

SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT – PRINCIPAL PERCEPTIONS AND BEHAVIORS
AFTER 19 YEARS OF IMPLEMENTATION

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Abstract

With the advent of the *No Child Left Behind* legislation and the culture of standards-based education that it brings, it is imperative for educators to focus on the academic growth of students. Indeed, the nation's schools, school districts, and states are being held accountable for student achievement. Administrators in numerous school districts across the United States have implemented a popular reform initiative, Site-Based Management (SBM), to improve student achievement. District leaders must examine the efficacy of SBM, where the authority, autonomy, and responsibility for student learning are devolved to the school level, to ensure that SBM is yielding intended results and to ensure fidelity of its implementation.

This study examined principal perceptions and implementation of SBM in the Prince William County School District in Virginia after 19 years of implementation. The investigator administered an SBM survey to a population of all 86 principals in the school district. Of those, 78 completed at least part of the survey, for a return rate of 91%. The study focused on the perceptions of principals under SBM and their implementation of SBM as defined by the functions of the School Advisory Council and the shared decision-making processes used at the school level. Variables of the study were principals' years of experience with SBM and the grade level at which they work.

Principals reported positive perceptions of SBM, in particular, the perception that SBM contributes to improvements in student achievement and to a climate of enhanced stakeholder

satisfaction. A third of the principals indicated that SBM requires principals to spend too much time on administrative tasks.

Principals with more than 10 years of experience reported more positive perceptions than principals with zero to three years experience with SBM. Principals reported that School Advisory Councils spend the most time developing, monitoring, and evaluating the school plan. Principals' years of experience with SBM were not related to the functions of their School Advisory Council, but principals with more than ten years of experience with SBM indicated a significantly higher use of consensus as a shared decision-making process.

No significant relationship was found between the school level at which principals work and their perceptions of SBM. While not significant, middle school principals rated the School Advisory Council function of aligning the school budget with the school plan slightly higher than principals at other levels. There was no relationship between principals' school level and their use of shared decision-making processes. Principals reported strengths of SBM to be autonomy in making instructional decisions; flexibility with budget; building teacher leaders; and shared decision making. Challenges to the successful implementation of SBM were budget issues; too much time away from instructional focus; and the need for ongoing training.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to all the principals who work tirelessly to ensure that the children at their schools receive the best education possible. These leaders, as well as the teachers in the classroom, are the true champions of today's education as they show up for work each and every day and give their very best to ensure that American children are equipped with the tools to be productive, informed citizens.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Background

A decade ahead of the implementation of the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* legislation, Site-Based Management (SBM), a decentralized system of managing schools, became popular. A major component of school reform in American education, SBM, in some version, was implemented in nearly one-third of the nation's school districts between 1986 and 1990 (Holloway, 2000; Ogawa & White, 1994). There are many different ways to define SBM, but most models involve the decentralization of decisions to the local school level in order to improve educational outcomes. Most definitions of SBM consist of three essential components: a) the delegation of the authority to individual schools to make decisions about the educational program of the school including staffing, budget, and program; b) the adoption of a shared decision-making model at the school level by a management team that includes the principal, teachers, parents, community members, and students, when appropriate; and c) the expectation that SBM will facilitate leadership at the school level in school improvement efforts (Reynolds, 1997). According to David (1996), while reasons for initiating SBM run the gamut, "virtually all are cloaked in the language of increasing student achievement" (p.6).

NCLB, the federal legislation of 2001, has catapulted education into a new era of standards-based accountability—accountability not only for school districts and states, but also for students, teachers, and principals. Researched-based programs, highly qualified teachers, adequate yearly progress, and student achievement by subgroup are all

part of the paradigm of *NCLB*. Never before has the need for all students and schools to show academic growth been as important as it is now. Principals must not only manage their schools, they must possess leadership skills that result in learning for all students—skills that build a school-wide culture of achievement and that acknowledge and include the role of parents in education. *NCLB* has raised the ante for educators by focusing on results and providing a standard measurement of those results, specifically, requiring states to administer reading and math tests every year to students in grades three through eight and once in high school (Dillon, 2009). With this increased accountability, school districts must implement the educational practices that yield the highest returns in student achievement, and although SBM has received decidedly mixed reviews as a reform strategy, most scholars who have studied it acknowledge that it can be linked to some positive changes in culture or parent or teacher satisfaction. While only a few have observed clear changes in student achievement that can be tied to site-level autonomy and shared decision making within the school (Beck and Murphy, 1998), of all the reform movements of this era, none has received as much attention as SBM (Murphy, 1994).

SBM places accountability and responsibility for student achievement at the school level. It requires shared decision making and it gives principals and schools the autonomy and authority to implement changes that are in the best interest of students. SBM has had a profound effect on school leadership. The changes it requires in the role of the principal have redefined expectations for school leaders.

The school district in this study, Prince William County Public Schools, implemented SBM district-wide in 1990. The Prince William County Public School District is the third largest school district in the State of Virginia. In the 2008-09 school

year, at the time of the study, the school district had 73,657 students. The student population consisted of the following demographic groups: 40.6% white, 23.9% Hispanic, 22.9% African American, 7.5% Asian, and 5% other. The percentage of special education students in the district was 14.6%; English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) was 17.8%; and 29.3% of students were receiving free and reduce-priced lunches.

Prior to the implementation of SBM, the school district was managed by a highly centralized administrative organization in which school board policies, administrative regulations, and various executive orders were prepared and issued on every phase of the school district's operation. All appropriated funds were held by the central office administrators, and most decisions governing the operations of the schools were made centrally. With the implementation of SBM, the district moved from highly centralized to school based.

Prince William County Public Schools defines SBM as a "philosophy of management by which the individual school becomes a self-directed, responsible, and educationally accountable entity within the parameters established by the School Board and the district superintendent, and where decisions are economical, efficient and equitably facilitate learning" (Kelly, 1990). The goals of SBM, as identified by the school district, were as follows:

1. To improve the quality of all instructional programs;
2. To provide a psychological climate in the building to enhance the effectiveness and satisfaction of all staff members;

3. To build a high degree of confidence and support of the schools' programs by parents and community.

4. To improve the decision-making process by allowing the staff to use their initiative to seek new and creative problem solving strategies.

Under the Prince William County Public Schools' model of SBM, each school must develop a school plan describing how it will work towards achieving the goals set by the school board in the Strategic Plan and how it will strive to achieve its own locally generated school goals and objectives. The plan must be prepared by the principal in a collaborative manner with the School Advisory Council which consists of teachers, parents and community members and students where appropriate. Each plan must be supported by a local school budget.

Under SBM, the bulk of the school district's budget is assigned to the individual schools in a budget allocation based on the number and nature of students and other relevant factors. Transferred with the funds is the appropriate decision-making authority needed to expend those funds and improve instruction. Decisions on the expenditures of these allocations are the responsibility of the principals, working in concert with the school staff and community and in keeping with the district's Strategic Plan and the individual school plan. No funds are allocated for food services or pupil transportation (Kelly, 1990).

The school district established parameters to SBM in order to help define the degree of autonomy assigned to principals. They are as follows:

1. Principals have the authority to establish the number of employees and the areas in which those employees work as long as the cost for those employees remains

within the specific dollar amount allocated. In addition, principals have the final authority to recommend the names of individuals to the Human Resources director for personnel vacancies in their building. Principals have the responsibility to determine how to allocate positions, consistent with the school's annual goal statement, program plan and budget.

2. Principals have the opportunity to budget funds for the use of supplies and materials and equipment replacement funds within the amount allocated to their school. They have the authority to control the use of utilities within their building as long as the dollar amount used does not exceed the amount allocated. Principals do not have autonomy over the cafeteria or transportation in the school.

3. All principals must adhere to the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and Prince William County, and all schools must follow the district curriculum and adhere to all policies, state and federal regulations and state requirements (Kelly, 1990).

Importance of the Study

School districts adopt SBM for specific reasons. Among those are the needs to improve the quality of education, to enhance the work environment for teachers and staff, to foster parental and community support, and to improve the decision-making process (Chion-Kenney, 1994). A task force representing the American Association of School Administrators, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals found that, among other advantages, SBM:

- formally recognizes the expertise and competence of those who work in individual schools to make decisions to improve learning;

- gives teachers, other staff members, and the community increased input into decisions;
- improves morale of teachers because staff members see they can have an immediate impact on their environment;
- shifts the emphasis in staff development. Teachers are more directly involved in determining what they need;
- focuses accountability for decisions, where one individual, typically the superintendent or a building principal, has ultimate responsibility for any decision;
- brings both financial and instructional resources in line with the instructional goals developed in each school;
- helps to provide better services and programs to students; and
- promotes a greater sense of ownership by staff, parents, and students (Chion-Kenney, 1994).

The Prince William Public School District implemented SBM with the overall goal of improving the achievement of all students and eliminating the achievement gap. Secondary goals of implementing SBM were to enhance the work environment for teachers and staff, to foster parental and community support, and to improve the decision-making process in the school district (School-Based Management, Executive Summary, 1990).

Under SBM, schools in the district have had the autonomy to develop and implement school plans that are responsive to student and community needs. Principals have been given the authority to make decisions regarding the school budget, personnel,

and instructional programs in order to increase student achievement, and they have been given the responsibility for student learning in their buildings. In addition, they have been empowered to implement a model of shared decision making that involves an advisory council composed of administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students ,where applicable, whose role is to develop, implement, and monitor the school improvement plan. Principals are critical to successful implementation of SBM in this school district. They must provide effective instructional leadership in order to reach the goal of improved student achievement while managing their schools to guarantee those results.

Important questions for school districts that implement SBM are a) Is SBM accomplishing its goals? b) How does SBM impact the role of the principal? c) How does SBM impact student achievement? d) Does SBM foster shared decision making at the school level? e) How does the School Advisory Council function?

Purpose of the Study

The Prince William County School District has been implementing SBM for 19 years. Until the time of the present study, there had not been a comprehensive look at the impact that SBM has had on individual schools and the school district as a whole nor the degree of implementation of SBM at individual schools. Leadership was asking the questions, “What is the current status of SBM?” and “What are principal perceptions of SBM?”

The purpose of this study was to identify principal perceptions and implementation of SBM and how principals’ years of experience and school level (elementary, middle, high) relate to their implementation and perceptions of SBM. In order to determine the principals’ implementation and perceptions of SBM, the

investigator identified various components of SBM and the extent to which they were being implemented in schools. The investigator participated on a district-wide task force that developed and administered an SBM Principal Survey to all principals in the district. The investigator selected subsets of data from the survey data file for the study.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study were developed to determine, from the principals' viewpoint, the current status of SBM after 19 years of implementation. They were designed to provide useful information on principal perceptions and implementation of SBM.

1. What are principal perceptions of SBM?
2. How are years of experience related to principal perceptions and implementation of SBM?
3. How is the school level of a principal related to his perceptions and implementation of SBM?

Methodology

The investigator was part of a school district SBM task force that developed and administered a district-wide SBM principal survey designed to identify the components of SBM that were being implemented at the individual schools and the degree to which they were being implemented, principal leadership behaviors and principal perceptions of various aspects of SBM. A data file from the survey was made available to the investigator who chose subsets of data for the study. The subsets used for the study were 1) principal perceptions of SBM, 2) functions of the School Advisory Council, 3) use of shared decision-making processes and 4) strengths of SBM and challenges to the

successful implementation of SBM. The investigator identified the principal perceptions of SBM, the functions of the School Advisory Council and the shared decision-making processes used. The investigator also identified the relationship between the principals' years of experience and school level and the principals' perceptions, functions of the School Advisory Council and the form of shared decision-making used by the principals. The investigator content analyzed the responses to strengths of SBM and challenges to SBM.

In order to identify principal perceptions of SBM, principals were asked to indicate their level of agreement with nine statements about SBM. The statements pertained to their autonomy to develop school goals and the school budget; if they ultimately are responsible for student progress; if SBM required them to spend too much time on administrative tasks; the importance of the School Advisory Council; if the Strategic Plan limits their autonomy with respect to the school plan; if shared decision making allows them to function as instructional leaders; and if SBM contributes to improvements in student achievement and to a climate with enhanced stakeholder satisfaction.

Delimitations

For purposes of the study, the investigator did not focus on budget or curriculum issues under SBM. Except in the context of the principals' agreement with the statements that they had the autonomy to develop their budget and in aligning the budget with the school plan as a function of the School Advisory Council, data was not collected on development of the budget. Since its inception in this school district, SBM has included the decentralization of the school budget, and principals have had a budget allocation

based on their student population. Teaching the curriculum is a parameter of SBM in this school district; all schools must teach the district curriculum, therefore the investigator did not include curriculum issues as a part of the study. These components of SBM were not intended to be a part of the study. In terms of implementation of SBM, the investigator instead chose to focus on issues associated with the principals' leadership practices involving stakeholders, such as functions of the School Advisory Council and what shared decision-making processes they used. These areas with the variables of years of experience and school level of the principals seemed to be adequate for a study of this size.

