

**PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE TRANSITION FROM  
TRADITIONAL TO YEAR ROUND EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA**

by

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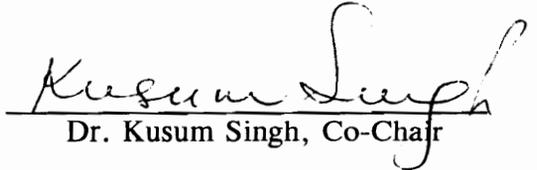
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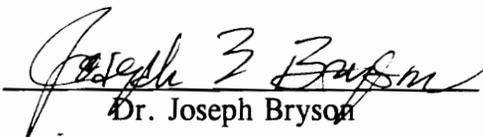
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**ABSTRACT**

This study described perceptions of principals who have made the transition from a traditional to a year-round educational program in North Carolina. Data was collected which dealt with school operations in a YRE setting. A questionnaire designed to answer seven research questions was used in this study.

Part I of the questionnaire gathered school demographic data from the principals. Part II was a fixed response section of the instrument using a Likert scale, and part III contained open-ended questions designed to give participants in the study an opportunity to elaborate on their experiences as their schools made the transition from a traditional to a YRE setting. The questionnaire focused on six domains of school operations: school calendar, daily schedules, facilities, transportation, funding, and personnel.

This study addressed six domains. Giving students and parents an opportunity for input on the school calendar and offering enrichment classes were positive benefits of YRE programs. In the area of daily schedules, according to the principals it is difficult to schedule meetings when one track is out of school. Several principals mentioned that it was difficult to schedule itinerant teachers shared with dual calendars. In the area of school facilities, it is necessary to schedule maintenance workers on a more flexible schedule since students are in school more days during the year. Principals believe facility use has not lessened since implementation. The success of YRE has been worth the added transportation costs. Most principals agreed that YRE requires additional funding. In the area of personnel, affording teachers opportunities for taking needed time off was rated very positively by principals in a YRE setting. Principals also felt that teachers are more satisfied teaching in a YRE program.

It is apparent that principals have an increase in their workload as a result of operating a YRE calendar; the school-within-a-school requires much more time, according to the principals. They recommend that schools entering a YRE schedule use a single-track pattern of grouping. Although several principals stated the school staff would need at least a year to adequately plan a YRE program, most recommended a two year period to allow the principal and school staff to gain the needed community and staff support for the program. Several principals stated that it was difficult for them to take personal time away from school during the planning and

implementation stages. Several principals stated there was a need to have an assistant principal because the work load is greater in a YRE school.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The focus of this study was to describe principals' perceptions who have made the transition from a traditional school calendar to a year-round education (YRE) calendar in North Carolina. How this change is initiated and organized has a profound impact on how well those affected by it accept this change. School personnel need to be involved in the planning and delivery of this concept. The study describes the principals' perceptions of moving a school from a traditional (September through June) calendar to a YRE calendar. Data was collected which dealt with school operations in a YRE setting. Six domains were studied: school calendar, daily schedules, facilities, transportation, funding, and personnel. The operational changes involved in the transition to YRE impact on everyone throughout the school system. Transportation, food services, and other support services are affected by the change, as well as parents, students, teachers, administrators, community organizations, and businesses. All must change and adapt to new ways of thinking and operating. The study presents findings dealing with school operational concerns of principals and their views concerning this major change. Characteristics of principals such as years of service in the field and how they prepared for this school change were also included. Hopefully, the study will help school districts decide whether or not to implement a YRE program in their schools.

The investigation is a descriptive analysis of an alternate approach to traditional schooling. The study includes historical information about YRE and questions which must be considered when changing the school calendar from the traditional to the year-round school. The study offers findings of principals that may prove valuable to others interested in this concept.

"The traditional school calendar found its basis in an agrarian society almost 200 years ago" (Parrish, 1989). "It was designed not for any educational purpose, but to support the agricultural communities that were commonplace in the 1800s" (Ballinger, 1987). Farmers needed help during the summer months, so the school calendar accommodated that need (Stover, 1989). Children were required for working in the fields. The idea that school vacation occurred during the warm summer months was passed to the industrial age generation. During the time that children were needed to help tend crops, the agrarian calendar made sense. But today, many consider the present calendar is antiquated and outdated.

There have been experiments in year-round schools since the turn of the century. "As early as 1904, American educators instituted year-round education on a limited basis. The year-round concept served as an innovative option for organizing the curriculum and calendar and as the solution to overcrowding. Today's educators are more likely to consider YRE for the second reason--particularly in places where enrollment is growing most rapidly" (Carriedo & Goren, 1989).

Year-round education is one manifestation of the school reform movement. Americans have called for reforms in education, especially since the 1980s. In 1983 the National Commission on Excellence in Education declared that America was a nation at risk educationally. Fewer than one third of parents indicated that they were satisfied enough with their schools to give them an A or B. According to the Twenty-second Annual Gallup Poll (1990) concerning education, this report stated that about ten percent more parents felt that the schools deserved an A or B than was reported in 1983 (Elam, 1990).

President Bush met with the nation's governors at the Education Summit in 1989 to begin work on a reform agenda (Sarason, 1990). The main thrust of this meeting was to direct attention to changes to assist students at risk of failure. In 1986 the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching in A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the Twenty-First Century stated that a "window of opportunity" was before us for reforming education. These and other reform reports published by educators, education commissions, political leaders, and task force members have pointed out shortcomings of the education system. Each of these reports has suggested an agenda for reform, and many of America's leaders have called for a plan to reshape, restructure, and reinvent education for the public schools in America.

Among the many educational reforms presently being considered and implemented, year-round education has the potential to improve educational outcomes for our students. Students that are at risk in the present system may benefit from a

year-round setting where they can receive remediation and enrichment opportunities designed more for their needs, rather than by an arbitrary calendar's requirements. Studies by the New York State Board of Regents in New York (1978) indicated that children have better retention when learning occurs in more frequent increments; therefore, students benefit by being in a YRE program.

To date, most of the research on YRE has primarily concentrated on teachers' and parents' views on multi-track programs, costs incurred in YRE programs, and non-instructional interests (Merino, 1983; NEA, 1987). Little attention has been focused on the school principals' role and how it may change in YRE, nor have studies investigated principals' perceptions of the best way to initiate a YRE program in their particular setting. As the instructional leader, the school principal is one of the persons responsible for planning and implementing change, and information on the principal's views is much needed.

Year-round schools were started as a result of overcrowded conditions in the schools in the West, mainly in California (Merino, 1983). The dilemma of a growing student population and shortages of classroom space led to the creation of the multi-track concept, where students and teachers attend school on a staggered schedule throughout the year. A school facility using this structure can accommodate between 25 to 50 percent more students versus a traditional educational schedule (Merino, 1983).

The literature on YRE comes from a variety of sources, including state departments of public instruction, local school systems, and national and state advocacy groups. Primarily, the literature has been concerned with financial aspects and how to implement a YRE program. Changes in the principal's role between traditional and year-round schools have not been thoroughly investigated.

### Problem Statement

As we step into the 21st Century, we are finding the need for inspired, effective leadership in our schools. Research has shown that the school site principal is the key person responsible for initiating change in a school. How change is initiated and organized has a profound impact on how those affected by it accept this major change. Little is known about the principals' role in leading the change to a year-round educational concept from a school operational point of view.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to provide information to help school districts decide whether or not moving to YRE is a good policy decision. Information was gathered from principals that highlighted the problems they encountered which may prove to be valuable to other principals that are interested in this concept. Principals answered questions that focused on school operational concerns. Solutions proposed by the principals to problems encountered were also included in the study.

### Definitions of Terms

1. *Year-Round Education (YRE)*: "the term **year-round education** describes single-track, multi-track, and extended year approaches to school calendars where vacations are spaced at various times throughout the year instead of combined into one long summer vacation" (Glines, 1987, p. 17).
2. *Single-track*: "On a **single track** YRE all staff and students are in school at the same time, but the instructional and vacation sequences are changed. Typically, this schedule is designed to eliminate the long summer vacation" (Brekke, June 1991, p. 1).
3. *Multi-track*: The **multi-track** year-round system divides a group of students and their teachers into separate "tracks." Depending on the calendar selected, there may be three, four, or five different tracks.
4. *Extended Year*: A **single track**, traditional school calendar which has more school days than the traditional calendar, which in North Carolina is 180 days.
5. *On track*: A term used to describe who is in school at a given time. If, for example, a school is on a four track system, then at any one time, three tracks of teachers and students are attending school--"**on track**."
6. *Off track*: A term describing who is not in school at a given time. Using the same four track system, when three tracks are in school--"on track"--one group is "**off track**," meaning they are on vacation. When the "**off track**" group returns to school, one of the "on track" groups goes on vacation.

7. *Intersession*: **Intersessions** are the three week breaks between each session. If for example, a school is using a 45-15 day calendar, the students will be in school for 45 days and out for 15 days. **Intersessions** can be used for remediation and enrichment for students. They can also be taken as vacation time.
8. *School-within-a-school*: An arrangement whereby different groups of students follow different types of calendars within one facility. For this study, one group of students is on a traditional schedule, while another group of students is operating on a YRE schedule in the same facility.
9. *Student Information Management System--SIMS*: This is a student accounting system developed by the state of North Carolina. All public schools within the state began this program four years ago.

#### Significance of the Study

The study discusses the perceptions of principals that have been involved in the "starting up" process of year-round schools in North Carolina. The interest in YRE in North Carolina has increased significantly during the past three years. The number of schools in the state that have implemented some type of year-round calendar has grown from two programs in 1990 to 70 in three years. It is estimated that approximately 25 percent of the state's school districts are considering YRE implementation in the 1994-95 school year. Principals and administrators considering

YRE may find it beneficial to focus on the skills and behaviors of other administrators and what they did to implement the program.

Furthermore, the North Carolina State Board of Education, the Legislature of North Carolina, and the Department of Public Instruction are in full support of implementation of year-round education (North Carolina General Assembly, 1990). Each year the number of school districts nationwide, as well as in North Carolina, that are adopting YRE programs increases.

Changing the school calendar to implement a year-round program as a part of school reform is steadily increasing throughout the U.S. In the midst of renewed interest this past decade in school effectiveness, there has been a resurgence of interest in YRE. Charles Ballinger, president of the National Association for Year-Round Education, reported that the number of schools now on year-round calendars reached 1,668 during the 1991-92 school year. This is a tremendous increase from two years ago. In August 1991, there were 1,629 programs nationwide. That statistic was up eighty-seven percent from the previous year. In the 1992-93 school year the total number of public schools reached 2,017 on the YRE calendar. The total enrollment nationwide in the 1992-93 school year reached 1,567,920 students (National Association for Year-Round Education, 1993).

Most of the implementation of year-round schools has occurred mainly because of the need to increase facility usage for students. The largest number of year-round programs are presently on the West coast. To increase facility efficiency, California has legislatively mandated that districts begin YRE because of overcrowded facilities

(Howell, 1988). Year-round education as a scheduling system is different from YRE as a philosophy. Some of the benefits of the philosophy include savings in the areas of physical, human, and fiscal resources (Glines, 1987).

Having school principals recall the lessons of experiences learned will enhance the likelihood that others will profit from their responses in the structured questionnaire. Also, allowing principals time to reflect on their experiences will help them increase their own effectiveness as well. The findings of this study could assist State Department of Education officials, local boards of education policy makers, and parents that are interested in initiating this change. Isaac and Michael (1981) advise that studying what people are doing in a similar setting can assist others in making future decisions.

### Limitations

The major limitation is that the study is of principals only in North Carolina. Other limitations include the time constraints on principals to answer the survey questions in a timely manner and the fact that responses are limited in a structured questionnaire which may not cover all the concerns the principals feel are important.

### Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 provides an introduction of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, definitions of terms, the significance of the study, the limitations of the study, and the organization of the dissertation.

Chapter 2 presents the review of related literature relevant to the study.

Chapter 3 includes a description of the population used in the study, the data collection instrument explained, data collection procedures, and the method of analysis.

Chapter 4 presents an analysis and findings of the data derived from the questionnaire that the principals answered, with analysis organized from the issues that emerged from the data.

Chapter 5 summarized the findings and provide the conclusions, discussions, and implications for further study. The references, appendices, and vita conclude the study.

## **Chapter 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### Introduction

This study identified the perceptions of principals regarding the lessons and experiences that they learned while moving from a traditional educational concept to a YRE concept. The principals in the study identified the changes they believed to be important for the transition. The information gathered from the principals illustrated difficult issues that they encountered. The information obtained should give others interested in this concept a clearer picture of what to expect when making this transition.

The review of literature relevant to this study includes a focus on educational reform movements that have had an effect on school districts moving to a YRE concept in the U.S. The study also includes theories and studies regarding leadership of principals and research related to feasibility studies, operational costs, curriculum concerns, the historical basis of YRE, and the primary models used.

#### Educational Reform

Educational reform is not a recent effort for schools in America. The first schools were created by the early settlers so that a child could learn to read the Bible (Johnson, et al, 1979). As early as the 1600s colonies began to pass legislation concerning education.

Perhaps the best known, recent reform report is the work done by the National Commission of Excellence in Education. The publication of A Nation at Risk, released in April, 1983, gained the most attention of any reform movements in education today. This report signaled the beginning of the educational reform movement for the latter part of this century. The Task Force on Education for Economic Growth (1983) encouraged all states to "...increase both the duration and the intensity of academic learning time" (p.38).

