1991

An analysis of perceptions of shared decision making in early stages of implementation as related to selected factors associated with school improvement

Thomas J. Renze
Iowa State University

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Renze, Thomas Joseph, Ph.D.

Iowa State University, 1991
An analysis of perceptions of shared decision making in early stages of implementation as related to selected factors associated with school improvement

by

Thomas J. Renze

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

For more than a decade, critics have charged that American schools are not as effective as their foreign counterparts. A host of independent studies which include *A Nation At Risk* (1983), Governors' Report on Education (1986), Carnegie Report (1988), and Iowa Business and Education Roundtable Report (1991), have pinpointed problems and recommended solutions. But reform movements have typically fizzled or been ineffective for a variety of reasons. Because these efforts have not achieved their intended goals, a second wave of change has emerged. Unlike state-mandated reform efforts of the 1980s, the emphasis in the 1990s is upon restructuring from the grassroots level. It has been established that school improvement takes place on a school by school basis (Goodlad, 1983), and many of the recommended reforms have in the past and continue to focus upon the individual school. Lewis (1989) noted that Goodlad (1983) was the first to use the term "restructuring" in a call for dramatic school reforms. "Restructuring" has come to include many facets, one of which is the decision making structure. Focus on the decision-making structure has moved from the state level to the building site in order to obtain better decisions and to gain greater commitment to decisions. Rosenholtz (1989) indicated that one characteristic of developing schools is teacher participation in decision making. We know factors such as collaboration, ownership in decisions, and collegiality are associated with increased productivity and quality of decisions (Peters, 1985, Lezotte, 1989). Yet, little is known about what happens to people and organizations during the transition to a shared decision-making (SDM) structure. In an effort to increase that body of knowledge, this study addressed the perceptions of shared decision-making in early stages of implementation as related to selected factors associated with school improvement.
Purposes of the Study

This study was designed to analyze perceptions of shared decision making in early stages of implementation as related to selected factors by using data collected from the Marshalltown, Iowa, Community School Learning Lab Initiative Shared Decision-Making Project. The selected factors chosen are: restructuring of roles and decision-making processes, empowerment, involvement in decisions, collegiality, collaboration, and teaching and learning. The Marshalltown shared decision-making project lists four stated purposes: (a) to develop and provide a flexible shared decision-making model which accommodates the differences in each building; (b) to provide an effective means to develop and achieve building goals and objectives within the framework of the district goals and objectives; (c) to provide collegial, cooperative, and professional relationships among teachers, administrators, classified personnel, students, and parents; (d) to focus the shared decision-making model on the improvement of teaching and learning.

This study determined the degree to which those four purposes of the Marshalltown Shared Decision-Making Project have been met, and analyzed early perceptions of SDM as related to factors associated with effective group decision making and school improvement.

Specific purposes of the study were to analyze perceptions of: (a) steps used to implement district-wide SDM and their relationship with the selected factors; (b) membership of decision making groups which were implemented as a result of the Marshalltown SDM Project; (c) degree to which SDM has affected how decisions are made and by whom they are made; (d) strength of belief by staff in SDM; (e) involvement by staff and parents in decision making; (f) degree to which SDM has affected teaching and learning; (g) degree to which SDM has affected factors of collegiality, collaboration, ownership in decisions, and trust among staff; (h) degree to which SDM has affected roles of teachers, administrators and parents; (i) degree to which the purposes of SDM have been communicated to the staff.
Statement of the Problem

Shared decision making (SDM) is receiving much attention as schools examine restructuring practices. Although many projects have been started and some districts have used SDM for a number of years, little information exists about the characteristics of SDM in its early stages of implementation. Many issues arise before and during the process of implementing SDM. They include:

1. Who makes the decision in the first place to adopt a SDM structure?
2. Do people want to participate in decision making and do they believe that participation will improve decisions?
3. Who is involved, who is not involved and why are they not involved?
4. What do participants and nonparticipants think and how do they feel about SDM?
5. How do roles change with SDM?
6. What skills and training are needed for SDM?
7. What types of problems and decisions are addressed in a new SDM structure?
8. What changes in collaboration, collegiality, and trust, occur in a district which moves toward an SDM structure?
9. How is success measured?
10. What are the immediate effects of adopting an SDM process and what problems can be expected?

These are a few of the many questions about early characteristics of SDM for which there is no body of information to guide practice. The problem for this study is to analyze perceptions of SDM in early stages of implementation as related to selected factors by using data collected from the Marshalltown Shared Decision-Making Project. Such information would be helpful to those educators who are considering or are actually involved with changes in their decision-making structures.
Research Questions

The following research questions were posed:

1. Is there a difference in the procedures used to make building-level decisions as a result of SDM?
   
   A. Do administrators perceive a difference in the procedures used to make decisions that affect people at the building level as a result of the SDM project?
   
   B. Do teachers perceive a difference in the procedures used to make decisions that affect people at the building level as a result of the SDM project?
   
   C. Do classified persons perceive a difference in the procedures used to make decisions that affect people at the building level as a result of the SDM project?
   
   D. What changes in the decision making structure have been made as a result of the SDM project?

2. In what specific decisions have teachers been involved as a result of SDM in which they would not have otherwise participated?

3. To what extent have changes already occurred in the way things are done in the buildings as a result of the SDM project?

4. What changes are in the process of occurring in the way things are done in the buildings as a result of SDM?

5. What is the direction and degree of difference in staff commitment to building level decisions as a result of SDM?

6. What is the extent of ownership for decisions as a result of SDM?

7. What is the extent of teacher authority to make decisions as a result of SDM?

8. What is the extent of teacher involvement in making decisions as a result of SDM?

9. What is the difference in effectiveness of communications as a result of SDM?
10. What is the extent of parent involvement as a result of SDM?
11. What is the difference in collegial relations as a result of SDM?
12. What is the extent of collaboration as a result of SDM?
   A. Do teachers work together more as a result?
   B. Do teachers share and help each other more as a result?
13. How has the role of the principal changed as a result of SDM?
   A. Has there been a change in the daily tasks of the principal?
   B. Has there been a change in the principal's role in the decision-making process?
   C. Has there been a change in the principal's relationship with central office personnel?
   D. Has there been a change in the way the principal relates and interacts with teachers?
   E. Has there been a change in the way the principal relates and interacts with parents?
   F. Has there been a change in the way the principal relates and interacts with students?
   G. Has there been a change in the way the principal spends his/her time?
14. How has the role of selected central office personnel changed as a result of SDM?
   A. Has there been a change in tasks?
   B. Has there been a change in the way time is spent?
   C. Has there been a change in the central office decision-making process
   D. Has there been a change in relationship with principals?
   E. Has there been a change in relationship with teachers?
   F. Has there been a change in relationship with parents?
15. How has the role of teachers changed as a result of SDM?
   A. Has there been a change in tasks?
   B. Has there been a change in the way they spend their time?
   C. Has there been a change in the way they relate and interact with their principals?
   D. Has there been a change in the way they relate and interact with central office personnel?
   E. Has there been a change in the way they relate and interact with colleagues?
   F. Has there been a change in the way they relate and interact with parents?
   G. Has there been a change in the way they relate and interact with students?
   H. Do teachers give students more opportunities to make decisions?

16. Are there differences in beliefs about effectiveness of SDM among:
   A. Buildings?
   B. Teachers?
   C. Administrators?
   D. Classified persons?

17. Have opportunities for staff leadership roles changed as a result of SDM?
   A. What new roles have developed?
   B. To what extent have teachers assumed new roles?

18. Have classroom activities changed as a result of SDM?
   A. Do students have more opportunities to make decisions about their choices of activities?
   B. Do students have more opportunities to participate in self-assessment?
   C. Do students have more opportunities to learn and practice decision-making skills?
19. What are the differences in structures of SDM among the buildings?

20. Do faculties work together to effectively solve problems in their buildings as a result of SDM?

21. What factors exist within the buildings and district that enhance the effectiveness of SDM?

22. What factors exist within the buildings and district that detract from the effectiveness of SDM?

23. What factors pose future threats to the success of SDM in the district?

Definition of Terms

Below are the definitions of terms used in this study:

1. **Assessment Task Force:** A subgroup of the district vertical team charged with responsibility of assessment of the SDM project.

2. **Building Administrator:** All building principals and assistant principals. This category could also include employees who are classified as administrators but who are not principals or assistant principals. Examples are athletic director and the activities director. In this paper the term *principal* is used synonymously with *building administrator*.

3. **Central Office Administrator:** This category of employee includes the superintendent, associate superintendent, director of curriculum and instruction, director of special education services, business manager, and director of volunteer services.

4. **Certificated but non-classroom teacher:** Teacher of a special subject or a support teacher. This category includes teachers of physical education, art, music, media center specialists, special education resource, Chapter I, and Limited English Speaking.

5. **Classified personnel:** All employees in the district who are not certified and who provide support services. They include secretaries, custodians, food service personnel, bus drivers, utility personnel, and educational aides.
6. **Classroom teacher:** Teacher in a regular education, self-contained, or self-contained with integration special education classroom. This term refers to all classroom teachers who are not considered teachers of special subjects or support teachers.

7. **Collaboration:** The state of working together as equals to identify and solve a problem or to complete a task. A collaborative situation is one in which participants work together without regard for job roles or positions in an hierarchy. Participants have a common vision, goals, and purposes.

8. **Collegiality:** A situation in which workers are treated as colleagues, as fellow workers who are valued and respected for the contributions they make as individuals and as professionals. Collegiality requires personal and professional respect, value of each individual, and cooperative relationships.

9. **Empowerment:** The degree to which teachers, administrators, classified persons, students and parents have the power to make decisions, the authority to carry them out, and the accountability for them. People who are empowered have the authority, information, and resources required to make decisions on matters which affect them, and are held accountable for the decisions.

10. **I/D/E/A:** An abbreviation for the Institute for Development of Educational Activities. I/D/E/A is funded by the Charles Kettering Foundation.

11. **Involvement:** Refers to participation in the decision-making process. Involvement can vary by degrees, from awareness, to providing input, to actually making the decision.

12. **Learning Lab Initiative (LLI):** A project sponsored by the National Education Association. Started in 1989, the LLI project will identify one school district per state as a LLI school. The purpose of LLI is to promote restructuring of schools.

14. *Participative Decision Making (PDM)*: In this study the designation PDM is used to describe those decisions in which subordinates share in the decision making process at either the building or district level. The term PDM is considered a form of shared decision making, and is loosely used as a synonym for SDM.

15. *People Sharing Information Network (PSI-NET)*: PSI-NET is a computer information network composed of schools, districts, regional information centers, and consultants involved in selected on-going projects of the National Education Association. All learning laboratory schools are members of the network.

16. *Renewal efforts*: Renewal efforts is a term used in the survey to mean the collective studies and implementations which have occurred and are ongoing in the Marshalltown Community School District during the recent past.

17. *Restructure*: To reestablish or reshape the structure of any part or all of the educational delivery system. Restructuring of roles refers to redefining the roles and tasks of participants in schools and/or school districts. Restructuring of decision-making processes refers to redefining the steps and procedures used to make decisions in schools and/or school districts.

18. *Shared decision making (SDM)*: SDM refers to decisions which are made collaboratively at either the building or district level by the people involved in carrying out the decision. SDM is loosely used in this paper as a synonym for PDM.

19. *Shared Decision Making Project*: A project conducted by the Marshalltown Community School District as part of the National Education Association's LLI.

20. *School Improvement Program (SIP)*: An I/D/E/A concept referring to process of school improvement taught through its training program.
21. **SIP Facilitators**: A core group on each SIP team, consisting of a teacher, parent, and the building principal. SIP facilitators are a component of the I/D/E/A program, receive training in leadership, problem-solving, and consensus-building skills. They are responsible for planning and leading SIP meetings.

22. **SIP Team**: The teams developed for the purpose of long-ranged planning at a school site. The SIP team typically consists of parents, teachers, community members, building principal, and students where appropriate. The SIP team is a component of the I/D/E/A training program.

23. **Staff Survey Instrument**: A 52 item paper-pencil survey instrument designed by the assessment task force to gather information about staff opinions of the shared decision making project. It is used synonymously in this paper with the term "survey instrument".

24. **Vertical Team**: District level planning team composed of teachers, principals, central office administrators, parents, and community members. The role of the vertical team is to facilitate the development of SDM within the district.

**Assumptions of the Study**

This study accepts the following basic assumptions:

1. The primary purpose of SDM is to improve teaching and learning.

2. An improvement in a school's climate and culture will lead to an improvement in teaching and learning.

3. The relationship of SDM to teaching/learning can be determined by analyzing relevant conditions commonly present in productive teaching/learning environments: empowerment; involvement in decisions; collegiality; collaboration.

4. Ownership of building data belongs to the building rather than the district. It is important that data generated by individuals at the building level be available to the building
for their use in the school improvement process, and not perceived as a potential source of threat from the district level.

5. A description of the district's progress in SDM can be generated by combining data from individual buildings while still maintaining the anonymity and integrity of the building's data.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was delimited in the following ways:

1. This study involved SDM in the context of Marshalltown’s LLI project. Information generated applies only to the Marshalltown School District, and external validity is thus limited.

2. The author of this study has been integrally involved in the design and implementation of the Marshalltown LLI project and the assessment component.

3. Marshalltown’s SDM project began at the building level in the fall of the 1990-91 school year. The project’s assessment model had not been developed at that time and as a result baseline data from the buildings at start-up time is not available. Because the study collected data from the 1990-91 school year only, it was not possible to note long-term growth trends.
Numerous organizations have failed because they did not consider the character of their work force. Our society has moved from the formalistic to the collaborative. Today, the people who work in organizations demand a chance to be involved, and they expect to have their talents and skills utilized effectively; they are also willing to participate in activities that will make the organization perform more effectively. Because it has become generally accepted that creativity and innovation are traits widely distributed through the population, managers must be able to discover and put to use these resources within their teams. Once creative forces are unleashed within an organization, the potential for positive results is greatly enhanced. (Varney, 1989, p. 2)

Introduction

School restructuring is a frequent and sometimes controversial topic in the media and educational literature. Intense economic competition, globalization of the economy, diminishing numbers in the labor pool, greater demands for an increasingly skilled work force, a knowledge explosion, and advancement of technology have combined to focus attention upon the inadequacies of the public education system. Business leaders, public commissions, politicians, economists, and educators have called for and outlined plans for school improvement. "The U.S. economy is changing as well: advancing technology and changes in international trade are altering the structure of international competition. Our existing educational system cannot meet those new demands. New structures of schooling are needed" (Clinton, 1986, p. 208).

The decision-making process is an inherent part of any organizational structure. American industrial and educational institutions have traditionally used a hierarchical model, characterized by a minority at the top who are vested with power and decision-making authority, and a majority in the middle and at the bottom who are responsible for carrying out the decisions. Dolan (1990) calls this a "top-down, authoritarian hierarchy." It is organized in a pyramid that functions by putting a few people in charge and giving them authority over people and functions of those below. In a school setting this places the
board of education and the superintendent at the pyramid's tip, with various other administrators and supervisors somewhere in the middle, and teachers and other staff persons at the base. This organizational pattern produces layers of authority, with each layer having less authority than that above it. The result is a hierarchy controlled from above and responded to from below. This model tends to be characterized by non-listening, and assumes that the higher one goes on the pyramid, the greater the intelligence and talent of the individual. In addition to layers, workers within layers are separated by grids, those boundaries which establish departments at each level. There thus tends to be a cellular effect within the organization, with vertical information flow inhibited by layers, and horizontal information flow hampered by grids. Communication is a command-demand content, and the amount of information flow decreases as one nears the bottom. Decisions tend to be crisis-oriented, short-term, judged according to immediate rather than long-term results. Rewards and punishments are the motivators, very powerful to a point, but having little to do with employee satisfaction, loyalty, or extra effort (Dolan, p. 2).

The hierarchical model is based upon those assumptions about human nature and its relationship to work that McGregor (1960, Chap. 3&4) labeled Theory X: (a) the average human being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it if he can; (b) because of the dislike for work, most people must be coerced, controlled, directed, threatened with punishment to get them to put forth adequate effort toward the achievement of organizational objectives; (c) the average person prefers to be directed, wishes to avoid responsibility, has relatively little ambition, and wants security above all. He contrasted them with a different set of assumptions that view work as a natural form of activity, the worker as wanting self-direction, responsibility, the opportunity to exercise a high degree of imagination, ingenuity, and creativity in the solution of problems. This second set of assumptions were labeled Theory Y. McGregor concluded that the assumptions of
Theory Y point out the fact that limits on human collaboration in the organizational setting are due to management's failure in discovering how to realize the potential represented by its human resources. Assumptions of Theory Y imply that unless the needs of both the organization and the individual can be integrated, the needs of the organization will suffer. Shared decision making rationale shares common themes with McGregor's theories.

Since the 1970s American business has been redefining and restructuring its organizational decision-making patterns. That development clearly has been stimulated by pressures from foreign economic competition. Current efforts at worker participation in decision making are based upon Japanese management theory. Japanese organizational theory is in turn, founded upon the teachings of W. E Deming, an American whose views on organization and management were adopted during post-war reconstruction in the early 1950s (Tribus, pp. 1-8). Ouchi (1981) described the Japanese management system, which he labeled Theory Z, as a consensus, participative, decision-making process that provides for a broad dissemination of information and values within the organization and symbolizes the way an organization does business (p. 66). There is strong emphasis on developing a vision for the organization and involving workers before any steps are implemented (p. 100).

Foreign competition also challenged American business's notion of its own leadership capabilities. Kanter (1984) stated that America had always won its positions of leadership because of innovation. She defined innovation as "the generation, acceptance, and implementation of new ideas, processes, products, or services" (p. 20). During economically difficult years the pursuit for innovation tends to shift from an expansive outlook to managerial procedures and organizational practices, such as new methods to engage employees in problem solving. Kanter advocated a renewal of the traditional "entrepreneurial spirit", the need to get people the power to experiment, to create, to
develop, to test, and to innovate. "Entrepreneurs --and entrepreneurial organizations--
always operate at the edge of their competence, focusing more of their resources and
attention on what they do not yet know...than on controlling what they already know"
(Kanter, p. 23). She emphasized the importance of working in teams, developing the skills
and knowledge of the workers, and expanding their visions.

That "entrepreneurial spirit" was evident in some of the organizations which Peters
and Austin (1985) studied. They examined characteristics of effective organizations and
those organizations' adaptation to change. One characteristic of more effective
organizations is the involvement of employees in decisions which affected their work.
Peters (1987) described the use of skunkworks, informal structures where workers
organized themselves into problem-solving groups. He noted that the key to productivity
lies in flexibility and a flat decision-making structure that empowers all employees by
complete sharing of information, delegating responsibility with authority to act, and
working in teams. Those conclusions seem to support a 1981 study by Kanter (cited in
Kanter, 1984, p. 19). She attempted to identify forty-seven of the "most progressive"
companies in the U.S. Each was matched with a counterpart not on the list, and the
matches compared. Data indicated that companies with reputations for progressive human-
resource practices were significantly higher in long-term profitability and financial growth
than their matched counterparts. She concluded that progressive human-resource practices
were positively related to long-term health of the organization. These conclusions
supported those reported by Likert (1961).

During the re-examination of America's values, competitiveness, and leadership,
public education became the target of close scrutiny and frequent criticism. Goodlad
(1983) stated that it was not the fact of recent criticism that led to concern about the demise
of the school system, for critics had vocalized concerns during the 1950s, as well. These
early comments were primarily directed at administrators and teacher trainers. “During the 1970s, however, public criticism included the institution, not just those who run it. Schools shared in our loss of faith - in government, the judicial system, the professions, and even ourselves. Uncertainty swiftly arose about the inherent power of schools and, indeed, education” (Goodlad, 1983, p. 3). American schools, it was said, were not responding appropriately to the changing situation. David Kearns (1988), chairman of Xerox Corporation, reflected the private sector’s concern toward the current state of public education. Kearns believed that public schools have failed to produce a work force which enables our country to stay competitive. He asserted that schools should look to the high-tech companies as models for a leaner structure and flat organization to provide a new look that would include site management by principals and teachers. “Restructuring schools along those lines amounts to an emancipation proclamation for principals, teachers, and students. It would free the schools to be innovative, creative centers of learning” (Kearns, 1988, p. 568). The assumption is that, just as restructured business has been able to make better and smarter decisions to maintain a competitive edge, a similar restructuring of public education to a flatter decision-making model with a shared decision-making component will result in improved teaching and learning.

The nature of restructuring

Shared decision making should not be equated with the concept of restructuring. Just what is restructuring? The literature refers to it as a rearrangement of the structural organization of the school in order to achieve a system which produces more effective teaching and learning. It seems to mean a school in which educators have greater authority to make decisions about how the school operates and funds are allocated (Nathan, 1987, p. 749).
Definitions of restructuring as applied to education vary. Harvey and Crandall (1988, p. 8) stated that there is no one, concise, agreed upon definition of restructuring nor is there a definitive model. There is some agreement, however, that restructuring is not adding more of the same or even making significant improvements to the current school structure. Underlying any definition is the shared belief that the current structure must be redesigned in order to meet the changing demands of our society. Goodlad (1983, p. 2) used the term "reconstruction of schooling". Lewis (1989, p. 48) stated that the basis of what is being called restructuring comes from the conclusions and research of people such as Motimer Adler, Ernest Boyer, Theodore Sizer, John Goodlad, Albert Shanker, Marc Tucker and others. Florio (cited in Lewis, p. 48) placed restructuring into four categories: (a) content or substance, that is, moving away from superficial knowledge and content to an understanding of substantive knowledge, problem solving, and analytical content; (b) people, that is the roles played by teachers, students, and community, as well as the personnel structure; (c) place, that is, alteration of people, materials, and equipment to accommodate a variety of learning structures; (d) time, that is, the way students and teachers spend their time. Restructuring also affects the process which goes on within the four categories. Decision making must cover both instructional strategies and the allocation of school resources, and be shared by all professionals within the school (Lewis, p. 49). Harvey and Crandall (1988, pp. 10-12) list eight "critical components" of restructuring, two of which are (a) focus at the building level and (b) rethinking and altering the roles and responsibilities of educational personnel. Implicit in the common themes of restructuring is a rearrangement of decision-making models from hierarchical to participative or shared decision-making structures.

Timar (1989, p. 266) noted that little evidence exists regarding the success of restructuring as an avenue to school improvement. While restructuring is a commonly
proposed strategy to fix what is supposedly wrong with American schools, the motives of the restructuralists differ. Some favor it as an economic tool to achieve a competitive state. Others regard it as a means to empower teachers and thereby improve effectiveness. Still others aim to change the interactions between teachers and children in terms of method and content, thereby changing the character and mission of the school. Whatever the motives, bureaucratic decentralization is at the heart of restructuring (Timar, p. 266). Inherent in the concept of decentralization is the notion of participation in decision making.

The nature of shared decision making

The decision-making patterns within a school form an integral part of that school’s structure. Greenburgh (1975) attempted to clarify the theoretical issues involved in decisional participation. He contended that four schools of thought, Management Theory, Democratic Theory, Humanistic Psychology, and the Participatory Left, all support participation, but each with different definitions and for different reasons. The movement toward SDM in education is most closely allied with Greenburgh’s version of the human development theory. It proposes participation as a strategy by which all parties benefit. Participation is seen as an intense experience in commitment and energy within a narrow range of decisions, and human development theory advocates meaningful participation without challenge to basic economic structure (Greenburgh, p. 204-206).