Definitions

There are many different ways to define SBM, but most models involve the decentralization of decisions to the local school level in order to improve educational outcomes. Most definitions of SBM consist of at least three basic components. First, there is a delegation of authority to individual schools to make decisions about the educational program of the school, including areas of personnel, budget, and curriculum and instruction. Second, there is a shared decision-making model at the school level, consisting of a management team that includes the principal, teachers, parents, community members, and students, when appropriate. Third, there is facilitative leadership at the school to ensure follow-through of decisions (Murphy, 1991; Hodder, 1994).

Most forms of SBM involve some kind of representative decision-making council at the school. The composition of school advisory councils varies from school to school. All segments of the school community are represented on the School Advisory Council.

Most councils consist of teachers, parents and the principal; additional members may include classified staff, community members, students where applicable and business representatives. Council membership is balanced between school staff and parents. Student and community members are included on the council as determined by the school. Whenever possible, constituents select their representatives on the council.

Responsibilities of the School Advisory Council are to assist and support the principal and school leadership in developing the school plan, aligning the school plan with the district Strategic Plan, aligning the budget with the school plan, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the plan. In addition to activities pertaining to the school plan, the council assumes other responsibilities as deemed appropriate by the principal and school leadership. The functions of the council in 1990 and 2009 are outlined in Table 2, *Advisory Council Functions in 1990 and 2009*, located in Chapter Three.

Each School Advisory Council develops and approves council by-laws to govern the operation of the council. By-laws include a definition of the purpose of the council, definition of the responsibilities of the council, description of the membership of the council, guidelines for advisory council meetings and description of officers, their duties and selection process. Councils use the continuous improvement planning process to develop the school plan.

Shared decision-making processes used in the Prince William County Public School District consist of consensus, majority vote and weighted vote. Consensus is reached when all members can support the decision even though they may not agree with it, because their views have been heard and understood. Decision by consensus is time-

consuming because all members must have the opportunity to express their opinion and all must agree to support the decision. While this style of decision making can take a long time, it creates the highest level of commitment from members. In a majority vote, decisions are arrived at through voting. Those on the losing side of a vote may have little commitment to the decision. Weighted vote is used during the discussion of an issue as a means to see where people are in the decision making process. It is used when the council is deciding from a number of options. A certain number of votes are allotted to each member who then distributes his votes among the options according to his preference. Weighted vote is often used as part of the consensus process.

Of the three shared decision-making processes, consensus is the preferred way to make a decision in the PWCS model of SBM. It is the most time consuming method of making decisions, but when a council is making a decision about the education of children, it is imperative that all can support the outcome. With majority vote there are winners and losers, but with consensus all members are winners. All members agree to support the decision as it was made in a fair and equitable way (Educational Satellite Training, Inc., 1994).

Summary

Educators today find themselves in a culture of heightened accountability under the *NCLB* federal legislation of 2001. It is imperative that schools show academic progress for all students. In order to achieve the goal of academic progress for all students, many school districts have turned to SBM. SBM is an educational reform that has been in place since the early nineties in thousands of school districts across America and the world, implemented to improve student achievement. It has been hailed as the

greatest invention since *sliced bread* and condemned as a prescription for disaster (Cromwell, 2005). In an era of educational accountability mandated by *NCLB* legislation, it is imperative that school districts take a close look at SBM to determine if it is, indeed, a significant reform initiative or if it falls into the category of another failed educational reform, or at the least, as an insignificant disappointment.

The purpose of this study is to identify the impact of SBM after 19 years of implementation from the viewpoint of principals. The investigator examined functions of the School Advisory Councils, shared decision-making processes and principal perceptions of SBM. The investigator also determined how a principal's years of experience and level of school relate to his implementation and perceptions of SBM.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review relevant literature on SBM, the various definitions and forms of SBM, and the roles and responsibilities of one of the key stakeholders in SBM, the school principal. The investigator reviewed literature about the impact that SBM has on the operations of the school and how SBM impacts principal behaviors. The investigator also examined changes in the role of the principal and the impact that SBM has on the role of the principal as an instructional leader. National and international research on the principal's role in SBM is significant and comprised a portion of this study.

Context

There are many different ways to define SBM, but most models involve the decentralization of decisions to the local school level in order to improve educational outcomes. Most definitions of SBM consist of at least three basic components. First, there is a delegation of authority to individual schools to make decisions about the educational program of the school, including areas of personnel, budget, and curriculum and instruction. Second, there is a shared decision-making model at the school level, consisting of a management team that includes the principal, teachers, parents, community members, and students, when appropriate. Third, there is facilitative leadership at the school to ensure follow-through of decisions (Murphy, 1991; Hodder, 1994).

SBM places the accountability and responsibility for student achievement at the school level. It requires shared decision making, and it gives principals and schools the autonomy and authority to implement changes that are in the best interest of students. The philosophy of SBM is that the people best qualified to make decisions regarding the education of children are those closest to them. Its main objective is to enhance student achievement (David, 1996).

The Prince William County School District implemented SBM district-wide in 1990, prior to the standards movement. The goal of the school district was to improve student achievement, and the vehicle for achieving the goal was SBM. Since that time, schools have had the autonomy to develop and implement school improvement plans that are responsive to student needs. Principals assume the responsibility and have the authority to make decisions at their schools that result in improved student achievement. SBM places accountability with the principal to produce desirable educational outcomes (School-Based Management, Executive Summary, 1990).

With the implementation of SBM, principals in the school district have had the authority to make decisions regarding the school budget, personnel, and instructional programs. Principals have been held accountable for student achievement, but prior to 1997 and the Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments, there was no consistent measure or standard by which students and schools could be compared to other students across the county, state, or nation. The Standards of Learning Assessments, and later *NCLB*, provided consistent means for comparison and, consequently, made public a school's growth or lack thereof.

NCLB provides a measure for the accountability that is integral to SBM, and it reinforces the need for the principal to focus on the school's instructional program and provide the leadership that will result in student growth. The investigator reviewed literature that assesses the impact of SBM on principal behavior and leadership.

SBM as an Educational Reform

SBM was implemented in some version in one-third of all school districts in the United States between 1986 and 1990 (Holloway, 2000; Ogawa & White, 1994). In a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education in 1996, all states reported having some site-based decision-making entities in local schools (Rodriguez and Slate, 2005). It has also been implemented in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UK (Leithwood and Menzies, 1998). Indeed, restructuring schools by allocating to them more decision-making authority is a widespread reform initiative (Leithwood and Menzies, (1998).

Many scholars view SBM as a component of restructuring schools and report that it has several advantages. Higher levels of commitment, effort and morale are present as a result of collaborative participation in decision making (Fowler, 1996; Murphy and Beck, 1993; Richard, 1996). In addition, decisions are supposed to improve if they are made by the people with the greatest knowledge about the school, its students and its programs (Stribling, 1992). SBM decision-making committees include stakeholders such as teachers, parents and administrators (Rodriquez and Slate, 2005). SBM may be the most significant reform of the decade- a potential force for empowering educators and communities (David, 1996).

Impact of SBM on Principal Leadership

SBM has had an effect on the leadership role of the principal. Existing literature on SBM suggests that the role of the principal is most affected by the change and that principals experience expanding and more challenging roles under SBM (Cranston, 2000). Herman and Herman (1993) observe that the principal is the “key player in the decentralization and restructuring process” (p. 92). Brown (1990) says about the change:

The role most affected by decentralization is clearly that of the school principal. No other person will encounter more changes, more need to adjust, and more potential to make a difference both to his or her school and to the way decentralization works at the school level (p. 79).

The role of the principal has become increasingly more demanding, with higher expectations and increased accountability for student achievement. Research since 1983 shows that effective principals play an active role in the instructional process (Gulatt, 1994). In a qualitative case study of primary school principals conducted in Queensland, Australia, a researcher reported on the impact of SBM on primary schools and their principals, using individual and focus group interviews as the major data collection method. Findings revealed a significant impact of SBM on schools and principals. Increasing demands were being made on principals to lead their communities through the change process and facilitate cultural change while at the same time responding to greater accountability demands from the system. Educational leadership had largely given way to managerial activities (Cranston, 2000). Despite this, all principals in the study noted increased job satisfaction from the change to SBM.

Another researcher studying the impact of school reform on learning outcomes and on the professional culture of the principalship in schools in Victoria, Australia, from 1993 to 1998 reported on emerging roles and preferences of principals for the decentralized management system in Schools of the Future. Since 1993, almost 90% of the state's budget has been decentralized to schools for local decision making. With 1700 schools, this is the largest system of public education anywhere to have decentralized such a high proportion of the total budget. The study is made up of several smaller studies, and in a survey of the Cooperative Research Project, 1998, principals reported their perceptions of the changes.

Findings show that despite dysfunctions, unfilled expectations, and intensification of work, a large majority of principals would not return to previous organizational governance (Caldwell, 1998). On a principal survey, more than 80% of principals gave ratings of three or more on a five-point scale, with five being the most positive rating, on items such as better resource management, clearer sense of direction, increased accountability and responsibility, greater financial and administrative flexibility, and improved long-term planning (Caldwell, 1998). The perceptions and preferences of principals with respect to their new role were tracked through successive surveys of the Cooperative Research Project. Several of the key findings are listed below.

1. The work load of principals has increased.
2. Mean job satisfaction has fallen over the life of the reform, initially 5.3 on a 7-point scale, with 7 being the most positive, for principals in the initial pilot phase, falling but stabilizing across all schools to 4.3.

3. Many problems have been encountered, and while some have lessened in magnitude, many have not, notably workload and aspects of resourcing.
4. Despite the problems, concerns, dissatisfactions, and diminished expectations, principals report significant benefits with respect to curriculum and learning outcomes and approaches to planning and resource allocation.
5. Taking all things into account, the overwhelming majority of principals would not wish to return to previous arrangements before the change.

Inherent in SBM is the expectation that the role of the principal will change (Goodman, 1994). Wohlstetter and Briggs (1994) stated that the role changes from primary decision maker to one who empowers others. Among the changes in the principal's role is the need to devote more time to managerial tasks than to instructional issues. Principals working under SBM report that there is a major refocusing of their time from curriculum matters to matters more managerial in nature (Cranston, 2000; Portin, 1998).

Tanner and Stone (1998) conducted a study on the principal's role under SBM, using the Delphi technique—a process to determine opinions or judgments of a group of people—sampling practitioners and educational researchers. Participants were a panel of experts from 14 states that included educational specialists, researchers, writers, and elementary school principals. One purpose of the study was to identify changes in the management, leadership, and administrative functions of principals. Another purpose was to discover the components of a job profile for elementary school principals working under SBM. The researchers asked the following five research questions.

1. What changes have occurred in the principal's role with respect to management and administration since the implementation of SBM?
2. What changes have occurred in the elementary principal's role with respect to leadership since the implementation of SBM?
3. What are the primary management and administrative tasks of the elementary principal in SBM?
4. What are the primary leadership tasks of the elementary principal in SBM?
5. How does the implementation of SBM policy alter the role of the elementary principal in the decision-making process?

The researchers chose the Delphi technique as a method of inquiry involving consensus building. Participants in the study, a national panel of experts, consisted of two subsets: 12 school principals in elementary schools that had worked in SBM for at least three years, and 12 professionals who had attained national or local recognition as knowledgeable educators in the area of SBM and considered specialists in SBM.

The researchers conducted the study in three cycles:

1. In Cycle I, the researchers asked all participants to respond to a questionnaire consisting of two open-ended questions about the job of the elementary school principal involved in SBM. The researchers then conducted a semantic analysis on the responses and categorized those responses into sets. The last step of the process was to formulate one Delphi item statement to represent each set of responses, resulting in the formulation of 57 Delphi items for the Cycle II instrument.

2. In Cycle II, an external panel of ten educators reviewed the survey item statements for content validity by making a comparison to the original responses received from the expert panel in Cycle I. The researchers then mailed the survey instrument to the 86 principals who comprised the study's participants.
3. In Cycle III, the researchers asked each member, after reviewing this information, to consider a new response in light of the modal response or state a reason for not changing the Cycle II response and reported the mode for each item in Cycle II to the panel.