Most educational researchers agree that the extent of time a person is exposed to instruction and the time spent in learning has a bearing on how well learning occurs. Denham & Lieberman (1980) assert time is a powerful tool for increasing learning achievement. Additionally, the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) and the Task Force on Education for Economic Growth (1983) point out that other countries, highly respected educationally, spend longer time periods on educational instruction. Levin (1983) states that "U.S. students do not fare well in international comparisons of achievement, and that the future competitive position of the U.S. in the world economy is at stake if the U.S. does not follow this and other reforms" (p. 2).

Reform movements, regardless of their beginning, have mainly been directed toward the area of instruction. Fullan (1982) suggests that educational reform helps schools to "accomplish their goals more effectively by replacing some programs or practices with better ones" (p. 136). According to Schlechty (1991), the necessary ingredient needed for school reform is effective leadership. Much of the school

reform issues address the following: administrative leadership, student achievement outcomes, teacher certification, school governance issues, school organization, upgrading standards, goals relating to teaching students to prepare them for competing in a global world economy, and other restructuring components (Kernes & Doyle, 1989).

The Task Force On Education For Economic Growth report in 1983, Action for Excellence, stated that the nation that dramatically led the world in technology is failing to provide its own children with the intellectual tools needed for the 21st century. Boyer (1983), Goodlad (1984), Lightfoot (1983), Sizer (1992), and other researchers during the 1980s, and 1990s, wrote several papers that centered on the reform of secondary schools. If the numerous reports of the past decade are an indication of things to come, the rest of this century will be spent addressing various reform issues in schools. YRE is one of the issues the public is considering.

The 1970s experienced a time that stressed accountability of programs and schools, leading to reform. Accountability to the public and students to be served by the schools centered on the premise that schools should focus their efforts to ensure minimum competence of students (Tyler, 1987). The report A Nation at Risk in 1983 signaled renewed concern for the future of education in America, and stimulated new calls for educational reform. Since this report in 1983, attention focused on preparing our youth for success in a technological society. These were early childhood and basic education programs. This change in structure is "altering systems of rules, roles, and

relationships so that schools can serve existing purposes more effectively or serve new purposes altogether" (Schlechty, 1991, p. xvi).

Education emphasis today focuses on precepts concerning shared decision making, methodology, curriculum changes, technology, and preparation of school personnel. Innovation and reform are more likely when carried out by those who have ownership, responsibility, and accountability. Many believe that student achievement, teacher satisfaction, and making better use of facilities can be achieved by a YRE program (Ballinger, 1989). According to Elmore & McLaughlin (1988), school personnel are more careful when considering school reform. Those affected by decisions should have a choice in making those decisions. The reform agendas, such as YRE, must address the organization of schools, curriculum concerns, student achievement, as well as working to improve the quality of teaching (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988). Ballinger (telephone interview September 20, 1993) considers YRE to be a major aspect of education reform mainly because of its implications throughout the community: "Unlike the others, the reforms that are never felt outside the school walls, this is one reform that is felt throughout the community, and so it has to be considered a major reform."

#### Basis for YRE Reform

The beginning of the YRE programs under study are to be found in the work of John Carroll (1971) and Benjamin Bloom (1971). The idea of direct instruction and mastery learning is based on the premise that children learn information and

acquire skills if they are provided enough time and opportunities. According to Carroll (1971), aptitude is essentially the amount of time a student needs to master the material. Carroll believed that student learning is a "function of time allowed, the perseverance of the student, the quality of the instruction and the student's ability to understand, and aptitude" (Joyce & Weil, 1986, p. 318).

"Academically, YRE schools acknowledge and accommodate the student as a continuous learner" (Ballinger, 1988; Gitlin, 1988). According to Gottschalk (1986), several studies indicate that students on a YRE calendar show academic gains; Ballinger (1987) stated that students do as well or better than their contemporaries on traditional schedules. There are also opportunities for exposure to different subject matter or learning in more depth than usual in traditional schedules, where much time is spent in review (Roberts, 1987).

Many believe that special needs students receive additional benefits from the year-round setting. A New York study stated that long summer vacations hurt students with learning difficulties (Gottschalk, 1986). Newman (1990) uses the term "summer slippage" to explain the academic loss of students who are classified as "at-risk". This slippage is attributed to the lack of home instruction, and also the lack of community reinforcement of learning. This same concept is aptly applied to the evidence of greater loss by English as a Second Language (ESL) students in their efforts to learn English (Ballinger, 1987).

The New York Board of Regents Division of Research in 1978 examined various school calendars, and learning and retention rates, and found that students

provided with more concentrated learning periods, with shorter breaks retained more information. It was further stated that these students forget less.

In April, 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education issued its report in a booklet, A Nation at Risk. The report listed several important issues. One of the issues studied was the subject of time. They found that American students, compared to other industrialized countries, spend much less time in school. While several countries have a 220-day calendar for students, American students have 180 days in a school year. Many educators, parents, politicians, and YRE proponents believe that reform and restructuring of our educational system should involve the adoption of a longer school year for our students.

One of the goals of American education is that students reach world class standards and that our students must do as well as the students in other countries. It seems unlikely that our students can reach these goals if they spend less time preparing academically. Fortunately, many believe there is more support for a longer school year now than ever before. Year-round education offers a better opportunity to move in this direction. Some headlines of major newspapers include, "Cities Turn to Year-Round Schools as Answer to Crowded Conditions" (Gottschalk, 1986) and "It's Good for Students, Good for Community" (Ballinger, 1986). The National Governor's Association, following its annual meeting on Education Reform, signaled the endorsement of the year-round school by saying, "It makes no sense to keep closed half a year the school buildings in which America has invested a quarter of a trillion dollars while we are undereducated and overworked" (Alexander, 1986, p.90).

Reiterating this same sentiment, spokespersons in the U.S. Department of Education asserted, "A longer school year could help school reformers achieve several objectives: higher salaries for teachers, opportunities for disadvantaged and slow learners, enrichment opportunities for the academically gifted, and alleviation of child care problems for parents during the summer vacation months" (Doyle & Finn, 1985, p. 29).

The 1986 Carnegie Report on Teaching, Teachers For The Twenty-First Century states that schools should emphasize higher-order thinking skills and develop strategies that would teach children to learn how to learn. In recent years, however, educators have focused more on achievement scores rather than addressing the real needs of children. With the rapidly changing family structure, there is a greater need to deliver enrichment opportunities and remediation for students, rather than worrying only about test scores. A year-round education program can assist in meeting these needs of children.

#### Education Reform in North Carolina

On the first of February, 1989, the YRE Institute of North Carolina sent surveys to all 132 school districts in NC. One hundred seven (107) of the systems have responded to date. Of those responding, 102 (95%) are assessing the appropriateness of year-round programs or already have them in their districts (Langston, 1993). Some districts are looking at implementing elementary programs,

while those with existing programs are assessing the process for implementing middle and high school programs.

In the 1992-93 school year there were 35 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, and one exceptional program operating on a YRE calendar. This was over a 200% increase in YRE programs in operation. During this time period, 22 school districts in the state were in some aspect of YRE. Currently North Carolina has 33 LEA's utilizing this concept. The number of schools in the 1993-94 school year has grown to 60 elementary schools, 9 middle schools, and one exceptional children's program.

Vann Langston, education consultant with the Department of Public Instruction, has been following the development of YRE over the past several years. "One of the most important reasons that YRE continues to gain supporters is that parents and students have been given year-round schools as a option, as a choice. When it is presented as a choice, parents and students often see it as an attractive option" (p. 8).

In terms of scheduling, only one of the year-round schools has an instructional year that is longer than 180 days in North Carolina. The Greensboro City Global Studies Magnet School has a school year of 210 days. Most schools are operated as schools-within-schools. A portion of a school's students opts for a year-round calendar while the other students remain on the traditional schedule. According to Langston (1993), interest in YRE schools continues to build. "Year round schools

will continue to be popular with some students as long as they are offered as options rather than as mandates. Parents like having a choice" (p. 8).

### Principal Leadership

From the thoughts of both Warren Bennis and Peter Drucker, "Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things" (Covey, 1989, p. 101). Bennis & Nanus, (1985) stated, "Always, it seems, the concept of leadership eludes us or turns up in another form to taunt us again with its slipperiness and complexity. So we have invented an endless proliferation of terms to deal with it...and still the concept is not sufficiently defined" (p. 259). According to Bass (1988) there are "almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (p. 7). The principal fulfills several roles and performs numerous functions requiring specific skills and behaviors (Townsend, 1992).

The transition from a traditional to a year-round school requires effective leadership from a number of people, including the principal leading this change. Fullan (1991) asserts, "The school is an organization, and organizations change more effectively when their heads play active roles..." (p. 152). Several writers in education refer to the principal's leadership in relation to others (Townsend, 1992). Dublin (1991), Sergiovanni (1991), Fullan (1988), & Renchler (1991) list characteristics and certain behaviors of principals, focusing on the interaction between the leader and his or her followers rather than addressing the separate duties that the

principal attempts to accomplish. Townsend (1992) asserts "the principal's role is increasingly one of developing leaders among staff throughout the school" (p. 42).

Dublin (1991) has stated that the principal needs to involve others to be effective. "A proactive decision-maker is one who involves people in planning; provides an appropriate governance structure in which to operate, creates a high trust condition for healthy interaction among members and an evaluative process for feedback" (p. 112). Fullan (1988) emphasizes the importance of principals' abilities to connect concepts and skills for job effectiveness. Sergiovanni (1991) stresses the idea of transactional and transformational leadership for the principal in a detailed fashion. Transactional leadership, according to his view, is related to bartering. "The wants and needs of followers and the wants and needs of the leader are traded and a bargain is struck" (p. 125). Sergiovanni believes that the leader and followers do not share a common interest in the organization and the only way to reach agreement is by bargaining for what each one wants.

In congruence with this thinking is Schlechty's view that a leader strives to keep people moving to higher levels. Schlechty reports that the role of principals is for them to be leaders of leaders, and "creators of conditions in which other leaders thrive" (1991, p. 43).

Both Senge (1990) and Schlechty (1991) believe that involvement is important and that building a team is essential to leadership effectiveness. Burns (1978) asserts that leadership is likened to a process in which a leader engages the human needs of his followers.

The principal is the key person for ensuring success of the YRE program (Mekeel, 1991; Moss, 1989). According to Mekeel, change is rather difficult for people; and no one person is prepared to "champion the issue of change more than the site principal" (p. 4). The principal is responsible for a multitude of duties including planning, implementing, and leading the way for this major change, but none of these duties are as important as articulating the vision of change required for YRE. To be successful a principal must have a wide range of leadership skills. Organization, time management, planning, analysis, and communication skills are mentioned as critical for all principals, but particularly for YRE principals (Quinlan, George, & Emmett, 1987; Serifs, 1990). It is the integration of all these discrete skills into focused leadership that distinguishes successful principals. According to Johnston, (1974), year-round elementary principals seem to be spending more time with outside activities and less time in the areas of instruction, curriculum, and staff than the traditional principal.

Sergiovanni (1990) maintains that education leaders must strive to restore spirit and trust to the process that will eventually lead to collegiality, bonding, and intrinsic motivation. Bryson (1991) reports that "successful leadership has awesome power, to inspire employees to accomplish the organization's goals whether they wish to or not-- power to transform people, organizations, communities, teams, armies, yes, even civilizations to greatness" (p. 26). It is well documented that the leadership of the principal is the determining factor in the success of the school.

Goren (1991) conducted case studies while surveying four schools that converted to YRE. He stated that each of the four principals was playing the role of "gatekeeper of change", but the associations between and among various individuals were different at the schools studied. This evidence supports the idea that principals must be conscious of the need to involve several constituencies in the planning process. Several researchers explain that after YRE is implemented, communication is a high priority for the principal (Cruz, 1988; Glines, 1988). Ballinger (telephone interview, September, 1993) believes that the principal is the main person--especially from an operational point of view. "There can be some other important people as part of the implementation process, like the superintendent for example; and how the superintendent works with the board and the community to get approval. But, on a day-by-day operational basis, clearly the principal is the chief figure."

### Feasibility Studies

Year-round education is not a new concept in the U.S. or in other countries. Schools have adopted extended year calendars for several reasons, including an alternative to the alleviation of overcrowded schools, fuel conservation, and improved educational opportunities for students (Ballinger, Kirschenbaum, & Poimbeauf, 1987; White 1988).

Many educators argue that the time is right for YRE to become even more widespread in the U.S. McLain (1973) asserted, "An analysis of the changing lifestyles and living patterns of our society today, together with the technological forces

that are causing these changes, will demonstrate that major changes in our school time structures are inevitable in the near future" (p. 56). Others cite the increasing pressure to maximize the use of tax dollars as a viable reason to focus on YRE (Ballinger, 1988; Doyle and Finn, 1985; Thomas, 1973). Ballinger (telephone interview, September, 1993) estimates that in the year 2000 we could have an estimated five million students in the YRE program.

Wilce (1991) asserts that YRE has more advantages than disadvantages. Even though some parents disapprove of the shortened summer vacation, studies have shown that "the long summer break can be particularly damaging to migrant and disadvantaged children who lose up to 27 percent more of their previous year's learning than their peers" (p. 19). In one school operating on a YRE schedule, "suspensions were down an astonishing 75 percent by February this year and teacher attendance has improved markedly" (Wilce, 1991, p. 19). Bradford (telephone interview September 1993) stated that in his district, the high schools have been on a YRE schedule since 1973-74. "You can't take it out with a wedge. Year-round education is the fastest growing national organization in America."

Some studies have indicated that there is no significant difference in student achievement (as measured by standardized tests) between students on a year-round calendar and those on a traditional schedule (Merino, 1983; Mussatti, 1981; Young & Berger, 1983). Yet as noted above, there are other compelling reasons to abandon the school calendar created by the demands of an earlier, agrarian economy (Honig, 1986). Case studies found in current literature address the feasibility of changing to

YRE and are written by several authors who describe the experiences of others in order to assist schools which are considering changing to YRE. According to Brekke (1991), practical suggestions include forming study committees with parent groups and staff, scheduling meetings which conveniently mesh with work and family schedules, and organizing panels which represent balanced (both pro and con) concerning views of YRE. Hunt (1974) asserts that the most significant predictor of whether or not a school district implemented YRE was the attitude of teachers, administrators, parents, students, and business and industry toward implementation.