SDM is a decision-making model designed to assure that the most educationally important decisions are made at the school site by a group of administrators, teachers, and parents who set basic directions, and determine strategies, organizational, and instructional arrangements to achieve them (O’Neil, 1990, p. 1). SDM is designed to make decisions as near as possible to the levels where they will be carried out. It is not principal autonomy, teacher control, or an end in itself. It is not a "sweetheart" arrangement between union and management, a uniformly implemented recipe or a total restructuring plan (AASA, AFT,
NEA, NNER, 1989). SDM flattens the decision-making structure by involving those who are charged with carrying out the decisions in the decision making process. The nature and degree of participation is a central topic in the SDM debate.

Timar (1989, p. 267) divided the theoretical rationale for decentralization into two camps: (a) that which argues that attracting, holding, and motivating the best teachers means professionalizing the occupation by granting more authority; (b) that which believes the key to decentralization is understanding children’s needs rather than teacher motives, and since it is the teacher who best knows each child, it is the teacher to whom power must be given to act on behalf of the child. The two rationales differ in that the first focuses upon the relationship between the teacher and the school, while the second focuses upon the relationship between teacher and the child, and forming an educational plan for the child. McGregor (1960, p. 42) cautioned that “What sometimes appear to be new strategies -- decentralization, management by objectives, consultative supervisions, 'democratic' leadership -- are usually but old wine in new bottles because the procedures developed to implement them are derived from the same inadequate assumptions about human nature.”

SDM is based upon the assumption that the people who work in school with children are professionals, and it is they who should be collaboratively making decisions about student learning. It is generally agreed in the literature that there is a national imperative for improved education and putting that imperative into reality requires close working relationships between all educator groups and the public. Relationships between teacher groups and administrative groups have begun to move beyond the adversarial to include support for cooperative, collegial, and collaborative roles. Linda Darling-Hammond, Director of Education and Human Resources Program for the RAND Corporation (in Meek, 1988, p. 14), noted that unions have been at the forefront of the movement toward
professionals. This movement appears to have gone through four stages: (a) getting the right to bargain; (b) then bargaining on bread-and-butter issues; (c) negotiating on policies; (d) and now negotiating responsibilities, that is, who makes the decisions about what and about the processes, but not the decisions themselves. This last stage has been the basis for creating shared governance structures and professional obligations for the past few years. Relationships must manifest a willingness to work together in mutually supportive ways. The key to success is the mutually held beliefs that SDM will lead to better schools, that SDM improves the quality of decisions, and that SDM helps create a professional environment for teachers and principals (Ventures in Good Practice, 1989, pp. 4-5). Generally recognized outcomes of a carefully planned school-centered decision-making model include: the possibility of decisions about resources, personnel, and programs that are more school-relevant; a forum for professional discussion; increased appropriate learning opportunities for all students; students who are empowered for learning; dissolution of the teacher/administrator isolation; increase in collegiality; increased ownership, greater commitment and cooperation vs. competition; increased sense of responsibility; and modeling of collaborative behavior by staff. (AASA, AFT, NEA, NNER, 1989, October).

SDM models of decision making differ from the traditional paradigms in many ways. In some models, policy and budgeting decisions are predetermined in consultation with the school board and are made at the building level. The authority for certain functions is moved to the local building site, thereby developing a broader base for leadership. Power is shared by all persons concerned with improving the educational program, including parents, teachers, and students (Mesenberg, 1987, p. 2). Fleming and Mljkowski (cited in Fleming, 1989a) listed the building blocks of school-based management as autonomy, accountability, access, focus, shared leadership, performance linkage, responsiveness,
empowerment, equity, and trust. The literature does not seem to point to any specific areas that are universally included or not included within the realm of shared decisions. That determination is usually made by the local school district, based upon the history, culture, and context of the specific situation.

SDM structures are as diverse as the schools claiming to use participative decision-making processes. Hallinger and Richardson (1988, April, p. 12) identified four basic models which seem to be in use:

1. Principal’s Advisory Council is composed of a representative group of faculty. It is designed to improve organizational climate through involvement of representative faculty in the decision-making process, is advisory in nature, does not tend to deal with instructional issues, and is dependent upon the good will of the principal.

2. Instructional support team is based upon improvement of instruction.

3. School improvement team increases the professional power of the teacher by looking at a broad scope of issues. It lacks the instructional focus of the school improvement team, and has the approval of the district as an official functioning group. Without that approval it is an advisory committee.

4. Lead teacher committee is the newest and most radical model. Its purpose is to improve educational outcomes by increasing the utilization of the expertise of professional staff and by widening the scope and accountability beyond the principal. The team is selected by the staff to oversee instruction and run the school. In this setting the principal becomes the managerial director, while the lead teacher oversees staff and instruction.

Many critics would not consider an advisory council to be an SDM structure because it serves at the pleasure of the building principal, who is free to accept or reject recommendations. The advisory committee lacks formal power to act, and therefore its
members are not sharing in common the authority and power necessary to make and carry out decisions.

Successful teams are the result of four factors, according to Varney (1989, pp. 7-8): (a) development of team management skills and commitment to continuous learning; (b) management recognition that teams are living entities, that they come to life, grow, develop, mature, and eventually die; (c) a clear understanding of the characteristics of a productive team; (d) and the ability of the manager to diagnose what is going on in the team.

Commonly mentioned advantages of SDM are: results in better programs for students; makes full use of human resources; pools expertise and viewpoints to attain higher quality of decisions; increases loyalty and commitment; increases leadership opportunities; improves communication; improves staff morale; provides opportunity for staff creativity and innovation; engenders public confidence; enhances fiscal accountability; changes roles and responsibilities (Prasch, 1990).

SDM has disadvantages, as well: it requires more work and more time; participants need to adopt attitudes which are conducive to change and overcome resistance to change; it requires sustained staff development in group dynamics, problem-solving skills, trust building skills and conflict resolution techniques; it requires resources, particularly time for planning and development; sometimes causes confusion about new roles, responsibilities, and parameters for sharing of decisions. In addition, once the process is started it is difficult and traumatic to change directions (Prasch, pp. 5-6). SDM is not a panacea. It takes time to develop an effective SDM structure and see results. Prasch (1990, pp. 6-7), in particular, noted a danger that administrative staff could be inappropriately reduced. He emphasized that reduction of administration is not a goal of school-based management.
Focus upon student learning

Shared decision making is not an end in itself. Lewis (1989) contended that the first wave of reform which began in the 1980s essentially failed because efforts were made to impose the changes by external pressures and regulatory measures rather than structural reforms. Many states thus adopted a “scientific management” view of reform. In the meantime, such persons as Adler, Goodlad, Boyer, and Sizer focused upon improvement of the teaching-learning dimension. Eventually their viewpoints began to gain popularity, particularly among teachers during the latter part of the decade (Lewis, pp. 37-39). O'Neil (1990, p. 6) emphasized that the focus of any SDM model must remain on student learning. A participative management model is a means to an end and not the end. Likewise, SDM should not be equated with school restructuring. It is rightly viewed as a means of providing those people who are at the level of decision implementation with the information and authority to make decisions and carry them out, a form of empowerment.

The House Committee on Education and Labor Report (1989) indicated that effective schooling should be the focus of SDM and reform. It described efforts which used SDM to implement effective school projects in ten school districts of various sizes and geographic locations throughout the country. As defined by legislation, Effective School Projects are intended to: (a) promote school-level planning, instructional improvement, and staff development; (b) increase the academic performance of all children, particularly those who are educationally deprived; (c) achieve certain characteristics of effective schools, those being strong and effective instructional leadership, focus on basics and higher order thinking skills, safe and orderly school environment, expectation that nearly all children can learn, and ongoing assessment of student performance and program effectiveness (Committee on Education and Labor, 1989, p. 1). In these cases SDM is used as a tool to achieve effective schools.
Empowerment

Power is a factor in decision making. It invests decision makers with the authority, resources, and latitude to make, implement, and evaluate their decisions. Possession of requisite power by a decision maker is generally called *empowerment*. Empowerment is an organizational strategy (Patterson, Purkey, Stewart, & Parker, 1986, p. 69). It is one outcome of SDM, and for some, the goal of SDM. Many different definitions of empowerment are advanced in the literature. Some are descriptive rather than definitive. Kahn, Lezotte, and Maksimowicz (1988, p. A5) defined empowerment as accepting responsibility for one’s own actions. The entire faculty should be empowered to use its collective knowledge to make collective judgements and take collective actions toward school improvement. Maeroff (1988, p. 6) described empowerment as a situation in which a teacher works in an environment as a professional and is treated as a professional. Three guiding principles for empowerment are boosting of teacher status, making teachers more knowledgeable by providing them with information necessary to make decisions in areas which affect them, and building collegiality between teachers and between teachers and principals. Patterson, Purkey, Stewart and Parker (1986, p. 69) stated three assumptions about empowerment which contribute to a renewal outlook in organizations: (a) empowerment is seen as an expanding entity within the school district, and anyone can have access to the necessary power available; (b) acquisition of support, information, and resources is the basis by which people and organizational units become empowered; (c) empowering people in the organization to influence decisions directly affecting them leads to more effective operation of the school.

Although delegation is one form of empowerment, empowerment is not the same as total delegation, nor does it mean abdication of responsibility by administrators (McGregor 1960; Patterson et al. 1986; Maeroff, 1988). One form of empowerment does mean that there will be a sharing of decision-making power through consultation and collaboration
between the administrator and teachers. A second form of empowerment is that which charges local schools with decisions affecting teaching and learning within their spheres of responsibility. Some examples of the latter form are school-based management, school-based budgeting, and school governance. The principle is to provide the individuals in the school with sufficient information, resources, and support to make the decisions and implement them at the school level (Patterson et al., p. 72). “Empowerment becomes inevitable when teachers have so much to offer and are so sure about what they know that they can no longer be shut out of the policy-making process” (Maeroff, 1988, p. 475).

Empowerment is viewed by some as the collective effect of leadership. Bennis (1984) studied common traits of leadership. He interviewed 90 successful executives, 30 from the public sector, 60 from private corporations. Four common traits, the third of which is empowerment, were identified in his study. Empowerment was most evident in four themes: (a) feeling of people that they are important and significant; (b) feeling that learning and competence matter; (c) feeling that people are part of a community; (d) feeling that work is exciting (Bennis, p. 19).

Delegation of leadership functions to individual school level is a recurrent theme in the literature, as evidenced by Boyer (1988, p. 7), Kerr (1987), Joyce (1986), and many others. Kerr addressed the question of who should be responsible for what aspects of education. Answers to that question would enable society to know why schools succeed, why they fail, and where to focus when failures occur. Kerr stated that authority for education should be delegated to the classroom teacher. The school hierarchy should be responsible for promoting conditions of education and hand over the task of education to the teachers. She concluded that if the hierarchy is to justify its existence, it must see that the responsibility for maintaining educational conditions and education is shared, and that authority for educating be delegated to teachers (Kerr, p. 38).
Boyer (1988, p. 7) stated that in order to achieve educational excellence, educational leadership should be school-based, and the local school should also be held accountable. Kahn, Lezotte, and Maksowicz (1988, p. 6) believed that the effective schools process starts with the assumption that teachers and administrators already are doing the best job they know how under the conditions. Thus to gain further improvement, these groups need to add to what they know and change the current conditions under which they work. State and local authorities should articulate goals and priorities and make clear what will be accepted as evidence of progress toward those goals. Beyond that each school should be given as much discretion as possible regarding how resources will be deployed to achieve the outcomes. Lezotte (1989b), found that one major implication of effective schools research is that school improvement occurs one school at a time. The early research did not indicate how improvement was accomplished, and therefore, some districts mandated the school improvement process. He drew five conclusions from research about how to create more effective schools, three of which focused directly upon school site issues: (a) preserve the single school as the strategic unit for change; (b) principals can’t do it alone, teachers and others must be an integral part of the school improvement process; (c) improving schools must feel as though they have a choice in the matter and control over the exchange process (Lezotte, 1989b, pp. 10-11). Lezotte’s work supported the school-by-school approach to school improvement, but also emphasized the district’s importance in development of effective schools. He contended (Lezotte, 1989a) that a newer model for school improvement incorporates the school board and central office. Lezotte cited eight basic assumptions for the internal renewal model, six of which deal directly with the importance of the individual school in the improvement process and the involvement of adults at the school site (Lezotte, 1989a, pp. 5-6). He drew five conclusions from research about how to create more effective schools. One of the conclusions was that improving
schools must believe they have a choice in the matter and control over the change process (Lezotte, 1989b, pp. 10-11). He advocated adapting the structure to include school planning teams with membership composed of parents, teachers, principals, and others. Lezotte’s vision for effective schools was based upon nine assumptions and conditions, including the following which focused upon the importance of SDM: decision making will become more decentralized and individual schools will be recognized as the production center for education as the strategy unit for planned change; decentralization must be met with a model of collaboration and empowerment that increases teacher and administrator levels of involvement in the planning, problem solving, and evaluation of school programs; by emphasizing outcomes, schools will be able to reduce emphasis on process, thereby leading to school restructuring (Lezotte, 1989a, pp. 12-14). The plan for school improvement should be a collaborative model.

Empowerment is not a smooth process, and sometimes brings its own problems to a setting. Glickman (1990) suggested seven ironies of empowerment which he speculated come with the empowerment cause: (a) the more an empowered school improves, the more apparent it is that there is more to be improved; (b) the more an empowered school is recognized for its success, the more nonempowered schools criticize it; (c) the more an empowered school works collectively, the more individual differences and tensions among the staff members become obvious; (d) the more an empowered school becomes a model of success, the less the school becomes a practical model to be imitated by other schools; (e) the more a school becomes empowered, the more it hesitates to act; (f) the more an empowered school has to gain, the more it has to lose; (g) the more an empowered school resembles a democracy, the more it must justify its own existence to the most vocal proponents of democracy (Glickman, pp. 70-73).
Participation and decision making

The nature of participation and its relationship to decision making is widely discussed in SDM literature. Hoy and Miskel (1982, p. 280) listed nine generalizations which, because of their pervasiveness, are mentioned here: (a) Participation is important for teacher moral and enthusiasm for the school; (b) SDM is positively related to teacher satisfaction with the profession; (c) Teachers prefer principals who involve them in decision making; (d) Teachers don’t expect or want to be involved in all decisions; (e) Participation in decision making has consequences which vary from situation to situation; (f) Roles and functions need to vary with the nature of the problem; (g) Both external and internal factors affect participation in decision making by teachers; (h) Typical administrators are likely to prove ineffective because they are not fully accepted by subordinates or because of limited quality of decisions they make; (i) To maximize potential, there is a need to ask under what conditions, to what extent, and how should teachers be involved, how sound the decision making groups be constituted, and what is the principal’s role.

Proponents use these assumptions in advancing both their rhetoric and their investigations of the effects of SDM. Closely allied with these assumptions is a list of reasons why school site decision making can be more successful in planned change efforts: (a) The staff will take into consideration the culture of the school; (b) It allows planning by the faculty; (c) It allows training to meet the school’s identified needs; (d) It allows for a problem solving view of change; (e) It allows resource allocations to be made in response to identified needs (Hoy and Miskel, pp. 2-5).

The issues of who should participate, how should they participate, to what degree should they participate, and do they want to participate are at the center of the participation/decision-making discussion. Constitutional arrangements define how a group is to arrive at a decision. Swanson (cited in Hoy and Miskel, p. 283) listed three types: (a)
the Democratic-centralist arrangement in which the leader presents problem, asks for input, and retains decision-making authority while trying to reflect participant input; (b) parliamentarian arrangement where each member has an equal vote and is bound by the majority vote; (c) participant-determinant arrangement, which requires total consensus.

Gress (1974) conducted an extensive review of the literature on the effects of participation in the decision-making process. He contended that participative theory of leadership is based upon the assumptions that: (a) managers and workers are motivated to share influence with decision-makers; (b) workers are capable of contributing usefully to the decision-making process; (c) in general this willingness and capability has not been used; (d) and the three circumstances do not vary with respect to most normal work situations (Gress, p. 35).

Lowin (1968, p. 69) defined participative decision making as "A mode of normal working organizational operations in which decisions as to activities are arrived at by the very persons who are to execute those decisions."

Melcher (1976, p. 12) noted that participation is often used as a general term, or is equated with democratic approaches to leadership:

Participation is only one of the building blocks that make up democratic leadership style; the term should be defined as the extent to which subordinates, or other groups who are affected by decisions, are consulted with, and involved in the making of decisions. This may vary from extensive involvement to restrictive involvement.

In their review of the topic, Locke and Schweiger (1979, p. 274) stated that the concept of shared decision making specifically refers to participation in decision making. This definition excludes delegation as part of SDM because delegation omits the concept of sharing in common. They listed four categories of decisions in the participative mode: (a) routine personnel functions such as hiring, training, payment method, discipline,
performance evaluation; (b) work itself, such as task assignments, work methods, job
design, goal setting; (c) working conditions; (d) company policies (Locke and Schweiger,
p. 276). Sharing in common is a key factor in collaboration, an often-used term in the
SDM literature.

Wynn and Guditus (1984, p. 4) named three types of participation: job enrichment,
job enlargement, and management by objectives. Teachers are not interested in
participation in all decisions that must be made in the schools, but only those that are
directly related to their work in the classroom. It is likely that not all teachers are inclined to
directly participate. There are limitations which apply to the participation in management
functions. Power is more effectively shared when expertise and interests are primary
considerations. Participative power does not mean that authority should be shared equally
among all members of the organization or that it should be shared in all the organization’s
functions or decisions (Wynn & Guditus, p. 39).

Conway (1984, p. 19) stated that participative decision making contains two major
constructs: (a) concepts associated with decision making, and (b) concepts associated with
participation. He defined decision making as “any process wherein one or more actors
determine a particular choice”. Participation is “sharing by two or more persons or some
action or matter.” Conway distinguished internal participative decision making, which
involves administrators with teachers and/or students, from external participative decision
making, which involves administrators and citizens. He contended that, although citizen
participation in schools is likely to continue, the reasons are political rather than empirical.
He offered seven “myths” about participative decision making: (a) Citizen participation
leads to increased support; (b) To sooth a disagreeable client, get that person involved in
decision making or an advisory council; (c) Direct involvement is necessary for
organizational members to accept and implement change; (d) Participation in establishing
goals is needed for goal accomplishment; (e) Participation in organizational decisions increases satisfaction with the organization and the job; (f) Student participation in decisions about instructional topics and activities leads to higher test achievement scores; (g) Higher levels of teacher participation in decisions is related to a higher quality of teaching. Concurrent with his myths was a list of mysteries (p.33), questions to be resolved regarding participative decision making: (a) Why is satisfaction not always related to PDM? (b) Are the myths really myths, or are they unsupported propositions resulting from poor research? (c) Why do some people who appear to be actively and intensively involved in decision making groups perceive themselves still to be deprived? (d) What does it mean when teachers indicate they are not participating as much as they would prefer? (e) Do they want more of the same or something different? (f) If participation is a characteristic of effective schools, is it also a condition of noneffective schools?

**Collaboration**

Collaboration implies equality between persons, shared responsibility, and shared accountability for decision-making. There are common goals, interests, concerns, and conceptual frameworks (Hord, 1986). Collaboration differs from cooperation in that cooperation means the participants retain separate goals and interests, but agree to work together. Collaboration is a union of purpose in which the participants are partners and in which no partner takes a dominant role. There is equality among the participants.

Participants are drawn from the groups which have a vested interest in the institution and the decision. These participants are also commonly referred to as *stakeholders* or *responsible parties*. In SDM structures they can include parents, teachers, principals, outside consultants, and students. Joyce (1986) stated that broad governance is an essential strategy of school improvement. The responsible parties must develop parity, i.e. a relative equality among teachers, administrators, and patrons.
The object of bringing together the responsible parties is to build a community that can continuously rethink the purposes of the school, select its primary mission, choose its most appropriate operating methods, evaluate how they work, make adjustments, and, over time, repeat this cycle. (Joyce, p. 74)

Joyce calls the bringing together of the responsible parties “collaborative local governance” (p. 76). One of the most important elements in a school improvement program is a social climate that supports people as they formulate and try out ideas.

**Common vision**

Common vision of schools is achieved within an institution by individuals who come together, discuss, and collaborate to form a picture of what they want their school to become. For SDM to be successful, the vision must be shared or accepted by all the participants and clientele of the school. In its report describing successful efforts to implement effective schools projects, the House Committee on Education and Labor (1989, p. 5) indicated that there were certain key steps which nearly all of the effective schools took to implement their projects, including: forming teams of principals, teachers, parents and community persons who come together to develop, support, or implement the project; developing a school improvement plan on a school by school basis; and in some instances, creating a district-level team to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the project. Steps such as these are designed to achieve school improvement by involving people in a process to choose the kind of education they want.

School as a *home for the mind* was Costa’s (1988) theme in *Occasional Paper Number 1: A Vision of Restructured Schools*. He envisioned school as a home for the minds for all members of society, a place where everybody in the school gets his or her intellect empowered and developed. In that vision, school is a place where there is a high degree of alignment of all members involving commitment to a shared vision. School is a
home for the mind where all inhabitants continue to grow. It is characterized by maximum caring for staff and restructured roles which look upon the teacher as researcher and mediator of learning. One feature of the curriculum is that teachers are empowered to make curriculum and instructional decisions in the school (Costa, p. 20). There is a sense of ownership and internal responsibility for performance, not because someone is checking up, but because each member feels an obligation to the achievement of that vision. For teachers that internal motivation comes with restructured roles which cast them as coaches and mentors, researchers, mediators of student learning, instructors of colleagues, contributors to their profession, and members of a decision-making collaboration (Costa, pp. 14-16).

A collaboratively developed and shared vision is also a critical component of the I/D/E/A model for school improvement. Its training program for school improvement facilitators includes a component for leading school improvement teams through development of a vision for the individual school which is based upon Nine Principles of Education. It is only after the vision for the school is formed by the school improvement planning team that action plans and action groups are developed. Shared vision and locus of authority were addressed by Goodlad (1987), who stated that school improvement cannot be mandated by legislators or measured by standardized tests. Instead, he contended there are sensible actions that policy makers, teachers, parents, and the public can link together to make a difference. One of his correlate assumptions was that the actors at each level of the system must ask if the decision is theirs to make, and be sensitive when making decisions that others are to carry out, that is, determine who is responsible for making the decision and who is responsible for carrying it out. The concept of accountability must be changed to responsibility for carrying out the function of a given level or a unit of decision making by the people in that level. Within education, the
individual school unit remains the most promising unit to maintain quality and equitable programs, according to Goodlad (pp. 12-13).

Organizational culture and change

Culture within the context of organizational structure of the school is directly related to change and shared decision making. SDM changes the roles of teachers and principals. Unless the change process is understood, it is likely that individuals within the organization will erect barriers to the proposed change. Dalziel and Schoonover (1988, p. 10) defined change as a planned or unplanned response of an organization to pressures. Change leadership is the process of seeing beyond the change. A change leader focuses on the specific context of change, but keeps a strategic domain or vision of the total organization. Important factors to consider include motivating people to change and obtaining support from both the top and the bottom. The origin of the problem is important.