Agreement was reached on 51 (87.9%) of the Delphi statements, where at least 80% agreement constituted consensus. The following conclusions were drawn: The elementary school principal working in SBM should a) share the responsibility of attaining the school's goals with all collaborating parties; b) orchestrate shared decision making and practice time management techniques; c) obtain knowledge concerning group process and interpersonal skills; and d) cultivate leadership from the ranks of teachers. Elementary school principals need to become master facilitators and communicators, and they need to expand their expertise in management and administration (Tanner & Stone, 1998).

Tanner and Stone (1998) made the following recommendations as a result of this study: To expand the study to validate the findings and use the results to determine a course of study for principal preparation programs in order to determine what professional development practices would maximize the effectiveness of SBM; and to conduct additional studies to assess the effectiveness of professional development programs in elementary schools implementing SBM. To lend support to these

recommendations, many researchers have found that principals under SBM express the need for training in leadership skills and decision-making (Alexander, 1992).

Fullan (1997, 1998) has noted that the job of the principal within a system of SBM becomes more complex and constrained with pressures intensifying overload. This view is supported by other researchers who see decentralization increasing the workload of principals, making it more varied and complex and increasing stress (Williams, Harold, Robertson, & Southworth, 1997). Crow and Peterson (1994) categorize the diverse set of agendas across which principals must operate under SBM as encompassing roles in four areas: political, cultural, environmental, and managerial. Murphy (1991) states that principals need to address three key areas of their school: people management, school-environment relations, and technical core operations.

The research cited in this last section has focused on changes in the principal's role under SBM. The literature is replete with indications that SBM dramatically impacts the role of principal in management and leadership practices. Many researchers agree that SBM requires principals to spend additional time on management issues, which diminishes the time spent on instructional issues. It also requires principals to develop and use interpersonal skills of shared decision-making, collaboration, and consensus building, to name a few. According to Wohlstetter and Briggs (1994), the principal's customary role as the primary decision maker changes under SBM, with others being empowered to make decisions that previously were the principal's exclusive domain.

The research examined here indicates that the principal is key to the successful implementation of SBM in a school. Research also indicates that the role of the principal changes significantly under SBM (Tanner & Stone, 1998). SBM requires principals to be

attentive to community groups, oversee expanded budgets, and carry out numerous other activities which were traditionally associated with the duties of central administration (Daresh, 1998). The principal under SBM is required to spend an increased amount of time on non-instructional issues, sometimes at the expense of instructional issues. Common themes of changes in three aspects of the role of the principal under SBM are synthesized in Table 1.

Table 1

Themes of Changes in the Role of Principal under SBM

Author (Date)	Management Tasks vs. Instructional Issues	Need for More Time	Need for Additional Interpersonal Skills
Caldwell (1998)	New leadership must be strategic & empowering to accomplish new tasks	Increased workload with reduced time to accomplish tasks	Principals have feelings of dysfunction with the complexities of their job
Cranston (2000)	Refocus of responsibilities; managerial tasks leave reduced time for instructional issues	Increased workload; time demands to accomplish processes of SBM	SBM requires people & interpersonal skills
Daresh (1998)	Expectations for improved student achievement, yet principals required to carry out budget tasks and other management issues	More demands on principals with not enough time to accomplish job	SBM requires principals to use political & social skills to carry out activities parallel to those of the superintendent
Gurr (1996)	Principals less hands on due to management issues	Principals delegated more to cope with daily time demands	Greater complexity of job requiring more school community relations
Portin (1998)	Principals feel thwarted from work they feel is important-instructional leadership	Principal's role has been devalued by overload, bringing increased pressures; Need new models to adapt role, not just add more	Redefined expectations for principals should inform principal preparation programs
Tanner & Stone (1998)	Need to establish a clear definition of role & high level of performance	Principals need to practice time management skills	Principals need to obtain group process & interpersonal skills

Although, as literature suggests, principals working in an SBM system are overloaded with more complex responsibilities and tasks, their satisfaction with such a system is noticeable. Cranston (2000) reported that, despite the enhanced and more demanding roles for principals operating under a system of SBM, principals, for the most part, prefer this model of management to the previous, central-based model. Principals state that they are able to accomplish far more under an SBM model than they were able to accomplish previously.

Site-Based Decision Making

Principals, the key stakeholders, are responsible for establishing and implementing models of shared decision making—a defining characteristic of SBM—at the school level (Murphy, 1994). Hallinger and Hausman (1993) state, “If important decisions about educational programs are to be decentralized to the school level, there needs to be a structure and process in place...to ensure that these decisions are made in a participatory manner” (p.139), and to ensure that the complex work of shared decision making is conscientiously addressed. Whether it is called the School Advisory Council or the Site-Based Decision-Making Committee, as the school structure for stakeholder involvement and shared decision making, the site council is a feature common to all forms of SBM and is at the heart of SBM.

The site council is composed of school staff, parents, community members, and students, as appropriate. The business of the council may vary within SBM, but most councils devote time to instructional issues with the goal of improved student achievement. In a state-wide survey of SBM administered by the Texas Education

Association, 65.3% of principals indicated a high degree of committee involvement in site-based decision-making as it pertains to establishing and reviewing the campus improvement plan, while 58.4% indicated a high degree of committee involvement in site-based decision-making as it pertains to campus goals and objectives (Rodriguez, 2001).

The site council, a representative decision-making council, is the main vehicle for shared decision making at the school level, and it is integral to successful implementation of SBM. Effective site councils have the following characteristics in common (David, 1996):

1. A well-thought-out committee structure: There is a good match between the types of decisions to be made and the most appropriate people to debate and resolve those issues.
2. Enabling leadership: Strong councils are led by strong principals who exercise leadership by mobilizing others. They encourage participation and model inquiry and reflection, thereby creating school-wide ownership of the school improvement.
3. Focus on student learning: Strong councils link all issues to teaching and learning, maintaining their focus on the goal of student learning.
4. Focus on adult learning: Council members need new skills, and they need to appreciate that their constituencies require access to new knowledge and skills.
5. School-wide perspective: Functioning councils focus on school goals and direction, coordination and communication, and allocation of resources and equity.

Summary

SBM is a significant educational reform implemented throughout the United States and the world. SBM has been implemented for various reasons, foremost to improve student achievement. Review of the literature on the role of the principal in a system of SBM suggests that the principal is a key figure in its implementation and that the role of the principal changes in such a system. The literature on SBM strongly suggests that a decentralized system impacts leadership practices of the principal, creating more varied and complex responsibilities in addition to instructional leadership. Principals indicate a need for more time to accomplish their increased work load and fulfill their responsibilities; they acknowledge the conflict between management tasks and instructional leadership tasks; and they recognize the need for additional interpersonal skills. While principals' responsibilities increase and broaden significantly under a system of SBM, they report satisfaction with the change to SBM and indicate that they would not want to return to a centralized system of management.

Site-based decision making is at the heart of SBM. The vehicle for site-based decision making is the site council, composed of representative stakeholders. The functions of the site council, or School Advisory Council, are centered on the school improvement plan and are focused on the goal of improving student learning.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Chapter Three will discuss the methodology used in the study. It will include the research design, overview of the literature review, population and sample, instrumentation, validity and reliability, data collection methods, and methods of data analysis. It will conclude with a chapter summary.

Site-Based Management (SBM), a decentralized system of managing schools, became popular across the United States and throughout the world a decade before the enactment of the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* legislation. School districts implemented SBM for various reasons: to improve student achievement, to enhance the work environment for teachers and staff, to foster parental and community support, and to improve the decision-making process.

The intent of this study was to examine, from the viewpoint of the principal, two key aspects of SBM in The Prince William County School District, in Virginia, after 19 years of implementation. The study examined principal perceptions of SBM and principal implementation of SBM. Specifically, the investigator examined the functions of the School Advisory Council and the shared decision-making processes it uses.

The investigator examined principal perceptions and implementation of various aspects of SBM: autonomy, importance of the advisory council, principal work load, student achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, shared decision making, and overall attitude towards SBM. Factors affecting principal perceptions and implementation of SBM were years of experience of the principal and school level of the principal.

Research Design

In order to examine the current implementation of SBM, the investigator used descriptive research to determine principals' perceptions and implementation of SBM. Descriptive research involves the collection and analysis of quantitative data in order to develop a precise description of a sample's behavior (Gall, J., Gall, M.D., & Borg, 1999). Applied properly, descriptive research identifies meaningful patterns of behavior in a population. This study involved administration of a survey to all principals in the school district.

The purpose of the survey was to assess the current status of SBM in order to improve its implementation. The district-wide survey asked principals to identify various SBM behaviors they use and the extent to which they use them. The survey included questions pertaining to the functions of the School Advisory Council as well as principal implementation and perceptions of various aspects of SBM. The survey also asked principals to identify strengths of SBM and challenges to its successful implementation. For purposes of the study, implementation of SBM focused on functions of the School Advisory Council and the shared decision-making processes principals used. The study identified the relationship between principals' years of experience and level of school and their implementation and perceptions of SBM.

The research questions were as follows:

1. What are principal perceptions of SBM?
2. How are years of experience related to principal perceptions and implementation of SBM?

3. How is the school level of a principal related to his perceptions and implementation of SBM?

In order to examine the role of the School Advisory Council, the survey asked several questions of study participants:

- What are the various compositions of School Advisory Councils?
- How are members selected?
- What functions, according to principals, are advisory councils responsible for completing?
- What shared decision-making processes do schools use?

In order to examine principal perceptions of SBM, the survey asked a series of questions about certain aspects and major components related to:

- **Autonomy:** What level of autonomy do principals report related to school plan and school budget?
- **Level of Importance of Advisory Council:** What is the level of importance reported by principals?
- **Perceptions of Work Load:** What are the perceptions of principals related to the amount of work required to implement SBM?
- **Student Achievement:** What are the perceptions of principals related to student achievement under SBM?
- **Stakeholder Satisfaction:** What is the principal perception of stakeholder satisfaction under SBM?
- **Overall Attitude:** What do principals perceive is the overall attitude towards SBM?

Overview of Literature Review

SBM has received mixed reviews as a reform strategy. Beck and Murphy (1998), after conducting an extensive analysis of SBM, concluded that it “is a fairly weak intervention in our arsenal of school reform measures” (p.178) if its goal is to have a direct and positive impact on student learning outcomes. The authors were not willing to dismiss SBM as a useful decision-making structure, however. They acknowledge that SBM is a complex phenomenon, given that it can be implemented in a variety of ways. This makes it difficult to generalize about its effectiveness. Although most researchers note that SBM can be linked to some positive changes in the culture of the school or to parent or teacher satisfaction, only a few have observed clear changes in student achievement that can be linked to site-based autonomy and shared decision making at the school level (Beck and Murphy, 1998).

After reviewing 77 empirical and case studies of the implementation of SBM, Leithwood and Menzies (1998) concluded that SBM has yet to demonstrate its value in improving the educational experiences of students, stating, “Although not quite the ‘silver bullet’ it is sometimes claimed to be, SBM’s potential is quite significant nonetheless”. Realizing the potential of SBM lies in acquiring a more explicit understanding of the issues of its implementation (p. 236). There is clearly more to learn about SBM as a reform initiative, and the investigator hopes that this study will provide insight into the implementation of SBM from the principal’s viewpoint.

Research supports the fact that SBM has an impact on the leadership role of the principal (Daresh, 1998; Gurr, 1996; & Portin, 1998) and that the role of the principal changes significantly under SBM (Tanner & Stone, 1998). Even with the changes SBM

brings to their role, principals report increased job satisfaction with the change to SBM (Cranston, 2000). Because the principal is vital to the successful implementation of SBM, further study into the practices and perceptions of principals has the potential to augment the literature on SBM.

Context of SBM in PWCS

The basis for examining current practices of SBM in The Prince William County Public School District after 19 years of implementation was the original model set forth when SBM was initially implemented in 1990. The SBM components that were examined are various aspects of the School Advisory Council, the schools' shared decision-making processes, and the role of the principal. Principals provided their perceptions about autonomy under SBM, the importance of the School Advisory Council, the work load under SBM, student achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, and the overall attitude towards SBM. Factors that the investigator examined that may affect principal implementation and perceptions of SBM were number of years of experience of the principal and school level of the principal—elementary, middle, or high.

Table 2 compares the functions of the School Advisory Council in 1993 as set forth in Regulation 230.01 and the functions of the School Advisory Council cited in the 2006 regulation. While the functions have not changed significantly, the 1993 version of the regulation does not state the council functions as explicitly as it does in the 2006 revised regulation. There is no mention of the District Strategic Plan in the earlier version of the regulation, and the alignment of the plan with both the school budget and the school professional development plan is not mentioned. In addition, the function of

“other responsibilities as deemed appropriate by the principal or school leadership” (p. 3)
 is not mentioned in the earlier regulation.