Many school districts that change to a YRE calendar hope to save money. In some school districts that have effectively implemented the multi-track programs costs have been cut by as much as 15 percent (Merino, 1983; Quinlan, George, & Emmett, 1987; White, 1987). They report savings in such areas as construction of new schools, per pupil operating costs for books, materials, equipment, and it provides an opportunity to redirect construction funds toward the improvement of educational programs.

Districts that have instituted YRE have also experienced some unexpected benefits. The attendance of both teachers and students has increased at the elementary and the high school level (Quinlan, George, & Emmett, 1987; White, 1987). "The reason for the improved attendance was associated with the more frequent vacation periods. With more frequent vacations, teachers appeared to have less need to use sick-leave days for rest and recuperation. Also, students seemed more eager to return to school to see friends after a short vacation period" (Ballinger, Kirschenbaum, &

Poimbeauf, 1987, p. 7). However, one school district on a multi-track calendar which scheduled the high school students according to academic goals and achievement scores experienced a high absentee rate (24.9%) for the remedial track (Housden & Holmes, 1981).

The momentum for moving to YRE has come from several different constituencies. Many communities react adversely to the notion of the majority of students having so little to do during the summer months and demand that the schools make better use of programs to remedy this idleness. Several taxpayer groups want empty buildings put to use for reasons of efficiency.

Because the traditional calendar includes a long summer break, there is a greater loss of information by the student that must be reviewed for approximately six weeks at the beginning of each school year. At present, there is little evidence that the extended year accomplishes an increase in test scores (Pittman, Cox, & Burchfiel, 1986). Some authors point out that it should not come as a surprise to any of us that student achievement is not greatly enhanced because the YRE calendar does not usually increase the number of days for instruction (Quinlan, George, & Emmett, 1987).

Studies concerning student achievement are limited in number and do not define the academic impact of YRE either positively or negatively. Creating more confusion, several studies use the term YRE but in reality are examining extended year programs rather than multi-track YRE programs, which are different and much less complex (Healey, 1987; Pittman, 1986; VanTassel-Baska, 1988). In some YRE

schools the students are allowed to return during the intercessions to take remedial classes or classes for accelerated students (Ballinger, 1985; Doyle & Finn, 1985).

White (1987) stated:

The year-round school schedule has in the opinion of experienced administrators and teachers, shown a tendency for increasing the holding power of schools during the standard academic year. At the same time it has proven to be a feasible means for extending the length of the academic year for able and ambitious students to take advantage of options to enroll in classes beyond their minimum attendance track. It seems to be a feasible way for introducing a 225-day school year for those who need additional education without drastic increases in school district budgets (p.124).

Another advantage of the YRE calendar is increased opportunities for teachers to earn extra pay (Doyle & Finn, 1985). Teachers can work more hours and be paid accordingly. Ballinger, Kirschenbaum, & Poimbeauf, (1987) noted: "...the big breakthrough in teachers' salaries will not come until the teacher's work year is substantially longer....There is a real world, and it seems very clear...that teachers cannot have both substantially higher salaries and 14 weeks of vacation" (p. 25).

Higher salaries resulting from an extended year contract could enhance the profession and possibly attract more high-caliber college graduates to consider teaching as a career (Ballinger, 1985; Doyle & Finn, 1985). "The flexible options provided by the year-round schedule could solve two common problems of the profession: having a cadre of qualified substitutes available when they are needed; and providing professional work for teachers who would otherwise seek summer employment out of their fields and often at much lower pay" (Ballinger, Kirschenbaum, & Poimbeauf, 1987, p. 79).

There are many reports of reduced vandalism to schools on a YRE calendar. The reason for this is that the school is not standing empty during the long summer months. Also, student, parent, and teacher satisfaction with the YRE calendar is high (Merino, 1983). According to Quinlan (1987), "In general, student responses were definitely more positive than negative about their experiences in YRE programs. Given a choice between a year-round and a traditional program, more students would choose year-round than not" (p. 90). According to Boyles (1993) "the increase in positive attitude during the first year suggests that the year-round program influences children in such a fashion that they feel greater control over their educational destiny" (p. 66).

McLain (1973) stated that a YRE calendar is superior in addressing the needs of our society for child care.

In some respects, parents would be the principal beneficiaries of a reformed school calendar. As women poured into the work force in the sixties and seventies, families with two working parents became the rule rather than the exception. This was the genesis of "latchkey" children, who come home to empty houses. Schools have been slow to adjust to this development which is now a permanent fixture of U.S. society....Long summer vacations have become a major problem for families that must make child-care arrangements. The wealthy pay for camps, day-care programs, or summer schools that charge tuition. But for the less affluent and poor, summer is a time for juggling schedules or allowing children to go unsupervised (Doyle & Finn, 1985, p.121).

Other well-stated advantages are providing for the special needs students, including the mentally, emotional, and physically handicapped; providing for students needing more remediation; and also assisting the non- and limited-English speaking child (Ballinger, 1988; Doyle & Finn, 1985; Gitlin, 1988; Goycochea, 1990). Many

others claim that the school facilities are better used because some students are in school while others are out of school (Cruz, 1988; Glines, 1987). Glines (1990) reports increased opportunities for employment and more time for volunteer activities for the older student population.

### Operational Costs

Baker (1987) and others outline possible ways of making some comparisons between the costs of traditional schooling and those of a YRE calendar. The budget under year-round schooling may be compared to the budget for prior years.

Many school districts that choose to adopt a YRE calendar hope to save money. In school districts that use a multi-track program effectively, costs have been decreased as much as 15 percent (Merino, 1983; Quinlan, George, & Emmett, 1987; White, 1988). Brekke (personal communication, September 21, 1993) stated... "Oxnard saved one million dollars a year while using a multi-track schedule. Several school systems have experienced a cost avoidance, thereby increasing capacity by 120% on a four track schedule." According to Brekke (1993), there has been a cost analysis and avoidance of 20 million dollars over the past several years.

Glines (1987) thought of "year-round education as a philosophy, a concept related to the present quality of life" (p. 14). He states that he believes in continuous education. By increasing the number of days in school, YRE is a way to increase resources available to society in three specific areas: human, physical, and fiscal. The human side corresponded with the fact that YRE enrolls approximately 70-80%

of all students, therefore, the remainder of students are able to work in volunteer programs, or tutorial programs. The physical aspect insures less building of schools, thus fewer raw materials are used, and therefore, energy demands not as great. Fiscally, because of less building construction, dollars could be saved (Glines, 1987).

Most districts change to YRE for financial reasons, especially to save on capital costs associated with building new schools, according to Quinlan, George, & Emmett (1987). Growth in student enrollment is a statewide phenomenon in 48 of California's 58 counties, with a growth rate of at least 20 percent estimated over the next decade. In California, as a result of several failed school bond elections, school districts have almost been forced to adopt YRE schools. Several districts have turned to YRE as a last resort to deal with their exploding student population (Brekke, 1990).

In a time of economic concern, especially in education, any fiscal advantage is of great importance. The single track plan for YRE is not usually better financially, but it is no more expensive than the traditional school (Ballinger, 1987). However, the multi-track YRE program is fiscally worthy of mention. White (1990), stated that no other innovation in education in the U.S. has as much potential to save money as the operation of schools using a YRE schedule. Some proponents of YRE, according to Merino (1983), exaggerate many cost savings benefits. In one such example, in an article written for the American School Boards Journal, a board member admitted that he had oversimplified the economic appeal of YRE in the article. He continued to further his theory on the foundation of this simplistic view of school finance (Howe,

1973). Such reports have caused the public to have feelings of distrust, and confusion concerning YRE.

In order for a year-round program to meet desired financial savings, the schools essentially must operate at or near top capacity and require students to attend certain tracks. Some additional cost factors to be considered are additional costs to air-condition the schools, and also additional costs for the adjustment of salary schedules for teachers (Merino, 1983). Additional expenses for transportation and revamping the school curriculum must also be included. Because these expenses are sometimes overlooked, savings have been so minimal that several districts have abandoned year-round schooling after a few years of implementation (Merino, 1983).

Glines (1988) believes that any capital savings incurred by not building new schools is offset by the lowered life expectancy of buildings created by continuous use. White (1987) stated that when a multi-track program is implemented in several schools, some savings are generated in inverse proportion to the number of attendance areas which divide student membership. Critics also state that with the increase in transportation and air-conditioning costs, and elevated administrative expenses, it takes away from funds better spent to improve the quality in classrooms under the traditional calendar (Romey, 1988).

According to White (1987), Jefferson County, Colorado, generated a cost savings of 87.7 million dollars of bonded indebtedness in 1988 when the multi-track program was terminated. The unreported savings in operating costs surprised the

district's leadership when the newly built schools for the traditional 9-month operation were opened and these expenditures became evident.

### Curriculum

It is assumed that those associated with YRE understand that the curriculum must be revamped to accommodate the needs of students. The degree of change depends on what type system a school had before the change, what type of calendar is used, and whether a school is elementary, middle, or a high school (White 1985). At the elementary level, since the students are with the same teacher the entire year, YRE appears to be less disruptive than at the secondary level (White 1985). According to Carriedo & Goren (1989), in multi-track programs, students and teachers have to change rooms as often as four times a year. Some schools have to combine students into one class from several grades; as a result, some teachers believe YRE creates "a dilution to the quality of instruction" (Quinlan and others, 1987, p. 46).

At the secondary level, where teachers are usually divided into departments and courses are individually offered, curriculum changes become somewhat problematic. When this occurs, secondary schools usually have to make revisions in graduation requirements. One reason for this is because there is not enough students to offer every class for every track (White, 1985). Multi-track secondary schools usually experience several curriculum changes. While more than one track is in the same term, all tracks are never in school at the same time in the school year (White, 1985). This creates a problem with elective, specialized, and advanced courses;

multi-track schools are sometimes forced to offer the same course several times to smaller groups and also make students cross-track to take special courses (Quinlan and others, 1987). YRE is a relatively inexpensive method of reform that allows educators to deal with population increases and a way to reform curriculums. It remains to be seen precisely how the recent increase in the number of districts implementing YRE will affect education as a whole.

Ascher (1988) asserts that students in YRE schools can achieve at or above expected levels of academic achievement. She believes that the low achievement of students in YRE programs possibly result from changes in the curriculum when schools change to the new schedule, problems of secondary schedules, resistance from teachers in adaption to the schedule change, and resistance from parents.

Ballinger (1987) noted that there is usually less teacher "burn out" while working on a YRE schedule because they have regular vacation periods. This period of time away from school gives teachers more time to prepare lesson plans, and therefore, they should do a better job with teaching the curriculum. Mussatti (1981) writes that many special learning programs can be enhanced by YRE programs--bilingual and multi-cultural, special education, and extended remedial programs. Some concerns regarding high school YRE programs include sequencing and course continuity. According to Mussatti (1981), a heavy program of in-service training, with emphasis on weekly follow-up and individualization for teachers in curriculum development, must be maintained. He also stated that summer tracks have low enrollment, and students tend to be remedial which also limits curriculum offerings.

Ballinger (1988) believes that "remediation can occur throughout the year by using more frequent vacation periods, rather than limiting it to summer school after nine months of failure and frustration" (p. 57). He also asserts that the September-June calendar is based on economic needs rather than instructional needs, and has outlived its usefulness. He stated, "today when we announce that formal instruction is over in June and that "real" learning will not be available until September, what subliminal messages are we sending to students?" Bradford (personal communication, September 1993): "When we went to year-round we put our school on a quarter system, and we revised all curriculum guides to include performance and terminal objectives or minimum standards for children. In other words, when our children go into a unit they know at the end what the objectives are. So we wrote all of our curriculum." One of the most noticeable benefits of the year-round calendar is the opportunity for remediation, enrichment, and acceleration. Also, students have opportunities to make up failures immediately by either repeating a class or by switching to a more appropriate course during a mid-year vacation term (White, 1988).

Research on achievement tests while comparing student performance of students in traditional schools to those in YRE schools most often showed no significant difference due to the mixed results found in multi-track schools (Quinlan & others, 1987). Other studies have shown mixed results (Costa, 1987; Kuner-Roth, 1985; Marr, 1989; Young & Berger, 1983). Studies by Quinlan, George & Emmett (1987) found major differences in family backgrounds of students attending traditional

and YRE schools. The authors stated that YRE schools usually operate in lower socio-economic communities, have a larger percentage of minority and welfare families, and have more children that are non- and limited English speaking versus traditional school students.

Attesting to student achievement, Bradford, (personal communication September 1993) stated that in Buena Vista, Virginia..."the curriculum has been drastically revised. We went to a YRE program in our high schools in 1973-74. The YRE program in this district is divided into three 60-day quarters, plus a summer quarter that is tuition free." Superintendent Bradford went on to say that "more than 50 percent of the high school students at Parry McCluer consistently enroll in enrichment, promotion, acceleration, or remedial work." The year-round program has seen dramatic results. More than 90 percent of the students in the Buena Vista District attend YRE classes during their four years in high school. In addition, Buena Vista's 11th graders showed improvements in student performance exceeding the national average.

Ballinger (telephone interview, September 30, 1993).

"I hear more talk about doing restructuring at the same time the calendar has changed. In fact, we even see more of those kinds of ideas at the National Conference where presenters are doing sessions for it. Last year for the first time we saw a real pick-up in restructuring through calendar change. Calendar change doesn't restructure everything, but its a means to doing some other restructuring at the same time, which of course, affects the curriculum."

