block the path to school-based power. (1989, November). The Executive Educator, 11(11), 17.


Ceperley, P. (1991, Summer). Site-based decision making: Policymakers can support it or undermine it. The Link, 10(2). Charleston, WV: Appalachia Educational Laboratory.


Communication with Employees--Faculty/Staff Advisory Councils. (1982). Regulation 4010.5. Virginia School Division used in the study.


Faculty Advisory Councils. (1986). Regulation 4451. Virginia School Division used in the study.


February 8, 1991

TO:

FROM:

SUBJECT: Research Proposal from Sheila Bertrand

I recently received the attached research proposal from Sheila Bertrand. I understand that she has worked with your staff in some capacity. Bill has assisted Sheila on several occasions with this proposal, and it seems fairly well-defined. In order to present it to Bea for approval, I need to know whether your office supports the project. Support, as I understand it, means: a) RPA is interested in the findings from the study, and b) RPA staff would be willing to lend minimal, informal assistance, if needed (in the manner in which Bill has helped her).
February 28, 1991

Sheila E. Bertrand
8811 Queen Elizabeth Blvd.
Annandale, VA 22003

Dear Ms. Bertrand:

I am pleased to inform you that your application to conduct a research study regarding the use of Faculty Advisory Councils in shared decision making has been approved by the Research Screening Committee of the Public Schools, pending return of the attached Approval Agreement form. Specific conditions for approval are included on this form. Please sign the agreement and return it to me. Final approval of your research is contingent upon receipt of the agreement.

Please review attached Regulation 3910.1 and adhere to it carefully. Keep in mind that school personnel participation must be strictly voluntary. I understand that you have the strong support of ... Director of the Office of Research and Policy Analysis. You should work closely with his office during the course of your study.

If you plan to make changes in the study or are in need of further administrative assistance, please contact ... Chairperson of the Research Screening Committee at

Once you have completed the project, please send me an abstract and two bound copies of the study. One copy will be placed in the Public Schools' Professional Library and one in the Office of Testing and Evaluation. We look forward to reviewing the final product.

Sincerely,

Associate Superintendent

/cc:

Attachments

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APPLICATION FOR A RESEARCH STUDY

APPROVAL AGREEMENT

Approval to conduct your research is contingent upon two sets of conditions:

General Conditions

1. Voluntary participation in research studies by school staff members.

2. Preservation of anonymity of all participants in reporting the results of this study. You must not reveal the identity of schools or the school system, or identifiable characteristics of either, unless authorized by the Associate Superintendent for Administration.

3. Adherence to all Public Schools policies and regulations.

Specific Conditions

1. Neither Public Schools nor the case study schools must not be identified by name in any report, article, or document which is a product of this research project.

2. If assistance is needed in carrying out the case studies, you should work with the staff of the Office of Research and Policy Analysis

3. You should keep the Office of Research and Policy Analysis informed as to the progress of your study.

[Signature]
Applicant's Signature

3/4/91
Date
Dear [Name],

I am requesting that you take a few minutes to complete a one-page questionnaire which I believe will provide useful information about Public Schools. As a part of my dissertation, I am conducting a study which will describe shared decision making structures as related to the current research about teacher involvement in the decision making process. This study has been approved by

Please note the following:

- The data will be used only in aggregate form to provide a "snapshot" of shared decision making across the school division.
- The identification of schools by name will be used only to determine 3 to 6 schools for participation in an indepen interview process (on a voluntary basis).
- No data will be reported by individual school or principal.

Please complete one of the attached forms by selecting the condition (described below) which most closely represents your strategies for teacher involvement.

- Blue Form for Condition 1:
  The Faculty Advisory Council as described in Regulation 4561 is the one committee used to provide a direct line of communication between the principal and staff members to raise and discuss concerns.

- Yellow Form for Condition 2:
  Other committees (e.g., Team Leaders) in addition to the Faculty Advisory Council, provide a direct line of communication between the principal and staff members to raise and discuss concerns.

- Pink Form for Condition 3:
  One committee (e.g., School Improvement Team or Effective School Committee) subsumes the function of the Faculty Advisory Council (to resolve concerns) and also addresses broader issues related to instruction and school operations.

- Green Form for Other:
  Conditions 1, 2, and 3 do not apply. Please describe how you share decision making.

Thank you for your assistance. Please return your questionnaire to me at Elementary School no later than March 23. Summary data will be made available to you in the spring.