Table 2

Advisory Council Functions in 1990 and 2009

Aspect of School Advisory Council	Original Model – 1990 Regulation 230.01, 1993	Practice According to Regulation, 230.01-1, 2006
Function (s) of the council	Works with principal in development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluating of annual school plan which is basis of school’s instructional program and budget	Assists/supports principal and school leadership team in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developing school plan, including objectives, strategies and action plans - aligning the school plan with District’s Strategic Plan - aligning the school budget with school plan - reviewing the alignment of school professional development plan with school plan - monitoring/evaluating the implementation of the school plan - assuming other responsibilities as deemed appropriate by principal/school leadership
Composition of council	Staff, parents, possibly community members, and students	All segments of school community. Membership shall be balanced between school staff and parents.
Selection of council members	Defined by council by-laws	Defined by council by-laws

Population and Sample

The Prince William County School District implemented SBM district-wide in 1990. Since that time, the school district has experienced significant growth. The total number of schools at the time of the study was 86, as follows: 55 elementary schools, 15 middle schools, 10 high schools, and 6 other schools. Other schools were alternative schools, special schools, and combined schools. Of the principals who responded to the survey, 42% have zero to three years of experience, 44% have four to ten years of experience, and 14% have more than ten years of experience. Sixty-four percent of principals who responded are elementary principals, 19% are middle school principals, 9% are high school principals, 6% are principals of special schools and 2% did not indicate their level. The school district surveyed Prince William County Public Schools' principals, making the study a sample of convenience. A total of 78 of the 86 principals responded to at least part of the survey, rendering a 91% response rate.

Instrumentation

Under the direction of the School Board, the superintendent created a SBM Task Force. The investigator participated as a member of the SBM Task Force. The task force consisted of principals representing each level and geographic area of the school district and members of central office staff. The purpose of the task force was to study the current state of SBM in the district, to develop a SBM manual with supporting regulations as well as to begin developing training modules for principals and others involved with SBM.

In order to determine the current state of SBM, the task force developed a SBM Survey. We began by brainstorming the types of information they would collect. The

information we identified was background information about the principals, current SBM practices and principal perceptions of SBM. The current SBM practices consisted of the makeup, by-laws, functions and selection process of advisory councils. Once the task force decided on the contents of the survey, we worked with the Accountability Office to develop the survey itself. The survey was approved by the Superintendent's Staff.

The school district distributed electronically the district-wide survey to all principals in the school district in order to collect data on their perceptions and implementation of SBM. The survey was divided into three sections. In Section One, demographic information, principals were asked to indicate the length of time they have been a principal in the school district; the level of school in which they work; and if and when they have ever taken SBM training.

In Section Two, implementation/current practices of SBM, principals were asked about the composition of their School Advisory Council; what type of shared decision-making processes they use; the selection process of their advisory council members; what is contained in the council by-laws; the frequency of advisory council activities; the importance of the advisory council at their school; the frequency of certain functions of the advisory council; and other means through which staff and parents have the opportunity to participate in shared decision making.

In Section Three, perceptions about SBM, the survey asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with several statements about SBM. This final section also contained open-ended questions about the strengths and challenges of SBM. Elements of the survey were forced-choice items, Likert items, and open-ended items.

Table 3 shows survey contents, by section, and the type of question included in the survey.

Table 3

SBM Survey Components

Survey Section	Contents of Survey	Item Type
Section One	Demographic – Years of Experience, Level of School, and Training Experience	Forced Choice
Section Two	Current SBM Practices – Composition of Advisory Council, Member Selection Process, By-Laws, Frequency of meetings, Importance of Advisory Council, and Shared decision-making processes,	Forced Choice Ranked Open-ended
Section Three	<p>Perceptions about SBM – Level of agreement with the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to developing school goals. 2. I have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to developing my school’s budget. 3. Principals are ultimately responsible for the progress of students in their buildings. 4. SBM requires principals to spend too much time on administrative tasks. 5. The Advisory Council at my school is an integral part of the development of our school’s improvement plan. 6. The Strategic Plan limits local autonomy with respect to the school improvement plans. 7. The shared decision making that is part of SBM allows principals to function as instructional leaders. 8. SBM contributes positively to improvements in student achievement. 9. SBM contributes to a climate with enhanced stakeholder satisfaction. <p>Strengths and challenges of SBM</p>	<p>Likert Scale Forced Choice</p> <p>Open-ended</p>

Validity and Reliability

The school district's Office of Program Evaluation developed the study survey with input from an SBM task force and principals. Content and construct validity of the SBM Principals' Survey was established through feedback discussions with a school district task force and through discussions with principals.

The instrument's survey scale had a reliability coefficient of .79, indicating that it is internally consistent. This was established using Cronbach's α , using the following formula:

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

N = the number of items in the scale

c = the average covariance between items

v = the average variance between items.

If the items are standardized to have a constant variance, the formula becomes:
r = the average correlation between items.

The larger the overall α coefficient, the more confident one can feel that the items contribute to a reliable scale or test. The coefficient can approach 1.0 if there are many highly correlated items.

Data Collection Methods

The school district administered electronically the survey to all principals in the school district and gave them three weeks to complete it. The introduction of the survey explained its importance and purpose. It included the assurance that names and schools

would not be reported or identified. Participants received an email with a link to the survey and a password to access it. The district sent a reminder to principals two weeks after the first email with the link to the survey. Since the survey was designed and administered by the Office of Program Evaluation, principals were given time during a monthly meeting to complete the survey, if needed. A return rate of 80% was necessary in order to validate the study.

Methods of Data Analysis

The investigator used the statistical package JMP to analyze data from the survey. To answer Research Questions One and Two, “What are principal perceptions of SBM?” and, “How are years of experience related to a principal’s perceptions and implementation of SBM?” the investigator used a five-item Likert scale. The scale ranged from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The items were as follows:

1. I have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to developing school goals.
2. I have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to developing my school’s budget.
3. Principals are ultimately responsible for the progress of students in their buildings.
4. SBM requires principals to spend too much time on administrative tasks.
5. The Advisory Council at my school is an integral part of the development of our school’s improvement plan.
6. The Strategic Plan limits local autonomy with respect to the school’s improvement plan.
7. The shared decision making that is part of SBM allows principals to function as instructional leaders.
8. SBM contributes positively to improvements in student achievement.
9. SBM contributes to a climate with enhanced stakeholder satisfaction.

Items four and six were reverse scored because they were negatively worded.

The investigator analyzed survey data according to principals' years of experience and level of school. Years of experience was defined in three categories, zero to three years, four to ten years and more than ten years. Analysis of the effect of years of experience in education was performed using one-way ANOVA with post hoc tests, as appropriate.

The investigator used the same five-item Likert scale for Research Question Three, "How is the school level of a principal related to his perceptions and implementation of SBM?" Level of school was defined as elementary, middle, or high. Five respondents who did not work in a regular school comprised the *other* level of principals. These principals were assigned to alternative schools, special education schools, or combined schools. The investigator performed analyses of the effect of principals' school level on their perceptions of SBM that included descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, Chi Square, and post hoc tests, as appropriate.

The investigator applied and analyzed descriptive statistics of mean, median, and mode for each of the independent variables years of experience and level of education and their effect on the dependent variables of perceptions and implementation of SBM. The investigator used analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare mean data and to test the statistical significance of differences on each variable and the statistical significance of the various interaction effects. As appropriate, the investigator analyzed the content of open-ended responses to determine principal perceptions of the strengths and challenges of SBM.

Summary

SBM has been a major component of school reform in American education, being implemented in nearly one-third of the nation's school districts between 1986 and 1990 (Holloway, 2000; Ogawa & White, 1994). This being said, SBM has received mixed reviews as a reform strategy. There are various ways to implement SBM due to its complex nature, and further study of this reform initiative is merited. It has been noted that the principal is key to its successful implementation and that it is the role of the principal that changes the most under SBM. This study of site-based management was based on principal practices and perceptions of SBM as provided on a principal survey.

This chapter described the methodology that was used to determine how a principal's years of experience with SBM and level of school relate to his implementation and perceptions of SBM, to identify the functions of the School Advisory Council and to identify the shared decision-making processes used under SBM. The study answered the research questions:

1. What are principal perceptions of SBM?
2. How are years of experience related to principal perceptions and implementation of SBM?
3. How is the school level of a principal related to his perceptions and implementation of SBM?

The investigator designed a descriptive research study, and a survey was developed and administered to a population of all principals in The Prince William County School District, Virginia, in its 19th year of implementation of SBM. The

investigator analyzed data using descriptive statistics, ANOVA and Chi Square with post hoc tests, as appropriate.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

Literature reveals that the position that undergoes the most significant changes under Site-Based Management (SBM) is that of school principal. The purpose of this descriptive study was to examine the current practices and principal perceptions of SBM in a school district after 19 years of implementation. The investigator studied the current practices as they pertain to SBM implementation and perceptions of principals, the key players involved. The survey included questions about various aspects of SBM, particularly the functions of the School Advisory Council and shared decision-making processes principals use at their schools. The survey also included open-ended questions about the strengths of SBM as well as challenges to its successful implementation. The investigator also examined the relationship between principals' years of experience with SBM and school level and their implementation and perceptions.

The chapter is organized according to the research questions posed in Chapter One. The research questions of this study were as follows:

1. What are principal perceptions of SBM?
2. How are years of experience related to principal perceptions and implementation of SBM?
3. How is the school level of a principal related to his perceptions and implementation of SBM?

At the time of the administration of the district-wide SBM survey to all principals in the school district, the total number of schools was 86, as follows: 55 elementary

schools, 15 middle schools, 10 high schools, and six special schools. Of the principals who responded to the survey, 9% were in their first year with SBM, 33% had one to three years of experience, 21% had four to five years of experience, 23% had six to ten years of experience, and 14% had over ten years of experience. See Figure 1.

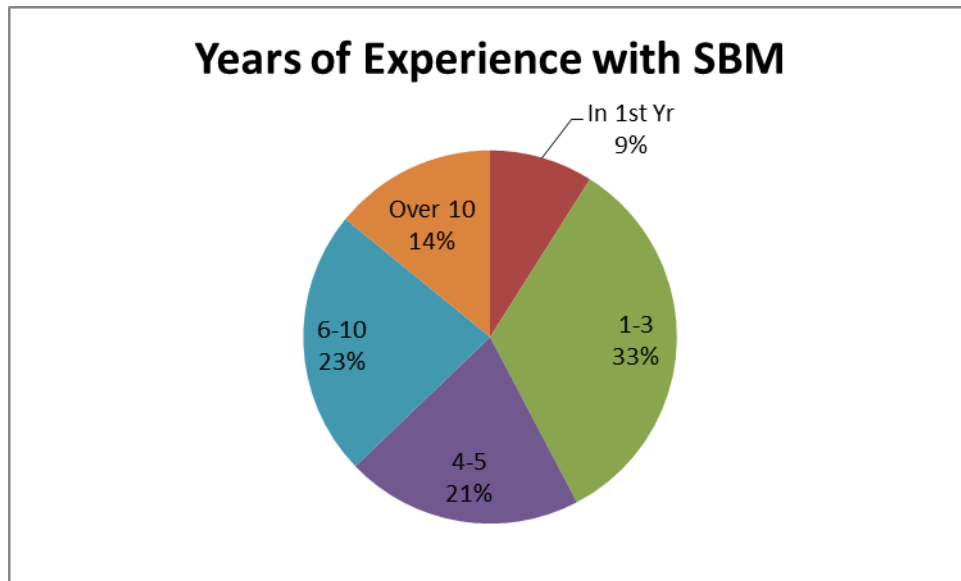


Figure 1. Principals' Years of Experience

Sixty-four percent of principals who responded were elementary principals, 19% were middle school principals, 9% were high school principals, 6% were principals of special schools, and 2% did not indicate their level (See Figure 2). The investigator surveyed all principals in The Prince William County School District, and a total of 78 principals responded to at least part of the survey, rendering a 91% response rate.