Bradford (1992) called the traditional calendar outdated and outmoded. "For America to compete in an international society, the nation's schools will have to raise their educational standards" (p. 1). Moreover, he contends that standards can be raised by changing the curriculum to prepare students for the technological and informational age ahead. YRE should be an integral part of those changes if there is going to be a change in American education.

According to Ballinger (1993), "The traditional school calendar in not an educational calendar now, has never been and never will be." Calling for change, "the chief purpose of our schools is to help our children learn." The best calendar for learning is perhaps one without a three-month vacation. (Paper presented at the National Association for YRE, San Diego, California).

### Summary

This chapter provided a review of the literature in five main areas: educational reform; education reform in North Carolina; basis for YRE reform; principal leadership; feasibility studies, operational costs, and curriculum studies. The body of literature on YRE, while it is now increasing in size, lacks definitiveness in several areas. The major emphasis seems to be centered on claims for or against YRE rather than specific studies concerning major facets, such as operational costs, student achievement, and leadership.

In order to utilize the information regarding the decision to implement a year-round program, school districts must find specific, longitudinal studies that clearly

address the main reasons to begin this educational change. At present, there are several year-round models and also many variations of these models for school districts to decide upon for implementation. The transition of the change from a long held traditional concept to a YRE concept has a profound impact on all people connected with the school district where it is being implemented. With the number of school districts converting to YRE, more information is needed for policy makers in order to decide whether this change is feasible for their particular setting. This study is designed to present information from the principals' perspective to other school systems interested in this concept.

## Chapter 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This chapter contains a discussion of the methodology used in conducting this study: description of the population, the data collection instrument and the methods of analysis.

The methodology included the collecting of data to describe the perceptions of principals who have made the transition to a Year-round education (YRE) format. Specifically, data were collected regarding school operations in a YRE setting. The study addressed six domains: school calendar, daily schedules, facilities, transportation, funding, and personnel. Also, open-ended questions were included to gather more information on principal perceptions of the transition to YRE.

In the area of the **school calendar**, allocated time for primary instruction, remediation, and enrichment learning was gathered. Also, information on designated vacation periods were explored. The maximum and minimum days for all types of instruction within the school and the difficulty in coordinating year-round calendars with other calendars in use in the district was examined.

Events in the **daily schedule** included regular extracurricular programs, special activities, faculty meetings, and communication with staff. The literature has shown that YRE schedules require some activities and events to be repeated because one

track may not be in school. Staff meetings, open houses, field days, and awards assemblies are examples of some of these activities. The data from the current study were examined to determine if the findings in the literature can be corroborated.

In the area of **school facilities**, issues related to enrollment capacity, maintenance and cleaning schedules, and extended building use were addressed. As the school building becomes used more days for holding classes, periodic in-depth, lengthy cleaning may need to be planned in advance. Also, as the facility is used more days for students, it may be available fewer days for large-scale community activities. The data from the study revealed different ways of using school facilities in a YRE setting.

Scheduling necessary **transportation** for students may be more difficult in a YRE schedule. Some students will be riding the bus for intersessions or remediation classes while others will not. The frequently changing transportation routes could make scheduling buses a very detailed, time-consuming activity, and the extra time on the road could increase transportation costs. How YRE changed the way transportation routes were scheduled was also explored in this domain.

In the area of school finance, issues related to **funding** a YRE program were explored. Whether or not additional per pupil expenditures (beyond what is required for a student in a traditional program) are necessary was also examined.

Data were collected about **personnel** concerns that arose during the planning and implementation phases of moving to YRE. Staffing non-core subjects, as well as

intersession classes, were discussed. Also, the role of personnel in making a decision regarding YRE was explored.

The study provides information which may be utilized by schools and school systems considering the implementation of a YRE program to determine the appropriateness of a YRE program for their particular situation. The analysis of data is descriptive in nature.

### Population

Current principals in North Carolina's YRE schools comprise the population for this study. All principals of sixty-nine YRE schools in North Carolina were surveyed by means of a mailed questionnaire. A questionnaire was mailed to each principal, which when analyzed provided information about his/her school. Two follow-up contacts were made for those who did not respond to the first mailing. Presently North Carolina has sixty (60) elementary schools, nine (9) middle schools, and one special education school operating on a YRE calendar, enrolling 18,390 elementary, 2,095 middle, and 168 special education students (did not include special education school in study). Total enrollment of students on a YRE schedule in 1993 is 20,653 in North Carolina.

Principals in North Carolina are required to have a master's degree in administration. All are also required to have completed at least four years of teaching. The principalship and certification are not grade-level specific.

Demographic information about the YRE schools were included in this section. The size of student enrollment, years of implementation, type of YRE track implemented, years of experience of principals, whether the school is air-conditioned, and also if remediation and enrichment classes were offered in their YRE schools.

### Research Questions

Seven research questions comprised the focus of this study:

1. How has the school calendar changed as a result of YRE?
2. What are the problems with the daily schedule?
3. How has YRE affected the use of the school facility?
4. How has YRE impacted transportation?
5. How has YRE funding been accomplished?
6. How has YRE impacted personnel decisions?
7. What kind of difficulties have principals experienced in the transition and implementation of a YRE program?

### Instrumentation

A questionnaire designed to answer the seven research questions was used in this study. The survey items were based upon a study of the literature and reviewed by five current or former administrators with YRE experience who are not

participating in the study. Content validity was established by utilizing this panel and they reviewed each question.

The questionnaire and a cover letter were mailed to principals of the YRE elementary and middle schools in North Carolina. It contained both fixed-response and open-ended questions.

A Likert scale was used in Part II of the questionnaire which elicited principals' perceptions about conditions in their schools. Scales of the Likert type present a number of both positive and negative statements regarding an attitude (Ary, 1979). The respondents indicated whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with each statement. The numerical value assigned to each response depended on the degree of agreement or disagreement with individual statements. The scores were computed by summing the response scores of the items. The values assigned are as follows: strongly agree a value of 4; agree 3; disagree 2; and strongly disagree, 1. The weighting scheme was reversed for unfavorable statements so that higher scores always indicated more favorable attitudes.

#### The Questionnaire -- Part I

This section collected basic demographic data from the participants. It included information about school setting, enrollment, years of experience, and type of YRE program.

#### The Questionnaire -- Part II

Questions in this section focused on six domains: school calendar, daily schedule, facilities, transportation, funding, and personnel. Principals rated 29 items

that focused on school operations in their schools. A Likert rating scale was used for all 29 items. Means and standard deviations were computed for each item.

### The Questionnaire -- Part III

Part III is the open-ended section of the instrument giving participants in the study an opportunity to elaborate on their experiences as they made the transition from traditional to YRE schooling. The responses were examined for commonalities in the answers, and discussion of the results was based on those commonalities which emerged.

### Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaire was mailed to the school site of 69 principals of YRE schools in 33 Local Education Agencies in North Carolina. The participants were determined from a list compiled by the Department of Public Instruction, State of North Carolina YRE School Listing, 1993-94.

Surveyed principals were asked to complete the questionnaire according to the instructions given and return it within two weeks after the mailing. Included in the initial mailing package, in addition to the questionnaire, was a cover letter encouraging a prompt response. An endorsement letter contained signatures of Dr. Claire Cole Vaught and Dr. Kusum Singh, professors of education, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; and Dr. Joseph Bryson, professor of education, University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Participants not responding to the questionnaire two weeks after the initial mailing, as recommended by Dillman

(1978), received a follow-up letter. The purpose of the letter was to remind participants of the need to respond. A telephone call was made to all of those participants not responding to the letter within two weeks after the initial mailing.

### Method of Analysis

All items in Part I of the questionnaire were analyzed to provide descriptive demographic data about the population. In Part II, means and standard deviations were computed for items responded to on a Likert scale. This provided descriptive statistics for research questions one through six. Research question seven, which dealt with principals' perceptions about the transition to YRE, was answered by determining commonalities among the open-ended responses. This section was designed to give the respondents in this study an opportunity to express their lessons learned as they made the transition to a YRE concept. This section contained five questions that asked principals to describe how they implemented the change to YRE. The guiding question for the open-ended section was "What kind of difficulties have principals experienced in the transition and implementation of a YRE program?"

## Chapter 4

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

The findings presented here summarize the responses given by 61 principals who completed a mailed survey (88% of the population surveyed).

The responses described the perceptions of principals that have made the transition to a YRE format. Specifically, data was collected regarding school operations in a YRE setting in their particular school. The study focused on six domains: school calendar, daily schedules, facilities, transportation, funding, and personnel.

The analysis was divided into three phases. First, the demographic data from the participants (comprising questions one through nine in Part I of the survey) were examined. These items dealt with information such as the number of years as a principal, student enrollment, type of YRE track, number of years of implementation, intersession offerings, whether or not the school was air-conditioned, and how well YRE was working in their particular setting.

The second phase of the analysis involved Part II of the instrument. A four point Likert Scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) was used for the 29 items in this section. Means and standard deviations were computed for each item.

The final phase of data analysis involved a synthesis of responses to Part III, the open-ended section of the instrument. This section was designed to give the participants an opportunity to express, in their own words, the problems encountered and the lessons of experience as they made the transition from a traditional to a year-round educational format.

#### Analysis of the Questionnaire Data: Part I--Description of Sample

A total of 69 YRE principals in North Carolina were contacted. Of this group, 61 (88%) responded. Therefore, the sample size for all data analysis was 61.

Part I of the questionnaire provided demographic data about the geographic location of schools, type of YRE tracks, length of YRE implementation, intersessions (remediation and enrichment), and how well YRE is working (see Table 1). Also, Part I provided information about principals and their schools. Principals in the sample averaged 9.1 years of experience, ranging from 1 year to 28 years (see Table 2). The longest tenure for principals was in the rural year-round schools: their mean was 9.4 years. Principals in suburban schools averaged 9.1 years of experience and urban principals averaged 8.8 years (see Table 4).

Demographic information about the YRE schools indicated that approximately 34% were urban, 39% suburban, and 26% rural (see Table 1). The average enrollment among the 61 schools was 547 students with a range of 150 to 980 students.

Table 1. Frequencies and Percentages for Demographic Variables used to Describe the Schools of Participating Principals.

Variables	n	%
<b>Geographic Location</b>		
Urban	21	34.4
Suburban	24	39.3
Rural	16	26.2
<b>Track</b>		
Single	17	27.9
Multi	6	9.8
School within a school	38	62.3
<b>Length of YRE Implementation</b>		
1 year	25	41
2 years	26	43
3 years	7	11
4 years	3	5
<b>Intersession Remediation</b>		
Yes	59	96.7
No	2	3.3
<b>Intersession Enrichment</b>		
Yes	58	95.1
No	3	4.9
<b>YRE Working</b>		
Well	54	89
Moderately well	6	10
Not very well	1	1

Table 2. Means and Ranges for Demographic Variables used to Describe the Schools of Participating Principals.

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Lowest</b>	<b>Highest</b>
Enrollment	547.4	150	980
Principal's Years of Experience	9.1	1	28
Years of YRE Implementation	1.8	1	4
Rating: YRE Working	2.9	1	3

Table 3. Frequencies and Percentages for Demographic Variables By Geographic Location.

Variable	Urban		Suburban		Rural	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>Track</b>						
Single	11	52.4	3	12.5	3	18.8
Multi	2	9.5	4	16.7	0	0
School within a school	8	38.1	17	70.8	13	81.3
<b>Intersession Remediation</b>						
Yes	19	90.5	24	100	16	100
No	2	9.5	0	0	0	0
<b>Intersession Enrichment</b>						
Yes	19	90.5	23	95.8	16	100
No	2	9.5	1	4.2	0	0

Table 4. Means and Ranges for Demographic Variables By Geographic Location.

Variables	Urban			Suburban			Rural		
	Mean	Low	High	Mean	Low	High	Mean	Low	High
Enrollment	469.3	200	900	591.8	150	980	583.2	300	935
Principal's Years of Experience	8.8	1	25	9.1	1	28	9.4	1	17
Years of YRE Implementation	1.7	1	4	2.1	1	4	1.6	1	3
Rating: YRE Working	2.8	1	3	2.9	2	3	3.0	3	3

The majority of the schools were air-conditioned (94%). Among urban schools 95% are air-conditioned with 92% of suburban schools air-conditioned, and 94% of rural schools being air-conditioned. All suburban and rural schools offered intersession remediation for students in year-round programs. Slightly fewer urban schools offered remediation (90%). All of the rural schools offered intersession enrichment programs. All but one of the suburban schools and 96% of urban schools offered such programs. All 16 YRE rural school principals answered that YRE was working well in their schools. Slightly fewer principals of urban and suburban schools responded that YRE was working well in their schools.

#### Analysis of the Questionnaire Data: Part II

Questions in Part II queried about school operations in a YRE setting in North Carolina. Principals rated 29 items that focused on the six domains: school calendar, daily schedule, facilities, transportation, funding, and personnel in their schools. A Likert rating scale was used for all 29 items. Means and standard deviations were computed for each item. Chi-square statistics were computed for each item by demographic location. No significant associations using chi-square were obtained.

The individual item ratings are presented by the six domains. Means and standard deviations for each item are presented in Table 4. Means and standard deviations for each item by geographic location are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations for Items Part II.