The concept of ownership is emphasized in both change literature and literature on participation and decision making. All of the major efforts at education restructuring contain components in problem identification and problem solving which are designed to attain ownership by responsible parties. Good change leaders proceed through five key processes, the fourth of which is ensuring ownership (Dalziel and Schoonover, p. 109). Effective change occurs when leaders make certain that structures will create rather than inhibit motivation (Dalziel and Schoonover, p. 124). Genuine participation is considered a primary method of attaining feelings of ownership.

SDM is often viewed as a management device, but its most important purpose is to improve student learning by involving teachers in decisions. The process of involvement affects the culture within the school by creating ownership and motivation on behalf of teachers, which in turn has an impact upon the students. Sirotnik and Clark (1988) were concerned about the implications of schools as bases of management as opposed to schools
as centers of decision making and renewal. To place the school as the center of focus implies that the school is the focus of improvement and that it is the site of professional inquiry and reflective practice. The traditional model of school improvement pits the experts on the outside against the practitioners in the school. It views knowledge as something which is designed from without by a group of outside “experts” and given to teachers to be applied in the classrooms. In such a situation schools are the targets for change, but not the centers of change (Sirotnik and Clark, p. 661). There is an absence or reduced level of ownership because the knowledge does not belong to the teacher, that is, did not originate with the teacher.

An alternative is to think of schools as centers of inquiry activity. Sirotnik and Clark (1988, p. 662) suggested that sustained educational change must recognize and accept the nature of knowledge in which knowledge is developed by the practitioners from within instead of applied from without, that knowledge is personal, and that educators at school sites must be involved in developing their own knowledge and understandings through a critical inquiry process if their awareness is to be translated into action. Critical inquiry is a process and an attitude which will require leadership from several sources, including principals, teachers, parents and central staff. Ideally this leadership will arise from collaboration of these sources (Sirotnik and Clark, p. 664). Holly and Southworth (1989) call that development of teacher knowledge action research. The teacher feels ownership for the knowledge because he/she has gathered the data, made conclusions, and applied the information to the classroom. Action research, then, is a form of teacher empowerment and participation in decisions about what directly affects students in the classroom. It involves the teacher as teacher as learner and the students as learners.

Barth (1990) examined the school as a community of leaders and as a community of learners. In his opinion the school reform movement has thus far been based upon a list
logic, with different studies having a list of effective schools, list of effective teachers, and list of effective principals. List logic is not effective because it is based upon an assumption that strong leadership and effective teaching bring about higher test scores. That approach is too limited, Barth believes, because good people will not be confined to a list that describes outcomes. Barth’s solution is to view the school as a community of learners in which adults and children learn and think simultaneously, are committed to discovering conditions that elicit and support learning and to providing those conditions (Barth, p. 42). In such a community the principal serves as the head learner. The proposition is that all teachers can lead. The vision should be of a school whose mission is to ensure that students, parents, teachers, and principal are all school leaders in some way at some time (Barth, 1987, p. 5). The school is also a community of leaders in which teachers participate by leading in an area which is of interest to them, and are empowered as school leaders. The assumptions upon which a community of learners is based are different from those of the list makers:

1. Schools have the capacity to improve themselves if conditions are right. Those outside the schools must provide the conditions.

2. When conditions are right, adults and student learners energize each other.

3. What needs to be improved in the schools is their culture, the quality of interpersonal relationships, and quality of the learning experiences.

4. School improvement is the effort to determine and provide from within and without the conditions under which the adults and students of the school that will promote and sustain learning among themselves (Barth, 1990, p. 45).

The general implication of the literature is that a school’s culture will be supportive of improvement only if the people within the school are involved in its formation. It cannot be successfully imposed from the outside by either district or state policy. Timar and Kirp
(1989) discussed the relationship between state policies, the regional or local movements, and what they called the *conversation* or building level. If reforms are to be effective, state policies must create a context in which organizational competence can develop at the individual school level. Each school must establish a tone for its students. That tone is created by the individuals in the school, not by mandates from the outside (Timar & Kirp, p. 508). “A lesson from the past that present reformers should heed is that institutional culture cannot be circumvented. Excellent education comes from sound public institutions, not from disparate programs; high-quality educational programs cannot exist in unhealthy institutions” (Timar & Kirp, p. 510). Organizational cultures are built on participatory decision making, planning, goal setting and problem solving. Their theory of institutional support holds that educational excellence cannot be achieved in the absence of healthy institutions. Reshaped school culture is necessary for a healthy institution, and will determine whether reform efforts have made a positive impact (Timar & Kirp, p. 511).

**Relationship to teacher morale**

Many authors (Hoy & Miskel, 1982; Frymier, 1987; Peters, 1987; Urbanski, 1988; Rosenholtz, 1989; Dolan, 1990; and Shanker, 1990, to name just a few) view SDM as one means to improve worker and teacher morale. The first of Hoy’s and Miskel's nine generalizations about teacher participation in decision making was that teacher participation is important for teacher morale and enthusiasm for the school (Hoy & Miskel, p. 280). McNeil (1988) contended that bureaucratic controls in a traditional model are at war with educational goals, causing disharmony which affects teachers and students. What critics label as a decline in education is actually the result of a bureaucracy. Tensions are created between the contradictory goals of educating students and controlling and processing them through the system (McNeil, p. 334). The tension shapes what is taught and splits teachers from administrators.
Previous Efforts to Address the Problem

Relationship to Industry

Research on the effects of employee participation is not a new development. Melcher (1976) cited one of the early investigations into the topic of participation. The Pequot Mills Study by Nyman and Smith (1930-1934) dealt with the effects of consultation at top levels of management and union leaders. The company proposed a plan to meet regularly with union officials so they could discuss and participate in formation of company policy dealing with a number of controversial issues. Union management supported all of the proposed changes. Support was not forthcoming, however, from lower level management or workers who were not involved in the participative discussions. Workers regarded the consultation between their leaders and top management as a device to speed up production. Relations deteriorated until a strike was called and an independent union was formed. The significance of the Pequot Mills Study is that the results suggested the value of participation was limited to those who were actively involved in the decision making process (Melcher, p. 13).

The Coch and French Study (1948) at the Harwood Manufacturing Corporation in Marion, Virginia, was the first to investigate the effects of participation in decision making upon changes in worker attitudes. The pajama manufacturing company was concerned with loss of productivity when workers transferred from one job to another, high turnover rates, resistance to change, and aggression toward supervisors. Coch and French examined the effects of democratic procedures in handling groups to be transferred as related to time required to gain target efficiency following the transfer. Three experimental groups and one control group were used. Results of the study indicated that the rate of recovery was directly related to the amount of participation in planning the change, and that acts of aggression and turnover were inversely proportional to amount of participation. All experimental groups performed better than the control group. The experimental groups
which experienced total participation performed better than the experimental group which experienced participation through representation. Coch and French concluded that total participation resulted in faster transfer recovery than does representative participation, and that total participation has a stronger influence (Melcher, 1976, p. 524). The researchers noted that management can overcome and even eliminate group resistance to change through the use of group meetings and participation.

Vroom (1959) explored the effects of participation upon the personality structure of the follower. He hypothesized that participation interacts with personality characteristics of the participants in determining attitudes and performance. Vroom conducted a study of two branches of a parcel post firm in which he sampled 108 supervisors from five levels. Two variables of personality were measured: a measure of the need for independence, and a measure of authoritarian qualities. He collected data on five areas: psychological participation, attitude toward the job, need for independence, authoritarianism, and job performance. To examine the level of participation, he asked four questions: (a) In general, how much say or influence did the worker have on what happened at the work station? (b) Did the worker feel he/she was able to influence the decisions of the immediate superior regarding things about which the worker was concerned? (c) Did the worker’s immediate superior ask for the worker’s opinion when a work-related problem arose? (d) How easy was it for the worker to get across a suggestion to a supervisor about improving the job or changing the setup in someway? The questions were scored on a five-point scale. To measure the need for independence he asked 16 questionnaire items. He then compared scores between participation and attitude toward the job, and participation and job performance. Vroom found positive relationships between participation and attitude toward the job for persons who were high in need for independence and low on authoritarianism. The least positive relationships were found for those who were low in
independence and high in authoritarianism. He concluded that persons who have strong independence needs develop more positive attitudes toward their job and greater motivation through participation. On the other hand, authoritarians and those with low independence needs are unaffected by participation. Vroom warned against generalizations concerning the effects of participation upon attitudes and job performance without considering the interactions of personalities (Vroom, 1959, p. 326).

Likert (1961) proposed what he called a new theory of management, based upon observations made from the research. He made two generalizations about management theory: (a) Supervisors in both industry and government who achieved the highest level of productivity, lowest costs, least turnover and absence, and highest levels of employee motivation demonstrated different patterns of leadership from other supervisors; (b) While those individuals were aware that their leadership patterns differed from others, such "deviant" patterns had not yet been integrated into a new theory of management (Likert, p. 97). His work indicated that the highest-producing managers tend to show more of the following characteristics: (a) favorable attitudes toward members in the organization; (b) high level of cooperation by use of a variety of motivational techniques including the satisfaction of needs in the areas of ego, security, curiosity, creativity, desire for new experiences, and economic concerns; (c) tightly knit, effectively functioning social system made up of interlocking work groups, each with high degrees of loyalty, favorable attitudes, trust, and participation; (d) use of organizational performance measurements as self-guidance rather than control devices (Likert, pp. 99-100). The new management theory held that employees are most productive and happy when their self-worth and importance is reaffirmed by those around them. That occurs in work groups, where most people are motivated to behave in a way that is consistent with the values of their work group and in a way that will get them recognition, security, and favorable reactions. Likert
(pp. 104-105) cited research by Cartwright and Zander (1960) to support the benefits to employee productivity provided in work group settings. An effective organization has many work groups which are linked together through the linking pin concept. Likert reviewed previous studies in light of his new management theory, and concluded that the results of those studies were consistent with expectations based on the newer theory of management and such results lent support to the theory’s validity. Of particular interest to this study is Likert’s conclusion on the use of participation by highly-productive managers:

Widespread use of participation is one of the more important approaches employed by the high-producing managers in their efforts to get full benefit from the technical resources of the classical theories of management coupled with high levels of reinforcing motivation. This use of participation applies to all aspects of the job and work, as, for example, in setting work goals and budgets, controlling costs, organizing the work, etc. (Likert, 1961, p. 100)

Relationship to education

Studies of decision making have also been conducted in the field of education. While the recent literature generally supports the concept of SDM, there are differing opinions regarding its success. A thorough review of literature on the topic was conducted by Melcher (1976). He made four conclusions that are noteworthy because they touch upon critical issues frequently mentioned in the discussion of SDM:

1. Participation in decisions sharply increases the acceptance of decisions.
2. The process of participation affects the attitudes only of those who are consulted; those not involved are not influenced.
3. Participation in inconsequential decisions doesn’t affect general attitudes.
4. The effect of participation may be mediated by personality (Melcher, p. 19).
Zone of acceptance can be defined as the range of behavior within which the subordinate is willing to accept the decisions made for the subordinate by the superior (Kunz and Hoy, 1976, p. 49). Clear and Seager (1971) looked at zones of acceptance between administrators and teachers for the purpose of identifying and comparing perceptions of administrators and teachers concerning the legitimacy of administrative influence. Their study compared the legitimacy which administrators feel in attempting to influence teacher behaviors with the teachers’ willingness to accept such attempts as legitimate. Legitimacy was defined as “the appropriateness or acceptability of the administrator’s right to exercise influence upon specific personal or professional areas of the teacher’s life” (Clear & Seager, p. 48). They found that areas of influence divided into three general domains of acceptability: (a) operational zone, dealing with the operation, organization, and maintenance of the school; (b) professional zone, dealing with areas of professional domain such as teachers’ professional judgement relative to students, curriculum, parents, etc.; (c) personal zone, dealing with areas of matters personal to teachers. Only seven of sixty-six items showed polarized disagreement between teachers and administrators. The overwhelming trend in the data pointed to the conclusion that, with the exceptions cited above, there were no great differences between perceptions of teachers and administrators. Administrators and teachers generally agreed (.95r) upon the areas that should and should not be influenced. The the data indicated strong agreement among teachers and administrators over what administrators should try to influence, but there was wide spread difference over the degree of influence which should be exerted by the administrators. In five of the seven items, administrators ranked higher than teachers, meaning that administrators felt they should have a greater degree of influence than did the teachers. The study also examined how strongly influence should be exerted, given that there is general agreement on the legitimacy of agreement. Data indicated that the
administrators' zones of desired influence were consistently greater than the teachers' zone of acceptance in areas of organizational, maintenance, and professional judgement. This could lead to conflict should the administrator attempt to exert influence in areas not accepted by teachers. Both groups assigned low legitimacy to administrative influence in the personal zone and high legitimacy in the operational zone. This study was important because it addressed the crucial issue of areas in which teachers do and do not desire influence and administrators' perspectives of their influence. One implication is that potential for conflict arises when the administrator's desire for influence is greater than the teachers' zone of acceptance or when the administrator attempts to exert influence in areas not accepted by teachers. Because data also indicated a high degree of agreement about areas of legitimacy, the implication is that teachers don't necessarily want themselves to exert a great deal of power in the operational zone, but would rather leave that area to the principal.

Kunz and Hoy (1976) investigated the relationship between the leadership style of the principal and the professional zones of acceptance of the teachers. They related zones of acceptance to two dimensions of leadership styles: (a) initiating structure (IS), and (b) consideration (C). Data indicated the professional zone of acceptance by teachers was significantly greater for principals who were higher on both dimensions (IS and C) than for those who were perceived as high on consideration but weak on initiating structure. In addition, principals perceived as strong on initiating structure and low on consideration had teachers with a significantly wider professional zone of acceptance that principals who were weak on both dimensions. The researchers concluded that principals who are strong in initiating structure and consideration have the widest zone of acceptance among teachers. Strength in initiating structure appeared to be significantly related to professional zones of acceptance by teachers regardless of the degree of consideration (Kunz & Hoy, p. 59).
The implications of this study for SDM are that a principal who is strong in both dimensions will have the best chance to successfully implement SDM with staff, and one who is stronger in IS will have a greater chance of successful implementation than will one who is strong only in C or who is weak in both dimensions.

Lindelow, Coursen, Mazarella, Heynderickz, and Smith (1989) reviewed several studies involving participation in decision making, affects upon teacher perceptions, and areas for decision making. They concluded that the evidence indicated that participation in decision making can enhance quality of decisions, increase teacher job satisfaction, prevent adversarial relationships, and in general improve the school climate (Lindelow et al., p. 159).

Greenburg (1975) attempted to clarify the theoretical issues involved in participative decision making. He contended that there are a number of disagreeing schools of thought regarding appropriate degree and forms of participation. Greenburg listed four schools of theory which address participation in decision making, each with its own attitudinal, behavioral, social, and political consequences: (a) management theory, which advocates minimum participation as a means of placating the worker in order to gain an atmosphere of stability for increased productivity; (b) humanistic psychology, which defends concerns of human development and economic efficiency, proposing participation as a strategy by which all parties can benefit; (c) democratic theory, which promotes participation as a means of obtaining greater facility in the use of democratic skills and development of a democratic society; (d) the participatory left, which advocates a socialistic/Marxist approach with a desire for complete control and hostility to centralization and hierarchy.

Duke, Showers, and Imber (1980) were concerned with shared decision making in schools and teachers' commitment to it. Their study examined the costs to teachers of involvement as compared to the benefits of involvement. They hypothesized five potential
costs of SDM: (a) increased time demands; (b) loss of autonomy; (c) risk of collegial
disfavor; (d) subversion of the collective bargaining process; and (e) threats to career
advancement. Three hypothesized benefits were (a) feelings of self-efficacy, (b)
ownership, and (c) workplace democracy. Results indicated that the greatest cost as listed
by the teachers was time. Subversion of collective bargaining was listed as the second-
greatest cost, followed in order by risk of collegial disfavor, loss of autonomy, and threats
to career advancement. Ownership offered the greatest benefit, followed by workplace
democracy, and self-efficacy. The investigators found that, when questioned, most
teachers felt less than anxious to participate, and derived little satisfaction when they did.
The majority who did participate felt they had received little benefit, and 60% mentioned
that they felt they had little influence. SDM was viewed by the teachers as a formality or an
attempt to create the illusion of teacher influence. Their involvement was not sufficient to
provide benefits of self-efficacy, ownership, and workplace democracy. Shared decision
making, they reported, did not mean shared influence, since rarely was a shift in power
detected. Duke and his colleagues concluded that the benefits of SDM come from a
combination of involvement and influence. Unless a real influence shift occurs, it would
be better not to offer opportunities for SDM (Duke et al., p. 104).

Sweeney (1981) studied the effects of professional discretion upon teacher
satisfaction. One of the purposes of his study was to examine the effect of professional
discretion, participation in decision making, and reciprocal trust on the overall satisfaction
level of secondary school faculties. He found that professional discretion accounted for
.746 of overall faculty satisfaction, and increased to .749 when participation in school-wide
decision making was added. “In other words, the greater the extent to which the school
faculty felt they were able to exercise control over professional matters, the greater their
overall satisfaction in their positions” (Sweeney, p. 5).
Goodlad (1983) conducted an extensive study of individual schools. His investigation involved 38 schools, 8,624 parents, 1,350 teachers, and 17,163 students, and over 1,000 classrooms. The purpose of the study was to gain insights into and understanding of schools beyond anything available at the time. The researchers attempted to compile *thick* descriptions composed of a composite of perceptions of those people closely associated with each school and independent observers. Goodlad wanted to study the school as an entity (Goodlad, pp. 17-18). Resulting data indicated that participation is an important element in the school’s culture. Goodlad stated that his data confirms that parents want participation in the schools, but they do not want to take over. They would prefer to leave the running of the school to the teachers and to the principal, but to hold them accountable. Most parents perceived the important decisions to be made by the superintendent and the school board, and teachers and principals generally shared that perception. They would like to see a shift of power to the local site, away from the district superintendents, school boards, and state and federal levels. Goodlad noted a clear message that the groups interviewed wanted the power transferred from remote locations to the staff and parents of the school and to groups close to the school where those who make the decisions are visible (Goodlad, pp. 273-274). One of the Goodlad’s recommendations was to decentralize authority and responsibility to the local school, within a framework designed to assure equality among schools within a district. He also recommended that each school have a policy and planning group chaired by the principal. It would consist of teachers, students, parents, a nonparent, and a representative from central office. The group would deal with problems affecting the school as a whole, policies, and budget (Goodlad, p. 278). Such decentralization would be designed to stimulate long-ranged planning under the leadership of the principal with assistance in self-assessment from the district office. Goodlad (p. 318) likened it to “every tub on its own bottom,” each with a strong link to the
superintendent and to the other schools in the district. "The unit of improvement is the individual school. The major decisions regarding it are made there, where they are easily scrutinized by the school's patrons. The district prospers to the degree that its schools exhibit good health" (Goodlad, pp. 318-319).

Frymier (1987) attempted to determine how urban elementary teachers’ perceptions of their workplace compare to perceptions of teachers who work in schools identified as especially good. He compared perceptions of teachers from nine different urban schools with those of teachers from schools identified as good schools in the Good Schools Project (Frymier et al., 1984). Results of the study indicated that perceptions of urban teachers differed to a statistically significant degree on 158 of 187 survey items from the perceptions of teachers in the good schools, the direction of feelings was negative on 156 of the 158 items. Teachers felt they experienced more difficulty with interpersonal relationships, received less parent support, were more often left out of decision making within their schools, and worked with colleagues who were less willing to work for school improvement (Frymier, 1987, p. 9). Frymier inferred from the data that the bureaucratic structure of the workplace is more influential in determining what professionals do than are professional abilities, training, or previous experience. He concluded that changes should, therefore, focus upon structure of the workplace rather than on teachers. He further concluded that the principal and teachers can create conditions within a school that transcend limits imposed from the outside in order to create a climate of excellence. He noted (p. 12) that just a few of the 183 teachers who participated in the study felt in charge of who they were and what they did. His solution was to empower teachers to help them develop internal locus of control: “Teachers and principals, supervisors and superintendents, boards of education and state legislators all must appreciate the
possibilities of school improvement efforts that marshall the motivations and unleash the talents of those who work directly with children day after day” (Frymier, 1987, p. 14).

Rosenholtz’s study of elementary schools (1989) linked the relationship of shared school goals to the social structure and effectiveness of schools. She attempted to explain why some schools successfully achieve school effectiveness and some do not, and hypothesized that the difference can be found in the social structures within the schools. One of the areas she investigated was collaboration. Her study indicated that teachers in collaborative schools center their sharing around instructional and learning issues, are more open to seeking advice and less uncertain about technical knowledge of teaching than are teachers in noncollaborative schools. She concluded that there is greater collaboration in learning-enriched schools, that it is easier to teach and easier to learn in some schools than others, and that students profit more in their mastery of the basic skills in learning-enriched schools where teachers collaborate (Rosenholtz, p. 104). Her study is significant in that she linked the social structure of the school to effects upon student learning. Collaboration, collegiality, and participation were important elements in the social structures of schools which she described as having learning-enriched environments.

Disagreement with SDM

Given the preponderance of literature which supports the concept of SDM, critics still question or oppose its widespread implementation. Some concerns are lack of systematically designed studies, breakdown in the traditional decision-making system, erosion of authority, locus of leadership, and failure to alter the decision-making power to the subordinates. Locke’s and Schweiger’s (1979, p. 325) conclusions are representative of the issues raised about a participative decision-making model:

1. Use of participative decision making is a practical rather than moral issue.
2. The concept of participative decision making refers to joint or shared decision-making and thus excludes delegation.

3. There are numerous mechanisms through which participative decision making may produce both high morale and performance.

4. Research yields equivocal support for the thesis that participative decision making leads to increased satisfaction and productivity, although evidence is stronger for satisfaction than for productivity.

5. Evidence indicates that effectiveness of participative decision making depends upon numerous contextual factors.

6. Participative decision making is not the only way to motivate employees.

Malen and Ogawa (1985) concluded from their study of Salt Lake City’s school-site councils that decision-making power had not been in fact transferred to the school improvement councils (SIC) and the school community councils (SCC). They found that generally the SIC and the SCC members voiced enthusiasm over shared governance. Members joined for a variety of reasons: desire to acquire information; willingness to take their turn to serve the school; watch out for their own departments; change a specific policy. Membership from teachers was more service driven than issue driven. Staff members felt that major decisions were made by principals and central office persons. Teachers were able to make decisions on managerial aspects and implementation aspects of issues. Given these circumstances, Malen and Ogawa recommended continuance of the SIC and SCC structure because members were enthusiastic about school governance. They suggested joint training for members in group dynamics, concluding that problems were not with the individual members or councils, but with group dynamics.

Geisert (1988) took issue with the Carnegie Report and its support of SDM. He contended that effective schools research shows the need for strong leadership, and that
collaboration undermines that concept. He cited three areas where he believes problems would arise if Carnegie recommendations are implemented:

1. Parent problems would occur because parents would have to grieve formally a teacher’s actions in situations where decisions are made by teachers.

2. SDM would destroy middle management and thus pose problems in collective bargaining because it is midmanagement who knows what is wrong with contracts.

3. Teacher evaluation would be adversely affected because having lead teachers do evaluation would destroy collegiality (Geisert, p. 56).

Geisert also discussed specifics of the Rochester, NY, master contract with which he disagreed (Geisert, pp. 58-59). The Rochester contract contained provisions for participative decision making.