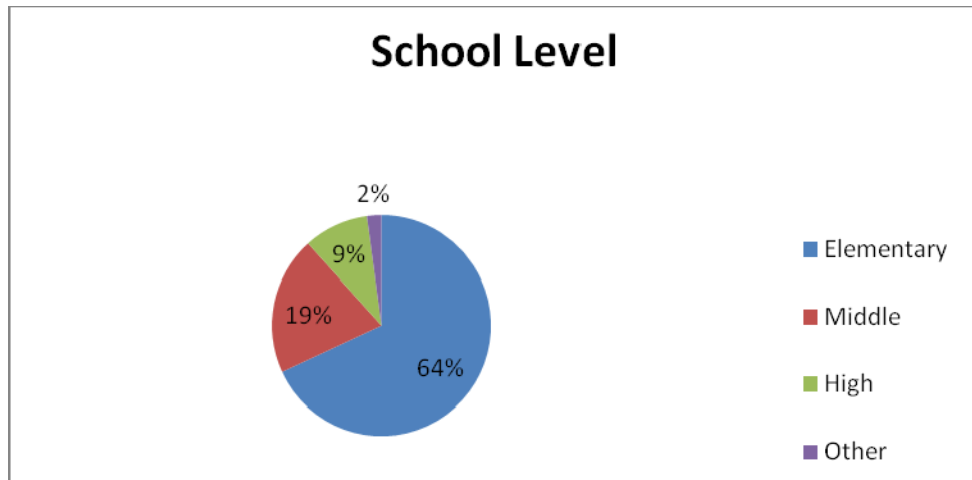


Figure 2. Principals' School Level

Research Question One

In order to determine principal perceptions, the investigator asked a series of questions about certain aspects and major components of SBM related to principal autonomy, the importance of the advisory council, principal work load, student achievement, and stakeholder satisfaction. The investigator used a five-item Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4); Agree (3); Not Sure (scored as 2.5); Disagree (2); and Strongly Disagree (1). The nine questions were as follows:

1. I have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to developing school goals.
2. I have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to developing my school's budget.
3. Principals are ultimately responsible for the progress of students in their buildings.
4. SBM requires principals to spend too much time on administrative tasks.
5. The Advisory Council at my school is an integral part of the development of our school's improvement plan.
6. The Strategic Plan limits local autonomy with respect to the school's improvement plan.
7. The shared decision making that is part of SBM allows principals to function as instructional leaders.

8. SBM contributes positively to improvements in student achievement.
9. SBM contributes to a climate with enhanced stakeholder satisfaction.

The investigator reverse scored questions four and six because they were negatively worded.

Overall, principal perceptions about SBM were positive. With the highest mean score of 3.58 on a four-point scale, 98% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that principals are ultimately responsible for the progress of students. Next, 83% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that SBM contributes to a climate with enhanced stakeholder satisfaction (mean score = 3.23), and 83% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that SBM contributes positively to improvements in student achievement (mean score = 3.22). Next, 88% of principals reported that the shared decision making that is part of SBM allows principals to function as instructional leaders (mean score = 3.10).

Roughly two-thirds (65%) of principals reported that they have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to developing school goals (mean score = 2.80), and 69% of principals reported that they have a great deal of autonomy developing their school's budget (mean score = 2.76). Not quite two-thirds (60%) of principals reported that the School Advisory Council is an integral part of the development of the school improvement plan (mean score = 2.62). One-third (32%) of principals felt that SBM requires principals to spend too much time on administrative tasks (mean score = 2.82). While 65% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that they have a great deal of autonomy in developing school goals, over a third of the principals (37%) agreed or strongly agreed that the school district's Strategic Plan limits local autonomy with respect to school improvement plans. This item resulted in a mean score of 2.62. Results of this portion of the survey are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Principals' Perceptions of SBM: Mean and SD

Item	Responses				Mean	SD
	Not Sure	D and SD	A and SA	Total		
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)		
1. I have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to developing school goals.	4 (8.0)	23 (32.4)	46 (64.8)	73 (100.0)	2.80	.80
2. I have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to developing my school's budget.	0 (0.0)	22 (31.0)	49 (69.0)	71 (100.0)	2.76	.77
3. Principals are ultimately responsible for the progress of students.	0 (0.0)	1 (1.4)	71 (98.6)	72 (100.0)	3.58	.58
4. SBM requires principals to spend too much time on administrative tasks.	3 (4.2)	46 (63.9)	23 (32.0)	72 (100.0)	2.82	.99
5. Advisory Council at my school is an integral part of the development of our school's improvement plan.	1 (1.4)	28 (38.9)	43 (59.7)	72 (100.0)	2.62	.82
6. The Strategic Plan limits local autonomy with respect to the school improvement plans.	4 (5.6)	41 (57.7)	26 (36.6)	71 (100.0)	2.62	.64
7. The shared decision making that is part of SBM allows principals to function as instructional leaders.	1 (1.4)	8 (11.2)	63 (87.5)	72 (100.0)	3.10	.76
8. SBM contributes positively to improvements in student achievement.	5 (6.9)	7 (9.7)	60 (83.3)	72 (100.0)	3.22	.71
9. SBM contributes to a climate with enhanced stakeholder satisfaction.	4 (5.6)	8 (11.1)	60 (83.3)	72 (100.0)	3.23	.75

Note: Means include Not Sure responses as 2.5 and are calculated from the following values: Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Strongly Agree = 4. Items 4 and 6 are scored in reverse.

Research Question Two

Perceptions of SBM by Years of Experience

The investigator used the same five-item Likert scale to determine how principals' years of experience with SBM are related to their perceptions. An analysis of the relationship of principals' years of experience with SBM to principal perceptions of SBM was performed using one-way ANOVA with post hoc tests, as appropriate.

Analysis of Variance results were significant $P(F) = .02$, indicating the need for a Tukey-Kramer post hoc test. See Table 5.

Table 5

ANOVA Results for Perceptions of SBM by Years of Experience

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Ratio	Prob (F)
Years	2	177.46	83.73	5.47	0.01
Error	75	1216.71	16.22		
Total	77	1394.17			

Means for One-way Anova

Level	Number	Mean	Std Error
0-3 years	33	25.27	0.70
4-10 years	16	26.59	1.01
10+ years	29	28.66	0.75

As indicated in Table 5, principals' number of years of experience with SBM relate positively to their perceptions of SBM. There was a significant difference ($P(F) = .01$) between the perceptions of principals with zero to three years of experience with SBM and the perceptions of principals with more than ten years of experience with SBM, indicating the need for additional analysis. The investigator performed a Tukey-Kramer post hoc test with results shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Tukey-Kramer Post Hoc Test Results: Perceptions of SBM by Years

Means Comparisons					
Level	-Level	Difference	Std Err Dif	p-Value	Mean
10+ years	0-3 years	3.38	1.03	0.00	28.66
10+ years	4-10 years	2.06	1.25	0.23	26.59
4-10 years	0-3 years	1.32	1.23	0.53	25.27

Results of the Tukey-Kramer post hoc test indicate that principals with more than ten years' of experience with SBM report significantly more positive perceptions of SBM than principals with zero to three years of experience. Principals with zero to three years of experience indicated a mean score of 25.27 from a range of 9 - 45, while those principals with more than ten years of experience scored a mean of 28.66. Although principals with four to ten years experience reported more positive perceptions than those with zero to three years experience, it was not significantly different from principals with zero to three years of experience.

Implementation of SBM by Years of Experience

For purposes of this study, implementation of SBM was limited to functions of the School Advisory Council and the shared decision-making processes used by schools. First, the survey presented principals with a list of six functions performed by school advisory councils according to SBM, and asked them to rank order the functions of their advisory council in terms of how much time the council spends on each function. They were asked to select each option only once. The functions were:

1. developing school plan to include objectives, strategies, and action plans;
2. aligning the school plan and action plans with the district's Strategic Plan;
3. aligning the school budget with the school plan;

4. reviewing the alignment of the school professional development plan with the school plan;
5. monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the plan; and
6. fulfilling other responsibilities deemed appropriate by the principal and school leadership.

Of the functions listed, principals reported that the School Advisory Council spends the most time dealing with the school plan. Almost one-third of principals (32.8% ranked the function of developing the school plan with objectives, strategies, and action plans as number one, indicating that their council spends the most time on this function. The second in priority (27%) was aligning the school plan with the district Strategic Plan. The third highest ranking was monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the school plan (21.6%), followed by aligning the school budget with the school plan and fulfilling other responsibilities deemed appropriate by the principal and school leadership. Finally, principals indicated that the advisory councils spend the least amount of time reviewing the alignment of the school professional development plan with the school plan. See Table 7.

Because there was a problem in gathering the data from this question, the data may not be reliable. Not all principals ranked all six functions, resulting in a minor distortion of the rankings. In addition, principals were instructed to rank the functions one for most frequent to six for least frequent. Although they were directed only to select each option (1-6) one time, not all of the principals followed this direction and they marked options more than once which resulted in distorted data.

Table 7
Mean Ranking of Advisory Council Functions

Function	1 st N %	2 nd N %	3 st N %	4 th N %	5 th N %	6 th N %	N	Mean Rank	SD
1. Developing the school plan to include objectives, strategies, and action plans	24 (32.8)	21 (28.8)	15 (20.5)	4 (5.4)	4 (5.4)	5 (6.8)	73	2.42	1.48
2. Aligning the school plan and action plans with the district's Strategic Plan	20 (27.0)	20 (27.0)	17 (22.9)	5 (6.8)	8 (10.8)	4 (5.4)	74	2.64	1.49
3. Aligning school budget with the school plan	15 (20.8)	17 (23.6)	17 (23.6)	11 (15.3)	6 (8.3)	6 (8.3)	72	2.92	1.53
4. Reviewing the alignment of school professional development plan with school plan	8 (10.8)	13 (17.6)	13 (17.6)	20 (27.0)	12 (16.2)	8 (10.8)	74	3.53	1.50
5. Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of plan	16 (21.6)	23 (31.1)	16 (21.6)	10 (13.5)	6 (8.3)	3 (4.1)	74	2.68	1.39
6. Fulfilling other responsibilities deemed appropriate by principal and school leadership	13 (17.8)	22 (30.1)	17 (23.3)	5 (6.8)	7 (9.6)	9 (12.3)	73	2.97	1.62

In order to determine how principals' years of experience with SBM were related to the functions of the School Advisory Council, the investigator performed an analysis of the effect of principals' years of experience with SBM on functions of the School

Advisory Council, using one-way ANOVA. Results were not significant, indicating that the years of experience were not related to the principals' implementation of advisory council functions See Table 8. There was no need for a Tukey-Kramer post hoc test.

Table 8

Ranking of School Advisory Council Functions by Years of Experience

Function	Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P(F)
1. Developing the school plan to include objectives, strategies and action plans	Experience	2	2.71	1.36	0.61	0.55
	Error	70	155.12	2.22		
	Total	72	157.83			
2. Aligning the school plan and action plans with the district's Strategic Plan	Experience	2	0.29	0.14	0.06	0.94
	Error	71	162.86	2.29		
	Total	73	163.15			
3. Aligning school budget with the school plan	Experience	2	0.96	0.48	0.20	0.82
	Error	69	164.53	2.38		
	Total	71	165.50			
4. Reviewing the alignment of school professional development plan with school plan	Experience	2	0.09	0.05	0.02	0.98
	Error	71	164.35	2.31		
	Total	73	164.45			
5. Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of plan	Experience	2	1.78	0.89	0.46	0.64
	Error	71	138.44	1.95		
	Total	73	140.22			
6. Fulfilling other responsibilities deemed appropriate by principal and school leadership	Experience	2	5.11	2.55	0.98	0.38
	Error	70	182.84	2.61		
	Total	72	187.95			

Shared Decision-Making Processes by Years of Experience

In order to determine the SBM shared decision-making processes used by the school, the survey asked principals to choose from a list of four shared decision-making processes: consensus, majority vote, weighted vote, and no vote. They were able to mark

all of the shared decision-making processes that they implemented at their school. The investigator used Chi Square with post hoc tests, as appropriate, in order to determine the relationship of principals' years of experience with SBM to the shared decision-making processes. In a Chi Square test of Association, when cell sizes are smaller than five, the statistic is inflated (Mantel & Fleiss, 1980). Therefore, the following analyses of the relationship between years of experience and shared decision-making processes should be considered with caution. Tables 9 through 12 indicate which processes principals reported using at their school.

Table 9

SBM Shared Decision-Making Process: Consensus by Years

Response	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years	Row Total
Yes	22	15	29	66
Total%	28.21	19.23	37.18	84.62
Column%	66.67	93.75	100.00	
Row%	33.33	22.73	43.94	
No	11	1	0	12
Total%	14.10	1.28	0.00	15.38
Column%	33.33	6.25	0.00	
Row%	91.67	8.33	0.00	
Column Total				
N	33	16	29	78
%	42.31	20.51	37.18	100.00

The investigator performed a Chi Square analysis to determine the relationship between the two variables. Results of analysis indicated that there was a significant relationship (Chi Square = 17.48, P= 0.00). As can be seen in Table 9, there was a significant relationship between principals' years of experience with SBM and the use of

consensus as a decision-making process. All principals, or 100%, with more than ten years of experience with SBM reported using consensus as a decision-making process at their school. Of the principals with zero to three years of SBM experience, 67% reported using consensus as a decision-making process. Of the principals with four to ten years of SBM experience, 94% reported using consensus as a decision-making process. Principals with more than ten years of experience with SBM reported a significantly higher use of consensus as a decision-making process than principals with zero to three years of experience. Although not significant, principals with four to ten years experience reported a higher use of consensus than principals with zero to three years experience.