	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	I believe that parents and students should have an opportunity for input on the calendar.	3.4	.6
2	Remediating students more frequently than just in summer school was one reason for designing a YRE calendar.	3.8	.4
3	The ability to offer a variety of enrichment classes during intersessions was one reason for developing our YRE calendar.	3.4	.6
4	It has been difficult to coordinate the YRE calendar with traditional calendars that are being used in my district.	2.6	.9
5	Providing students remediation closer to the time when necessary skills or knowledge were not mastered is a benefit of a YRE calendar in my school.	3.8	.5
6	I believe the YRE schedule affords teachers and other staff improved opportunities for taking needed time off from school.	3.8	.4
7	Participation in extra curricular activities such as athletics and clubs has been more difficult for students involved in a YRE calendar.	2.9	.8
8	Staff members who sponsor extracurricular school activities find it difficult to schedule meetings when one track is in school and the other is not in school.	2.8	.9
9	Special activities such as open house, field day, and award assemblies are more difficult when there are dual calendars.	2.9	.8
10	Faculty meetings to conduct business and share information is not a problem with a YRE calendar.	3.3	.6
11	Increasing enrollment capacity by going to a multi-track approach was one reason for adopting YRE.	2.1	1.1
12	Because students are in the facility more days of the year, I have had to schedule maintenance workers for in-depth cleaning on a more flexible schedule.	3.1	.8
13	Maintenance is more difficult since the implementation of a YRE program.	2.8	.9

table continues next page

Note. Scale was Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1

	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
14	Since the implementation of YRE there has been more wear and tear on the facility.	2.0	.8
15	Community use of the facility has lessened since the implementation of YRE.	1.6	.6
16	Scheduling necessary transportation for YRE students is made more difficult because of additional bus routes.	2.7	.8
17	The success of YRE has been worth the added transportation costs.	3.6	.6
18	YRE has made transportation planning and operations more complex.	2.7	.8
19	I believe that to do YRE in an acceptable manner requires additional per-pupil expenditures.	2.6	.8
20	The decision to provide a multi-track YRE calendar was influenced by other costs such as new school construction.	2.2	1.3
21	Teachers in my school were in agreement that a move to YRE was a good idea.	3.6	.5
22	Teachers of courses such as music, art, and foreign language are more difficult to staff when they are shared with the traditional calendar schools.	2.9	.9
23	Finding personnel qualified and willing to teach <u>enrichment</u> courses in the intersessions is difficult.	2.3	.9
24	Finding personnel qualified and willing to teach <u>remediation</u> courses in the intersessions is difficult.	2.0	.7
25	I believe teachers are more satisfied teaching in a YRE program.	3.6	.6
26	I spend more time communicating with the staff in my building as a result of YRE.	2.6	.8
27	Teachers had input into the decision-making process when we began considering moving to a YRE concept.	3.6	.6
28	Make-up days are more difficult to schedule since the implementation of a YRE schedule.	3.1	.8
29	In my school YRE is working well.	3.8	.4

Note. Scale was Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1

Table 6. Means and Standard Deviations for Items for Part II by Geographic Location.

Item	Urban		Suburban		Rural	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1 I believe that parents and students should have an opportunity for input on the calendar.	3.3	.7	3.4	.5	3.4	.5
2 Remediating students more frequently than just in summer school was one reason for designing a YRE calendar.	3.7	.5	3.8	.4	3.9	.3
3 The ability to offer a variety of enrichment classes during intersessions was one reason for developing our YRE calendar.	3.1	.7	3.6	.5	3.6	.5
4 It has been difficult to coordinate the YRE calendar with traditional calendars that are being used in my district.	2.7	.9	2.6	.9	2.7	.9
5 Providing students remediation closer to the time when necessary skills or knowledge were not mastered is a benefit of a YRE calendar in my school.	3.7	.7	3.8	.4	3.8	.4
6 I believe the YRE schedule affords teachers and other staff improved opportunities for taking needed time off from school.	3.8	.4	3.8	.4	3.7	.5
7 Participation in extra curricular activities such as athletics and clubs has been more difficult for students involved in a YRE calendar.	2.7	.8	2.9	.9	3.5	.5
8 Staff members who sponsor extracurricular school activities find it difficult to schedule meetings when one track is in school and the other is not in school.	3.0	.8	2.7	1.0	2.7	.8
9 Special activities such as open house, field day, and award assemblies are more difficult when there are dual calendars.	3.2	.7	2.6	.9	3.1	.6
10 Faculty meetings to conduct business and share information is not a problem with a YRE calendar.	3.5	.5	3.1	.7	3.3	.7

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Note. Scale was Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1

Item	Urban		Suburban		Rural		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
11	Increasing enrollment capacity by going to a multi-track approach was one reason for adopting YRE.	1.3	.6	2.5	1.2	1.5	.7
12	Because students are in the facility more days of the year, I have had to schedule maintenance workers for in-depth cleaning on a more flexible schedule.	3.1	.8	3.0	.8	3.0	.6
13	Maintenance is more difficult since the implementation of a YRE program.	2.7	.9	2.8	.9	2.8	.8
14	Since the implementation of YRE there has been more wear and tear on the facility.	2.1	.8	2.0	.8	1.6	.6
15	Community use of the facility has lessened since the implementation of YRE.	1.7	.5	1.7	.8	1.3	.5
16	Scheduling necessary transportation for YRE students is made more difficult because of additional bus routes.	2.8	.9	2.8	.8	2.4	.7
17	The success of YRE has been worth the added transportation costs.	3.5	.5	3.6	.7	3.7	.5
18	YRE has made transportation planning and operations more complex.	2.5	.9	2.8	.7	2.6	.8
19	I believe that to do YRE in an acceptable manner requires additional per-pupil expenditures.	2.8	.9	2.6	.8	2.5	.7
20	The decision to provide a multi-track YRE calendar was influenced by other costs such as new school construction.	1.0	0	2.8	1.2	2.0	1.4
21	Teachers in my school were in agreement that a move to YRE was a good idea.	3.6	.5	3.6	.5	3.5	.5
22	Teachers of courses such as music, art, and foreign language are more difficult to staff when they are shared with the traditional calendar schools.	2.8	.9	2.9	.8	2.9	1.0

table continues on next page

Note. Scale was Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1

Item	Urban		Suburban		Rural	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
23 Finding personnel qualified and willing to teach <u>enrichment</u> courses in the intersessions is difficult.	2.2	.9	2.3	.9	2.6	.7
24 Finding personnel qualified and willing to teach <u>remediation</u> courses in the intersessions is difficult.	1.8	.6	2.0	.9	2.0	.6
25 I believe teachers are more satisfied teaching in a YRE program.	3.7	.6	3.6	.7	3.6	.5
26 I spend more time communicating with the staff in my building as a result of YRE.	2.6	.8	2.5	.7	2.8	.8
27 Teachers had input into the decision-making process when we began considering moving to a YRE concept.	3.6	.5	3.5	.8	3.7	.5
28 Make-up days are more difficult to schedule since the implementation of a YRE schedule.	2.9	.9	3.1	.8	3.2	.8
29 In my school YRE is working well.	3.8	.4	3.8	.5	3.9	.3

Note. Scale was Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1

### School Calendar

What effect has the transition to YRE had on the school calendar? Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 22, and 28 in Part II addressed the domain of the school calendar. The highest rated items in this domain were #2 and #5 (mean rating of 3.8). Item #2, fifty-eight out of sixty-one principals (95%) responded favorably that remediating students more frequently than just in summer school was one reason for designing a YRE calendar. Item #5, fifty-eight out of sixty-one principals (95%) responded that providing students remediation closer to the time when necessary skills or knowledge were not mastered is a benefit of a YRE calendar (mean of 3.8). In items #1 and #3, fifty-two out of sixty-one principals (85%) responded moderately favorably (mean rating of 3.4) that parents and students should have an opportunity for input on the calendar, and offering enrichment classes in the YRE program was a positive benefit of YRE programs. Item #4 had a moderately positive rating: (mean of 2.6), forty out of sixty-one principals (66%) agreed that it was difficult to coordinate the YRE calendar with traditional calendars. Participation in extracurricular activities and special activities such as open house or field days are more difficult on a YRE calendar, with forty-four out of sixty-one principals in agreement. Item #28, forty-seven out of sixty-one principals (77%) answered that it was more difficult to schedule make-up days since the implementation of a YRE schedule (mean rating of 3.1).

Table 7. School Calendar.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. I believe that parents and students should have an opportunity for input on the calendar.	3.4	.6
2. Remediating students more frequently than just in summer school was one reason for designing a YRE calendar.	3.8	.4
3. The ability to offer a variety of enrichment classes during intersessions was one reason for developing our YRE calendar.	3.4	.6
4. It has been difficult to coordinate the YRE calendar with traditional calendars that are being used in my district.	2.6	.9
5. Providing students remediation closer to the time when necessary skills or knowledge were not mastered is a benefit of a YRE calendar in my school.	3.8	.5
7. Participation in extra curricular activities such as athletics and clubs has been more difficult for students involved in a YRE calendar.	2.9	.8
9. Special activities such as open house, field day, and award assemblies are more difficult when there are dual calendars.	2.9	.8
22. Teachers of courses such as music, art, and foreign language are more difficult to staff when they are shared with the traditional calendar schools.	2.9	.9
28. Make-up days are more difficult to schedule since the implementation of a YRE schedule.	3.1	.8

Note. Scale was Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1

### Daily Schedule

How has YRE altered the daily schedule? Items 8, 10, 13, and 22 in Part II of the questionnaire address the domain of the daily schedules. The highest rated item in this domain was item #10; 83% of the principals responded that scheduling faculty meetings was not a problem (mean rating of 3.3). Receiving a moderately high rating response (item #8) with a mean of 2.8, 70% of the principals feel that scheduling meetings when one track is in school and one is out is difficult. The mean rating in item #22 was 2.9: Principals moderately agreed (73%) that it was difficult to schedule itinerant teachers when they were shared with schools with dual calendars.

Table 8. Daily Schedule.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
8. Staff members who sponsor extracurricular school activities find it difficult to schedule meetings when one track is in school and the other is not in school.	2.8	.9
10. Faculty meetings to conduct business and share information is not a problem with a YRE calendar.	3.3	.6
13. Maintenance is more difficult since the implementation of a YRE program.	2.8	.9
22. Teachers of courses such as music, art, and foreign language are more difficult to staff when they are shared with the traditional calendar schools.	2.9	.9

Note. Scale was Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1

### Facilities

How has YRE affected the use of the school facility? Items 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 in Part II of the questionnaire addressed the domain of school facilities. The highest rated item in this domain is item #12. Over 78% of the principals indicated that because students are in the facility more days of the year, scheduling maintenance workers for in-depth cleaning requires a more flexible schedule (mean rating of 3.1). In item #13, maintenance is more difficult since the implementation of a YRE program, a mean rating of 2.8 suggests that most principals, 43 out of 61, (70%) are in agreement with this statement. According to the principals in this study, (50%) there hasn't been any more wear and tear on the building since implementation of YRE (mean rating of 2.0). Item #15, community use of the facility has lessened since the implementation of YRE. Principals (40%) believe facility use has not lessened since implementation of YRE (mean of 1.6). Item #11, increasing enrollment capacity by going to a multi-track (mean of 2.1) was a reason for adopting YRE, 32 out of 61 principals (53%) responded in agreement.

Table 9. Facilities.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
11. Increasing enrollment capacity by going to a multi-track approach was one reason for adopting YRE.	2.1	1.1
12. Because students are in the facility more days of the year, I have had to schedule maintenance workers for in-depth cleaning on a more flexible schedule.	3.1	.8
13. Maintenance is more difficult since the implementation of a YRE program.	2.8	.9
14. Since the implementation of YRE there has been more wear and tear on the facility.	2.0	.8
15. Community use of the facility has lessened since the implementation of YRE.	1.6	.6

Note. Scale was Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1

### Transportation

How has YRE changed the way transportation routes are scheduled? Items 16, 17, and 18 in Part II of the questionnaire addressed the domain of transportation. The highest rated item in this domain was #17, indicating the success of YRE has been worth added transportation costs (mean rating of 3.6), with 90% of the principals in agreement with this statement. Responses to item #16 according to the principals (68%) indicate scheduling transportation for YRE students is made more difficult by additional bus routes (mean rating of 2.7). Also receiving a mean rating of 2.7, (68%) principals indicated that transportation planning and operations are more time consuming and more complex due to the implementation of a YRE program (item #18).

Table 10. Transportation.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
16. Scheduling necessary transportation for YRE students is made more difficult because of additional bus routes.	2.7	.8
17. The success of YRE has been worth the added transportation costs.	3.6	.6
18. YRE has made transportation planning and operations more complex.	2.7	.8

Note. Scale was Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1

## Funding

How has YRE funding been accomplished? Items 17, 19, and 20 in Part II of the questionnaire addressed the domain of funding. The highest rated item in this domain is #17. Over 90% of the principals indicated that the success of YRE has been worth the added transportation cost (mean rating of 3.6). Item #19, stating that to do YRE in an acceptable manner requires additional per-pupil expenditures, received a moderately high rating (mean of 2.6) with 42 out of 61 (65%) responding that it required more money for the students. A less positive rating was assigned to item #20 (mean of 2.2); 34% of the entire group of principals reported that the decision to begin a multi-track calendar was influenced by construction costs associated with YRE. However, 70% of the suburban principals responded (mean rating of 2.8) that construction cost was a decisive factor to implement a multi-track plan.