Malen, Ogawa, and Krantz (1989) studied SDM in the form of site-based management. They noted three features of site-based management: (a) formal authority for the school site to make decisions in areas of budget, personnel, program; (b) formal authority delegated to the principal or a broad-based group with a formal structure (council committee, team, board); (c) considerable discretion for site participants. Site-based management is supposed to enable participant to exert influence on school policy decisions, enhance employee morale and motivation, strengthen quality of school-wide planning process, stimulate instructional improvements, foster development of characteristics of effective schools, and improve academic achievement (Malen, Ogawa, and Krantz, pp. 2-3).

Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990) concluded that in most cases site-based management does not achieve its stated objectives. Their review of the topic identified only 8 systematic studies on the topic, and found that the writings are generally descriptive, status reports, or
advocacy pieces. They contended that site-based management fails to meet its objectives and the assumptions upon which it is based, and cited seven reasons why:

1. It does not touch policy. Councils are controlled by principals and teachers, maintaining the traditional pattern where administrators make policy, teachers instruct, and parents provide support.

2. Participants are handcuffed. It is difficult for people to change and schools are given little capacity to change.

3. Morale boost is fleeting. SDM is time consuming, causes confusion with new roles and a dissonance between the time demanded and the time needed for teaching, the problems which the groups address are complex, and frustrations result from financial constraints and from the perceptions of participants that they have only modest influence.

4. Planning remains unaffected. Participants don't have time, technical assistance or logistical support.

5. Innovation is lacking. Although it is assumed that participants will be innovative and feel ownership, there is little evidence to show that site based management results in major instructional changes, and in some cases it has adversely affected instruction because of the time and responsibility required which detracted from teaching duties.

6. There are limits to autonomy. There is no clear evidence that an increase in autonomy will achieve characteristics of effective schools.

7. Achievement remains unaffected. There is little evidence to indicate that site-based management improves school achievement. Studies fail to establish that site-based management came before any gains noted, and therefore fail to account for rival explanations of increase in achievement (Malen, Ogawa, & Kranz, 1990, p. 32, pp. 53-56).
Attitudes toward restructuring and SDM seem to differ, depending upon job role of the individual. A survey conducted by the American Association of School Administrators (cited in Lewis, 1989) indicated an ambivalence toward various aspects of restructuring efforts. Lewis acknowledges that the results were based upon a small sample of AASA members and heavily skewed toward administrators from non-urban districts, but as such they represented the official positions of their schools. The survey data indicated that 69% of the respondents did not favor reorganizing school district structure and governance. Nearly 60% favored requiring more accountability from teachers, but 53% were not in favor of establishing restructuring experiments. Restructuring of teaching methods was favored by 58%, restructuring of the curriculum by 49%. While 62% of the administrators favored giving greater authority to the school, only 42% favored giving greater authority to teachers, and just 43% favored providing more support for teachers in terms of increasing salaries and reducing teaching loads (Lewis, pp. 15-20). The same survey was sent to the 1988 state Teachers of the Year. Generally they supported trends toward restructuring. On the issue of reorganizing district structure and governance, 44% of the teachers did not favor it, while 31% did not respond. Fifty-eight per cent (58%) were not in favor of requiring more accountability from teachers, and 54% favored reorganizing faculty practices. Unlike the administrators, 69% did favor establishing restructuring experiments. On the issue of decentralizing authority, 76% favored giving greater authority to the school, but only 42% favored giving greater authority to teachers (Lewis, pp. 71-76). Results of this survey seem to indicate that although their respective organizations are supportive of restructuring efforts and the movement to school-based decision making, there is still reluctance or doubt on behalf of many individual members.

Many school districts and individual school sites have already begun the move toward SDM. Some lessons and trends are emerging that hold potential for those who are just
beginning to become involved or who are considering doing so. Caldwell and Wood (1988) examined policies and procedures, and held discussions and interviews with district administrators and staff development persons in four school districts which had been involved in school-based improvement. They found three trends in common, one of which is a movement toward participatory decision making and decentralization (Caldwell & Wood, p. 50). Data collected by the Center for Policy Research in Education (cited in Lewis, 1989, pp. 144-145) indicates that restructuring districts take certain actions and have certain attitudes which include demonstrating and promoting shared decision making, participating actively in building new alliances with teachers' unions and other groups, transferring authority to schools and to teachers, encouraging creation of new roles with teachers as leaders and administrators as facilitators of teachers, and providing time for staff to assume new roles and responsibilities such as working with colleagues and site decision making.

Developing SDM procedures is often a trial and error process. Because of culture, history, and context, what works in one school or district will not necessarily be the most appropriate for a different school or district. Harrison, Killion, and Mitchell (1989) noted four mistakes their district made in its apparently successful implementation of SDM: (a) failure to define terms and clarify concepts at the outset, making it difficult to distinguish between the concepts of site-based management and school improvement; (b) failure to clearly define roles at the outset and to clarify how school-based management would affect central office personnel, resulting in establishment of active blockers of the process; (c) failure to follow up initial training with sustained training and support for staff; (d) failure to take into account the affect which change had upon individual staff members. Although they felt their district successfully implemented a SDM model, the failures hampered efforts. Their district has since taken actions to rectify those errors.
Legacy of SDM

School-based management is not a new idea in education. According to Lindelow, Coursen, Mazzarella, Heynderickz, & Smith (1989, pp. 154-155) our country has a legacy of educational governance dating from colonial times to the beginning of the 20th century during which time schools were decentralized. School boards operated through consensus regrading who would teach what, what would be taught, etc. When American industry increased its productivity through the adoption of scientific management, schools adopted similar principles. The period around 1930 (citing Eagleton) could be considered the high point of public education in America. At that time schools were highly decentralized units, simple in structure, controlled by the local citizenry. Between 1930 and 1950 school population increased from 28 million to 46 million, yet the number of districts decreased by over 400%. By 1980, nearly 50% of the students were in districts of 10,000 or more. With the centralization came the growth of bureaucracy in education.

The recent move away from centralization and school-based management began in 1971 when the Fleischmann Commission recommended school-based management for that state. Two years later the Florida Governor’s Citizen Commission proposed school-based management for that state, and California enacted a school improvement program in 1975 which contained elements of school-based management (Guthrie, 1986, p. 309).

Beginning with A Nation At Risk (1983), various educational groups and commissions called for a reforming of the American school system to include shared decision making. Other groups and reports addressing the topic were the National Education Association’s Mastery in Learning Project (1985), the Holmes Group Report (1986), the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy’s A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century (1986), the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching report An Imperiled Generation: Saving Urban Schools (1988), the National
School Public Relations Association, the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives One Hundred First Congress First Session (1989), and Ventures in Good Practice (1989), which was jointly sponsored by the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the National Education Association.

The National Education Association implemented its MIL project as a major reform initiative in 1985. MIL involves twenty-six elementary, middle, and high schools from nineteen states in restructuring projects designed to focus upon the development of high, relevant standards for student achievement. One of the major criteria for the MIL schools is that the local faculty must play the central role in making decisions about learning and instruction. A goal is to have each staff restructure its school so that teacher practices are consistent with what research says about teaching and learning. It is designed to be a renewal process through inquiry based upon current knowledge about effective education (McClure, 1988).

The American Federation of Teachers has encouraged local units to establish charter schools, in which school administrators, school boards, and unions could charter teams of teachers and others to establish autonomous schools within schools. One criterion would be participative management and governance. The AFT also established in 1988 its Center for Restructuring to provide technical assistance to the school-within-a-school movement. It has worked with the Harvard University Education Technology Center on student assessment. In addition, AFT has started an Urban District Leadership Consortium with the district and union leaders in the participatory leadership schools (Lewis, 1989, pp. 83-84).

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor-Management Relations and Cooperative Programs (1990) in conjunction with American Federation of Teachers' Center
for Restructuring, the American Association of School Administrators, and the National Alliance of Business at a conference in April, 1990, summarized many of the current restructuring efforts and developed recommendations which included making systematic changes in the roles and relationships of the work organization by viewing power differently and more professionally, distributing authority and decision making more widely, assigning responsibility to all staff members for defining and implementing change. They recognized a need to focus and apply SDM techniques, encourage risk taking and leadership at the schools, and involve school-level administrators in the change process (U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor-Management Relations and Cooperative Programs (1990, pp. 19-21). “Participatory leadership is not a goal. It is a strategy for achieving a goal-efficient delivery of quality goods and services by unlocking the human capital with the organization” (U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor-Management Relations and Cooperative Programs, 1990, p. 1).

Principal leadership behaviors advocated by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (1991) include those which bond the school community through shared values and beliefs, encourage and develop the leadership of others, exercise vision, and provides leadership that involves staff, parents, students, and the community in the identification and accomplishment of the school’s mission (National Association of Elementary School Principals, p. 6). Proficiencies include collaborative skills in the decision-making procedures the school will follow in strategic planning, and the skill of consensus building both as a leader and as a member of a group (National Association of Elementary School Principals, p. 8).

Some groups in Iowa have also addressed the issue of school restructuring. In May, 1986, the Iowa Association of School Board’s Board of Directors authorized a committee to study Iowa’s educational delivery system. The committee, composed of school board
members, superintendents, and administrators, school principals, a school business official, and a private citizen, submitted its report to the IASB Delegate Assembly on January 21, 1987. In the recommendations on teaching functions, the commission stated that “teachers should have a meaningful voice in the decision making process…” (Iowa Association of School Boards, 1987, p. 2).

An Iowa School Public Relations Association survey of Iowa administrators in the spring of 1988 asked about the greatest needs in the public schools. Administrator respondents indicated that improving staff morale was the top public relations need, rating 3.67 on a 5-point survey scale. Participation in decisions seems to be positively associated with factors of staff morale.

The Iowa Business and Education Roundtable Report (1991) contained eight principles which it states must guide today’s Iowa schools into future world-class schools. The fourth principle addressed shared decision making:

Staff members in individual schools must have the authority to make decisions affecting student achievement and must be accountable for results. Holding schools accountable for results means giving schools authority to decide how to achieve those results. Decisions affecting instruction should be made by staff members as close to the students as possible. (Iowa Business and Education Roundtable, p. 7)

SDM Projects

Many schools across the country have implemented school improvement efforts which incorporate restructuring through some form of SDM as part of their program. In addition to the MIL schools and LLI districts, they include: Indianapolis, Indiana (Phillips and McColly, 1982, Cosner-Lotto, 1988); Duluth Public Schools, Minnesota; Salt Lake City, Utah (Malen and Ogawa, 1985); Cincinnati, Ohio (Schiering, 1984, and Morgan, 1983); ABC District of Cerritos, California (Sickler, 1988); Jefferson County Schools in
Kentucky, Dade County Public Schools in Florida, Poway Unified School District in California, New Orleans Public Schools, and Harlem District #4 in New York City (David, Purkey & White, 1989); Rochester, New York (Sheive, 1988, and Urbanski, 1988); and some schools in Maine (Miller, 1988). The National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the National Education Association (1989) collaborated to identify eleven SDM projects nation-wide. The New Jersey Department of Education and the major education associations in that state developed the New Jersey Cooperative Relationships Project with three basic purposes: (a) to increase teachers’ empowerment in decision making that affects the classroom; (b) to identify specific ways of improving the working and learning environments of public schools; (c) to develop ways of promoting on-going, cooperative change in school systems (New Jersey Department of Education, 1989, p. 2). The Minnesota Department of Education has implemented the Minnesota Educational Effectiveness Program which contains a school-based management component (Mesenburg, 1987). The New Hampshire Alliance for Effective Schools’ School Improvement Program is designed to train local school teams (teachers, principal, central office administrator, school board member, parents, students, and community members) to work collaboratively, using an SDM model, to develop their own school improvement plan. The Massachusetts Carnegie Schools is a state-funded program to develop innovative organization and management systems at school buildings and to promote autonomy for professional in schools. Rhode Island developed a grant program in 1989-90 to encourage school site management (Timar, 1989, pp. 2-3). In addition to these few examples, many other states have developed school improvement projects which use SDM components (Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 1987).
Clearly, then, the issue of teacher participation through restructuring is widely discussed in the literature and there appears to be a need for further investigation. The call for shared decision making has been raised at both national and state levels. The Iowa Roundtable Report praised those schools which have attempted to involve staff members in decision making. However, it also cited roadblocks:

But these innovative schools and teachers are largely working outside the system - or perhaps in spite of it. They are working in the context of an education system that emphasizes process over results, that places too many restrictions on creativity and innovation, that discourages collaboration and shared decisions. (Iowa Business and Education Roundable, 1991, p. 4)

Investigative Techniques

Investigative techniques used in this study were based upon those recommended by Sirotnik (1987), Holly (1988), Yin (1989), and Fetterman (1989). All advocate collecting data from a variety of sources and using a variety of methods.

Holly views evaluation as an action-research process to be conducted from within by the persons who are responsible for running the program. He advocates an eclectic approach which encompasses both qualitative and quantitative measures. This approach is supported by Sirotnik (1987): “By definition, then evaluation is the production of critical knowledge through the process of critical inquiry” (Sirotnik, p. 42). He views information, knowledge, and evaluation as thematic strands of the critical inquiry process. His critical inquiry process looks at circumstances, processes (activities), and meaning as three categories of information which can be obtained in a self-study. The facts or givens regarding the structures, situations, and physical features constitute the circumstantial data. Circumstantial data is obtained from school records, reports, documentation. Activities in the school constitute the processes. Data is collected through surveys, interviews,
observations, perceptions. Attribution of meaning to the experience constitutes the feelings, opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values that interact with the circumstances and process (Sirotnik, pp. 45-48). Sirotnik (p. 44) views the individual school as a cultural ecosystem where it is contradictory to treat one piece of information as a supreme standard against which all other pieces of information are judged.

Sirotnik and Holly both believe that the individual school should be the focus of evaluation, using resources from within that can be tapped for information. Yin (1989) supports a multiple assessment approach in gathering data for case studies. He listed six sources of data for case study research (Yin, p. 85).

Fetterman (1989) discussed the advantages of survey questionnaires for large-scale representativeness and efficiency of large scale data collection. However, methodological problems, including the distance between questioner and respondent, lend support for use of descriptive methods as well. Descriptive methods can be useful in explaining questionnaire results, while questionnaire results can indicate the degree to which attitudes and opinions are present (Fetterman, p. 65). Use of interviews to gain descriptive information is strongly advocated by Yin (1989). He mentioned three types of interviews: (a) the open-ended in which the respondent is asked for facts and opinions on a subject; (b) the focused interview in which the respondent is interviewed for a short period of time and the interviewer is more likely to follow an established set of questions derived from the case study profile; (c) a more structured interview along the lines of a survey (pp. 88-90). Fetterman further advocates the use of thick description which incorporates the cultural context as well as the researcher’s analysis. He believes that use of direct quotations is important to convey a sense of reality and immediacy. They also help the reader judge whether the author’s analysis and summary is accurate (Yin, 1989, p. 115). Interviews should be considered verbal reports only. They are subject to bias, poor recall, poor or
inaccurate articulation and should always be corroborated by other sources. (Yin, 1989, p. 91). The major reason for using multiple assessment methods is to enable corroboration of information. Corroboration enables one source of information to be compared against another to test the quality of information, or put information into perspective.

Summary and Conclusions

Based upon a review of the literature this researcher has developed the following conclusions about the SDM movement:

1. SDM cannot be separated from the issue of restructuring schools. It is one facet of the restructuring movement. SDM must be viewed as a means for school improvement and studied from that perspective. Improvement of student learning is its foremost justification.

2. The concept of participation in decision making is widely supported by major education groups, powerful influences in the private sector, and influential individuals within education. Motivations for that support vary. Because of the scope of support and variety of motivations, vigilance must be exercised so that shared decision making is used in education for the benefit of the students rather than becoming part of a power struggle between employees and management.

3. Educational organizations can benefit from the experiences of the private sector in the use of shared decision making. Industry and business in this country have successfully adapted management practices to include elements of shared decision making and are willing to share their knowledge experience with educators.

4. Although groups representing teachers and principals endorse the concept of empowerment through SDM, reservations exist on behalf of many rank and file persons regarding changes in organizational structure and sharing of power.
5. The movement to restructure American education to include a component for SDM and teacher empowerment is genuine, and has advanced to such a degree that it will not be turned back.

6. Experiences of those organizations which have implemented SDM indicate that SDM tends to improve climate, promotes positive feelings among workers, and results in increased productivity.

7. Few studies have been conducted to show the effect of SDM upon student achievement.

8. Subtle differences exist between shared decision making and school-based management. It is possible to have school-based or site-based management without using true shared decision making. For example, a principal, or an oligarchy within the school, can be empowered to make decisions at a particular school site and yet exclude from the process those persons who are affected by the decision. In that setting, site-based management is present, but true shared decision making is not being practiced.

9. The restructuring movement and subsequent emphasis on SDM have reduced the barriers between education groups, have started a collaborative process, and have improved collegial relationships. These effects are evident in single school sites, in school districts, and at the national level. The same trend is also evident between education groups and business groups. These groups are growing closer as the movement continues to unfold and develop.

10. There is no single established formula for achieving SDM. The successful implementation of SDM in a particular institution is unique to the culture, norms, and circumstances within that setting. Steps which proved successful in one school cannot be successfully applied in another school without considering the special circumstances of the adopting school.
11. With the implementation of SDM, the roles of educators are being transformed. Teachers are being provided more opportunities to exercise professional leadership, and principals and superintendents are being challenged to change the way they work with staff and make decisions. These new roles are making their jobs both more exciting and more difficult. They require development of new skills, new ways of viewing problems, and new ways of working together. Increased accountability will accompany the expanded leadership opportunities.

12. Decision-making power must be shared or it will be lost. School administrators must prepare themselves to facilitate a structural change in the decision-making process. Lindelow and his colleagues succinctly summarized the situation when they stated, “The writing is on the wall: If school administrators do not voluntarily share their power, they risk the forced rearrangement of decision-making authority through political means” (Lindelow et al., 1989, p. 153).
CHAPTER III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Background of the Study

Description of Marshalltown Community School District

Marshalltown Community School District is located in central Iowa. Marshalltown is a predominantly rural city of approximately 27,000, and serves as the Marshall County seat. Its economic base depends upon a mixture of agriculture, agribusiness, food processing, light industry, health-related services, commercial and retail trade. School enrollment is approximately 5,000 students in seven elementary, two middle, and one high schools. Organizational structure by grade is K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. The district employs a full time equivalent of 306 teachers and a total of 602 full-time and part-time employees. Central office administrative staff consists of a superintendent, one associate superintendent, one curriculum director, one director of special education, one business manager, and one coordinator for volunteer services. Building-level administration consists of seven elementary principals, two middle school principals, two middle school associate principals, one high school principal, and two associate high school principals. Additional personnel who are categorized as administrators at the high school include athletic director and director of student services. Classified supervisors include director of buildings, director of grounds, transportation director, and food service director. Director of Buildings and Director of Grounds are employed by a private management firm which is contracted to oversee supervision of those two departments.

Background to the LLI SDM project

The Marshalltown Community School District has a history of staff involvement and for the past several years had been moving toward greater teacher empowerment. Activities have included career ladder, teacher mentors, peer counselors, and job enlargement at both
building and district levels. Generally positive relationships have existed between the Marshalltown Education Association, the district administration, and the Marshalltown Board of Education.

Marshalltown Community School District's Shared Decision Making (SDM) Project started in the spring of 1989 as a National Education Association Learning Lab Initiative (LLI) project. Marshalltown's acceptance as the first learning lab school district in the country began with a grant application by Associate Superintendent Dr. Richard Doyle and Marshalltown Education Association (MEA) president Dr. Phil Tetzloff. The foci of the grant proposal were to conduct research and to develop a shared decision-making project which would have district-wide impact upon the use of shared decision making at the district and building levels. It emphasized the district's interest in using shared decision making to improve teaching and learning, documented the many programs which had already been implemented and which would support such a project, and committed the district to learning more about shared decision making and how to better implement it. The application process included an interview by representatives of NEA and the Iowa State Education Association (ISEA) with a district team. That team was composed of a board member, the superintendent, associate superintendent, MEA president, teacher negotiator, and several classroom teachers. Acceptance as an LLI district provided financial and technical support from both the NEA and ISEA.

After receiving the LLI designation, an interim steering committee was established to guide development of the SDM project. Members were selected from a list of applicants by a group composed of the superintendent's cabinet and MEA representatives. The steering committee originally consisted of the superintendent, the MEA president, one teacher each from the elementary, middle, and high school levels, one principal from each of the three
levels, the ISEA Uniserve Director, the ISEA Implementation and Project Specialist, and a school board member. NEA provided an independent consultant.

An early decision made by the interim steering committee was to designate a name for the district’s project. This was important for two reasons: to symbolize the nature and intent of the project; to counter criticism being received from a group in the community for having entered into an agreement with the NEA. The criticism focused upon the term learning laboratory, voicing concern that rooms would be established in which to perform experiments on children, and allegations that the Board of Education was usurping its lawful responsibilities by turning control of the school district over to the teachers and the NEA. After rejecting site-based decision making and site-based management as possible titles, the committee decided that the term shared decision making most appropriately depicted the project’s intent.

In October, 1989, the committee attended a week-long session conducted by the Institute for Development of Educational Activities (I/D/E/A) in joint sponsorship with I-LEAD Project from Iowa State University. Training concentrated on team building, problem-solving, and consensus development skills. Two persons received additional training as team facilitators. From that time the interim steering committee was called the vertical impact team, shortened to vertical team, a description used by the I/D/E/A program.

During the remainder of the 1989-90 school year the vertical team met in four-hour sessions at least once each month. Early activities included practicing team-building and trust-building skills, clarifying and developing the direction the project would take, producing printed materials which contain basic beliefs about shared decision making, defining purposes of the shared decision making project, and developing information for dissemination to the public. As the year progressed, the printed materials were refined and
published in the form of a booklet. The vertical team also researched and discussed at length its own role in the SDM project, as well as procedures to be used in pyramiding information to key groups.

By second semester of the 1989-90 school year, task forces were formed to visit each school. They shared information about the vertical team’s progress in the project, answered questions, and addressed concerns. In late spring of 1990 further plans were made to carry the project from the district to the building level. Procedures were developed whereby each building could express an interest in becoming formally involved in the SDM project. This was a critical step because the vertical team thought it crucial that buildings develop ownership for the project if success was to be realized. Again task forces visited each building to explain procedures for becoming involved and implications as they were known at that time. Each building’s decision to fully participate was required to be reached through staff consensus. It was emphasized that ownership for and direction of shared decision making within the building would be each building’s responsibility, and the role of the vertical team would be to provide technical assistance and facilitation as opposed to overseeing the building’s project. As part of the involvement, each building must agree to send a facilitator team (consisting of one teacher, one parent, and the principal) to a week-long training session conducted by I/D/E/A. Each of the ten buildings subsequently chose to participate and each was, therefore, included in the project during the first year.

All facilitating teams attended I/D/E/A’s training session during the week of August 13, 1990. The training session focused upon team development, trust building, group decision making, and formation of a School Improvement Program (SIP) planning team at the building level. In addition to building facilitators, others who attended were central office personnel, members of the vertical team, and members of the MEA leadership.
One outcome of training was the establishment of SIP planning teams at each building. Membership includes the facilitators, teachers, parents, community members, central office personnel, school board members, and student representatives at the high school. Numbers of people on the teams usually range from 16 to 22, depending upon staff size and school enrollment. During the 1990-91 school year every building implemented a SIP team.