Table 10

SBM Shared Decision-Making Process: Majority Vote by Years

Responses	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years	Row Total
Yes	11	5	8	24
Total%	14.10	6.41	10.26	30.77
Column%	33.33	31.25	27.59	
Row%	45.83	20.83	33.33	
No	22	11	21	54
Total%	28.21	14.10	26.92	69.23
Column%	66.67	68.75	72.41	
Row%	40.74	20.37	38.89	
Column Total				
N	33	16	29	78
%	42.31	20.51	37.18	100

The investigator performed a Chi Square analysis to determine the relationship between the use of majority vote and years of experience. Results of the analysis were not significant (Chi Square = .24, P= 0.89). As illustrated in Table 10, there was no

significant relationship between principals' years of experience with SBM and their use of majority vote as a shared decision-making process. Approximately one-third of principals reported using majority vote across all SBM experience categories.

Table 11

SBM Shared Decision-Making Process: Weighted Vote by Years

Response	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years	Row Total
Yes	3	2	6	11
Total%	3.85	2.56	7.69	14.10
Column%	9.09	12.50	20.69	
Row%	27.27	18.18	54.55	
No	30	14	23	67
Total%	38.46	17.95	29.49	85.9
Column%	90.91	87.50	79.31	
Row%	44.78	20.90	34.33	
Column Total				
N	33	16	29	78
%	42.31	20.51	37.18	100.00

The investigator performed a Chi Square analysis to determine the relationship between the two variables of weighted vote and years of experience. Results of analysis indicated that there was not a significant relationship between the two (Chi Square = 1.73, P= 0.42). As shown in Table 11, there was a tendency for principals with more SBM experience to use weighted vote as a shared decision-making process than those with less experience, but the difference was not statistically significant.

Table 12

SBM Shared Decision-Making Process: No Vote by Years

Response	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years	Row Total
Yes	3	0	2	5
Total%	3.85	0.00	2.56	6.41
Column%	9.09	0.00	6.90	
Row%	60.00	0.00	40.00	
No	30	16	27	73
Total%	38.46	20.51	34.62	93.59
Column%	90.91	100.00	93.10	
Row%	41.10	21.92	36.99	
Column Total				
N	33	16	29	78
%	42.31	20.51	37.18	100.00

The investigator performed a Chi Square analysis to determine the relationship between the principals' years of experience and their use of no vote as a shared decision-making process. Results of analysis in Table 12 indicated that there was no significant relationship between the two (Chi Square =2.48, P= 0.29). Although not significant, almost 94% of principals responded that they did not use a vote, indicating that they used one of the other three decision-making processes at their school. Only five principals indicated that they used no vote as a decision-making process at their school.

Research Question Three

Perceptions of SBM by School Level

In order to determine how the school level of principals was related to principal perceptions of SBM, the investigator conducted an analysis of the effect of the school level of principals on perceptions using a one-way ANOVA. See Table 13.

Table 13

ANOVA Results for Perceptions of SBM by School Level

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Ratio	P(F)
Level	3	47.04	15.68	0.86	0.47
Error	73	1328.39	18.20		
C. Total	76	1375.43			

Means for Oneway Anova					
Level	Number	Mean	Std Error	Lower 95%	Upper 95%
Elementary	50	26.81	0.60	25.61	28.01
Middle	15	26.27	1.10	24.10	28.46
High	7	26.43	1.61	23.22	29.64
Other	5	29.70	1.91	25.90	33.50

As shown in Table 13, there was no significant relationship between the school level of principals and principals' perceptions of SBM.

Implementation of SBM by School Level

To determine how school level was related to principals' implementation of SBM, the investigator performed an analysis of functions of the School Advisory Council using one-way ANOVA with post hoc tests as appropriate. See Table 14. In addition, an analysis of shared decision-making processes used by school level was performed using a Chi Square, as shown in Tables 16-19.

Table 14

Ranking of School Advisory Council Functions by School Level

Function	Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P (F)
1. Developing the school plan to include objectives, strategies and action plans	Level	3	9.04	3.02	1.38	0.26
	Error	68	148.45	2.18		
	Total	71	157.50			
2. Aligning the school plan and action plans with the district's Strategic Plan	Level	3	1.80	0.60	0.26	0.86
	Error	69	161.21	2.34		
	Total	72	163.01			
3. Aligning school budget with the school plan	Level	3	18.71	6.24	2.85	0.04
	Error	67	146.78	2.19		
	Total	70	165.49			
4. Reviewing the alignment of school professional development plan with school plan	Level	3	3.62	1.21	0.52	0.67
	Error	69	160.60	2.33		
	Total	72	164.22			
5. Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of plan	Level	3	10.43	3.48	1.87	0.14
	Error	69	128.01	1.86		
	Total	72	138.44			
6. Fulfilling other responsibilities deemed appropriate by principal and school leadership	Level	3	2.06	0.69	0.25	0.86
	Error	68	184.93	2.72		
	Total	71	186.99			

Analysis of variance results were significant ($P(F) = .04$) for item three, aligning the school budget with the school plan, indicating the need for a post hoc test on this item. Post hoc using Tukey-Kramer did not identify pairs that were significantly different.

Table 15

Group Means for Aligning Budget with School Plan by School Level

Level	Mean
Middle	3.80
Elementary	2.77
High	2.60
Other	1.75

Table 15 indicates the mean score rankings of principals at each level on the response of aligning the budget with the school plan. Middle school principals ranked aligning the budget with the school plan higher than principals at other levels, but the difference in the mean scores is not significant. With a mean score of 3.80, middle school principals rated aligning their school budget with their school plan higher than elementary principals (mean score of 2.77), high school principals (mean score of 2.60) and principals of other schools (mean score of 1.65).

Shared Decision-Making Processes by School Level

To determine the relationship of the school level of the principal to the shared decision-making processes the principal uses, the investigator performed analyses of the relationship of the school level to shared decision-making processes using Chi Square with post hoc tests as appropriate. In a Chi Square test of Association, when cell sizes are smaller than five, the statistic is inflated (Mantel & Fleiss, 1980). Therefore, the following analyses of the relationship between the school level of the principal and shared decision-making processes should be considered with caution. Tables 16 through 19 indicate which processes principals reported using at their school by level.

Table 16

Shared Decision-Making Process: Consensus by School Level

Response	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	Row Total
Yes	42	14	5	5	66
Total %	54.55	18.18	6.49	6.49	85.71
Col %	84.00	93.33	71.43	100.00	
Row %	63.64	21.21	7.58	7.58	
No	8	1	2	0	11
Total %	10.39	1.30	2.60	0.00	14.29
Col %	16.00	6.67	28.57	0.00	
Row %	72.73	9.09	18.18	0.00	
Column Total	50	15	7	5	77
N	64.94	19.48	9.09	6.49	100.00
%					

The investigator performed a Chi Square analysis to determine the relationship between the two variables of the principals' school level and their use of consensus as a shared decision-making process. As shown in Table 16, results of analysis indicated there was no significant relationship between the school level of the principal and the use of consensus as a decision-making process (Chi Square = 3.47, P= 0.33). Most principals (85.71%), regardless of school level, used consensus as a decision-making process.

Table 17

Shared Decision-Making Process: Majority Vote by School Level

Response	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	Row Total
Yes	17	3	3	0	23
Total %	22.08	3.90	3.90	0.00	29.87
Col %	34.00	20.00	42.86	0.00	
Row %	73.91	13.04	13.04	0.00	
No	33	12	4	5	54
Total %	42.86	15.58	5.19	6.49	70.13
Col %	66.00	80.00	57.14	100.00	
Row %	61.11	22.22	7.41	9.26	
Column Total					
N	50	15	7	5	77
%	64.94	19.48	9.09	6.49	100.00

The investigator performed a Chi Square analysis to determine the relationship between the two variables of the principals' school level and their use of majority vote as a shared decision-making process. As shown in Table 17, results of analysis indicated there was no significant relationship between the school level of the principal and the use of majority vote as a decision-making process (Chi Square = 5.23, P= 0.16). Nearly one-third (29.87%) of principals used majority vote as a decision-making process.

Table 18

Shared Decision-Making Process: Weighted Vote by School Level

Response	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	Row Total
Yes	9	2	0	0	11
Total %	11.69	2.60	0.00	0.00	14.29
Col %	18.00	13.33	0.00	0.00	
Row %	81.82	18.18	0.00	0.00	
No	41	13	7	5	66
Total %	53.25	16.88	9.09	6.49	85.71
Col %	82.00	86.67	100.00	100.00	
Row %	62.12	19.70	10.61	7.58	
Column Total					
N	50	15	7	5	77
%	64.94	19.48	9.09	6.49	100.00

The investigator performed a Chi Square analysis to determine the relationship between the two variables of the principals' school level and their use of weighted vote as a shared decision-making process. As shown in Table 18, results of analysis indicated there was no significant relationship between the school level of the principal and the use of weighted vote as a decision-making process (Chi Square = 4.24, P = 0.24). The majority of principals (85.71%) did not use weighted vote as a decision-making process at their school. Of those who did use weighted vote, 18% were elementary level principals and 13% were middle level principals. High school principals and principals of other schools did not use weighted vote as a shared decision-making process.

Table 19

Shared Decision-Making Process: No Vote by School Level

Response	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	Row Total
Yes	3	1	1	0	5
Total %	3.90	1.30	1.30	0.00	6.49
Col %	6.00	6.67	14.29	0.00	
Row %	60.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	
No	47	14	6	5	72
Total %	61.04	18.18	7.79	6.49	93.51
Col %	94.00	93.33	85.71	100.00	
Row %	65.28	19.44	8.33		
Column Total					
N	50	15	7	5	77
%	64.94	19.48	9.09	6.49	100.00

The investigator performed a Chi Square analysis to determine the relationship between the two variables of the principals' school level and their use of no vote as a shared decision-making process. As shown in Table 19, results of analysis indicated there was no significant relationship between the school level of the principal and the principal's use of no vote as a decision-making process (Chi Square – 1.23, P = 0.75). Only five principals across all levels used no vote as a decision-making process. To synthesize data from Tables 9-12 and 16-19, the form of shared decision making most used by principals was consensus, followed by majority vote and weighted vote. There was no significant relationship between the school level of the principal and the form of decision-making process used at the school.

Strengths and Challenges of SBM

The final section of the principal survey contained open-ended questions about the strengths and challenges of SBM. The survey asked principals what they thought

were the biggest strengths of SBM and what they thought were the biggest challenges to the successful implementation of SBM. The investigator performed a content analysis for both open-ended questions and identified themes from principal responses. The investigator based percentages on the total number of respondents to this section, which were 78.

Themes for the biggest strengths of SBM were identified as follows:

- Autonomy/flexibility/latitude in making instructional decisions n=51, (65%)
- Flexibility with budget n=10, (13)
- Building teacher leadership and relationships with staff n=5, (8%)
- Shared decision-making n=5, (6%)
- Ability to select staff =3, (4%)

Themes for the biggest challenges to the successful implementation of SBM were identified as follows:

- Budgeting issues, including formulas, staffing constraints, lack of understanding of the process n=26, (33%)
- Requires too much time away from instructional focus n=15, (9%)
- Need for ongoing training for councils, staff n=11, (14%)
- Dealing with mandates/directives from central office n=8, (10%)
- Lack of clearly defined parameters n=4, (5%)
- Appropriately using parents and council members in shared decision-making n=4, (5%)
- Not enough administrators at the school n=3, (4%)

Summary

This chapter reported the findings of the study based on data gathered from a district-wide survey on SBM, administered to all principals. Response rate was 91%. Analysis of the survey data was performed using descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, Chi Square, and post hoc tests, as appropriate. Interpretation of the data and conclusions regarding the findings and recommendations for further study are discussed in Chapter Five.

In response to research question one, overall, principals reported positive perceptions of SBM. With a mean score of 3.58 on a four-point scale, 98% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that principals are ultimately responsible for the progress of students. Next, 83% of principals indicated strong agreement or agreement, with the statement that SBM contributes positively to improvements in student achievement (mean score of 3.22), and that SBM contributes to a climate with enhanced stakeholder satisfaction (mean score of 3.23). One-third of principals indicated that SBM required principals to spend too much time on administrative tasks (mean score of 2.82).