Table 11. Funding.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
17. The success of YRE has been worth the added transportation costs.	3.6	.6
19. I believe that to do YRE in an acceptable manner requires additional per-pupil expenditures.	2.6	.8
20. The decision to provide a multi-track YRE calendar was influenced by other costs such as a new school construction.	2.2	1.3

Note. Scale was Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1

### Personnel

How has YRE impacted personnel decisions? Items 6, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27 in Part II of the questionnaire addressed the domain of school personnel. The highest rated item in this domain is #6. Over 95% of the principals indicated that affording teachers and staff needed time off is certainly a benefit of a YRE program. Also receiving a high rating response (item #21) with a mean of 3.1, 78% of the principals feel that teachers were in agreement that moving to YRE was a good idea - 55 out of 61 responded positively. It is more difficult to staff personnel when they are shared with the traditional calendar schools; item #22 received a 2.9 mean rating. Over 73% of the principals responded in agreement. According to the principals, (65%) finding personnel qualified and willing to teach enrichment courses (item #23) in the intersessions is not difficult (mean rating of 2.3). In item #24, 50% of the principals disagreed that finding personnel qualified and willing to teach remediation was difficult (mean rating of 2.0). A moderately high rating was found in item #26 (mean rating of 2.6): 65% of the principals responded that communicating with the staff is more time consuming since YRE was implemented. Item #27, teachers had input into the decision-making process when considering moving to a YRE concept, was very positive with 55 out of 61 principals (90%) responding at a 3.6 mean rating.

Table 12. Personnel.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
6. I believe the YRE schedule affords teachers and other staff improved opportunities for taking needed time off from school.	3.8	.4
21. Teachers in my school were in agreement that a move to YRE was a good idea.	3.6	.5
22. Teachers of courses such as music, art, and foreign language are more difficult to staff when they are shared with the traditional calendar schools.	2.9	.9
23. Finding personnel qualified and willing to teach <u>enrichment</u> courses in the intersessions is difficult.	2.3	.9
24. Finding personnel qualified and willing to teach <u>remediation</u> courses in the intersessions is difficult.	2.0	.7
25. I believe teachers are more satisfied teaching in a YRE program.	3.6	.6
26. I spend more time communicating with the staff in my building as a result of YRE.	2.6	.8
27. Teachers had input into the decision-making process when we began considering moving to a YRE concept.	3.6	.6

Note. Scale was Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1

### Analysis of the Questionnaire Data: Part III

Part III of the questionnaire is the open-ended section of the instrument. This section gave the respondents in the study an opportunity to express in their own words their experiences as they made the transition to a YRE concept. The responses of the principals were examined for differences in their particular setting and for common themes in their answers to the five questions at the end of the questionnaire. The guiding question for the open-ended section was, "What kind of difficulties have principals experienced in the transition and implementation of a YRE program?"

**Question 1. How has implementation of a YRE program changed the day-to-day operation of your school for you as a principal?**

Four principals reported that it was more stressful for secretaries. One principal stated that it was (YRE) more stressful for principals and secretaries who have to keep SIMS (Student Information Management System) records for two schools. "Principals can't finish one year before starting another. Leaves very little time for vacation." Still another commented, "It has increased the workload for principals and secretaries. SIMS is a burden as two systems must be run because my school offers traditional and YRE." Another reported that "equity in calendars required in planning. Paperwork has to be done twice each month. Accommodations for SIMS have to be made. Additional planning for re-teaching, hiring personnel, changing bus routes, daily activity scheduling during that week."

Five principals reported that it has not changed the day-to-day operation for a principal. Another stated, "Day-to-day operation has not changed drastically; however, preparation for opening is hectic in that you open twice."

Nine principals indicated that operating a school-within-a-school requires more work. One responded, "I spend more days working due to the school-within-a-school". Another reported "Because we're a school-within-a-school it's more complex--and confusing to parents about days off and on--day to day is no different."

Another remarked, "Since 1990, I have been the year-round principal for one to four schools operating a school-within-a-school. For three years, I have implemented all remediation and enrichment activities. I have had no time off due to the constant offerings, operations and planning for the next group." Still another reported that "operating a school-within-a-school requires additional time and lots of energy. Because of the school-within-a-school concept, I must schedule special staff to cover both calendars. I must also consider scheduling all extracurricular/special events carefully so that they coincide with the same days .....both calendars."

Another principal concurred, saying, "Additional paperwork; less turnaround time ordering resources; preventive maintenance, and the schedule is tight."

Nine principals reported that scheduling requires much more work in a YRE setting. One principal responded "My workload has increased because of the responsibilities of running two schedules during the year. Each schedule requires

separate payrolls, attendance, and pre-planning involved in securing appropriate instructional and cafeteria supplies during the summer months."

One principal explained that YRE with two calendars made it necessary to create multiple schedules--YRE only, Both, and Traditional only. "Keeping track of schedule changes has been a challenge." Another reported, "YRE had created an opportunity to do more creative scheduling and has given me less 'summer time' to prepare for opening of school. However, I enjoy it." A third principal stated, "Communications, scheduling, and organizational meetings have all increased." Several principals expressed that scheduling requires more energy, because the work is more continuous and intense.

Another theme gleaned from the open-ended responses was the concept of time. One principal reported "more time is spent on the premises. Adjusting leave time is a problem. More involvement in curriculum. For the first year opening, I worked 7-day weeks during the summer until 7:30, 8:30, or 9:30 every day. I did not have an assistant principal."

Still another remarked, "The YRE program means there is little or no 'down time' for cleaning the building." A third principal put it this way, "There is really no 'down time' to catch up like you can on a traditional calendar. You have to be organized at all times." A fourth commented, "More time is spent with staff, because they are with me more time during the year."

### Summary of Open-ended Question One

It is apparent that both principals and secretaries have had an increase in their workloads as a result of being in a YRE program. There is less time to schedule vacations, and SIMS (Student Information Management System) is still a problem to some school settings. The school-within-a-school concept requires much more time for principals according to the responses given by the principals. Several principals presently under a school-within-a-school calendar recommended selecting a single track YRE calendar. It is their opinion that a single track would be more beneficial to others that are thinking about implementing this concept. Several principals stated that scheduling requires much more work in a YRE setting.

#### **Question 2. What advice would you give others who are planning to begin a YRE program?**

One principal said to plan for a minimum of one year. "We planned for two, and as a result, parents were for the most part comfortable and positive about change." Another principal said, "Plan well and hold parent meetings over a year long schedule. Have all staff members visit a YRE school."

Several principals said to take at least two years to plan. Study changes. Take as much time as the staff and community needs to orient them to the ideas and concepts of YRE. According to another principal, "Plan carefully, gather extensive information. Take plenty of time to study the calendar. Plan well, sell well."

Over 50% of the principals stated that support from faculty and staff, parents, students, and community was a most important aspect of implementing a successful

YRE program. Making sure there was support from these people along with visitations and honest open discussion was a must. One principal said, "Insure the Board of Education has a plan for YRE. Discuss the issues thoroughly with parents so they have complete knowledge of YRE. Provide parents with choices."

A third principal remarked, "Make it an option. I don't feel anything should be pushed on people. It is not a radical concept, just a restructuring of the school calendar." Several other principals said to gain the support of parents and community from the early planning stages is something every successful YRE must have. They also emphasized the need to plan for intersessions (remediation and enrichment), assessment programs, staff development, and also for cleaning facilities.

Another principal exclaimed, "Plan, plan, plan,....Allow staff, students, and parents to choose to be involved....communicate with 'All' parties often." Yet another principal remarked, "Spend enough time educating the school staff and community on the actual benefits of a YRE schedule. Talk with experienced people. Ask about problems you foresee, but ask also for knowledge of mistakes made." Four principals stated that to get support, there must be a plan to have several parent meetings.

Another principal responded, "Get staff support first. Ask key parents to visit YRE schools. Conduct several night meetings to discuss ideas first. Know up-to-date research on YRE. Have speakers to speak to staff and parents about YRE." Another principal commented, "Assure staff and parent involvement. Provide lots of information. Consider options for parents not in favor of YRE. Consult with and

bring any other schools who have successfully implemented YRE to help you educate people."

Seven principals responded in the questionnaire that they would encourage others thinking about implementing a YRE program to run a single track. One principal remarked, "Go all or nothing. A school-within-a-school becomes dysfunctional and difficult to operate." Another said, "Go total YRE and not a school-within-a-school." A fourth principal said it this way, "Avoidance of a school-within-a-school concept is desirable. In an area where only one or two year-round schools exist, in-coming students almost always go in the traditional calendar classes, resulting in larger class size on the calendar."

Finally, one principal remarked, "Go for it--you'll never return to an agrarian calendar! Involve all in the decision-making process, visit other YRE schools."

### Summary of Question Two

Most principals stated that it was very important to plan for at least a year to a 18 months before implementing a YRE program. Time to discuss changes, orient community groups, parents, and students was greatly needed. Making sure there was support from these people by having open discussions is a must. Finally, researching as much as possible the advantages and disadvantages of a YRE program would benefit all parties involved.

**Question 3. What were the most difficult problems you encountered while making the transition to a YRE program?**

The principals' responses to this question were sorted into categories which included themes that emerged throughout the data. Several of the topics that were cited in the other questions emerged in question three as well.

There were six principals who responded that they experienced difficulty with central office personnel as their most difficult problem. One principal responded that "The most difficult problem encountered during the transition to YRE was getting central office personnel to remember that YRE operated on a different calendar as they set dates for meetings and staff development activities. This problem still exists." A second respondent stated, "Getting the central office to adjust time frames with a YRE calendar." Also getting the teachers' payroll worked out with the finance office was another principal concern. Still another principal answered, "Just getting the finance office at the Education Center to understand the concept" was his major problem.

Other themes that emerged in question three focused on the daily schedule, transportation, intersessions, maintenance needs, and parent concerns. In regard to the daily schedule, one principal said, "Scheduling physical education, art, French, and music with teachers on both calendars presented some problems." Another principal remarked, "Breaking away from the paradigms of 'traditional thought' with scheduling. It was hard at first to be creative with scheduling special teachers."

Another principal declared, "Scheduling resource personnel, child-care, and transportation--because of the dual calendar." Another principal reflected, "Central office awareness of YRE schedule and deadlines to meet; staff development scheduling; and superintendent support of YRE."

Principals also reported that transportation, changing bus routes, and trying to notify parents of the calendar change for students was also a concern. One principal reported that busing for intersessions with enrichment and remediation, and designing the offerings for enrichment was a problem in his school. Another principal reflected that the extra expense of buses, payroll for bus drivers, and schedules for academically gifted, art, music, physical education, speech, and the media center during intersessions was a problem.

One principal commented, "Probably the most difficult problem(s) involved getting all maintenance concerns satisfied because school was starting a month earlier. Schedules, handbooks, ordering instructional materials and staffing needs had to be accomplished within a 5 1/2 week period." Two principals mentioned, "Jealousy" from non-YRE staff was a concern." The reason given by the principals was that some non-YRE staff felt that the YRE staff were receiving more monies for their program than they were receiving. Also the idea of part of the parents that all of the best teachers were in YRE schools caused some discussion with parents in some meetings.

Deciding which faculty members would teach on which schedule and assuring everyone involved that programs were equal was a concern for one principal. Still another principal remarked, "My parents chose to try to segregate year-round and traditional calendar students." Five principals reported that selling parents on the philosophy and coordinating community agencies with the YRE program were their chief concerns.

One principal said that gaining community support and marketing the YRE program, planning and implementing an outstanding remediation program and enrichment experiences during intersessions was perhaps his most pressing concern.

#### Summary of Question Three, Part I

Principals listed a variety of people and identified a number of things that helped them or hindered them in the transition to a YRE program. Teamwork, cooperation, and communication were some of the items principals mentioned that were continually needed for a successful implementation of a YRE concept. Transportation for intersessions, changing bus routes, maintenance concerns, and scheduling were also concerns for some principals.

#### **Question 3. (Part 2) How did you solve these problems?**

One principal said, "Community support was gained through door-to-door visits, letters and brochures. Marketing the school and YRE has been done through parent groups, brochures, and phone calls. Several experiences and procedures are continuing to be tried during intersessions. Many school systems across the nation

have served as resources." Another principal reflected, "We began site-based management, soliciting input from the beginning. We approached problems collectively and with options for staff. Assessments have taken multitudes of hours, but teachers have learned that it helps them teach, move and know what students have mastered."

In reference to the problems with the central office personnel and scheduling, several principals stated that the central office personnel researched the laws and guidelines, then implemented the procedures necessary to eliminate problems. One principal said that itinerant teachers were allowed to come up with their own acceptable schedules. He also said, "In regard to problems with the payroll and the SIMS program... advice was obtained from those with prior knowledge. An optional schedule was adopted to keep the publics happy."

#### Summary of Question Three, Part 2

Several principals reported that it was important to build trust with parents to convince them that the traditional staff was just as equal as the personnel in the YRE program. Community support must be gained through door-to-door visits, letters and brochures, parent meetings, telephone calls, publicity, and community awareness. Five principals mentioned initiating site-based management, and soliciting input from the beginning planning stage. Approaching problems collectively with faculty and staff was also voiced by numerous principals in solving the problems they encountered in the transition.

**Question 4. What helped you as principal as you prepared for the transition to a YRE program?**

Visitations to existing YRE schools was valuable, not only for themselves as principals but also for staff members and parents who were interested in implementing a YRE program. Most of the principals, 43 out of 61, mentioned the importance of planning, talking with other principals, attending conferences on YRE, and researching as much information as possible, preparing for the transition to a YRE program. Other principals also mentioned the support that they received from staff and central office administrators as important contributors to a smoother transition to YRE.

One principal reported, "Researching as much information as possible about YRE: advantages, disadvantages, what has worked and what does not work. Contacting many school systems across the nation that are year-round and using their expertise really helped us." In addition to visiting other principals, some principals described participating in informal meetings with teachers by visiting other YRE programs.

Another principal concurred, "Talking with principals who had already done it. Having people from another school system conduct a seminar for our parents and staff. Lots and lots of planning and involvement of others." Three principals reported the positive aspect of attending the National YRE Annual Conference. "The

conference helped me more than anything else as I prepared for the transition to YRE."