Sincerely,

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**PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

The Faculty Advisory Council as described in Regulation 441.1 is the one committee used to provide a direct line of communication between the principal and staff members to raise and discuss concerns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW ARE YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS CHOSEN? (Check one)</th>
<th>FAC.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secret ballot (written)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote (show of hands)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO SERVES ON YOUR COMMITTEE? (Enter numbers as applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten teacher(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary teacher(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper grade teacher(s) a-d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed. teacher(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music or P. E. teacher(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL/ELL/ESOP (Chapter 1) teacher(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional assistant(s)</td>
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<td>Other (specify)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>AT WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS ARE COMMITTEE MEETINGS USUALLY HELD? (Check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal's office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafeteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FROM WHAT STAFF GROUPS ARE REPRESENTATIVES ELECTED? (Check all that apply)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in K:6 as a total group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers by grade level or a span of grade levels, e.g., K-3, 4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in special programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO IS CHAIRPERSON OF YOUR COMMITTEE? (Check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW OFTEN ARE COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD? (Check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 6 times per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 times per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 6 times per year</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AT WHAT TIME OF DAY ARE MEETINGS USUALLY SCHEDULED? (Check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Over please)
## Principal Questionnaire

**Condition:**

Other committees (e.g., Team Leaders) in addition to the Faculty Advisory Council, provide a direct line of communication between the principal and staff members to raise and discuss concerns.

**Directions:** Label the columns with the names of other committees. See sample below.

**Sample:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW ARE YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS CHOSEN? (Check one)</th>
<th>FAC</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secret ballot (written)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote (show of hands)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHO Serves on Your Committee? (Enter numbers as applicable):**

- Kindergarten teacher(s)
- Primary teacher(s)
- Upper grade teacher(s) 4-6
- Special Ed. teacher(s)
- Music or P.E. teacher(s)
- ESL/EP/English Teacher(s)
- Reading Teacher
- Librarian
- Counselor
- Assistant principal
- Instructional assistant(s)
- Other (specify)

**At Which of the Following Locations are Committee Meetings Usually Held? (Check one):**

- Principal's office
- Library
- Cafeteria
- Other (specify)

**From What Staff Groups Are Representatives Elected? (Check all that apply):**

- Teachers in K-6 as a total group
- Teachers by grade level or span of grade levels, e.g., K-6, 4-6
- Teachers in special programs
- Other (specify)

**Who is Chairperson of Your Committee? (Check one):**

- Principal
- Assistant principal
- Teacher
- Other (specify)

(Over please)
**PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Condition:**

One committee (e.g., School Improvement Team or Effective School Committee) assumes the function of the Faculty Advisory Council (to resolve concerns) and also addresses broader issues related to instruction and school operation.

**How are your committee members chosen?**  
(Select one):
- Secret ballot (written)
- Vote (show of hands)
- Appointment
- Volunteer
- Other (specify)

**Who serves on your committee?**  
(Insert numbers as applicable):
- Kindergarten teacher(s)
- Primary teacher(s)
- Upper grade teacher(s)
- Special Ed. teacher(s)
- Music or P.E. teacher(s)
- ESL/IEP/MCPS teacher(s)
- Reading teacher
- Librarian
- Counselor
- Assistant principal
- Instructional assistant(s)
- Other (specify)

**At which of the following locations are committee meetings usually held?**  
(Select one):
- Principal's office
- Library
- Cafeteria
- Other (specify)

**From what staff groups are representatives elected?**  
(Select all that apply):
- Teachers in K-5 as a total group
- T
d- Teachers by grade level or a span of grade levels e.g. 3-5
- Teachers in special programs
- Other (specify)

**Who is chairperson of your committee?**  
(Select one):
- Principal
- Assistant principal
- Teacher
- Other (specify)

**How often are committee meetings held?**  
(Select one):
- Less than 5 times per year
- 5 times per year
- More than 5 times per year

**At what time of day are meetings usually scheduled?**  
(Select one):
- Before school
- During school
- After school
- Evening

(Over please)
PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Other

School ________________

Conditions 1, 2, and 3 do not apply. Please describe how you share decision making.
I'm Sheila Bertrand. I'm doing my doctoral thesis at Virginia Tech, the subject of which is shared decision making. This may look imposing, but for most of you, it means doing just one page and putting a check mark next to the responses you select.

This is a approved study done in two stages. The first part is to provide a "snapshot" of where we are in in regards to shared decision making.

The second part is to identify interesting shared decision making arrangements in schools that I may look at through indepth interviews.