Results of the analysis of the relationship of principals' years of experience to their perceptions of SBM were significant ($P(F) = 0.02$), indicating that the number of principals' years of experience relates positively to their perceptions of SBM. A Tukey-Kramer post hoc test indicated that principals with more than ten years of experience with SBM had more positive perceptions of SBM with a mean score of 29.77 (range of 9 – 45) than principals with zero to three years of experience with SBM, with a mean score of 25.02.

Implementation of SBM was limited to functions of the School Advisory Council and the shared decision-making processes used by the school. Principals reported that, of the functions listed, advisory councils spend the most time developing the school plan. Second was aligning the school plan with the district Strategic Plan and third in priority was monitoring and evaluating implementation of the school plan. Principals reported that advisory councils spend the least amount of time reviewing alignment of the school professional development plan with the school plan.

Results of analysis of the effect of principals' years of experience with SBM indicated that principals' years of experience with SBM were not significantly related to their implementation of advisory council functions. Results of analysis of the effect of principals' years of experience with SBM on the shared decision-making processes used by the school indicated that there was a significant relationship between their years of experience with SBM and the use of consensus as a decision-making process. Principals with more than ten years of experience with SBM reported a significantly higher use of consensus than principals with zero to three years of experience with SBM. There was no significant relationship between years of experience and a principal's use of majority vote, weighted vote, and no vote as shared decision-making processes.

Analysis of the effect of the school level of principals on principals' perceptions of SBM indicated that there was no significant relationship between the school level of the principals and the principals' perceptions of SBM. Results of analysis of the school level of principals and the functions of the advisory council did not indicate a significant relationship between the school level of the principal and the advisory council function of aligning the school budget with the school plan. Middle level principals, however, rated

aligning the budget with their school plan slightly higher than principals at the other levels.

Analysis of the effect of the school level of principals on principals' use of the shared decision-making processes of consensus, majority vote, weighted voting, and no vote did not indicate a significant relationship between the two.

Themes from content analysis of open-ended questions about the strengths of SBM were autonomy in making instructional decisions; flexibility with budget; building teacher leaders and relationships with staff; shared decision making; and ability to select staff. Themes from the biggest challenges to the successful implementation of SBM were budget issues; too much time away from instructional focus; need for ongoing training; and dealing with mandates from central office.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study and important conclusions drawn from the data presented in chapter four. In addition to the summary, Chapter Five discusses major findings organized by research question with a discussion of the findings as they relate to the literature. Chapter Five also includes implications for practice, recommendations for further research, and concluding remarks.

Summary of the Study

Site-Based Management (SBM), a decentralized system of managing schools, was implemented in nearly one-third of the nation's school districts between 1986 and 1990 (Holloway, 2000). Most models of SBM involve the delegation of authority to individual schools to make decisions pertaining to the educational program; the adoption of a shared decision-making model at the school level; and the expectation that SBM will facilitate leadership at the school level (Reynolds, 1997). The school district in this study implemented SBM in 1991. During the ensuing years, there has not been a comprehensive study of its implementation. With the accountability of *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* legislation, new leadership asked the questions, "What is the status of SBM after 19 years?" and "What are the principals' perceptions and current practices of SBM, particularly related to the School Advisory Council and their shared decision-making processes?"

The purpose of the study was twofold: to identify principal perceptions and degree of SBM implementation, particularly the functions of the School Advisory

Council and shared decision-making processes and to determine how a principal's years of experience and school level are related to their perceptions and implementation of SBM.

The research questions of the study were as follows:

1. What are principal perceptions of SBM?
2. How are years of experience related to a principal's perceptions and implementation of SBM?
3. How is the school level of a principal related to his perceptions and implementation of SBM?

The investigator used a descriptive research design in this study. Principals completed a district-wide survey on their perceptions and implementation of current practices of SBM. The survey rendered a 91% completion rate, with 78 of 86 principals responding to at least part of the questions presented. The survey asked principals to identify various SBM behaviors they use and the extent to which they use them. The survey also asked principals their perceptions of various components of SBM.

District leadership administered the survey to principals with the purpose of identifying their perceptions of SBM, the SBM elements they were implementing, and the degree to which they were implementing them. While the survey included questions about several aspects of implementation, for purposes of the study, implementation aspects, or behaviors, were limited to functions of the School Advisory Council and the shared decision-making processes used by the principals with their School Advisory Council. The investigator analyzed quantitative data from the survey using descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and Chi Square with post hoc tests as appropriate.

Major Findings

Overall, principal perceptions of SBM were positive. Two-thirds of the principals reported a great deal of autonomy in developing their school plan 65% with a mean score of 2.80 on a four-point scale, with four being “strongly agree,” and a great deal of autonomy in developing their school budget 69% with a mean score of 2.76. Not quite two-thirds of the principals 60% reported that the School Advisory Council was an integral part of the development of the school plan. The mean score for this item was 2.62.

Eighty-three percent 83% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that SBM contributed positively to improvements in student achievement mean score of 3.22. Eighty-three 83% also agreed or strongly agreed that SBM contributed to a climate with enhanced stakeholder satisfaction mean score of 3.23. With a mean score of 3.10, 88% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that the shared decision making that is part of SBM allowed principals to function as instructional leaders.

Several of the positive perceptions of SBM that were identified in this study were congruent with the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Primary schools’ principals in Queensland, Australia, indicated increased job satisfaction from the change to SBM (Cranston, 2000). Principals reported that they prefer this model of management to the previous, central-based model of management and that they were able to accomplish far more under a SBM model than they were able to accomplish previously.

Although overall principal perceptions were positive, one-third 32% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that SBM required principals to spend too much time on

administrative tasks. The mean score on this item was 2.82. These data agree with the findings of other researchers: Daresh (1998), found that SBM brought expectations for improved student achievement, yet principals were required to manage budgets and other managerial tasks; Gurr (1996), who found that principals were less *hands-on* due to management issues; and Portin (1998), who found that principals felt thwarted from work they felt was important—instructional leadership.

Principal responses from the survey indicated that their years of experience did relate to their perceptions of SBM. Principals with more than ten years of SBM experience reported significantly more positive perceptions of SBM than principals with zero to three years of experience. Principals with zero to three years of experience with SBM scored a mean of 25.27 (range of 9 – 45), while principals with more than ten years experience with SBM scored a mean of 28.66. While the literature reviewed for this study did not indicate or differentiate the number of years of experience of the principals implementing SBM, it did report that principals in a system of SBM reported satisfaction with the change to SBM (Cranston, 1998). The issue of years of experience of the principal will be discussed in recommendations for further research.

Results of principals' rank ordering various functions of their School Advisory Councils indicated that of six SBM functions, councils spent the most time developing their school plan, aligning it with the district Strategic Plan, and monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the school plan. Next in priority were the functions of aligning the school plan with the school budget, fulfilling other responsibilities, and reviewing the alignment of the school plan with the school professional development

plan. Principals' years of experience with SBM were not significantly related to their implementation of the functions of the School Advisory Council.

To determine the second factor of implementation of SBM, the survey asked principals to choose which shared decision-making processes they used from a list of four: consensus, majority vote, weighted vote, and no vote. There was a significant relationship between the principals' years of experience with SBM and the use of consensus as a shared decision-making process. Principals with more than ten years of experience with SBM reported a significantly higher use of consensus than principals with zero to three years experience with SBM. Of the principals with more than ten years of experience with SBM, 100% reported they used consensus as a decision-making process. Of the principals with zero to three years experience with SBM, 67% indicated they used consensus as a decision-making process. In the literature reviewed for this study, the various types of shared decision-making processes used by principals in SBM were not a topic of study. However, consensus building is one of the time-consuming collaborative practices used by many principals in SBM, and it is often included in professional development as an interpersonal skill for principals. It is an effective method for decision making as it allows for input from all members of a group and it results in a high level of commitment and support from all members. Results on this portion of the study support the need for training in consensus as a shared decision-making process.

This study indicated that principals' years of experience with SBM were not significantly related to their use of majority vote, weighted vote, and no vote as shared decision-making processes.

The school level of the principal was not related to principal perceptions of SBM. There was no significant relationship between the school level of a principal and implementing the functions of the School Advisory Council. While middle school principals rated aligning the school budget with the school plan higher than principals of elementary schools, high schools and other schools, the relationship was not found to be significant.

There was no significant relationship found between the school level of the principal and the principal's use of a particular decision-making process. Principals used, in priority order, consensus, majority vote, weighted vote and no vote regardless of their school level. Shared decision making is a strong component of SBM. Although Beck and Murphy (1998) concluded that SBM "is a fairly weak intervention in our arsenal of school reform measures" (p.178), if its goal is to have a direct and positive impact on student learning outcomes, they were not willing to dismiss SBM as a useful decision-making structure.

When asked to list the strengths of SBM, 65% of the principals indicated autonomy, flexibility, and latitude in making instructional decisions and 13% indicated flexibility with the budget. Other responses were building teacher leadership and relationships with staff 8%, shared decision-making 6% and ability to select staff 4%. These responses align with three essential components of SBM as noted by Reynolds (1997): a) the delegation of the authority to individual schools to make decisions about the educational program of the school including staffing, budget, and program; b) the adoption of a shared decision-making model at the school level by a management team that includes the principal, teachers, parents, community members and students when

appropriate; and c) the expectation that SBM will facilitate leadership at the school level in school improvement efforts.

The SBM strengths of autonomy, flexibility, and latitude in making instructional decisions and flexibility with the budget were in agreement with principals' perceptions noted in other studies that the investigator reviewed. In the study of Schools of the Future in Victoria, Australia, more than 80% of principals gave ratings of three or more on a five-point scale on items such as better resource management, clearer sense of direction, increased accountability and responsibility, greater financial and administrative flexibility, and improved long-term planning (Caldwell, 1998).

The top challenges to the successful implementation of SBM, as reported by the principals in the study, were budget issues, including formulas, staffing constraints, and lack of understanding of the process; the requirement of too much time away from instructional focus; and the need for ongoing training for councils and staff.

Principals in the literature reviewed for this study did not indicate difficulty with budget as a problem or major challenge in the implementation of SBM. The problem of not enough time in general to complete tasks and time away from the instructional focus was mentioned in several of the studies and was a major issue with most principals under SBM. This is noted in studies by Cranston (2000), Daresh (1998), Portin (1998), and Caldwell (1998), in which principals reported that they did not have enough time to complete all their responsibilities and that additional managerial tasks took time away from instructional leadership.

The need for training was identified in several studies, including that of Tanner and Stone (1998), who reported that principals indicated the need to obtain group process and interpersonal skills.

Implications for Practice

SBM has been a major educational reform since 1990, not only in school districts in the United States, but in school districts throughout the world. It has withstood the test of time as well as the standards movement. Research on SBM is plentiful. While research has not indicated definitively that SBM results in improved student achievement, it has remained a significant educational reform. The intent of this study was to identify principals' perceptions and implementation behaviors of SBM after 19 years of implementation. Principals reported positive perceptions of SBM, and as they added years of experience with SBM their perceptions improved. They reported that the functions of School Advisory Councils were, for the most part, the development, monitoring and evaluation of the school plan, and that their preferred shared decision-making process was consensus. The study revealed no significant relationship between the school level of principals and their perceptions and implementation of SBM.

In the study, 65% of the principals considered the autonomy, flexibility, and latitude they have in making instructional decisions as one of the biggest strengths of SBM. Flexibility with the budget ranked second highest, with 13% of principals indicating it as a strength. To the contrary, 33% of principals indicated that budget issues, including formulas, staffing constraints, and lack of understanding of the process were a major challenge to the successful implementation of SBM. The implication here is clear: Principals need training in developing the school budget. This should involve training in

the budget process and the budget formulas in use by the district. Training should be ongoing, not a onetime event. With 33% of principals identifying this as an area for growth, this should not be ignored.

Training in various aspects of SBM is a need as the district continues with its implementation of SBM. Acquisition and use of interpersonal skills are critical to the success of principals in SBM, and as the primary budget holder, principals must be skilled in managing the budget for their school.

The overall implication one can draw from the results of this study is that from the principals' viewpoint, SBM in The Prince William County School District is functioning well for the most part. After 19 years, principals are still engaging the School Advisory Council with developing, monitoring, and evaluating the school plan. They are using consensus as their preferred shared decision-making process. With the more experienced principals indicating significantly more positive perceptions of SBM and more use of consensus, there is an opportunity for shared leadership and empowerment of principals as leaders.