Another principal stated, "Talking with experienced people. Enough time to educate staff and parents. Frequent system-wide meetings of core team of administrators, teachers, and parents to look for answers to all difficulties we might run into and develop some consistency in the system." One principal put it this way, "Strong commitment for staff in doing what they felt was 'right' for children--positive outcomes and continuous growth."

#### Summary of Question Four

Communicating with other administrators having implemented a YRE calendar afforded important information which could facilitate the implementation of YRE in their respective schools.

#### **Question 5. What do you wish you had known before you began the transition to a YRE format?**

One principal said, "I can't think of any surprises, though I know there must have been some. We were pretty much prepared. One thing--we had work days 'just so they add up to 18'--staff had trouble with that. This year, workdays will already be built into the calendar."

Six of the principals talked about the concept of time being important. One principal remarked, "What wear and tear on me!! Very little time is left for the office staff to recoup, relax and start over again for the year-round students. In order

to get the appropriate downtime, one schedule or the other is necessary." Still another principal responded, "How to plan in my own vacation time--It is an exhausting schedule." For another principal, "Getting small details you couldn't have known unless you experience it for yourself. It does take more monies, but not much more." "If I had known all I know now, I might have been afraid to try," reported another principal. "Belief in oneself and a design for learning that offers regular interventions makes one feel guilty to not act when, as RJR Nabisco says, 'The greatest risk in education is not taking one'." Another principal said that he "couldn't think of anything that would have helped. I had been to conferences, done lots of reading, and was generally well aware to anticipate as we began the transition."

Some principals talked about getting organized with more assistance from others in the transition to a YRE concept. One stated, "Year-round schools tend to be 'forgotten' in the bureaucracy. Schedules by the central office and DPI (Department of Public Instruction) tend to ignore the fact that YRE schools may be in session." Another echoed, "The Board of Education's long range plan for YRE in our district. We don't have one."

Ten principals reported that everything went well in their particular transitional period. One stated, "Our transition has been extremely smooth. Any problems we have encountered have been minor, most of which pre-planning could not have helped." Another principal said, "I am very pleased with our schedule. Though the only real thing that makes a difference to learning is good teaching every day."

"I am very pleased," was the response of another principal.

Still another principal exclaimed, "Our planning (system wide) was so good, we really did not have many surprises."

In addition to knowing what to expect while making the transition to YRE, one principal said that he wished he had known more about finance--payroll cost of transportation--summer feeding programs. Another principal expressed the need to know more about the difficulties of scheduling classes for students and teachers. Another principal stated that he was frustrated about the difficulty of educating others about YRE schools and scheduling.

Another theme that has been mentioned several times in previous responses by principals is "jealousy" on the part of parent groups; "Always the minority group looking to be sure they were getting equal treatment; many false statements floating in the community based on outdated research."

#### Summary of Question Five

The major concern for principals in YRE schools, according to the responses given, focused on the concept of time. This issue impacted throughout the planning, transitional, and implementation processes. The principals reiterated that due to an exhausting schedule, they couldn't find enough time for themselves to take some time away from their jobs. Almost all agreed that YRE principals must be good organizers to be effective. Several principals stated that everything was going quite well in their

YRE programs and there were no surprises because they planned well. Parents could be seen as split because of the potential "jealousy" among them.

### Summary of Part III

The following is a list of the main ideas and the also the frequency of responses from the principals in this study. Table 13 is a frequency table of the problems encountered. Table 14 is a frequency table of sources of help for the principals. Table 15 is a frequency table of advice for others to follow as recommended by the principals. Table 16 is a frequency table of stress relievers by the principals.

Table 13. Frequency of Problems Encountered in Implementing Year-Round Education.

Item	Frequency of Responses
Work load increase due to school-within-a-school	10
Scheduling	9
SIMS (Student Information Management System) is more time consuming for secretaries if operating traditional and YRE calendar	7
Being overlooked by Central Office in relation to schedules, meetings, and testing dates	6
Not enough time for personal leisure	6
Transportation changes	6
Jealousy among parents / staff -- between YRE and traditional calendars	5
Selling the program to parents	4
Schedules, handbooks, ordering supplies of instructional materials and staffing needs within 5 ½ weeks	3
Child care issues	2
No "down time" for cleaning the building	2
Unbalanced distribution of students	1

Table 14. Frequency of Sources of Help in Implementing Year-Round Education.

Item	Frequency of Responses
Talking with principals, visiting and talking with others involved in YRE	20
Attending seminars, conferences, workshops, meetings, forums, and YRE National Conference	11
Support from the superintendent, board of education, and central office personnel	8
Planning, telephoning, organizing with experienced personnel	5
Research literature	4
Obtaining additional monies from grant institutions	4
Engaging total staff in problem solving	4
Recruiting volunteers	2

Table 15. Frequency of Advice for Others in Implementing Year-Round Education.

Item	Frequency of Responses
Gain support early from faculty and staff, parents, business leaders, and community leaders	11
Avoidance of a school-within-a-school if possible	10
Develop good planning and communication	8
Plan well and hold parent meetings over a year long schedule	6
Speak to small audiences in the initial "selling" stage	5
Employ an assistant principal even in small schools	5
Take one to two years to plan	3
Use site-based management	3
Give teachers, parents, community, and business leaders much information about advantages and disadvantages	3
Recruit minorities	2
Get commitment from the board of education and superintendent	2
Make the program optional for parents and staff	1
Be flexible	1

Table 16. Frequency of Stress Relievers in Implementing Year-Round Education.

Item	Frequency of Responses
Communicate with fellow principals -- share experiences and problems	20
Take time for yourself -- take time off	7
Enthusiasm and support from others -- parents, students, and staff	7
Organize a support group	6
Network	4

## Chapter 5

### SUMMARY, INTERPRETATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

"If I had known all I know now, I might have been afraid to try. Belief in oneself and a design for learning that offers regular interventions makes one feel guilty to not act when as RJR Nabisco says, 'The greatest risk in education is not taking one.'" (Principal)

#### Introduction

The above statement from a giant corporation exemplifies the belief system industry must take if it is to keep up with changing times and be competitive in a global society. Schools must also restructure if they are to remain competitive in a free enterprise and also move students into a different age, the information age. This calls for the school to restructure to offer more programs in preparing the student for the near future. Many believe that the agrarian calendar which our forefathers built this country on is still the standard of the day and yet it is outdated.

The purpose of this study was to describe principals' perceptions who have made the transition from a traditional to a year-round educational concept in North Carolina. This chapter contains a summary of the findings, interpretations drawn from the data, and recommendations for further study.

## Summary

Through the questionnaire, seven research questions were answered by the principals. These are:

1. How has the school calendar changed as a result of YRE?
2. What are the problems with the daily schedule?
3. How has YRE affected the use of the school facility?
4. How has YRE impacted transportation?
5. How has YRE funding been accomplished?
6. How has YRE impacted personnel issues?
7. What kind of difficulties have principals experienced in the transition and implementation of a YRE program?

### **1. How has the school calendar changed as a result of YRE?**

The commencing and ending dates for teachers and students are different than those of the traditional school calendar. Vacation sequences for students and school personnel are different than those in the traditional calendar. Staff development activities for teachers both the traditional or YRE calendar may present problems or perhaps opportunities. State conferences planned by the Department of Public Education which traditionally are held while students are in session, under the traditional calendar, may actually be held while students are not in session under the YRE calendar. The impact is significant for the following reasons. The first is that teachers will not leave students to be taught by substitutes. The second is that the

system will save monies invested in substitute pay and therefore, reducing cost for unnecessary personnel.

However, getting those outside the school to recognize the calendar may be a problem. One principal responded, "The most difficult problem encountered during the transition to YRE was getting central office personnel to remember that YRE operated on a different calendar as they set dates for staff development meetings, and testing dates for students. This problem still exists."

Special activities such as open house, field days, and award assemblies are more difficult (mean rating of 3.2) for the urban principals and a (mean rating of 3.1) for rural principals, according to the responses given. However, two-thirds of the principals in the suburban setting also stated that it was a problem to operate dual calendars. Rural school principals (88%) responded that participation in extracurricular school activities such as athletics and clubs was a problem.

Operating dual calendars creates a problem in budget preparation. Under the traditional school calendar most budgets are built in February and submitted to the central office in their preparation of an at large system budget. A system operating dual calendars may have to build two different budgets and therefore, the synchronization of dual budgets by both the school and the central office staff could be problematic. The purchasing of instructional supplies within a school operating a traditional calendar normally occurs in the summer time. Operating under a YRE calendar calls for the instructional supplies to be ordered at a different time interval.

One principal echoed his frustration about the traditional mind-set of the central office personnel regarding the YRE calendar, "They are still using the traditional time frame for everything." One principal stated that because of the school-within-a-school concept, "I must consider scheduling of all extracurricular/special events carefully so that they coincide with the same days in attendance for both calendars."

The principals responded very favorably that parents and students should have an opportunity for input on the calendar. The view on remediating students was also positive and was thought to be one of the key benefits of the YRE calendar.

Providing students' remediation closer to the time when skills were not mastered received a high rating from the principals as a special benefit of YRE. The ability to offer enrichment was considered another benefit of a YRE calendar. The suburban and rural principals rated this item higher (mean rating of 3.6) than the urban principals (mean rating of 3.1) in Part II of the questionnaire. According to the responses given, two urban schools did not offer enrichment opportunities for the students.

## **2. What are the problems with the daily schedule?**

Principals summarized their perceptions by stating that scheduling meetings for faculty and itinerants was difficult with dual calendars within a school. Principals in the urban setting responded that staff members who sponsored extracurricular activities find it difficult to schedule meetings. Sixteen out of 21 (76%) urban principals responded that it is difficult to schedule meetings (mean rating of 3.0).

Principals throughout voiced their frustration about not being able to conduct faculty/staff meetings and they themselves had little time to establish their daily schedule. These principals felt that they were "really busy" much of the time, with little time for self-reflection.

### **3. How has YRE affected the use of the school facility?**

Principals responded that scheduling maintenance work required more flexibility on the part of the maintenance workers since the school was in operation longer periods of days with students. Another principal responded, "How difficult it is to clean a building in five weeks, and how much planning time is required for opening twice." Another principal remarked, "The YRE program means there is little or no 'down time' for cleaning the building. Provision must be made to be sure that the building is cleaned continuously." Principals agreed though that there was no more wear and tear on the building than they thought would occur in a traditional calendar.

Many communities react adversely to the notion that most of the schools are empty during the summer months. Several taxpayer groups want empty buildings put to use for reasons of efficiency. Most districts change to YRE for financial reasons, especially to save on capital costs associated with building new schools, according to Quinlan, George, & Emmett (1987). In California, as a result of several failed school bond issues, school districts have been mandated to adopt YRE schools. Several districts turn to YRE as a last resort to deal with their exploding student population

(Brekke, 1990). In North Carolina, some schools implemented a multi-track calendar because they needed more space for students.

#### **4. How has YRE impacted transportation?**

Principals responded very favorably that the success of YRE has been worth the added transportation costs. Principals also stated that although more planning and operations increased time spent in this area, the impact remained positive for the students due to the enrichment and remediation sessions students received.

According to Merino (1983), additional expenses for transportation must be included when considering YRE. Because these expenses are sometimes overlooked, savings have been so minimal that several school districts abandoned year-round schooling after a few years of implementation. However, 90% of the principals in this study stated that even though the expense for transportation is greater in a YRE setting, it is still worth the cost to operate a YRE schedule.

#### **5. How has YRE funding been accomplished?**

One principal remarked, "Be sure adequate funding is available to provide qualified staffing for enrichment intersessions and for extended contracts for special area teachers." Several school systems mentioned they had to seek and use more volunteers, enrichment funds and local grants were sought, and Chapter I monies were used to fund the YRE program. An extra expense on transportation both in operating and paying the drivers was incurred. Extra monies for teachers working during the intersessions, and teaching enrichment activities, such as art, music, and

speech, had to be incurred. By providing more monies for the intersessions, some other programs were cut from the budget. Principals (65%) responded that to do YRE in an acceptable manner requires additional per-pupil expenditures.

Many school districts that choose to adopt a YRE calendar hope to save money. In school districts that use a multi-track program effectively, costs have been decreased as much as 15 percent (Merino, 1983; Quinlan, George, & Emmett, 1987; White, 1987). They report savings in such areas as construction of new schools, per pupil operating costs for books, materials, equipment and it provides an opportunity to redirect construction funds toward the improvement of educational programs.

#### **6. How has YRE impacted personnel decisions?**

The belief that the YRE schedule affords faculty and staff improved opportunities for taking needed time off from school received the highest positive response from the principals in this study. Principals agreed that the teachers and staff appreciated being involved in the decision-making process of YRE. Another highly rated item by the principals in the domain of personnel was that teachers were in agreement that moving to YRE was a good idea.

In item #22, courses such as music, art, and foreign language are more difficult to staff when shared with a traditional calendar, 73% of the principals responded in agreement (mean of 2.9). Item #23, the principals responded that finding personnel qualified and willing to teach the enrichment courses during the intersessions was difficult. Fifty-eight percent of all the principals responded agreed

on this finding, representing a mean of 2.3. In the rural setting, 40 out of 61 principals (65 %) concurred with this difficulty. Principals in the urban and suburban schools rated this item lower, a mean rating of 2.2. They found personnel qualified and willing to teach the enrichment courses during the intersessions.

In general principals tended to have differences in opinion on item #24. Finding personnel qualified and willing to teach remediation courses in the intersessions was difficult (mean of 2.0), indicates that 50% of the principals disagreed with this statement. Urban principals (45%) ranked this item lower (mean of 1.8), finding personnel qualified and willing to teach remediation courses in the intersessions was difficult. Item #25, 90% of the principals responded that teachers are more satisfied teaching in a YRE program (mean of 3.6). Some principals mentioned that jealousy--the perception of "good" teachers being assigned to one track or the other was a personnel issue that emerged from the open-ended responses. Several principals responded that an assistant principal was needed in their particular setting because their workload had increased. Also, several principals mentioned that it was more stressful for secretaries who have to keep SIMS for two schools. Townsend (1992) asserts, "The principal's role is increasingly one of developing leaders among staff throughout the school" (p. 42).