Your participation is voluntary. I encourage you to fill out the questionnaire and return it to me so our picture of will be as clear as possible.

If your school is identified as one of the interesting cases, it will be up to you if you wish to participate. No data will be reported by individual school or principal.

Any of you who wish to fill it out before you leave or ask me questions, I will wait...Those of you who can't, please put it in the "pony".

Thank you for your time and assistance.
PRINCIPALS' MEETING
Assembly Room
March 13, 1991
8:15 a.m.

AGENDA

REFRESHMENTS

Pyramid

WELCOME/REMARKS

Superintendent

BREAK-OUT GROUPS

Elementary Principals
(Assembly Room)

Elementary Report Card
School-Based Management
Sheila Bertrand

Intermediate Principals
(Staff Development Room #218)

High School Principals
(Conference Room #208)

BREAK

FLEXFUND

Benefit Services

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

AREA III UPDATES

Directors

PERSONNEL UPDATES

Personnel Specialists

173
ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS MEETINGS  
MARCH 14 AND 15, 1991

AGENDA

- Sheila Bertrand, principal, Clearview ES
- Revised elementary school progress report
- PR efforts
- Line of communication
- Update of elementary teacher transfair
- Other
PRINCIPALS’ MEETING

April 3, 1991

Agenda

8:00 - 9:00  Teleconference

9:00  Summer Clinic

Kidsnet
Elementary Report Card
Student and Parent Leadership Conference - May 4
Summer School

9:30  Announcements

10:00  Survey (elementary)  Sheila Bertrand
May 21, 1991

Dear [Name]:

I am indebted to you for granting me permission to present my dissertation questionnaire to Area IV principals.

You made me feel most welcome. Your principals were very receptive to my study. It was great to be "back home" in your area.

I will meet with Dr. Worner on Tuesday, June 4, in Blacksburg. I'll be happy to share any of my experiences with you as I go through this process.

Again, thank you for assisting me with this project; good luck on yours!

Sincerely,

Sheila Bertrand
Principal

SEB/nal
March 25, 1991

Dear Dr. [Name]:

I am indebted to you for granting me permission to present my dissertation questionnaire to Area I principals.

You and . . . made me feel very welcome. Your principals were very receptive to my study; in fact, I felt right at home in your area.

I met with Dr. Worner on Tuesday, March 19, and his first remark to me was, "How is my old friend, . . . ?" He proceeded to tell me about your friendship over the past 30 years. Soon I'll have to get you two together!

Again, thank you for assisting me with this project. I'll keep you informed of my progress.

Sincerely,

Sheila Bertrand
Principal

SEB/nai

cc:
March 25, 1991

Dear

I am indebted to you for granting me permission to present my dissertation questionnaire to Area III principals.

You and made me feel very comfortable in presenting my study at the March Principals' Meeting. So far, the rate of return has been the highest from our area.

Again, thank you for assisting me with this project. I'll keep you informed of my progress.

Sincerely,

Sheila Bertrand
Principal

SEB/nal

cc:
April 5, 1991

Dear

If you have not completed and returned the questionnaire that I presented at the Principals' meeting on March 14 and March 15, 1991 which pertains to shared decision making in Public Schools, would you please take a few minutes and fill out the extra copy I have enclosed. Your participation is needed for the successful completion of this study.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it to me as soon as possible in the enclosed envelope.

Your assistance with this study is sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sheila Bertrand
Principal, Elementary

Enclosure
April 5, 1991

Dear

If you have not completed and returned the questionnaire that I presented at the Principals' meeting on March 13, 1991 which pertains to shared decision making in Public Schools, would you please take a few minutes and fill out the extra copy I have enclosed. Your participation is needed for the successful completion of this study.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it to me as soon as possible in the enclosed envelope.

Your assistance with this study is sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Sheila Bertrand
Principal, Elementary

Enclosure
April 5, 1991

Dear

If you have not completed and returned the questionnaire that I sent you on March 13, 1991 which pertains to shared decision making in Public Schools, would you please take a few minutes and fill out the extra copy I have enclosed. Your participation is needed for the successful completion of this study.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it to me as soon as possible in the enclosed envelope.

Your assistance with this study is sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Sheila Bertrand
Principal, Elementary

Enclosure
April 11, 1991

Dear

If you have not completed and returned the questionnaire that I presented at the Principals' meeting on April 3, 1991 which pertains to shared decision making in Public Schools, would you please take a few minutes and fill out the extra copy I have enclosed. Your participation is needed for the successful completion of this study.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it to me as soon as possible in the enclosed envelope.