The school district has the opportunity to pair more experienced principals with less experienced principals, allowing the more experienced principals to mentor and assist those with less experience. Such principal groups could study practices that are challenges to the successful implementation of SBM such as time management, budget preparation, interpersonal skills, and the instructional leadership role of the principal. This structure would respond to the recommendation of more training for the principals, and it would have the potential to be a positive situation for all.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study examined principal perceptions and implementation of SBM. The implementation of SBM was defined by School Advisory Council functions and the shared decision-making processes used at the school level. While the study is a valid look at certain components of SBM from the principals' viewpoint, it is limited. There is additional research to be done on this decentralized system of managing schools, especially when one considers its significance as an educational reform.

Although principals in this study indicated that SBM contributed positively to improvements in student achievement, whether or not SBM can be tied directly to improved student achievement is yet to be proven. Existing research is not conclusive on this point. In light of the few studies that report that SBM results in improved student achievement, further research on the instructional leadership practices of the principal under SBM would be valuable. It is an interesting note that while much of the research does not directly tie improved student achievement to the implementation of SBM, this decentralized system of management has persisted over time in an educational climate of increased standards and accountability for schools and school districts.

In another finding, principals indicated that the need for training was a challenge to the successful implementation of SBM. The investigator recommends a study of the professional development programs that school districts offer in order to successfully implement SBM. Study questions should include: Is the professional development ongoing and differentiated? Is it required or self-selected? Is it district-wide or school-based? Is it provided by practitioners or consultants? Of what does it consist? Who are

the participants? What are the results of such professional development programs? Which programs are most effective? How do school districts evaluate them?

The present study focused on two major behaviors of SBM, the School Advisory Council functions and shared decision-making processes. The majority of principals reported that the majority of work of the School Advisory Council focused on developing, monitoring, and evaluating the school plan. The majority of principals reported that they used consensus as a shared decision-making process. The investigator recommends a more in-depth study of school-based structures that are in place to make shared decisions. Research questions might include: What structures are in place at the school level for shared decision making? What types of decisions does the School Advisory Council make and what decisions do other school leadership teams and committees that are separate from the School Advisory Council make? What are the results? How does this affect stakeholder satisfaction and the success of SBM?

Still another area for further study is the conflict between managerial responsibilities and instructional leadership. Principals under SBM agree that management tasks required of them as a result of SBM take time away from their instructional leadership role. Such a study might address the following questions: How does a successful principal balance the two roles? What does this look like? Which management roles should be delegated and which instructional leadership roles should be shared? A well-developed case study of the principalship could inform the literature on SBM best practices.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of the study was the size of the population involved in the study. The study was limited to one school district. The total number of principals in the school district was 86, and 78 principals responded to the survey, rendering a 91% response rate. While the sample was large enough to draw conclusions, it was not large enough to generalize to the larger population.

Another limitation of the study was that it was based on only principal input. Principals self reported their perceptions and their implementation of SBM. For the perceptions portion of the study that was acceptable, but the portion on implementation of SBM could have included a survey to teachers and parents. Asking teachers and parents about the functions of the School Advisory Council and their shared decision-making processes would have added another dimension to the study.

Concluding Remarks

As an educator who has worked with SBM for over 20 years, I have developed my own perceptions and beliefs of SBM, which made the study a labor of love. For the investigator, the study was a result of a career spent implementing SBM. It was also the result of a school district's decision to look itself in the mirror and ask, after all this time, are we still implementing SBM with fidelity? Looking at the findings, one could reply, "yes." According to principals, key players in its implementation, SBM is being implemented as it was intended, with principals having the autonomy, authority, and responsibility for what goes on in their schools. Principals report that stakeholders, through participation on the School Advisory Council, are involved in the important functions of developing, monitoring, and evaluating the school plan and aligning it with

the school budget. For the most part, principals use consensus, an effective shared decision-making process. Principals report that SBM contributes to enhanced stakeholder satisfaction and contributes positively to improvements in student achievement, both of which were the goals of SBM when it was first implemented in 1990. Regardless of their years of experience with SBM and their school level, principals report positive perceptions of SBM and strong implementation of SBM through School Advisory Council functions and the shared decision-making processes used in their schools.

Even though the school plan must be aligned with the district Strategic Plan and must respond to *NCLB* test data, principals still manage to involve the School Advisory Council in the process of developing the school plan with its goals and objectives. This shows a genuine commitment to SBM and the shared decision making that is vital to its success.

One thing I learned from this study is that even with the additional stress of accountability from external assessments, principals maintain positive perceptions about SBM. I have learned that the longer a principal works in a system of SBM, the more they like it – despite the additional work it brings. The trade offs for the additional work and time constraints inherent in SBM are the accountability, autonomy and responsibility that come with SBM. Principals thrive in a culture of accountability, autonomy and responsibility, and their belief that SBM contributes to improved student achievement and an enhanced school culture fuels their actions. They may not start out with all the leadership skills they need, but along the way they improve and their positive perceptions of SBM increase. Principals whose leadership style is not collaborative find ways to share their decision-making with stakeholders. Principals who struggle to accomplish all that is

expected of them under SBM find a way to accomplish what they must, and they sing its praises and would not want to return to pre-SBM practices. Principals who have difficulties understanding a budget do not want to give that responsibility back to a central office department. They are resilient and willing to change and to learn new things.

In a system of SBM, principals step up to the plate every day. They withstand the pressures that come with their position. They own the accountability, autonomy, and responsibility that are inherent in their leadership position in SBM, especially in today's culture of standards and measurements.

I have learned and come to believe, as a result of this study, that as the demands of the *No Child Left Behind* legislation continue to increase, maintaining the school-based accountability, autonomy and responsibility inherent in SBM is imperative. With the overall positive perceptions and high level of implementation of SBM reported by principals in this study and the continued support and nurturing of school district leadership, the school district can, with confidence, continue with its implementation of SBM and attain the goals set for it in 1990.

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1. Introduction

As part of the commitment to providing a World-Class Education, the School Board and Superintendent have made studying Site-Based Management (SBM) a priority.

To that end, the Superintendent has established a SBM Task Force. The purpose of this Task Force is to study the current state of SBM in PWCS, to develop a SBM manual and supporting regulations, as well as to begin developing training modules for principals and others involved with SBM.

The goal is to clarify and better define the roles and responsibilities in SBM to improve implementation of SBM in PWCS.

As a result, the SBM Task Force is interested in gathering feedback from principals. Information gathered from this survey will be used in conjunction with other data, including the spring 2006 SBM survey administered to teachers, as the Task Force works to develop the manuals and training modules.

You are not asked in this survey to identify your name or your school. The background questions on the next page are there to allow the Task Force to understand the possibly different responses of newer and more veteran principals, for example. The purpose is not to report out on what individuals are doing.

Please take about 15 minutes to complete this survey. Your feedback is extremely important. Surveys should be completed by Thursday, October 2, 2008.

If you have questions or concerns about the content of the survey, or if you experience trouble with the survey, please contact Jennifer Cassata at 703.791.7277 or cassatjc@pwcs.edu.

Click on "Next" below to get started with the survey.

2. Background

These background questions are designed to find out about principals' backgrounds, including the training they have received.

1. How long have you been a principal in PWCS?

This is my first year

1-3 years

4-5 years

6-10 years

Over 10 years

2. Were you hired new to PWCS as a principal?

Yes

No

3. Please select the level of your school.

Elementary School

Middle School

High School

Other (Alternative, Combined, Special Schools)

4. Have you ever opened a new school as principal?

Yes

No

5. When have you most recently taken any SBM training (including courses, workshops, modules, etc.)?

I have never attended SBM training

Within the past year

Within the 2-3 years

Within the 4-5 years

Within the past 6-10 years

More than 10 years ago

Please list the training you have attended and when attended it.

3. Current SBM Practices

The next set of questions asks you about how SBM is implemented at your school. Your responses here will provide information about how SBM is currently working in PWCS, where there is consistency and where there is a great deal of variation. This insight will help in the development of a SBM manual and supporting regulations.

1. Which groups of people are currently represented on your Advisory Council?
(Please mark all that apply.)

	Included on Advisory Council	Number on Advisory Council
a. Parents	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
b. Teachers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
c. Classified Staff	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
d. Administrators other than principal	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
e. Students	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
f. Community members/business partners	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Comments/explanation of responses.

2. Which of the following decision-making processes are used by your Advisory Council? (Please mark all that apply.)

- Consensus
- Majority Vote
- Weighted Vote
- No Vote

Other/explanation:

3. How are teachers selected for the Advisory Council? (Please mark all that apply.)

- Principal selects teachers
- Department chairs/lead teachers select teachers
- Teachers volunteer
- Parents recommend teachers

Other (please specify)

4. How are parents selected for the Advisory Council? (Please mark all that apply.)

- Principal selects parents
- PTA/PTO selects parents
- Teachers recommend parents
- Parents volunteer
- Division leadership (Superintendent's Staff) recommends parents
- School Board members recommend parents

Other (please specify)

5. Which of the following processes are described/detailed in your school's Advisory Council By-Laws? (Please mark all that apply.)

- Membership selection
- Leadership position (chair) selection
- Length of terms
- Decision-making process
- Representation of Advisory Council
- Meeting schedules/frequency

Other (please specify)

6. How frequently do the following things occur at your school?

	Frequency
a. Advisory Council meetings	<input type="text"/>
b. School budget shared with Advisory Council	<input type="text"/>
c. Membership changes on the Advisory Council	<input type="text"/>
d. Financial reports provided to the Advisory Council	<input type="text"/>
e. School data analyzed with Advisory Council	<input type="text"/>

Explain:

7. How long do Advisory Council meetings typically last?

8. Please rate the level of importance of the Advisory Council in the functioning of your school.

Very important

Somewhat important

Slightly important

Not at all important

Comments:

9. Please rank each of the following functions of the Advisory Council in terms of how much time is spent doing each (1 for Most Frequent to 6 for Least Frequent). Note that you may only select each option (1-6) one time.

	1 - Most Frequent	2	3	4	5	6 - Least Frequent
a. Developing school plan to include objectives, strategies, and action plans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Aligning the school plan and action plans with the Division's Strategic Plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Aligning the school budget with the school plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Reviewing the alignment of the school professional development plan with the school plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Fulfilling other responsibilities deemed appropriate by the principal and school leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Please describe other avenues, in addition to the Advisory Council, through which your staff and parents have the opportunity to be involved in shared decision-making. (Consider teacher leadership teams, PLCs, etc.)

11. Do you provide or have you provided in the past, training on Site-Based Management for your staff or Advisory Council?

Yes, I currently provide this training.

Yes, I have provided it in the past.

No

If you have offered training, please describe.

12. Have you used the waiver deviation process?

Yes, and I was granted a waiver.

Yes, but I was not granted a waiver.

No.

I am not familiar with the waiver deviation process.

4. Perceptions about SBM

This set of questions asks what you think about SBM. Your insights here will help inform the development of the SBM manual and training modules for principals and other PWCS leadership.

1. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about site-based management.

	Not Sure	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. I have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to developing school goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to developing my school's budget.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Principals are ultimately responsible for the progress of students in their buildings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Site-based management requires principals to spend too much time on administrative tasks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. The Advisory Council at my school is an integral part of the development of our school's improvement plan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. The Strategic Plan limits local autonomy with respect to the school improvement plans.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. The shared decision-making that is part of Site-Based Management allows principals to function as instructional leaders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. New principals need ongoing support and mentoring in site-based management.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. SBM contributes positively to improvements in student achievement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. SBM contributes to a climate with enhanced stakeholder satisfaction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please use this space to comment on any of your responses above:

2. In which areas is it more efficient (and preferable) for Central Office to have responsibility? (Please mark all that apply.)

- Transportation (Field Trips and Activity Buses)
- Food Services
- Maintenance
- Grounds work
- Textbooks
- Staffing

Other (please specify)

3. What do you feel are the biggest strengths of site-based management?

4. What do you feel are the biggest challenges to successful implementation of site-based management?

5a. Please describe any areas that you feel would be critical to include in new principal training related to site-based management (e.g., "the tricks of the trade").

5b. What suggestions do you have for how best to provide SBM training for new principals?

6. What changes would you like to make to improve the implementation of site-based management in PWCS?



January 4, 2011

Dr. Walt Mallory, Clinical Assistant Professor
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Northern Virginia Center, Room 456
School of Education
Falls Church, VA 22043

Dear Dr. Mallory:

This letter is to grant permission to Pamela Gauch to use results and all data from the School-Based Management Survey that was administered to principals in the Prince William County School Division in 2008 for use in her doctoral study on Site-Based Management. Ms. Gauch also has permission to identify Prince William County Public Schools in the study. I wish her well as she completes the requirements for her doctorate degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Sincerely,

Steven L. Walts
Superintendent of Schools

DR. STEVEN L. WALTS
Superintendent of Schools