In the fall of 1990 the district vertical team appointed an Assessment Task Force to develop assessment procedures for the district's SDM project and to oversee the project's assessment. A member of the assessment task force was designated as the project's assessment coordinator. This group proposed an assessment model to consist of a staff survey, individual interviews, and document analysis, all to be conducted during the second semester of the 1990-91 school year. Peter Holly served as an outside consultant for the assessment efforts. Holly is an independent consultant in program assessment who has been retained by NEA to work with learning laboratory schools. Data from each of the three sources were triangulated to corroborate the other two sources and to assure construct validity. Both the paper-pencil survey questions and the interview questions were closely structured around the four stated purposes of the SDM project.

The assessment model was based upon an embedded design (Yin, 1989) and used a multiple assessment approach (Holly, 1989; Sirotnik, 1987). Data produced from a paper-pencil survey and individual interviews were used in this study.

Staff Survey

Staff survey instrument

A 52 item paper-pencil instrument was developed by the assessment task force for to assess staff opinions about SDM. It was a modification of the Bellevue (Washington School District) Evaluation Study Instrument (1990). The Marshalltown instrument used a
five point Likert-type scale: (1) Strongly agree; (2) Agree more than disagree; (3) Disagree more than agree; (4) Strongly disagree; (5) Don’t know/Not applicable. The first five questions were designed to elicit demographic information which could be used analyze the effects of SDM according to job category, number of buildings served, membership or nonmembership on a building planning team, number of years of service. Each of the remaining 47 questions was designed to analyze one of the four main purposes and one of the eight variables of the SDM project, as established by the vertical team. The four purposes and eight variables were:

1. To develop and provide a flexible shared decision making model which accommodates the differences in each building. Variables were:
   * Authority: Where are decisions actually made and by whom?
   * Process Description: How are decisions actually made?
   * Belief in SDM Concept: Could SDM work? Will SDM actually work in the building? Will SDM work in the district?

2. To provide an effective means to develop and achieve building goals and objectives within the framework of the district goals and objectives. Variables were:
   * Involvement: What is the degree of involvement in setting of building goals?
   * Degree of Empowerment: What is the degree to which teachers, administrators, classified persons, students, and parents have the power to make decisions, the authority to carry them out, and the accountability for them?
   * Input: Was there opportunity to participate in the decision about what areas will be affected by SDM? What opportunity is available to furnish ideas in the areas that are not identified as part of SDM?

3. To provide collegial, cooperative, and professional relationships among teachers, administrators, classified personnel, students, and parents. The variable was:
* Collegiality: Are there examples of collegiality or lack of collegiality in the building? Are there examples of collegiality or lack of collegiality in the district?

4. To focus the shared decision-making model on the improvement of teaching and learning. Variables were:

* Teaching: How has SDM affected teaching in the classroom?
* Learning: How has SDM affected learning in the classroom?
* Curriculum: How has SDM affected curriculum in the classroom?

**Procedures for use of staff survey instrument**

Scan sheets were used to record individual responses. Response sheets were anonymously completed. Building anonymity was maintained through the use of an intermediary and a double coding system. Answer sheets designated for specific sites were color-coded by the intermediary before distribution. The intermediary recoded the response sheets from each site before sending them be be computer scanned. The computer was programmed to include each building's code so information could be disaggregated by building. Building identities were known to the assessment task force and vertical team as School 1, School 2, School 3, etc. Individual building results were available to the respective building planning teams from the intermediary.

A letter was sent to each employee on January 14, 1991, to make the staff aware of the survey, to explain how it would be used, and to ask them to complete the survey. The letter was sent in the names of Dr. Phil Tetzloff, president of the Marshalltown Education Association, Gerry Ott, ISEA Implementation and Project Specialist and a member of the vertical team and assessment task force, and Dr. Stephen Williams, Superintendent of Schools. Survey instruments were distributed to each employee through the building principals and site supervisors on January 18, 1991. Total number of employees in the district was 602. Survey instruments were to be completed and returned to either the
building principal/site supervisor or directly to the intermediary by January 22. Three hundred eighty (386) replies were received from all categories. This represented a 64% return from total faculty, and approximate returns of 63% of all building administrators (principals, associate principals, and activity directors), 100% of central office, 86% of certified teachers, and 37% of classified staff. Teachers comprised 69% of the respondents. Survey results are presented for each of the selected factors of restructuring, empowerment, involvement, collegiality, collaboration, and teaching and learning.

Answer sheets were recoded by the intermediary, and sent to Iowa State University Computer Center for scoring on January 28. Raw data were then disaggregated by the Iowa State Education Association computer services department according to categories of job roles and membership or nonmembership on a SIP team. Statistical differences between groups were not calculated, the rationale being that percentages of responses would provide a more useful picture of group perceptions. Disaggregated data by job category was available for 380 of the questionnaires. Six questionnaires were not used because of errors in marking the responses. Disaggregated data by membership on a building SIP or SDM team were available from 384 questionnaires. Two questionnaires were not used for this disaggregation because of errors in marking the response to the item asking about membership on a building SIP or SDM team. Building level data were developed from responses of respective buildings. District level data were developed by combining embedded data from each building. Each building’s disaggregated data along with a copy of district-wide data was sent by the intermediary to the respective building principals for use by the building SIP teams. Copies of the district-wide data were distributed to each vertical team member. The assessment task force then developed a summary report which was distributed to all employees, the Board of Education, and local news media.
Individual Interviews

Sample selection

Individual interviews were used as the second method of assessment. Sample population included teachers, classified persons, principals, central office administrators, certified and classified supervisors. Sample selection from teachers and nonsupervisory classified personnel was made using a stratified random technique with a table of random numbers. All building principals, all central office administrators, all certified supervisors/administrators, and all classified supervisors were provided an opportunity to be interviewed. One hundred eleven (111) persons were chosen in the original selection procedure according to the following stratifications: 10 nonsupervisory classified staff (two each from the categories of secretary, custodian, food service, bus driver, education aide); 20 high school teachers; 20 middle school teachers; 35 elementary teachers; 5 central office administrators; 14 principals and associates; 4 classified supervisors; 3 certified supervisors/administrators.

These persons were contacted by letter on February 12. The letter explained the purpose of the interviews, the procedure to be used, how the sample was selected, and a request for participation. Accompanying the letter was a response sheet on which the individual could indicate whether or not he/she would be willing to participate. Eight high school, eight middle school, thirteen elementary teachers and two custodians declined to participate and were replaced. Replacements were selected using the random selection technique with a random table of numbers. A decision was made not to replace two bus drivers and two food service personnel in the sample. Three noncertified supervisors declined to be interviewed. One of those was replaced with a central office coordinator who was not included in the original sample. All building principals and assistant principals, certified supervisors and administrators, and those secretaries chosen in the sample agreed to be interviewed. Total number of staff persons who agreed to be
interviewed was 104, according to the following stratifications: 6 nonsupervisory
classified staff (2 custodians, 2 secretaries, 2 aides); 20 high school teachers; 20 middle
school teachers; 34 elementary teachers; 5 central office administrators; 14 principals and
associates; 2 classified supervisors; 3 certified supervisors/administrators.

Data was compiled from 98 of the interviews and not available from the other 6.

**Interview instrument**

Interview questions were developed by the assessment task force in consultation with
Peter Holly. Interview questions are contained in Appendix B. The instrument contained
23 open-ended questions designed to be answered in a structured individual interview
lasting from 45 to 60 minutes. Each question was keyed to a specific SDM project purpose
and variable or to a specific area of the staff survey data which the assessment task force
chose to validate. Interviewers were 18 Danforth Project graduate students from the
Department of School Administration at Iowa State University. They were trained in
interview techniques by Peter Holly on February 6, and received follow-up training from
their instructors at ISU. Each interviewer was provided with a packet which included
*Guidelines for Interviews*, developed by the assessment task force, a *Privacy of
Information Statement* which each was asked to sign, a list of the four purposes of the
SDM project, and a copy of the purposes with variables for each. These materials are
contained in Appendix C.

**Interview procedures**

Each respondent was provided with a list interview questions at the onset of the
session. The interview procedure provided the interviewee the opportunity to read each
question and then respond. The interviewer recorded the responses, trying to capture
language-rich statements. Notes were recorded on a separate one-page *Interview Data*
Sheet printed on two-copy NCR paper. The form was divided vertically, with the left-hand column to be used to note responses, and the right-hand column to note interviewer reflections. At the end of the session the respondent was provided with a copy of responses recorded during the interview. Following each session the interviewer reflected upon the meaning of the responses and wrote a brief explanation or summary comment reflecting his or her perceptions of the meaning of the response. The original copy of each interview data sheet was mailed to the intermediary through school mail and a photo copy retained by the interviewer for follow-up use in his/her analysis. Interviews were conducted between February 18 and March 25, 1991. The Danforth students were provided with a list of interviewees and respective buildings, and they, as a group, selected the individuals whom each would interview.

Interview data analysis procedures

Data analysis procedures were developed to provide a holistic summary by the interviewers of the data according to guidelines from the vertical team. Guidelines are listed in Appendix D. Data were organized and interpreted by the interviewers in a three-step process.

Perceptions of perceived strengths and perceived areas for improvement

In the first step, each interviewer was asked to review the data he/she collected for information relating to two perceived areas of strength and three priority areas for improvement and growth which the vertical team had previously identified from results of the staff survey, and which it wanted to validate through individual interviews. Two areas identified as perceived strengths of the SDM project were Collegiality and Involvement; three areas identified as needing further improvement and growth were Input, Empowerment, and Process. Based upon its interpretation of the staff survey, the vertical team wrote a conclusion statement for each perceived area of strength and each perceived area for
improvement and growth to describe staff opinion about each of the five areas. The interviewers were asked to decide if the people whom they interviewed would agree or disagree with each conclusion.

Areas of perceived strengths and the conclusion for each were:

1. Collegiality: "The SDM project has provided for improved collegial, cooperative, and professional relationships among teachers, administrators, classified personnel, students, and parents."

2. Involvement: "The SDM project provides an effective means for developing and achieving building goals and objectives within the framework of the district goals and objectives."

Areas of improvement and growth, and the conclusion for each were:

1. Input: "More work needs to be done to ensure that an opportunity to participate in the decisions about what areas will be affected by SDM is provided for all individuals."

2. Empowerment: "More work needs to be done to ensure that teachers, administrators, classified persons, students, and parents have the power to make decisions, the authority to carry them out, and the accountability for them."

3. Process: "More work needs to be done to ensure that a flexible share decision-making model which accommodates the difference in each building is actually used."

The interviewers were then asked to review the written responses and reflections from each person interviewed and to make a judgment about whether that person would agree or disagree with the following statements, each of which was related to a perceived area of strength or a perceived area for improvement and growth. Perceived areas of strength, and statements which the interviewers were asked to judge whether each person interviewed would agree with or disagree with were:

1. Collegiality: Cooperative relationships are present at the building and district level.
2. **Involvement:** A significant number of individuals are involved in the setting of building goals.

Perceived areas for improvement and growth, and statements which the interviewers were asked to judge whether each person interviewed would agree with or disagree with were:

1. **Input:** Providing individuals with more opportunities to furnish ideas and share in decision making process is a desirable growth priority for the SDM project.

2. **Empowerment:** Empowering these individuals (teachers, administrators, classified persons, students, and parents) with decision-making power is a desirable growth priority for the SDM project.

3. **Process:** Changing from the way decisions are actually made, at the present time, to a shared decision-making model is a desirable growth priority and need of the SDM project.

Interviewers reviewed their data and tallied the number of people interviewed who, in the opinion of the interviewers, would agree and the number who would disagree with each statement. Language-rich statements of those people who disagreed with the statement were recorded.

**Belief statements about four major purposes of the SDM project** In the second step, each interviewer was presented with the four major purposes of the SDM project. He/she was asked to estimate (a) the degree to which the people interviewed believed the purpose of the project was actually being met and (b) the degree to which the people interviewed believed the purpose was a desirable or undesirable goal. The four purposes statements were:

1. The people interviewed believe that a flexible shared decision-making model which accommodates differences in each building is being practiced.
2. The people interviewed believe that there is an effective means for developing and achieving building goals and objectives (within the framework of the district goals).

3. The people interviewed believe that collegial, cooperative and professional relationships among teachers, administrators, classified personnel, students and parents have improved.

4. The people interviewed believe that the stated goal of focusing the shared decision-making model on the improvement of teaching and learning is being implemented.

A fifth question asked the interviewers to judge whether the people interviewed feel positively oriented toward the project, whether they believe that the project will be successful, and whether they feel that research and literature are having an impact on how they do things.

Estimates for the degree to which the people interviewed believed the descriptive statement is actually occurring were recorded on a three-point Likert scale, with a range from to a small extent to a great deal. Estimates of each descriptive statement's desirability as a goal were recorded on a two-point continuum with a range of a very undesirable goal to a very desirable goal. Estimates on both scales were recorded in per cents of people interviewed. The interviewers then made summary interpretations about data recorded for each of the descriptive statements. Written directions for interpreting and scoring of interview data are contained in Appendix D.

Combining of data and summary statements. In the third step, the interviewers combined their observations and data. They met as a group on May 1 to examine data from their interviews. Interviewers worked in groups of four or five persons. Each group combined the number of agree and disagree tallies for each of the five statements. They also listed language-rich comments which disagreed with the statements in order to capture a sample of the reasons for disagreement. Total number of tallies in each category were
then noted for all groups in a large-group setting, and agreement reached about four or five language-rich statements which characterized the opinions of those interviewees who disagreed with the variable statements.

Individuals within each group then combined their data about the four purpose statements and degree of belief. Group data then were analyzed by the large group to obtain estimated percentages of people interviewed who fell at points on the Likert scales. A summary of language-rich statements of those people expressing concerns about the project was developed by the interviewers working in large-group.

Dr. Jacqueline Mitchell, Danforth class instructor, then summarized the findings of each group into a written report. The interview summary report is contained in Appendix E. Two Danforth students presented the report to the vertical team on May 14.
CHAPTER IV. FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of SDM in early stages of implementation as related to selected factors by analyzing data collected from participants in the Marshalltown shared decision-making project. The selected factors are restructuring of roles and processes, collegiality, involvement in decisions, empowerment, collaboration, and teaching and learning. Twenty-three research questions were examined. A staff survey instrument and individual interviews were used to gather data to address the research questions.

Staff Survey

Restructuring of roles and processes

Restructuring of roles and tasks refers to redefinition of traditional roles and tasks of participants in the schools and the school district. Table 1 presents data about processes of SDM, potential of SDM for school improvement, concerns, and other selected opinions and attitudes toward SDM or the process. Three items addressed processes. Most staff are not aware of the processes used with SDM. A majority (58.2%) don't know what issues are handled by the SIP teams or don't know with what detail items are addressed through the SDM process (56.3%). This is particularly true of classified staff. Many of them (80.6%) are unaware of the issues addressed by SIP teams and are also unaware of the degree to which SDM addresses issues (83.7%). Half of the teachers (50.4%), 4 of 10 principals (40%) and a two-thirds (66.7%) of central office persons also are unaware of the depth to which SDM addresses issues. Of the staff who is aware of the details addressed by the SIP team, nearly 3 out of 4 from that group (30% out of 41.9%) do not think the SIP teams address too many details instead of significant issues. Even though every principal serves on his/her building SIP team, 30% don't know if SDM handles items in depth. Teachers who are aware of the degree to which SDM handles items agree
Table 1. Responses by job category for restructuring roles and processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N=380)(^a)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
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<td>16.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
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<td>16.3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<td>13.2</td>
<td>47.0</td>
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<td>Principals</td>
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<td>30.0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
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<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>83.7</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>Principals</td>
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<td>Central Office</td>
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<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>67.3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46.6</td>
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<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<td>15.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
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<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
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<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
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</table>

\(^a\)Teacher n=266, principal n=10, central office n= 6, classified n=98.

*Reverse item.
### Table 1. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SDM is important for identifying vision</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe current efforts will last</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Concerns**

| It is not clear who makes what decisions *                           | Teachers     | 66.2           | 30.8              | 3.0                  |
|                                                                    | Principals   | 40.0           | 60.0              | 0.0                  |
|                                                                    | Central Office| 50.0           | 50.0              | 0.0                  |
|                                                                    | Classified   | 49.0           | 21.4              | 29.6                 |
|                                                                    | Total        | 60.8           | 29.5              | 9.7                  |
| District's goals, practices and beliefs fit my own                  | Teachers     | 80.8           | 17.7              | 1.5                  |
|                                                                    | Principals   | 90.0           | 10.0              | 0.0                  |
|                                                                    | Central Office| 83.3           | 0.0               | 16.7                 |
|                                                                    | Classified   | 46.9           | 19.4              | 33.7                 |
|                                                                    | Total        | 72.4           | 17.6              | 10.0                 |
| Too much change going on too fast *                                  | Teachers     | 35.0           | 59.4              | 5.6                  |
|                                                                    | Principals   | 60.0           | 40.0              | 0.0                  |
|                                                                    | Central Office| 50.0           | 33.3              | 16.7                 |
|                                                                    | Classified   | 26.6           | 47.9              | 25.5                 |
|                                                                    | Total        | 33.7           | 55.5              | 10.8                 |
| We jump too fast without doing a quality job of implementation*     | Teachers     | 42.9           | 48.5              | 8.7                  |
|                                                                    | Principals   | 40.0           | 60.0              | 0.0                  |
|                                                                    | Central Office| 50.0           | 33.4              | 16.7                 |
|                                                                    | Classified   | 30.6           | 41.9              | 27.6                 |
|                                                                    | Total        | 39.7           | 46.8              | 13.4                 |
Table 1. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category (N=380)²</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>87.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>63.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I am wondering why the focus on SDM³</strong></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I would welcome a district meeting to explain renewal efforts</strong></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

by 3 to 1 (39.2% to 13.2%) that SDM addresses items in depth. PSI-NET'S contribution to the SDM process is relatively unknown by the majority (78.9%) of staff.

Four items addressed potential for school improvement. Nearly 42% of staff do not know whether SDM will become more effective with time. However, those who expressed an opinion agree by 4 to 1 (46.6% vs. 11.6%) that SDM will become more effective with time. Principals (80%) and most teachers (52%) expect the SDM process to become more effective with time, while central office persons are evenly split (50%) between thinking it will become more effective and not knowing. A majority of the staff (65%) believe that SDM can lead to significant changes. Most teachers (71.4%), principals
(80%) and central office persons (66.6%) believe that potential exists for significant change through SDM, but half of classified (50%) are not sure of the potential for change.

A majority (70.3%) of staff perceive SDM as important component of establishing a vision for the school. While half of classified (50%) agree with the importance of SDM for identifying vision, nearly half (44.9%) do not know. Staff is not yet convinced that efforts in SDM will last. Fewer than half (43.9%) believe efforts will last, while nearly as many (36.3%) disagree, and nearly one fifth (19.7%) don't know if it will last. Teachers are almost evenly split between thinking efforts will last (46.6%) and will not last (41.4%).

Four items addressed concerns associated with changing roles and processes brought about by the SDM project. A majority (60.8%) of staff are not clear about who is supposed to make what decisions. Two of three teachers (66.2%), 40% of principals, half of central office (50%), and 49% of classified are unclear about who makes what decisions. The district's goal of SDM is compatible with most (72.4%) staff. Fewer than half of classified (46.9%), however, think that district goals are compatible with their own, and one-third (33.7%) don't know. Most staff (55.5%) are comfortable with the rate of change. It is interesting to note that a majority of teachers (59.4%) feel that change is not coming too fast, but a majority (60%) of principals, and half of central office persons would like to slow the rate of change in the district. Fewer than half the staff (46.8%) believe the district is taking its time to do a good job of implementing new programs. Many staff (39.7%) are concerned about the quality of implementation within the district. It should be noted that while a majority of the principals think change is occurring too rapidly, the principals are the only professional group with a majority (60%) who believe changes are being implemented with quality.

Other items addressed components of the process. A majority (63.7%) of staff don't know whether their school has a self-analysis component as part of the school
improvement plan. More than one-third (38.2%) do not understand the reasons for the
district's focus and attention upon SDM. A like proportion of teachers (38.4%), principals
(40%), and classified (38.7%) are unsure. More than two-thirds of the staff (68.9%)
would like further explanation of how SDM fits in with total renewal efforts in the district.

Table 2 presents data on restructuring roles and processes according to membership and
nonmembership on a school shared decision-making team.

Table 2. Responses for restructuring roles and processes according to membership and
nonmembership on a planning team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Planning Team Status (N=384)</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>67.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>(43.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processes</td>
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<td>67.0</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>66.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>(46.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>64.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>83.1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>(18.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>51.3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>(40.3)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Nonmember</td>
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<td>13.6</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>(7.5)</td>
<td>(27.7)</td>
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</table>

*aPlanning team member n=82; not a planning team member, n=302.
*Reverse items
Table 2. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Planning Team Member (N=384)$^a$</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SDM is important for identifying vision</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>(4.2)</td>
<td>(28.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>(6.6)</td>
<td>(15.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is not clear who makes what decisions $^*$</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>(3.6)</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>(12.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District's goals, practices, and beliefs fit my own</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>85.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>(3.5)</td>
<td>(14.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much change going on too fast $^*$</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>(12.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We jump too fast without doing a quality job of</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implementation $^*$</td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>(11.6)</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>(15.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>70.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>(31.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am wondering why the focus on SDM $^*$</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>(22.7)</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>(16.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would welcome a district meeting to explain renewal</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>efforts $^*$</td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>(2.6)</td>
<td>(13.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Those people who are on a SIP or SDM planning team have greater knowledge about specific details of the processes used with the SIP teams and SDM in general than do those who are not members of a team. Almost two-thirds of the team members (63.4%) believe that decision-making teams do not ignore significant issues, compared to just one-fifth (20.5%) of those staff who are not on a team. Team members (67%), by a proportion of 3 to 1 over nonmembers (23.8%), also believe that SDM handles items in depth rather than giving them surface level attention. While a greater percentage of team members (24.4%) than nonmembers (9.9%) perceive the computer network as useful for SDM, majorities of both groups (64.6% and 83.1% respectively) are not aware of its usefulness for SDM.

Members of planning teams are more likely than nonmembers to hold positive beliefs about the potential of SDM for effecting change. Twice the proportion of members (79.3%) think SDM will become more effective over time than do nonmembers of planning teams (36.7%). Nearly all planning team members (91.4%) foresee significant changes due to SDM compared to slightly more than half (56.3%) on nonmembers, and nearly all members (95.1%) believe SDM is important for forming a vision of what the schools can become, compared to 6 of every 10 (61.9%) nonmembers. It can be noted that while a very small proportion of members (1.2%) don't know whether SDM is important for identifying vision, nearly one-third (30.1%) of nonmembers don't know. Staff is not yet convinced that the current efforts in SDM will last, since over one-third of members either disagree (30.5%) or don't know (8.5%), and nearly two-thirds of nonmembers either disagree (37.1%) or don't know (24.2%).

Staff who are involved on planning teams are less likely to have concerns about restructured roles and processes. Although a very small difference (3.6%) exists between members and nonmembers who are not clear about where responsibilities lie for some decisions, a greater difference exists (15.9%) between team members (41.4%) who do
think they have a clear idea and nonmembers who share the same belief (25.5%). Likewise, a greater proportion of team members (85.4%) than nonmembers (67.2%) identify district beliefs and practices as consistent with their own. It is interesting to note that every planning team member holds an opinion about compatibility of district goals with their own. Planning team members are more likely (67%) to believe the district is doing a quality job of implementing new programs, while nonmembers are evenly split between those who have the same belief (40.1%) and those who think the district is moving from one idea to another without assuring quality implementation (42.1%).