Your assistance with this study is sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sheila Bertrand
Principal, Elementary

Enclosure
Return Envelope

A red envelope was used to distinguish returned questionnaires from the rest of the mail sent to the school through the internal mail system.
APPENDIX C
The Telephone Survey for Principals Responding
to Condition 3 on the Principal Questionnaire

Name of School

I am following up on the Principal Questionnaire given in the Spring. You were one of ten principals who selected Condition 3 on the Principal Questionnaire, indicating that you have a committee, such as a School Improvement Team or Effective Schools Committee, which subsumes the function of the Faculty Advisory Council.

1. Would you tell me how that works in your school?

2. How long has the school been involved in this process?

3. How long have you been principal at this school?

4. Do you foresee making any major changes in this process for the 1991/92 school year?
5. Did you or your staff receive any training to take part in this project?

6. Would you be willing to take part in case studies sometime in the fall, late October - early November? This would entail my meeting with you, the teachers on the committee, and randomly selected teachers not currently serving on the committee.
INSTRUMENTATION: THE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Date ________

School:

_____ a       c        Principal

_____ b

Member of the Decision-Making Team
Teacher Not Serving
Currently on the Decision-Making Team (ST)

Interviewer Statement:

Your responses to all the questions will be completely anonymous. The first set of questions will not be tape recorded.

First, I'd like to ask you about your current experiences with shared decision making.

1. What in this setting lets you be as effective as you are able to be?

2. What in this setting prevents you from being as effective as you are able to be?

3. If you were "King for a Day," what is the one thing you would change?

Interviewer Statement:

I also have a collection of more direct questions, and your responses to these will be tape recorded.

Now I will ask you some questions about the context of shared decision making at your school.

4. What is the structure of your shared decision-making committee?
   a. Who serves on the committee?
b. How were committee members selected?
c. Who do committee members represent?
d. Who chairs the committee?
e. How are issues brought to the attention of the committee?
f. Who sets the agenda?
g. When does the committee meet?
h. How often does the committee meet?
i. Where does the committee meet?
j. How are committee activities reported to the rest of the teachers?

5. For what purpose do you engage in shared decision making?

6. What is the function of your shared decision making committee?

7. What training did you receive to engage in shared decision making?

8. What are the obstacles to shared decision making in your school?

Interviewer Statement:

At this time, I will ask you some questions about the outcomes of shared decision making at your school:

9. How does the way decisions are made in this building affect you?

10. Describe changes in the way you perceive yourself as an educator?

11. What differences have you noticed in teachers experimenting with and trying new strategies?

12. Describe your working relationship with your peers.

13. How is the committee working?

14. How do you think teachers feel the committee is working?

15. How do you feel about the kinds of decisions that emerge from the committee?
16. How do you think teachers feel about the kinds of decisions that emerge from the committee?

17. Describe a decision about which you felt particularly good.

18. Have you ever experienced conflict in the committee?

19. Tell about a decision that was not handled well.

20. Is there any other information you would like me to know about shared decision making in this building?
VITA

SHEILA ELLEN BERTRAND
8811 Queen Elizabeth Boulevard
Annandale, Virginia 22003

Personal Data:

Date of Birth: January 27, 1938

Place of Birth: San Diego, California

Education:

Ed.D. 1994 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Blacksburg, Virginia
Major: Educational Administration
Cognate: Law

M.A. 1977 San Diego State University
San Diego, California
Major: Curriculum
Cognate: Reading

B.A. 1959 Mount St. Mary’s College
Los Angeles, California
Major: English
Minor: History

Experience:

1978-present Fairfax County Public Schools, Fairfax, Virginia
Principal, Clearview Elementary School
Acting Principal, Clearview Elementary School
Assistant Principal, Clearview Elementary School
Program Assistant, Compensatory Education: Chapter 1
Reading Teacher, White Oaks Elementary School
English/Reading Teacher, Robinson Secondary School
1959-1978  Chula Vista, Los Angeles, and Concord Schools, California
Principal, Summer School, Valle Lindo Elementary School
Early Childhood Education Coordinator, Castle Park Elementary School
Classroom Teacher, Grades 1-11 (6 Different Schools)

Professional Organizations:

National/Virginia/Fairfax Associations of Elementary School Principals
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Delta Kappa Gamma
International/Virginia/Greater Washington Reading Associations
Phi Delta Kappa

Shalla Ellen Bertrand