## **7. What kind of difficulties have principals experienced in the transition and implementation of a YRE program?**

The final question, what kind of difficulties have principals experienced in the transition and implementation of a YRE program, allowed and encouraged principals to voice their feelings on their work as a principal in a YRE school.

Principals reported that it was more stressful for those staff members working with the SIMS (Student Information Management System), which the state of North Carolina requires from each school. Principals voiced their concerns about the workload on their personnel and themselves, including the fact that they felt they had no time for themselves anymore. As one principal expressed his feelings, "I work 7 days a week during the summer--sometimes to late hours in the night."

Principals cautioned others desiring to make the transition to begin by studying and selling the concept to all the people, whether it be professional staff or the community. Public relations was seen as a major requirement, and this involved much energy and time from the principal and their staff. Principals recommended operating a school on a single track, rather than operating both tracks within the school. These principals stated that they would prefer the YRE program, and recommended dropping the traditional program.

A concern which emerged from the principals was the fact that the central office personnel had difficulty in working with those schools in which YRE had been implemented. Much discussion across the nation focused on site-based management;

yet, with all the discussion, it was found that the central office had greater difficulty working with this concept.

A final major concern from the principals was the preparation for the next school year which they had to plan for, while still operating school with students. Time to work on preparing for the next school year was found to be limited, and very tiring. As one principal said, "You have to be really prepared at all times."

The transition from a traditional to a YRE school concept requires effective leadership from a number of people, including the principal leading this change. With this in mind, this study sought the perceptions of principals already operating a YRE program in their school. These principals as the early pioneers in North Carolina, created a trail for others to follow, and their lessons learned will perhaps allow others to transition quicker to a YRE program.

### Conclusions

Based on the responses of the principals, these conclusions can reasonably be drawn. Several principals stated that a school-within-a-school required more work, and it was more stressful for them. The newness of the YRE concept keeps them motivated and going. The excitement of leading the way for this new change has been challenging according to several principals in the study.

The involvement of several people throughout the transitional process was central to the success of a smoother implementation of YRE. Involving faculty and

staff, students, parents, community, and businesses was seen as important to successful implementation. These people need to be involved in the process from the initial planning stages through implementation.

Communication with all parties throughout the school community is essential. Communication with the central office and the principals must always be open. Several principals mentioned the need to stay organized to keep faculty and staff members, students, and parents informed to the calendar changes. Paramount to successful operation of YRE requires that the principals make sure that all constituencies receive the same information. Oral and written communication skills are crucial for all principals in leading the transition from traditional to YRE. Five principals reported, "Be prepared to write more than ever before."

Principals expressed that teachers were happier teaching on a YRE calendar. The reasons given were that they have opportunities to take needed time off by having vacations throughout the school year. One principal commented, "They appear to have less burnout." This item received a very high rating with 90% of the principals responding positively.

Planning is a key for successful implementation to a YRE concept. Principals mentioned to take at least a year to prepare for this change. Other principals recommended that others thinking about implementing YRE to take 18 months to two years before beginning implementation.

According to the principals in the study, transportation is more expensive, but it is still worth the added costs. This item received a high rating with a mean of 3.6. Fifty-five out of 61 principals responded favorably that it is worth the extra expense.

### Recommendations For Practice

Principals indicated there were several issues that grew out of the transition to YRE. The need to acquire public relations skills was mentioned by several principals in the study. Selling the concept to the faculty and staff, students, parents, and the community requires effective public relation skills because these people must be involved in the implementation process. How to present information dealing with YRE issues to these people is important to successful implementation. Other issues that emerged from the principals included: scheduling appropriate time for personal reflection and leisure; being able to juggle two schedules, calendars, and personnel issues in a multi-track school; finding time to organize, and plan; and establishing a close working relationship with all those involved with the operation of a YRE school. Other principals considering this change would hopefully benefit by following these recommendations.

Principals further mentioned that they would operate a single track YRE concept rather than operating dual calendars. Visiting other schools and talking to other principals about YRE was one of the most important things that they did when making the transition to YRE. Also, attending conferences--both state and national helped them acquire more information concerning successful implementation of a

YRE program. Several principals talked about the need to plan for a minimum of one year before implementation. Other principals recommended to take longer if they felt more time was needed. One principal reported, "Take as much time as your staff and community need to orient them to the ideas and concepts of YRE." This time is needed because of the need to provide information to all parties affected with this change in school structure. Also mentioned by the principals was the suggestion to talk with successful school principals that have mastered the SIMS program (Student Information Management System).

One principal responded, "Make sure there is staff and community support before beginning a YRE program. Visitations and honest open discussion with parents, teachers, administrators and community patrons is a must. There should be no surprises for parents and others."

#### Recommendations For Further Research

The findings and the conclusions drawn from the study have raised several unanswered questions. The following questions would merit future study.

1. Does a YRE concept require additional personnel in administration? Numerous principals mentioned the need to have an assistant principal if a dual calendar was used. Keeping everyone informed requires more time for meetings, staff development, student and parent communication, and more time on school premises. These were some of the reasons given for having additional personnel. Having other

school systems write about the needs in their particular setting may benefit others interested in making the transition to a YRE program.

2. How do these findings compare with YRE in other states? The researcher studied literature dealing with YRE from several experienced people that have been involved in making the transition to a YRE concept. Several of the themes that emerged from the research in this study were mentioned by others in similar studies. However, it would be interesting to find out if other school systems across the country have experienced different problems, or have information that may help others interested in this concept.

3. Single track versus a school-within-a-school concept: Are both in one school necessary? According to Langston (1993), "One of the most important reasons that YRE continues to gain supporters is that parents and students have been given year-round schooling as an option, as a choice. When presented as a choice, parents and students often see it as an attractive option" (p. 8). Several principals stated that if they had a choice, they would prefer a single track versus operating a school-within-a-school concept. More research is needed to determine if both are needed.

4. What is role of the Central Office in a YRE setting? One important theme mentioned by several principals was that the central office seemed to forget that YRE operated on a different calendar as they set dates for meetings, testing dates, and staff development activities. Educating these people and developing a workable plan

seemed to help after consulting with successful principals and school systems that had experienced similar problems during implementation.

5. In the long-range, is a YRE school setting more stressful for an administrator than operating on a traditional calendar? There appears to be little difference on a day-to-day basis according to some principals while operating a single YRE track.

However, several principals mentioned that to operate a school-within-a-school requires more work. This type of YRE schedule added to their stress level according to numerous principals. Time for personal reflection was sometimes difficult to plan because more time is spent on the school premises. More time is spent in both oral and written communication to the faculty and staff, students, and parents. Several principals expressed that scheduling requires more energy, because the work is more continuous and intense.

One suggestion for future study includes a follow up study to discover if solutions to the problems and concerns of the principals were resolved. Information from these studies could assist others that may be interested in implementing a YRE program in their particular school setting. Also, further studies could inform others as to the problems the principals encountered, and the lessons of experiences while making the transition to a YRE concept.

## **Appendix**

## Questionnaire

### TO THE PARTICIPANTS:

*Thank you very much for your participation in this study. Please answer all questions in each part of the questionnaire.*

### PART I

DIRECTIONS: *Circle one answer or fill in the blank.*

1. My school can best be described as  

*urban                  suburban                  rural*
2. The enrollment in my school is \_\_\_\_\_ students.
3. I have been a principal for \_\_\_\_\_ years.
4. My school is a  

**multi-track**                  *divides a group of students and their teachers into separate "tracks." It may be three, four, or five different tracks.*

**single track**                  *all students and staff are in school at the same time, but instructional and vacation sequences are changed from the traditional calendar.*

**school-within-a-school**    *one group of students is on a traditional schedule, while another group(s) of students is operating on a YRE schedule in the same facility.*
5. Year-round education has been implemented in my school  

*1 year          2 years          3 years          4 years*
6. My school is air-conditioned.  

*Yes          No*
7. My school has an intersession period which offers remediation.  

*Yes          No*
8. My school has an intersession period which offers enrichment.  

*Yes          No*
9. In my school YRE is working  

*well          moderately well          not very well*

**PART II**

**DIRECTIONS:** *Please circle only one response for each of the following questions.*  
*Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), or Strongly Disagree (SD)*

1	I believe that parents and students should have an opportunity for input on the calendar.	SA	A	D	SD
2	Remediating students more frequently than just in summer school was one reason for designing a YRE calendar.	SA	A	D	SD
3	The ability to offer a variety of enrichment classes during intersessions was one reason for developing our YRE calendar.	SA	A	D	SD
4	It has been difficult to coordinate the YRE calendar with traditional calendars that are being used in my district.	SA	A	D	SD
5	Providing students remediation closer to the time when necessary skills or knowledge were not mastered is a benefit of a YRE calendar in my school.	SA	A	D	SD
6	I believe the YRE schedule affords teachers and other staff improved opportunities for taking needed time off from school.	SA	A	D	SD
7	Participation in extra curricular activities such as athletics and clubs has been more difficult for students involved in a YRE calendar.	SA	A	D	SD
8	Staff members who sponsor extracurricular school activities find it difficult to schedule meetings when one track is in school and the other is not in school.	SA	A	D	SD
9	Special activities such as open house, field day, and award assemblies are more difficult when there are dual calendars.	SA	A	D	SD
10	Faculty meetings to conduct business and share information is not a problem with a YRE calendar.	SA	A	D	SD
11	Increasing enrollment capacity by going to a multi-track approach was one reason for adopting YRE.	SA	A	D	SD
12	Because students are in the facility more days of the year, I have had to schedule maintenance workers for in-depth cleaning on a more flexible schedule.	SA	A	D	SD
13	Maintenance is more difficult since the implementation of a YRE program.	SA	A	D	SD

## DIRECTIONS:

*Please circle only one response for each of the following questions.*

*Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), or Strongly Disagree (SD)*

14	Since the implementation of YRE there has been more wear and tear on the facility.	SA	A	D	SD
15	Community use of the facility has lessened since the implementation of YRE.	SA	A	D	SD
16	Scheduling necessary transportation for YRE students is made more difficult because of additional bus routes.	SA	A	D	SD
17	The success of YRE has been worth the added transportation costs.	SA	A	D	SD
18	YRE has made transportation planning and operations more complex.	SA	A	D	SD
19	I believe that to do YRE in an acceptable manner requires additional per-pupil expenditures.	SA	A	D	SD
20	The decision to provide a multi-track YRE calendar was influenced by other costs such as new school construction.	SA	A	D	SD
21	Teachers in my school were in agreement that a move to YRE was a good idea.	SA	A	D	SD
22	Teachers of courses such as music, art, and foreign language are more difficult to staff when they are shared with the traditional calendar schools.	SA	A	D	SD
23	Finding personnel qualified and willing to teach <u>enrichment</u> courses in the intersessions is difficult.	SA	A	D	SD
24	Finding personnel qualified and willing to teach <u>remediation</u> courses in the intersessions is difficult.	SA	A	D	SD
25	I believe teachers are more satisfied teaching in a YRE program.	SA	A	D	SD
26	I spend more time communicating with the staff in my building as a result of YRE.	SA	A	D	SD
27	Teachers had input into the decision-making process when we began considering moving to a YRE concept.	SA	A	D	SD
28	Make-up days are more difficult to schedule since the implementation of a YRE schedule.	SA	A	D	SD
29	In my school YRE is working well.	SA	A	D	SD



## Letter Requesting Completion of Questionnaire

June 1, 1994

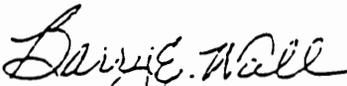
Dear Principal:

Please find enclosed a survey on Year-Round Education which I would appreciate your completing. The instrument is designed to find out what your perceptions are on various issues associated with this alternative approach to education. There are references made to multi-track, single track, and school-within-a-school settings. Please circle the "Not Applicable" response to those statements which are not indicative of your setting. I am interested primarily in responses about which you have personal knowledge.

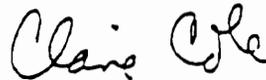
Your participation in this study will certainly provide valuable information about Year-Round Education. Enclosed you will find a self-addressed stamped envelope to make returning the survey easier.

If you have any questions or wish to talk to me about the study, please contact me. I welcome any discussion you might wish to pursue about this issue. In order to access all the information in a timely manner, please return the survey by the 20th of June.

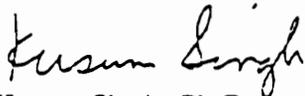
Sincerely,



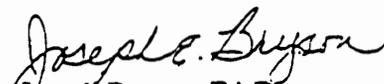
Barry E. Wall  
Doctoral Candidate



Claire Cole, Ed.D.  
Associate Professor, VA Tech



Kusum Singh, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor, VA Tech



Joseph Bryson, Ed.D.  
Professor, UNC-Greensboro

## **Follow-up Letter Requesting Completion of Questionnaire**

Dear Principal,

Two weeks ago you received a questionnaire regarding Year-Round Education from me. I have not received your response and would like very much to include your information in the study in order to provide as complete a picture as possible of year-round education in North Carolina. Enclosed for your convenience is the questionnaire and a self-addressed stamped envelope. Please take some time from your busy schedule to complete the questionnaire.

If your original questionnaire has already been sent, please disregard this letter and discard the second copy of the questionnaire. Thank you for your cooperation in this study.

Sincerely,

Barry E. Wall

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