Most staff (70.9%) who are not on a planning team either do not know whether self-analysis is part of their school's improvement plan or believe the issue does not apply to them, compared to fewer than half (39%) of planning team members. Team members (53.7%) are more than twice as likely as nonmembers (24.5%) to be aware of the school's improvement plan. A majority of team members (79.3%) understand the reason for focus on SDM compared to less than half (40.4%) of nonmembers. Majorities of both team members (80.5%) and nonmembers (64.2%) would like further clarification of SDM's role in the district's renewal efforts. It can be noted that a greater proportion of nonmembers, as compared to planning team members, indicate they do not know on every item. It can also be noted that a greater proportion of nonmembers than members agree with each of the reverse items except for that addressing the pace of change (.7% difference).

Empowerment

Empowerment reflects the degree to which teachers, administrators, classified persons, students, and parents believe they have the power to make decisions, are accountable for the results, and have the authority to carry them out. Data for the seven items which measured empowerment are presented in Table 3, and are organized according
to the extent of empowerment, feelings about empowerment, and specific areas of empowerment.

Five items addressed the latitude accorded to staff. Forty per cent of employees, including nearly half of the teachers (47.7%), believe that schools do not have enough latitude to make significant changes. Most principals (60%) and central office staff (83.3%), however, believe that schools do have power to make significant changes. Many classified staff (57.1%) do not know whether or not the schools have power to make such changes. Half (50.3%) of all employees do not believe they have sufficient influence over school level decisions which affect their jobs. Most notably, a slight majority (52.3%) of teachers share that perception, but a larger proportion of principals (60%) and half of the office personnel (50%) believe they have sufficient influence in this area. Most staff (57.4%) agree that their schools can make appropriate decisions for their clientele. One-fifth of the teachers (20.3%), however, do not share that belief.

Table 3. Responses by job category for empowerment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category (N=380)²</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latitude to Act</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due to rules, schools don't have enough latitude to make significant changes*</td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²Teacher n=266, principal n=10, central office n= 6, classified n=98.
*Reverse items.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category (N=380)</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have sufficient influence over school level decisions* that affect my job</td>
<td>Teachers 43.2</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals 60.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office 50.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified 24.5</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 38.9</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our school can make decisions which are appropriate for our population</td>
<td>Teachers 65.8</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals 90.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office 66.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified 30.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 57.4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have sufficient influence over decisions about my inservice needs</td>
<td>Teachers 49.2</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals 70.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office 83.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified 17.3</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 42.1</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have sufficient influence over decisions about allocation of building budget</td>
<td>Teachers 21.1</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals 90.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office 33.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified 4.0</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 18.7</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Feelings about empowerment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDM is empowering</th>
<th>Teacher 60.9</th>
<th>23.7</th>
<th>15.4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals 80.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office 100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified 22.4</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 52.2</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I feel bogged down rather than empowered by the decisions I am asked to make*</th>
<th>Teacher 34.9</th>
<th>55.3</th>
<th>9.8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals 40.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office 16.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified 10.2</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>59.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 28.4</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Less than half the staff (42.1%) report they have sufficient influence over inservice needs. Teachers are split on the issue, with nearly half (49.2%) feeling they have sufficient influence and an approximately equal proportion (47%) reporting they don't have sufficient influence. Most principals (70%) and most central office persons (83.3%) believe they possess sufficient influence over their inservice needs. Most staff (63.6%) believe they have little control over building budget allocations. That opinion is pervasive among teachers (73.3%). Principals (90%) on the other hand indicate they have sufficient influence over decisions concerning their building budgets.

Feelings about empowerment are mixed. A majority of staff (52.2%) believe that SDM is empowering. Central office (100%) and principals (80%) are most positive, but a majority of teachers (60.9%) also feel empowered by SDM, while 15% are not sure. Most classified staff (63.2%) do not know whether SDM empowers them. Less than half the staff (48.4%), including a majority of teachers (55.3%) and half (50%) of the principals, do not feel that the decision-making process bogs them down.

Table 4 presents data on empowerment according to membership and nonmembership on a school planning team.

Members of planning teams express a greater sense of empowerment than do nonmembers. Planning team members, by a proportion of more than 2 to 1 (56.1% to 26.8%), believe their buildings have power to make significant changes. Equal proportions of members and nonmembers (40%) do not agree that their buildings have such power, and one-third (33.1%) of nonmembers don't know. Over half the team members (53.7%) also feel sufficient influence over school level decisions affecting their jobs as compared to one-third of nonmembers (34.1%). The proportion of members (79.3%) and nonmembers (50.3%) who think their schools can make appropriate decisions for the populations differs by 29%. One-third of nonmembers (33.8%) don't know
Table 4. Responses for empowerment according to membership and nonmembership on a planning team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Planning Team Status</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N=384)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Latitude to Act</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due to rules, schools don't have enough latitude to make significant changes*</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>(29.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have sufficient influence over school level decisions that affect my job</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>(9.0)</td>
<td>(10.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our school can make decisions which are appropriate for our population</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>(1.2)</td>
<td>(27.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have sufficient influence over decisions about my inservice needs</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>(7.4)</td>
<td>(17.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have sufficient influence over decisions about allocation of building budget</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>(.3)</td>
<td>(14.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feelings about empowerment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM is empowering</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>82.9</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>(11.5)</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel bogged down rather than empowered by the decisions</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>(4.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aPlanning team member n=82; not a planning team member, n=302.
*Reverse items
whether their school has the power to make appropriate decisions for their respective populations, as opposed to a small proportion (6.1%) of team members.

Sixty per cent of planning team members believe they have sufficient influence over inservice needs compared to just over one-third (36.1%) of nonmembers. Nonmembers have greater proportions who don't feel sufficient influence over inservice needs (44%) and who don't know whether they have sufficient influence over inservice needs (19.9%) than do planning team members (36.6% who don't feel sufficient influence and 2.4% who don't know). Both planning team members and nonmembers agree in equal proportions (62%) that they lack sufficient influence over building budgets. However, a greater proportion of nonmembers than members (22.2% and 7.3% respectively) don't know whether they have sufficient influence in this area.

Planning team members are much more likely (82.9%) to believe that SDM empowers them than are nonmembers (43.1%). Nearly one-fourth of nonmembers (22.5%) don't believe that SDM is empowering, and more than one-third of nonmembers (34.4%) don't know whether SDM empowers them, compared to a small proportion of planning team members (6.1%). Nonmembers also have a greater proportion of those who don't know whether they are bogged down by decisions (29.1%) than do planning team members (4.9%), and a smaller percentage who don't feel bogged down (45.4%) than do team members (57.4%). It can be noted that on every item a greater proportion of nonmembers than members don't know, and that planning team members agree in greater proportion with the statement than do nonmembers.

Involvement

Data for involvement are presented in Table 5.
Table 5. Responses by job category for involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category (N=380)&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in SDM is a worthwhile use of my time</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is more appropriate to use nonclass time for planning than for SDM*</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>87.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under the planning team structure, it is easy for traveling staff to be involved in SDM</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>77.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under the planning team structure, it is easy for classified staff to be involved in SDM</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So busy that I give surface level attention to decisions that require my involvement*</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Teacher n=266; principal n=10; central office n= 6; classified n=98.

<sup>*</sup>Reverse items.
Table 5. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desire for involvement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let me do my job. I'll live with decisions of others.*</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm informed about what is happening with SDM in my building</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposes of SDM have been clearly communicated to me</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make sure my views are heard in SDM discussions</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity strengthens the SDM process</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Involvement represents feelings of worth about SDM, ease and extent of participation, and awareness of and communication about what is happening in SDM. Data are organized according to feelings of worth, ease of involvement, degree of involvement, desire for involvement, communications, and who should be involved.

Two items measured perceptions of worth. Half (50.2%) of total staff believe that participation in SDM is worthwhile. That feeling is held by most teachers (60.1%) and principals (70%). One central office person (16.7%), however, feels SDM is not worthwhile, and most classified (70.4%) don’t have an opinion about its worth. SDM is not perceived by most teachers (66.5%) as being so important as to take noninstructional time way from other planning activities.

It is not easy for either traveling staff or classified staff to become involved in SDM under the present structure. A minority of total staff (20.2%) believe it is easy for itinerant teachers, but most (51.1%) either don’t know or don’t believe the issue applies to them. Slightly more than one-third of total staff (36%) perceive it to be easy for classified staff to be involved. Most (55.1%) classified themselves, however, don’t know whether or not it is easy for them to become involved in SDM.

The staff is split on the issue of the level of attention it gives to decisions. Less than half the staff (45%) give more than surface-level attention to decisions requiring their involvement. Half (50.8%) of teachers report they are too busy to give adequate attention to decisions requiring involvement, whereas a majority of principals (70%) and central office persons (66.7%) do not feel that way.

It is clear that most staff (70.3%) want to be involved in decisions. A majority of teachers (73.7%), all principals, all central office persons, and more than half of classified (56.1%) want involvement, but some teachers (24.4%) and classified (29.5%) are satisfied being left out.
Communications were addressed by three items. Less than half the total staff (47.4%) report they are informed about SDM. More teachers (54.5%) and principals (70%) are informed about events in their buildings, but only one-fourth of classified persons (25.5%), and just half (50%) of central office think they are informed about SDM. Less than half of the staff (48.9%) believe the purposes of SDM have been communicated to them. Again classified staff (22.5%) are less informed. Over half the staff (55.8%), including a majority of teachers (63.9%), principals (70%), and central office (83.3%), make their views known in discussions about SDM, but the proportion of classified who do so is much smaller (30.7%). The staff (70.2%) feel that the SDM process is strengthened by a diversity of people, but classified staff (55.1%) again either don't know or think the diversity issue doesn't apply to them.

Table 6 presents data for involvement according to membership and nonmembership on a school's planning team. Differences of attitudes and beliefs about SDM can be noted between members and nonmembers of building teams. A big difference exists (59.5%) between the proportion of members of planning team members (97.2%) and nonmembers (37.7%) in their opinions about the worth of participation in SDM. In addition, 41% of nonmembers don't have an opinion, as compared to a small proportion of team members (2.4%). Planning team members are more likely (40.2%) than nonmembers (12.2%) to think it is appropriate to use nonclass time for SDM rather than for planning, while a majority of nonmembers (51.7%) believe it more appropriate to use nonclass time for planning. Nearly half of the planning team members (48.7%) think it is easy for classified staff to be involved in SDM as compared to 12% of nonmembers. Almost two-thirds of the planning team members (64.6%) also think that it is easy for classified staff to be involved while half of nonmembers (51.7%) don't know if it is easy for classified to be involved.
Table 6. Responses for involvement according to membership and nonmembership on a planning team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Planning Team Status</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Team Status</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Not Know/NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N=384)²</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worth</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in SDM is a worthwhile use of my time</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>(16.4)</td>
<td>(38.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is more appropriate to use nonclass time for planning than for SDM*</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>(15.1)</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>(12.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ease of involvement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under the planning team structure, it is easy for traveling staff to be involved in SDM</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>(.3)</td>
<td>(36.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under the planning team structure, it is easy for classified staff to be involved in SDM</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>(40.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Degree of involvement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So busy that I give surface level attention to decisions that require my involvement*</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>(8.3)</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>(17.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desire for involvement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let me do my job. I'll live with decisions of others.*</td>
<td>Members</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmembers</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>(19.1)</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>(6.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²Planning team member n=82; not a planning team member, n=302.  
*Reverse items.
Table 6. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Team Status</th>
<th>Percent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N=384)(^a)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm informed about what is happening with SDM in my building</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>(27.3)</td>
<td>(14.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of SDM have been clearly communicated to me</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>84.1</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>(32.8)</td>
<td>(13.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make sure my views are heard in SDM discussions</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>(10.5)</td>
<td>(20.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity strengthens the SDM process</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>(2.4)</td>
<td>(28.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A greater proportion of planning team members (64.6%) than nonmembers (38.7%) give in-depth attention to decisions requiring their involvement. Likewise a greater proportion of planning team members (89.1%) want to be involved in decision making than do nonmembers (63.5%). It can be noted that very small proportions of team members withheld their opinions on the issues of degree of involvement and desire for involvement (0% and 1.2% respectively).

Greater proportions of planning team members are informed about details of SDM than are nonmembers. In comparison to nonmembers, a greater proportion of planning team members are informed about what is happening with SDM (79.3% and 37.7% respectively), believe the purposes of SDM have been communicated to them (84.1% and
38.4% respectively), and are more likely to make sure their views are heard in SDM discussions (70.2% and 48.6% respectively). A greater proportion of nonmembers believe the purposes of SDM have not been communicated to them (47.4%) than believe that purposes of SDM have been clearly communicated (38.4%).

Nearly all (93.9%) planning team members believe that diversity strengthens the SDM process, and a smaller proportion of nonmembers (62.6%) share that belief.

It can be noted that a smaller proportion of planning team participants marked the *don't know* category on every item dealing with *Involvement* than did those who are not members of a planning team.

**Collegiality**

Collegiality is the degree to which cooperative relationships are present or absent in the building and district. Table 7 presents data according to job category. The data are organized according to value of others, respect, and atmosphere.

Two items addressed value of others. Slightly less than half (47.3%) of the staff value parent perspective on SIP teams. Only 4.2% disagree with the value of parent perspective, but nearly half the staff (48.2%) do not know. The proportions of principals (40%) and central office staff (50%), however, is especially notable, since all principals and nearly all central office staff serve with parents as members of SIP teams. A majority of staff (71.1%) either do not know whether student perspective on SIP teams is valuable, or feel the issue does not apply to them. Just one principal (10%) agrees with the value of student perspective, possibly reflecting the opinion of the one principal whose planning team does have student members.

Two items addressed respect. Staff members (80.5%) believe their opinions are respected by colleagues. They also believe that principals respect their opinions (76.4%).
Table 7. Responses by job category for collegiality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category (N=380)</th>
<th>Percent Agree</th>
<th>Percent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value of Others</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents add valuable perspectives to SIP team</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>69.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students add valuable perspectives to SIP team</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>33.4</td>
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<td>66.7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>79.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respect</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other staff members at my school respect my opinion</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My principal respects my opinion</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM has increased the level of respect between parents and teachers</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>48.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>75.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aTeacher n=266; principal n=10; central office n=6; classified n=98.*
Table 7. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category (N=380)</th>
<th>Percent Agree</th>
<th>Percent Disagree</th>
<th>Percent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atmospere</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff climate in my building</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is relatively tension and stress free</td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is especially interesting to note that the two groups which work most closely with principals in the buildings, teachers (84.2%) and classified (66.3), feel that respect, and that the proportions of teachers (9.4%) and classified (8.2%) who believe their opinions are not respected are small. Just over half of the staff (56.1%), however, do not know whether respect has increased between parents and teachers because of SDM. Although half of the principals (50%) note an increased level of respect, half (50%) of them, along with two-thirds of central office staff (66.7%), indicate they do not know, even though members in both groups work with parents in the SIP teams. Nearly half of the teachers (48.9%), and three-fourths of classified (75.5%) do not know whether the respect level between parents and teachers has changed. Just over half of the staff (55%) perceive their buildings as being relatively free from stress and tension. This group includes a majority of teachers (54.1%), principals (80%) and classified (57.1%). A smaller proportion of staff (37.7%), including 44.4% of the teachers, however, do feel the presence of tension and stress.

Table 8 presents data on collegiality according to membership and nonmembership on a school's planning team.
Table 8. Responses for collegiality according to membership and nonmembership on a planning team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Planning Team Status (n=384)&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value of Others</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents add valuable perspectives to SIP team</td>
<td>Member 87.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember 35.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference 52.4</td>
<td>(2.2)</td>
<td>(40.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students add valuable perspectives to SIP team</td>
<td>Member 19.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember 22.8</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference (3.0)</td>
<td>(2.1)</td>
<td>(5.4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respect</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other staff members at my school respect my opinion</td>
<td>Member 90.3</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember 76.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference 13.5</td>
<td>(1.3)</td>
<td>(12.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My principal respects my opinion</td>
<td>Member 87.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember 73.2</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference 14.6</td>
<td>(6.3)</td>
<td>(8.4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM has increased level of respect between parents</td>
<td>Member 64.7</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and teachers</td>
<td>Nonmember 21.9</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference 42.8</td>
<td>(3.9)</td>
<td>(39.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Atmosphere</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff climate in my building is relatively tension</td>
<td>Member 58.5</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and stress free</td>
<td>Nonmember 53.7</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference 4.8</td>
<td>(.1)</td>
<td>(4.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Planning team member n=82; not a planning team member, n=302.

Planning team members generally agree in greater proportions that respect levels are present as a result of SDM than do nonmembers. A majority (87.8%) of planning team members perceive parents as adding value to SIP teams, compared to just over one-third
(35.4%) of nonmembers. Although a small proportion (4.6%) of nonmembers disagree that parents add a valuable perspective, 60% do not know. Majorities of planning team members (75.6%) and nonmembers (70.2%) do not know whether students add a valuable perspective to SIP teams, or believe the issue does not apply to them. Nearly all planning team members (90.3%), and 3 of 4 nonmembers (76.8%) feel that colleagues respect their opinions, although nonmembers (14.6%) are more likely than team members (2.4%) to not know whether their opinions are respected. Planning team members (87.8%) are in greater agreement than nonmembers (73.2%) that principals respect their opinions. Nonmembers (9.9%) are more likely to feel that principals don’t respect their opinions than are planning team members (3.6%), and are more likely than planning team members to not know whether their opinions are respected (16.9% and 8.5% respectively). Planning team members are also more likely (64.7%) than nonmembers (21.9%) to believe that SDM has increased the level of respect between parents and teachers. Nearly two-thirds of nonmembers (64.6%), on the other hand, do not know whether levels of respect have increased between parents and teachers.

Perceptions of staff climate in the buildings are not affected by team membership. Differences between planning team members and nonmembers are slight in the proportions who agree and disagree that the atmosphere is relatively tension-free (4.8% and .1% respectively). Once again it can be noted that greater proportions of nonmembers did not have opinions on the items as compared to planning team members. It is interesting to note a difference between team members and nonmembers of 40% in the proportion who don’t know whether parents add a valuable perspective to SIP teams, and a difference of 39% who don’t know whether SDM has increased the level of respect between parents and teachers. Both items deal with perceptions of parents, and smaller proportions of planning team members withheld opinions on each item than did nonmembers.
Collaboration

Collaboration reflects the state of persons working together as equal partners to identify and solve common problems or to complete common tasks for common purposes. Data on collaboration according to job category are presented in Table 9. Four items examined the two issues of working together and perceived problems.

Table 9. Responses by job category for collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category (N=380)</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working together</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are committed to working together at my school</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely meet with others in scheduled way except for required meetings*</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>45.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problems</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core of blockers stops progress at my school *</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems in my school are recognized and worked on by staff</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Teacher n=266; principal n=10; central office n= 6.
*Reverse items.
Staff generally perceive that a collaborative attitude is present. Nearly three-fourths (73.4%) of the staff believe their colleagues are committed to working together. Majorities of all three groups within the buildings, that is teachers (76.7%), principals (80%), and classified (65.3%) share that opinion, but one-fifth of the teachers (19.2%) disagree, and one-fifth of principals, one-third of central office staff, and one-fourth of classified (20%, 33.3%, and 25.5% respectively) do not know whether staffs in their schools are committed to working together. Less than half the total staff (47.4%) regularly meet with colleagues except for required meetings, but most teachers (58.7%) and principals (80%), and half of central office (50%) do work with others outside of required meetings.

Most staff, including teachers and principals (71.1% and 80% respectively), do not perceive the presence of a core of people who block progress within the buildings. A majority (78.4%) of the staff believe that problems in their schools are recognized and addressed. Teachers (84.6%), principals (90%), and a smaller proportion of classified staff (62.2%) share that belief. It is interesting to note that identical proportions of teachers (19%) do not think that staffs at their schools are committed to working together and think that a core of blockers stops progress at their schools.

Table 10 summarizes data on collaboration according to membership and nonmembership on a school planning team.

Members of planning teams are more likely to agree that collaboration is being used than are nonmembers. A greater proportion of planning team members (80.5%) perceive the staffs in their schools as committed to working together as compared to nonmembers (70.5%). While members and nonmembers disagree in equal proportions (15.8% and 15.6% respectively), nonmembers are more likely than members not to know whether their staffs are committed to working together (13.9% and 3.7% respectively). Planning team members (70.7%) are also more likely to meet with others outside of required meetings.
Table 10. Responses for collaboration according to membership and nonmembership on a planning team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Planning Team Status (N=384)¹</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Not Know/NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working together</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>(10.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely meet with others in scheduled way except for</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>required meetings*</td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>(13.9)</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>(16.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core of blockers stops progress at my school*</td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>(25.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems in my school are recognized and worked on by</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff</td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>(9.4)</td>
<td>(11.1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Teacher n=266; principal n=10; central office n= 6.
*Reverse items.

than are their counterparts (40.4%), and much less likely than nonmembers to feel the issue does not apply to them (2.4% and 18.9% respectively). Likewise, a big difference exists (25.4%) between the nonmembers and the members who believe that a core of blockers stops progress at their schools (29.1% and 3.7% respectively). Nearly all planning team members (93.9%) think that problems in their schools are recognized and worked on, and nearly 3 of 4 nonmembers (73.5%) share that opinion. On the other hand, nonmembers are more likely than planning team members to disagree that problems are worked on
(14.3% and 4.9% respectively) and more likely not to know whether problems are addressed (12.3% and 1.2% respectively).

**Teaching and learning**

Table 11 presents data on SDM's relationship to teaching and learning as perceived by people within the different job categories. Six items addressed teaching and learning. They are organized according to perceptions of SDM as related to teaching, as related to learning, and as related to professional growth.

Table 11. Responses by job category for teaching and learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category (N=380)$^a$</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI-Net is useful for teaching and learning</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>64.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>89.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>71.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and instructional strategies have been largely dictated from central office rather than from schools*</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM has allowed me to analyze and adjust teaching practices on an ongoing basis</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$Teacher n=266; principal n=10; central office n= 6; classified n=98.

*Reverse item.
### Table 11. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Job Category (N=380)$^a$</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are actively involved in decision making in my classroom</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>82.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional growth</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School district provides ample opportunities to learn and grow professionally</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School is intellectually stimulating because of SDM</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>75.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching practices remain relatively unaffected by SDM. The PSI-NET component of the SDM project has not influenced the process of teaching and learning, since a majority of staff (71.8%) are unaware of the computer network or feel the issue does not apply to them. A small proportion of teachers (10.9%) and no principals believe PSI-NET to be a useful teaching and learning tool.

Almost half the staff (49%) perceive decisions about curriculum and instruction to be centralized. Nearly 58% of the teachers think that curriculum and instructional strategies are dictated from central office rather than from the school site, although most principals (60%) and central office persons (66.7%) disagree. One-fourth of the teachers (25.9%)
have used SDM to analyze and adjust their teaching practices on a continuing basis, and more than half (61.2%) actively engage students in decision making within their classrooms.

In the area of growth, a majority of the staff (64%) credit the district with providing opportunities for them to learn and grow professionally, although a greater proportion of teachers (73.7%) believe they have professional growth opportunities than do principals or central office persons (50% and 66.7% respectively). Half the principals (50%) think the district fails on that account. Likewise, 42% of the classified staff believe they lack growth opportunities. SDM causes school to be intellectually stimulating for just one-fifth of the staff. That group, however, includes 60% of the principals and half of the central office staff. One of every four teachers (25.6%), half of central office persons (50%), and three of every four classified members (75.5%) indicate they don't know whether or not SDM makes their work intellectually stimulating.

Table 12 presents data about perceptions of SDM as related to teaching and learning according to planning team membership and nonmembership. Few employees, whether they are planning team members (17.1%) or nonmembers (7.3%), perceive the computer network as being a useful teaching and learning tool. Large proportions of members and nonmembers (63.4% and 74.5% respectively) are not aware of PSI-Net or think the issue does not apply to them. About half of the planning team members and nonmembers (51.2% and 47.7% respectively) agree that central office dictates curriculum strategies, but a larger proportion of team members (41.4%) disagree than do nonmembers (21.8%). Greater proportion of nonmembers than members (30.5% and 7.3% respectively) do not know whether central office dictates curriculum and instructional strategies.

Likewise, team members (42.7%) are more likely to use SDM to adjust teaching practices than are nonmembers (12.6%). Nearly half (49%) of nonmembers either do not
Table 12. Responses for teaching and learning according to membership and nonmembership on a planning team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Planning Team Status (N=384)</th>
<th>Per Cent Agree</th>
<th>Per Cent Disagree</th>
<th>Per Cent Not Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI-NET is useful for teaching and learning</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>63.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>74.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>(11.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and instructional strategies have been largely</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dictated from central office rather than from schools*</td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>(23.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM has allowed me to analyze and adjust teaching practices on an</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ongoing basis</td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>(5.5)</td>
<td>(24.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are actively involved in decision making in my classroom</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>(2.3)</td>
<td>(11.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional growth</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School district provides ample opportunities to learn and grow</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professionally</td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>(.9)</td>
<td>(9.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School is intellectually stimulating because of SDM</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonmember</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>(17.6)</td>
<td>(42.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^Planning team member n=82; not a planning team member, n=302.

*Reverse item.
know whether SDM allows adjustment of teaching practices or feel the issue does not apply to them. Students of team members are also more likely to engage in classroom decision making than those students of nonmembers (54.85 and 41.1% respectively). A greater proportion of team members (70.7%) believe they receive ample professional growth opportunities than do nonmembers (60.6%). A great difference (64.6%) can be noticed between members (73.2%) and nonmembers (8.6%) in the perception that SDM makes school intellectually exciting. Forty-two percent of nonmembers report that SDM has not been the cause of excitement for them, and nearly half of nonmembers (49%) do not know, compared to just a small proportion of planning team members (6.1%) who do not know whether SDM causes their jobs to be intellectually stimulating. Greater proportions of nonmembers marked the don't know category on each of the six items related to teaching and learning.

Individual Interviews

Individual interviews were conducted with 98 staff members. Table 13 presents data on the interviewees' perceptions about areas of strength for the SDM project and their perceptions about areas for growth and improvement for the SDM project.

Perceived areas of strength

Collegiality Interviewers judged whether each person interviewed would agree or disagree with the following statement about collegiality: "Cooperative relationships are present at the building and district level." Most (70) employees agree with the collegiality statement.

A listing of language-rich comments from those people who disagree with this statement is contained in Appendix E. A summary of those statements was prepared by the
Table 13. Perceptions about areas of strength and about areas for growth and improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Areas of Strength</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegiality</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Areas for Growth and Improvement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interviewers. The interviewers' summary statements from those who disagree with the collegiality statement are:

1. Segmentation exists between departments and buildings (i.e., the people interviewed believe that collegiality does not exist between departments within buildings and between buildings).
2. Perceptions exist that central office is not using collegiality.
3. There seems to be some underlying animosity toward central office.
4. There is low trust and low morale.
5. Only a select few are involved (in the SDM process).

It should be remembered that the list represents a summary of beliefs of those who disagree with the collegiality statement.
Involvement    Interviewers judged whether each person interviewed would agree or disagree with the following statement about involvement: "A significant number of individuals are involved in the setting of building goals." Most people interviewed (61) believe that many individuals are involved in establishing building goals. A summary list of opinions of those people interviewed who disagree with the involvement statement is:

1. Only a selected few are involved in the process.
2. Many things are being dictated from the top-down.
3. There is not much involvement of classified staff and parents.
4. A bit of uncomfortableness exists with the decision-making process.
5. Information put out about the shared decision-making project does not promote understanding.
6. There is minimum feedback to the people who are not directly involved in the decision making process. They want information about "where do we go from here."
7. There is a lack of feedback to people about how their involvement is used. Many people feel left out of the process because they do not understand it. Dissemination of information is perceived to be ineffective.
8. People do not receive feedback about the impact which their involvement has caused in the SDM process.

Perceived areas for improvement and growth

Input    Interviewers judged whether each person interviewed would agree or disagree with the following statement about input: "Providing individuals with more opportunities to furnish ideas and share in the decision-making process is a desirable growth priority for the SDM project." Nearly all (89) believe that providing more SDM opportunities is a desirable goal for the SDM project. A summary of opinions of those people who disagree with the statement is:
1. There seems to be a concern about the time and energy required for more input and to serve on committees.

2. It would be better if they (staff) have more opportunities for information and input.

3. People need more information in order to determine if they even want to get involved.

4. There needs to be an equal acceptance of opinions from all stakeholders (rather than certain segments).

5. There is a sense of futility on behalf of some persons.

**Empowerment** The interviewers judged whether each person interviewed agrees with or disagrees with the following empowerment statement: “Empowering these individuals with decision-making power is a desirable growth priority for the SDM project.” Nearly all (92) of the people interviewed perceive empowerment for decision making to be a desirable goal of the SDM project. A summary list of opinions of those people who disagree with the empower statement is:

1. There is a question and concern about whether empowerment means taking time away from teaching.

2. Some skepticism exists about the reality of empowerment.

3. Some skepticism exists about whether the empowerment will be token or real and whether staff can make important decisions that affect them.

4. Some skepticism exists about whether the leaders will really empower staff members.

**Process** Interviewers judged whether each person interviewed would agree or disagree with the following statement about the SDM process: “Changing from the way decisions are actually made, at the present time, to a shared decision-making model is a desirable growth priority and need of the SDM project.” A majority (81) of the people
interviewed believe that changing to an SDM model is a desirable priority for the SDM project. A summary list of opinions of those who disagree with the process statement is:

1. Concerns exist about teacher burnout. Is there enough time to make SDM work?
2. Success of SDM appears to depend upon skills and philosophies of different administrators.

Belief statements about the SDM project

The interviewers next judged where the people interviewed would fit on a 3-point Likert scale in relationship to four statements about belief in the SDM project, and judged the degree to which each of the people interviewed perceive the descriptive statement as a desirable goal. A separate question required the interviewers to rate beliefs of those interviewed on three aspects of SDM. Summary statements about concerns were developed by the interviewers for each descriptive statement.

Flexible decision-making model

The first belief statement is: "The people interviewed believe that a flexible shared decision-making model which accommodates differences in each building is being practiced." Figure 1 illustrates where the interviewers judged the respondents to be on the Likert scales. The numbers indicate the approximate per cent of people interviewed who would be located at the designated points on the scale according to the judgement of the interviewers, based upon their review of the interview data. Copies of the interviewers' original scales are contained in Appendix E.

The interviewers judged that 50% of the people interviewed believe a flexible shared decision-making model is being practiced to a great extent. Approximately 33% believe it is being practiced somewhat, and 16% believe it is being practiced to a small extent. Summary statements representing opinions of the interviewers regarding the degree to which shared decision making is being practiced are:
Degree of Belief that SDM is Being Practiced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>True to a Small Extent</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>True to a Great Extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extent to which SDM is a Desirable Goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Very Undesirable Goal</th>
<th>A Very Desirable Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25% 25% 25% 25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Degree of belief that SDM is being practiced and the extent to which SDM is a desirable goal

1. A flexible shared decision making model is being practiced somewhat in individual buildings.

2. There is much sharing going on. However, some people feel they are not participating fully in the SDM model.

3. Those involved with SDM believe it is working, while those not involved do not believe it is working.

4. On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being highest), the elementary staff perceive their SDM model being practiced at a level 7; the secondary staff perceive the SDM model being practiced at level 2.

In the opinion of the interviewers, all, or nearly all, of the staff interviewed believe that a flexible shared decision-making model which accommodates differences in each building is *a very desirable goal*.

Effective means for developing and achieving building goals. The second belief statement is: "The people interviewed believe that there is an effective means for developing and achieving building goals and objectives within the framework of the district
goals." Figure 2 illustrates where the interviewers judged respondents to be on Likert scales.

The interviewers judged that 25% of the people interviewed believe somewhat that descriptive statement 2 is true, 50% believe more strongly so, and 25% believe that it is true to a great extent. Likewise, all, or nearly all, of the people interviewed believe that descriptive statement 2 is a very desirable goal. Interviewers' summary statements are:

**Degree of Belief About Effectiveness of Goal Setting in Buildings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>True to a Small Extent</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>True to a Great Extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extent to which Goal Setting is Desirable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Very Undesirable Goal</th>
<th>A Very Desirable Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Belief about effectiveness of practices for setting and achieving goals in the buildings and the extent to which such practices are desirable

1. Most people feel they have some input and it is being used effectively in achieving and developing building goals.

2. While some staff believe this (SDM) is an effective means for developing goals, the majority see it as a mysterious process.

3. The staff perceive the SDM model as being practical.

4. The majority feel this is definitely a desirable goal.

**Relationships have improved** The third belief statement is: "The people interviewed believe that collegial, cooperative, and professional relationships among teachers,
administrators, classified personnel, students, and parents have improved." Figure 3 illustrates where the interviewers judged respondents to be on Likert scales.

Approximately 50% of the staff believe that the relationship statement is *somewhat true*, with the remainder believing it is *true to a great extent*. Likewise, in the opinion of the interviewers, the staff views improvement in collegial and professional relationships as a *very desirable goal*. Interviewers' summary statements describing belief about relationships are:

**Degree of Belief that Collegiality and Professional Relationships Have Improved**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>True to a Small Extent</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>True to a Great Extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extent to Which Collegiality and Professional Relationships Are Desirable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A Very Undesirable Goal</th>
<th>A Very Desirable Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Belief that relationships have improved and the extent to which improved relationships are a desirable goal

1. Cooperative relationships are seen the strongest at the building team level, and weakest at the district level.

2. The people interviewed believe that collegial, cooperative, and professional relationships among teachers, administrators, classified personnel, students and parents have improved to some extent.

3. Depending upon the building, position, and administrator, relationships have either improved, stayed the same, or deteriorated.
4. Attempting SDM means trying to improve communications. This (SDM) is a better way to pool resources in addressing problems.

5. This (collegial and professional relationships) is an area in which people would like to see improvement.

6. This (improvement of collegial and professional relationships) is a very desirable goal if given the time.

SDM goal is being implemented The fourth belief statement is: "The people interviewed believe that the stated goal of focusing the shared decision-making model on the improvement of teaching and learning is being implemented." Figure 4 illustrates where the interviewers judged the respondents to be on Likert scales.

Nearly all of the staff think the statement is being accomplished to a small extent. About half of the staff believe the focus of SDM upon teaching and learning to be a somewhat desirable goal and half see it as a very desirable goal. Interviewers' summary statements describing the focus upon teaching and learning are:

**Degree of Belief the SDM Focused on Teaching and Learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>True to a Small Extent</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>True to a Great Extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25% 25% 25% 25%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extent to Which Focus Upon Teaching and Learning is Desirable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Very Undesirable Goal</th>
<th>A Very Desirable Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25% 25% 25% 25%</td>
<td>25% 25% 25% 25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Belief that SDM focused on teaching and learning and the extent to which such focus is a desirable goal
1. Thus far there appears to be a lot of talking but no action.

2. While a few teachers see results in the classroom, most believe it has not been practiced long enough to affect the teaching and learning process.

3. This is a desirable goal, but more communication is needed.

**Feelings towards the project** Interviewers answered the following questions: "Do people interviewed: (a) Feel positively oriented towards this project? (b) Believe that the project will be successful? (c) Feel that research and literature are having an impact on their work (how they do things)?"

The interviewers concluded that people interviewed feel somewhat positive toward the SDM project. Likewise they somewhat believe that the project will be successful. Finally, the research and literature affect how teachers do things to a very little degree.
CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study examined perceptions of shared decision making in early stages of implementation as related to selected factors associated with SDM and school improvement. The selected factors are restructuring of roles and decision-making processes, empowerment, involvement in decisions, collegiality, collaboration, and teaching and learning. Many issues arise before and during the process of implementing shared decision making. Information about the early implementation stages of SDM should be helpful to those educators who are considering or are actually involved with changes in their decision-making structure.

The study examined perceptions of shared decision making by using data collected from the Marshalltown Community School District's LLI Shared Decision Making Project during the 1990-91 school year. Two methods were used to collect data. The first method was a 52-item survey that was developed by the vertical team assessment task force and sent to all staff members (602) of the Marshalltown Community School District in January, 1991. The return rate was 64%. Data from the survey were computer scanned and disaggregated according to the job categories and according to membership and nonmembership on building planning teams. Job categories used in this study were teachers, building administrators, central office administrators, and classified staff.

The second method of data collection was individual interviews. Questions and procedures were developed by the vertical team assessment task force in consultation with Peter Holly. The interviews were conducted with a stratified sample of 104 staff members from all job categories in February and March, 1991. Eighteen educational administration graduate students from Iowa State University served as the interviewers. They used a 23-question open-ended instrument in individual structured interviews lasting from 45 to 60
minutes. The graduate students applied a three-step process to analyze and summarize data from the interviews.

Twenty-three research questions about SDM were posed in this study. Conclusions about perceptions of SDM as related to selected factors were developed from the survey and interviews. They are organized according to general conclusions, and according to conclusions about each of the selected factors (a) roles and processes, (b) empowerment, (c) involvement, (d) collegiality, (e) collaboration, and (f) and teaching and learning, each according to job roles. Areas in which 70% or more of the staff agree are presented in a manner to show that the the staff or job category holds that opinion. Lower levels of agreement are noted in the discussion.

General conclusions

1. SDM roles and processes are not clear to the majority of staff. Staff are not sure who is supposed to make what decisions under the present structure. They report (61%) that the SDM decision making process has not been clearly defined and communicated to staff. A large proportion of principals (40%) and central office (50%) share that perception. Perhaps some of the uncertainty can be explained by the fact that processes within the buildings are still emerging. It also seems likely that the processes which do exist have not been effectively communicated to staff.

2. Empowerment has not yet been attained in some critical areas. While staff view empowerment as a desirable goal for the SDM project, many (52%) do not believe they have been empowered in areas which affect their job. Some skepticism exists whether the empowerment is token or real.

3. Involvement is an important factor in developing support for SDM. For example, those staff who are involved in planning teams are better informed about the SDM project and report more positive attitudes toward SDM, its potential for producing significant
change, and its potential for success. Even though just half the staff believe that SDM is worth their time, they want to be involved in decisions which affect them.

4. Collegiality exists within the buildings in the district, and thus provides an atmosphere of support for SDM. People in the buildings feel their opinions are respected by colleagues and their principals. Collegiality is perceived as a very desirable goal, and professional relationships have improved somewhat because of SDM.

5. People are willing to work together to make decisions. Most people within the buildings feel that they collaborate with their colleagues to address and solve problems.

6. Application of SDM to teaching and learning remains an important growth area. Improvement of teaching and learning is perceived as a desirable goal, but it has been achieved to a very small extent. The SDM project has thus produced little impact upon teaching and learning.

7. The interview data supports findings and conclusions from the survey.

8. Communications with those who have not been directly involved in SDM have not been effective. The people who have been involved know what is happening, are positive about the project and believe SDM will be successful. People who have not been involved in SDM are less enthusiastic and less informed.

9. SDM in practice has not yet matched belief in SDM. There is a belief that SDM is a very desirable goal, but it is being practiced only to a moderate degree in the buildings.

10. Development of attitudes toward SDM, ensuring successful experiences, and application of current knowledge to teaching and learning remain important growth areas. People are somewhat positive toward the project and somewhat confident that it will be successful, but they don’t think that literature and research have affected how teachers do things.
11. Opinions about SDM appear to be more a function of awareness and involvement than of job role. Teachers, principals, and central office agreed on many issues, and disagreed on some others. Those people who are involved in planning teams, whether principals or teachers, are more positive toward SDM than those who are not involved. Classified staff, who experienced lower levels of involvement, do not know about many aspects of the SDM project.

Conclusions about selected factors

Roles and processes  Conclusions regarding SDM as related to roles and processes for teachers, principals, central office and classified are:

1. Teachers are willing to support changes through SDM. Teachers report that SDM can lead to significant changes and that SDM is important for identifying a vision of what a school can become.

2. Teacher uncertainty exists about the future of SDM. Only half the teachers believe that SDM will become more effective with time, and less than half (47%) think that SDM is here to stay. It is still too early for many teachers to have come to a conclusion about SDM, and the early stage might account for some of the skepticism noted in the interviews.

3. Principals are more concerned about the rate of change in the district than are teachers. A majority of teachers (60%) are generally comfortable with the rate of change in the district; most don't think that change is occurring too rapidly. Many teachers (43%), instead, are concerned about the quality with which new projects or programs are implemented. A majority of principals (60%) are concerned that change is happening too fast. Even so, they believe that the district does a good job of implementing new programs. One possible explanation of these differences is that teachers are anxious to see changes which will help them in the classroom, but principals may be concerned about the details and difficulties of effectively implementing and coordinating the changes.
4. The decision-making process requires further clarification and additional time for development. SDM is a mysterious process for some teachers. Two-thirds of the teachers report confusion about who is supposed to make what decisions and how the SDM process is supposed to work.

5. SDM has the support of the principals. Principals believe that SDM can lead to significant changes, that it is important for identifying a vision of what a school can become, that it will become more effective with time, and that the move to SDM is permanent.

6. SDM has not yet proven its worth to some central office members. Just 4 of 6 central office staff believe in the potential of SDM to produce significant change, and that SDM will become more effective with time. Only 2 of 6 disagree that change is happening too fast, and 2 of 6 agree that the district is doing a good job of implementing new programs.

7. Classified staff either are generally unaware of the effects of SDM upon the restructuring of roles and processes within the district or have low levels of belief about SDM's potential to produce positive change. Classified staff (80%) don't know about issues dealt with by the SIP teams. Just a few (28%) believe in the potential for SDM to become more effective, less than half (47%) think it can lead to significant improvement, and only one-third view it as a lasting change.

**Empowerment** Conclusions regarding SDM as related to empowerment are:

1. Teachers feel control over decisions which affect students, but they do not feel control over decisions which affect their jobs. Two-thirds of the teachers believe their schools have the power to make appropriate decisions for students, but over half the teachers (52%) believe they do not have sufficient influence over decisions which affect their jobs.
2. Principals feel empowered to a greater degree than do teachers. Principals believe their schools have the power to make appropriate decisions for students. Most (60%) think that schools have the latitude to make significant changes, and most principals (60%) report they have sufficient influence over decisions that affect their jobs.

3. If SDM is to be successful, principals need sufficient time to focus on decision making. Principals perceive SDM as empowering, but many (40%) feel bogged down by the decisions they are required to make.

4. A basic core of belief and support is present at the central office level to sustain the SDM efforts in the district, although that support is not unanimous. Central office staff perceive SDM as empowering. Central office staff (83%) perceive that schools have the latitude to make significant changes. Two-thirds of central office staff believe that schools can make appropriate decisions for their populations.

5. Classified staff must be provided expanded opportunities for involvement in order to develop a sense of empowerment. Classified staff (62%) do not feel empowered. Less than one-fourth of classified staff perceive control over decisions that affect their jobs or inservice. A majority (57%) don't know if latitude exists to make significant changes in the buildings, most (63%) don't know whether schools have power to make appropriate decisions for students, and very few (4%) feel they have sufficient influence over allocation of building budgets.

6. Staff will support efforts of the district to develop the SDM project. They perceive empowerment as a desirable growth priority of the SDM project.

Involvement Conclusions regarding SDM as related involvement are:

1. Teachers do not yet see SDM as an instructional planning tool. Teachers desire involvement and believe that SDM is a worthwhile use of their time (60%), but they don't wish to use planning time for dealing with SDM (67%).
2. If SDM is to succeed, teachers need time to become involved. Teachers are concerned about the time required to be involved with SDM; half indicate that they already don't have time to devote sufficient attention to decisions.

3. Communication about the SDM project and about the structure of SDM in the district and in the buildings has not been effective with many teachers, central office staff, and classified staff. Half the staff don't know whether it is easy for traveling staff to be involved, and many (42%) don't know if it is easy for classified staff to be involved.

4. Teachers and principals support a wide base of involvement from staff and parents. They support the concept of including a diversity of people in the decision-making process.

5. Principals desire involvement in SDM. They believe that SDM is a worthwhile use of their time and definitely want to be involved in decisions which affect them.

6. SDM has not yet proven itself to all central office staff. Central office staff want to be involved in decisions which affect them, but only half agree that SDM is a worthwhile use of their time.

7. Classified staff has clearly not been included in the SDM process nor has there been adequate communication. They don't know if SDM is worthwhile and many (55%) don't know how to become involved, although half indicate they want involvement.

8. The SDM project is important to the staff. Staff believes that providing them with opportunities for input in decisions should be a growth priority for the SDM project.

**Collegiality** Conclusions regarding SDM as related to collegiality are:

1. Although collegiality is strong, SDM can improve it further still, and staff will support further efforts to develop collegiality required for SDM to succeed. Staff reports that collegiality and professional relationships are desirable goals for the SDM project. They believe that collegiality and professional relationships have improved *somewhat* as a
result of the SDM project. There does, however, seem to be an underlying animosity on behalf of some toward central office.

2. Good relationships exist within the buildings. Teachers report that respect is present within their buildings; their opinions are respected by colleagues and their principals.

3. SDM has positively influenced relationships between parents and teachers. One-third of all teachers report increased levels of respect. However, two-thirds of people involved on SIP teams report increased levels of respect compared to just one in five persons not on SIP teams. Involvement on SIP teams thus appears to positively influence teachers' views about the relationship between parents and teachers.

4. Stress and tension are present. Many teachers (44%) feel tension and stress in the buildings, but most principals (80%) believe their buildings are relatively free from stress and tension. Teachers might be perceiving different sources of stress and tension than are principals. Concern about time is one source of stress and tension, although there are certain to be others that were not identified in this study.

5. A collegial and professional relationship exists between teachers and principals. Principals report that respect is present in the buildings; they believe their opinions are respected.

6. Central office staff don't feel as respected as teachers and principals; two-thirds of central office staff feel that other staff members respect their opinions compared to 85% of teachers and 90% of principals who feel the same way.

7. Central office staff don't perceive SDM as affecting parent relationships; just half feel that levels of respect have increased as a result of SDM, and just half feel parents add valuable perspective to SIP teams.
8. Respect within the buildings extends to the classified staff. They feel a part of the respect which has been noted by principals and teachers. More than two-thirds of classified staff believe their opinions are respected by teachers and principals in the buildings.

**Collaboration**

Conclusions regarding SDM as related to collaboration are:

1. A spirit of collaboration exists that will support the further development of SDM. Teachers in their buildings are committed to working together and that there is not a group of people blocking progress.

2. Although they believe in working together to solve problems, teachers have not yet found ways to do that outside of required meeting times. Teachers believe that problems are recognized and addressed in their schools, but they (59%) do not usually meet together except for required meetings.

3. Principals believe that a collaborative effort exists in their schools. They see staff as being committed and working together. Principals meet with other staff outside of regular meetings, they don't see a core of blockers stopping progress, and they believe problems are worked on in their schools. Principals perhaps meet with others outside of required meetings more so than do teachers because their roles entail working with teachers, and they are more free to structure their meeting time during the regular work day than are teachers.

4. Opinions of classified staff regarding collaboration match those of teachers and principals. Most classified staff (65%) believe building staffs are committed to working together and that problems are worked on by staff (62%).

**Teaching and learning**

Conclusions regarding SDM as related to teaching and learning are:
1. Teachers and administrators are not considering the same factors when forming their judgements about who makes decisions regarding curriculum and instructional strategies. More than half of the teachers (58%) believe that curriculum and instructional strategies are dictated by central office. Only one-third of the teachers disagree with that perception. On the other hand, two thirds of central office staff and most principals (60%) don't believe that central office dictates curriculum and instructional matters.

2. SDM has not yet been widely adopted as an instructional tool. Teachers are not perceiving it as a technique for planning or for use with students. Half the teachers report that SDM has not caused them to analyze and adjust their teaching practices. Planning team members (43%) are more likely than nonmembers (13%) to have adjusted their practices because of SDM, but a majority still have not done so.

3. A higher level of involvement appears to make SDM more intellectually exciting for teachers. SDM has resulted in making their jobs more exciting for just one-fourth of the teachers. In contrast, nearly three-fourths of planning team members do feel intellectually stimulated by SDM. SDM has made jobs intellectually stimulating for most principals (60%) and half of central office staff. Principals and central office staff have experienced greater involvement in SDM than have most teachers, which might account for the higher percentage who find it intellectually stimulating.

4. District efforts to provide teachers with professional growth opportunities have been felt to a greater degree than have those for principals. Three-fourths of the teachers and two-thirds of central office staff believe the district has provided opportunities for professional growth. The district efforts in professional development have not affected the principals to the same degree; half the principals don't feel the sufficient opportunity to grow professionally.
6. Classified staff are uninformed regarding effects of SDM upon teaching and learning.

7. The computer information network is not having an impact upon teaching and learning. Most teachers (65%) don't know if it is useful for teaching and learning. Efforts at communicating and disseminating information about the computer network have not been effective.

Discussion

What does this study tell about SDM in the Marshalltown School District? The survey and the interview revealed many positive factors which support the continuance and the growth of the SDM project. The findings also indicated factors which serve as barriers to the success of SDM.

Factors which support SDM in the district

The climate for SDM is supportive and positive. There is a belief that SDM is a desirable goal, but skepticism exists whether or not SDM will result in significant or permanent change. Teachers believe that SDM is a worthwhile use of time, but that belief has not been yet translated into action. For example, teachers don't view SDM as a planning tool, but view it as an additional task which is separate from planning for teaching.

Four findings regarding SDM as related to roles and processes constitute positive indicators for the continued outlook for the SDM project:

1. Teachers and principals view SDM as an important factor in identifying a vision of what a school can become. This should be encouraging to the district in light of the training that has been provided to the SIP facilitators and the subsequent work of the facilitators in their building SIP teams. That training placed great emphasis upon using
SDM as a tool for identifying a school's vision. It also emphasized use of SDM for long-term planning and decision making as opposed to using SDM for managing day-to-day issues. If this is indeed the case, it could be that effects of SDM will be more visible in the long-term rather than short-term. The focus on long-range planning could be a disadvantage for those who want more immediate action and results. As the pressure mounts for observable results the district will need to address the issue of how to integrate the use of SDM for short-term, day-to-day management and problem solving.

2. Because teachers and principals believe that SDM can lead to significant changes, the potential for SDM seems hopeful. There does not seem to be a core of active opponents to SDM. The fact that every school chose to join the SDM project in its first year was an initial positive indication. Survey and interview findings support that positive indication. There are, however, skeptics who still question whether SDM will really be allowed to happen in the district.

3. A third encouraging finding about the roles and processes is that teachers don't think change is occurring too rapidly in the district. This finding, when placed in context of other district projects, is important because of past concerns that too many innovations were occurring too fast. The implication is that SDM will not be rejected because it is perceived as another in a series of fast-paced changes. The perception that the district does not do a good job of implementing new programs seems likely to have greater negative implications for the SDM project than does the pace of change.

4. The district should feel satisfaction that district philosophies and goals are compatible with those of the staff. The staff supports the direction the district is moving with SDM and other projects. Because of compatibility of philosophies and goals the district will not be required to divert energy and resources toward pulling the staff together to resolve many issues which it faces, but can instead focus on moving forward.
Teachers desire empowerment. They believe empowerment is very desirable, perceive it as a worthwhile goal, and think their schools are empowered to make decisions. There is also a desire to be involved in shared decision making. Staff want to be involved in decisions that directly affect their jobs. No group indicated they wanted to live with decisions established by others. The survey found that those people who are involved are better informed about the SDM project and are more positive toward SDM. This finding could be a factor of self-selection in which the people who were originally more interested and positive about SDM chose to become involved. However, it also seems likely that involvement stimulates interest, knowledge, and enthusiasm for the project.

A collegial atmosphere exists in the district and has been somewhat advanced by the SDM project. That sense of collegiality is shared by people within the buildings, i.e. teachers, classified, and principals. Interview findings that 70% of employees reported that cooperative relationships are present at the building and district levels corroborate survey data on collegiality.

One of the interviewers' conclusions was that success of SDM depends greatly upon the attitude of the principal toward SDM. Principals thus hold key roles in determining the future success or failure of the SDM project. Their strong agreement that SDM is empowering, it is a worthwhile use of time, it can become more effective with time, it is important for identifying vision, that they want to be involved in decisions, and that staff respects their opinions all demonstrate a positive attitude toward shared decision making. In an independent survey of principals conducted by the assessment task force in December, 1991 (Appendix K), principals reported they are enthusiastic about SDM, that SDM will work in their buildings, and that it will result in better decisions. Seventy per cent of the district's principals indicated in that survey their approach to the principalship has changed because of SDM, 80% reported that the way they spend their time has changed
because of SDM, and 80% reported that SDM does not diminish the principal's authority. SDM thus seems to have the support of the district's principals.

Most teachers, principals and classified staff within the buildings believe they are working together to identify and resolve problems. That perception forms a valuable spring board for future SDM ventures. The finding that no organized opposition exists within the district lends further credibility to the belief that the staff is committed to working together. District resources and energies can thus focus on moving forward with SDM while at the same time attending to concerns of those staff (16%) who don't believe they or their colleagues are committed to working together.

**Barriers to the SDM project**

Barriers to the success of the SDM also exist. What are they and what are the implications for the SDM project?

The processes for SDM are not clear to many staff members, and the lack of clarity is causing confusion and raising questions for staff. An early issue the vertical team addressed was how to identify what decisions should come within the boundaries of SDM and what decisions should not be part of the SDM process. Having started from a position that areas for SDM should be clearly defined by a distinct list of issues that could be subject to the SDM process and those that would be retained by traditional decision-making hierarchy, the vertical team eventually adopted the present plan. It provides few, if any, restrictions on the scope of decisions made by building level teams. A waiver process is provided for those instances when a building decision might conflict with statute, school board policy, or the master contract. Part of the staff's confusion about who should make what decisions is possibly due to the fact that the waiver process has not yet been fully tested. Building teams don't know, or perhaps know but are skeptical about whether or not they truly have the power to make decisions in areas which formerly were off limits to
them. Because these waters have not yet been charted, questions arise. If we want to change our reading program, do we really have the power to do so? What will happen with the district reading committee? If the district doesn't like what we do, will they allow us to do it anyway? Do we really have the power to cut one area of our building's budget to pay for the change we want to make? Can we restructure our staff to provide for more reading teachers, or will the teachers' association object? These perhaps illustrate the types of questions staff members are asking themselves about the SDM process. It must also be remembered that SDM is in a transition stage wherein some decisions that eventually will be made through a SDM process are still coming from the traditional decision-making structure. Some of the doubts and concerns about who should make what decisions are, therefore, likely due to the newness of SDM and inexperience at having gone through the SDM process.

Ineffective communications about procedures for SDM within the district also add to staff confusion about the SDM process. Findings related to processes indicate that ineffective communication about the SDM project is a major barrier. It is clear that classified staff are unaware of the purposes of the SDM project, the processes used in decision making, and the opportunities for them to become involved in SDM. They are not aware of many of the fundamental issues surrounding the SDM project, such as the role of SDM in identifying vision, the role of SDM for bringing about change, the work of the SIP teams within their own buildings. One-third of the staff don't know if the district's philosophies and goals are compatible with their own.

Findings also indicate that communications about the SDM project have not been effective with many of the certified staff. Two-thirds of staff who are not involved on SIP teams don't know what issues are addressed by the SIP teams. This can only mean that important information is not effectively communicated to them. Interviews also indicated
that people who provide input into decisions are not receiving sufficient feedback about the effects of their involvement upon the decision making process. These people seem to be saying that they provide input into decisions but they don't know how that input has been used or how valuable it was in determining the final outcome.

It is likely that the district vertical team and the building SIP teams are already aware of the need to improve communication. Review of building activities at the vertical team meetings, the building documentation sheets, and the report by the NEA site visit team in April all indicate the need to improve the pyramiding process. The findings of the study clearly support the need to improve communication about the SDM project.

One-third of the staff, and even greater proportions of principals (60%) and central office staff (50%) think that change is happening too fast in the district. This finding presents an interesting challenge to the SDM project: Key groups within the district hold different perceptions about the change process. While some staff members are concerned about moving too quickly, others are anxious to move the SDM project into the area of teaching and learning, where little has yet been achieved. The challenge is to pace the change slowly enough to educate and bring all groups into the process and yet move fast enough to attain observable results which have a positive impact upon student learning. It seems likely that the district will have to do both at the same time, that is, continue the focus on involving more people and providing them with background and training in SDM while at the same time moving ahead to visibly focus the use of SDM on teaching and learning issues and attaining results in those areas.

Focus of SDM upon teaching and learning issues might also resolve another concern about the project. Because less than half the staff (44%) believe the SDM current efforts will last, it seems likely that many are waiting to see what happens before they make up their minds about the future of the SDM project. The interviews uncovered a degree of
skepticism about the sincerity of district intentions in SDM. Will principals and central office really allow SDM to happen? Is the movement toward SDM a token or is it a genuine effort? Will staff really be allowed to make decisions on significant issues? These are questions and doubts which are being raised. If the district directs the focus to issues of teaching and learning, and assures early successes by focusing upon problems that are easier to identify and easier to resolve, skeptics are more likely to lend their support in light of positive results. Formation of building design teams as part of the SIP development should also further expand involvement of staff and parents and demonstrate that the SDM process is moving to a more action-oriented stage.

Perceived lack of empowerment is a barrier to the success of the SDM project. Half the teachers think they don't have sufficient influence over school level decisions, even though a majority (61%) believe that SDM can be empowering. It is clear that they don't feel they have influence over the areas of building budget, inservice needs, and areas of curriculum and instruction. Why don't they have sufficient power? That perception does not appear to be due to poor relationships between the teachers and the principals, or an unwillingness on behalf of the principals to enter into an SDM process. General findings of the study indicate that the principals support the concept of SDM and the SDM project. One possible explanation for the perceived lack of empowerment is that the project in the buildings is too new to have had time to affect those areas of teacher concern in any significant way. The SDM project at the building level has been in the formation stage and teams have not yet had many opportunities to work through staff concerns. In addition, as more people become involved in the SDM process, the perception that teachers lack sufficient influence seems likely to change. More than half (54%) of members of SIP team did report sufficient influence over decisions that affect their job compared to one-third of nonmembers.
Just one-third of the staff believe their schools have sufficient latitude to make significant changes. It may be that most staff don't feel empowered because they feel restricted by outside rules and regulations, feel uninformed about processes for becoming involved in SDM, or are skeptical about the genuine opportunity to make change. In light of the findings about staff unawareness of roles and process, it is quite likely that many staff members are not aware of the district's process for waiving rules and regulations that might conflict with decisions made by building planning teams. The building teams and the district vertical team have not yet experienced working through the waiver process, and no one in the district really knows at this point whether the process itself will actually work as planned. In addition, the work of the SIP teams has not yet progressed far enough to have made decisions which test the district's credibility regarding SDM.

Time is a major barrier for the SDM project. Half the teachers, one-fifth of principals, and one-third of central office indicate they don't have sufficient time to devote to making decisions that require their involvement. The finding that most teachers (67%) would rather use their out-of-class time for planning than for SDM should not be surprising, because teachers are likely to perceive their major function as teaching. However, the finding does suggest that teachers are not yet perceiving SDM as a useful planning tool in matters of teaching and learning. Rather, they are still viewing SDM in terms of a management tool. This notion raises the issue of whether or not teachers are thinking of decision-making as a function of their job. Are they seeing themselves as decision makers? Are they thinking of SDM as a tool for making decisions about teaching and about learning? That they are not is supported by the interviewers' observation that SDM has affected teaching and learning to a very small degree. As teachers have more time to collaborate, it seems likely they will increasingly use SDM as a tool to improve teaching
and learning. The implication for SDM is that if the process is going to succeed, time must be found for people to collaborate.

The present SDM structure either does not facilitate involvement of traveling staff and classified staff, or has not effectively educated these groups about the potential for involvement. Just 23% of the teachers agree that it is easy for traveling staff to be involved, and 42% don't know. Over half of the classified staff (55%) don't know if it is easy for them to be involved in SDM, and only 22% think that it is. The traveling certified staff serve two or more buildings. Because they are not in one building full-time, they miss out on many of the activities and happenings which are a normal part of a building's life and which shape its culture. It is difficult for them to attend building meetings on days when they are assigned to different sites. Time for collaboration within a given building is restricted even beyond that of other teachers. Traveling teachers must communicate with more than one staff, and if they are going to be involved in SDM they either must be involved in all their buildings or choose one building over the others, thereby risking the appearance of favoritism. Because of these difficulties, it is likely that some traveling staff feel they really don't belong to any building.

Many classified staff are in a more difficult situation. Most (56%) want to be involved in decisions, but an even larger majority (70%) don't know whether participation is a worthwhile use of time. Food service personnel and bus drivers are nearly all part-time employees. Bus drivers have very little contact with the buildings, usually no direct contact with teachers, and minimal contact with principals. Many food service personnel in the elementary buildings work just a few hours a day. Most educational aides work only during hours when students are in the buildings. Some custodians work the night shift. It is also likely that many classified staff do not see SDM as part of their job. Perhaps changes in the SDM structure could facilitate involvement of traveling teachers and
classified staff. A change in structure implies cooperation between buildings so that teachers can be released from one building to attend scheduled meetings at another. It implies that if classified staff are to attend staff meetings, most of which are held outside the classified worker's normal work day, the district will have to pay them or provide compensatory time off from work. It implies that traveling and classified staff will be provided with opportunities to serve on the district vertical team and on building SIP teams. If the present structure does already make it easy for these groups to be involved, better communication is needed about those opportunities.

Parent involvement is evolving. Parent involvement thus far has been limited to participation on the vertical team and the SIP teams, and these positions are relatively new. Their roles are now being defined. These roles involve a small percentage of the total parent population as team members. It seems probable that communications with parents about the SDM project have been no more effective than communications with staff about the SDM project. Unless the project continues to expand parent involvement, those parents who are involved will become another layer in a decision-making hierarchy. By improving the effectiveness of communications about SDM, more parents can be made aware of and educated in the SDM process. It should be quite feasible, for example, to hold building level meetings in which all parents can hear from and meet SIP team members, to continue the annual district public forums about SDM, to devote a section in the local newspaper to a regular SDM report from each building, and to continue to emphasize the one-to-one communication process by SIP team members with their constituents. Staff members who work with parents as partners on SIP teams see parent participation as very valuable. But it also seems that parent roles and contributions to the SIP teams and parent roles in the SDM process are not yet fully appreciated by other staff members. Involvement appears to be a key to improving the staff's understanding the parents' role in SDM. It seem likely as
more teachers have the opportunity to work with more parents, the levels of mutual respect will increase. SIP teams must, therefore, provide increased opportunities for teachers and parents to work together by rotating membership on the SIP teams, bringing parents and teachers together for discussions about teaching and learning, and involving both parents and teachers on building action teams.

That most staff (71%) do not know whether students add a valuable perspective to SIP teams is not surprising, since only the high school includes students on their teams. One consideration for middle and elementary levels is whether students can make contributions to the SIP teams or some other part of the SDM process at those levels. If SDM is to positively affect student learning, then students should be empowered and responsible for their own learning. If involvement stimulates feelings of ownership, then students should be involved in decisions about their learning. Involvement of students in SDM is starting to occur, more so in the classrooms of those teachers who are members of planning teams.

Stress and tension are perceived to be present by nearly half of the teachers and more than one-third of classified staff. Although this study did not attempt to identify the sources of stress and tension, the findings present some plausible explanations. There are clear indications of concern about lack of time for making decisions and to meeting with colleagues. A difference exists between perceptions of teachers and perceptions of administrators about who makes decisions related to curriculum and instruction. Some believe they have been left out of the SDM process. Many teachers feel they don't control decisions which affect their jobs. Other sources of tension are certain to exist as well. The district has been severely limited in the past few years by budget constraints that affected the building level. Teachers and principals have voiced concerns about increased job-related demands which take them from the buildings and the classrooms. Class sizes have been an issue at the elementary level. SIP teams might gain attention and support by
identifying areas of stress and tension within the buildings and involving the staff in resolving those issues through an SDM process.

The potential for staff working together within the buildings to identify and solve problems seems great, since nearly three-fourths of the staff feel their buildings are committed to working together and believe that their staff recognize and work on problems. One-fifth of the staff, however, thinks their colleagues are not committed to working together, and one-fifth also thinks a core of blockers stops progress in their schools. It would be interesting to know whether the group that thinks the staff is not committed to working together is the same as that which thinks a core of blockers exists in their school. Certainly with more than 70% of the teachers and principals reporting commitment to working together, the implication for the SDM project is that it should move ahead to tackle substantive issues while working at the same time to address the concerns about commitment and blockers.

Failure of the SDM project to thus far address issues dealing with teaching and learning is a shortcoming of the project. One of the four main purposes of the SDM project is to positively affect teaching and learning. This goal has not yet been met. A serious gap exists between the perception of teachers about who controls curriculum and instruction, and the perceptions of principals and central office staff. The majority of teachers (58%) believe curriculum and instructional strategies are dictated from central office while the majority of principals (60%) and central office (67%) disagree. Why is there such a difference in perceptions about how curriculum and instructional matters are handled in the district? Could it be that central office staff members view teacher involvement in curriculum committees, Phase III committees, and other committees in the district as forms of participation and empowerment for teachers? Could it be that teachers view the curriculum committees as not being fully participative, or not open to involvement to all, or
controlled by central office? Could it be that communication about the procedures and the work of the curriculum and instructional committees is not being effectively communicated to all the staff, resulting in perceptions that teachers are not empowered in this area?

Teachers have a major and vested interest in curriculum and instruction. It is possible that the teachers' perceptions regarding their lack of empowerment are related in part to their belief that curriculum is dictated from central office.

Thus far the SDM project has concentrated upon developing team-building and shared decision making skills rather than application of SDM to teaching and learning. SDM has clearly not yet caused teachers to adjust teaching practices. It is quite possible that the project has not been in existence long enough at the building level to effect significant changes upon teaching and learning practices. SDM has not yet excited the majority of staff. Perhaps if and when SDM does begin to affect teaching and learning, it will cause school to be more exiting for teachers and students. That expectation seems realistic in light of the finding that 71% of those people on the SIP teams reported that SDM has caused school to be intellectually stimulating for them. Similar experiences have not been shared by most other teachers, possibly because they have not been involved in SDM to the degree where they see positive personal advantages and benefits coming from it. It seems likely that the staff and community will want some evidence soon that SDM has begun to positively affect student learning. The interviewers concluded that while teaching and learning is seen as a very desirable goal of SDM, thus far there has been little action in this area. This is an issue that deserves careful attention from the district.

Doubt exists among some central office staff members about the merits of SDM. One central staff member disagreed with items about SDM's potential to lead to significant changes, its importance for identifying vision, and SDM being a worthwhile use of time. One central office staff member disagreed that colleagues respect his/her opinion and that
staff is committed to working together, thinks a core of blockers is stopping progress, wonders why there is a focus on SDM, and believes that staff does not recognize and work on problems together. These findings suggest that frank communication is needed within central office staff regarding opinions and concerns about SDM and that steps should be taken to address those concerns. Because of its small size, the six central staff must work closely together. Central office staff is highly visible to other district staff. The implication for the SDM project is that, if it is to be successful district wide, central office leadership must be united in its beliefs about the merits of SDM and enthusiastically endorse SDM efforts.

**Recommendations**

Recommendations for practice and additional study have emerged from the analysis of data, the findings, and the discussion.

**Recommendations for practice**

1. The district needs to examine methods to obtain greater involvement from classified staff in the SDM process. Classified staff should be included in the vertical team and on every building team. Buildings should have the latitude to pay classified staff who work in a building to attend regular staff meetings that are held outside their normal work day. The district vertical team should plan and hold an informational meeting with classified staff members to inform them about the purposes of the SDM project and what is happening with the project at the district level, and clearly define how they can become involved. Follow-up meetings could be held once each semester to update classified staff.

2. The district needs to develop a plan to provide effective communication about SDM to staff, focusing particularly upon those who are not involved in the planning teams. This communication effort should be planned and coordinated by a group which is charged with
the responsibility. Part of the effort should include regular informational meetings where staff members hear directly the SDM story, have an opportunity to ask questions and express concerns about what is occurring with the SDM project. Attendance should be mandatory so that the same information is going to all staff. Such an effort should become a major focus of the SDM project in the near short-term and continue as a long-term effort. Communication efforts should address both the district and the building levels.

3. The district needs to begin to focus attention of the project upon the improvement of teaching and learning. The emphasis should come from the vertical team through the SIP facilitators and SIP planning teams. As part of this focus the vertical team could develop an assessment component to measure the impact of SDM upon teaching and learning on a district-wide basis. The SDM project should be written into the district's long-ranged plans for instructional improvement so that SDM becomes perceived as an instructional improvement tool. Support of teachers and public will not last unless the project produces improved student performance.

4. It is obvious that principals and central office administrators require skills to facilitate this decision-making process. Principals and central office administrators must not only know how to facilitate change in the decision-making process, but must also learn how to share decision-making authority which previously had been theirs. The district should continue with training programs such as I/D/E/A and provide central office administrators and principals with opportunities for frequent discussions about SDM and their concerns regarding the project. Principals should be provided opportunities to visit other buildings within the district to observe the workings of SDM in those settings as well as chances to visit other school districts and businesses using SDM. In light of current interest within the district on school-business partnerships, the district could facilitate a
partnership program between individual school administrators and local business
executives who have been involved in SDM.

5. The SDM project does not have unanimous support from central office personnel. The issue should be addressed by holding frank discussions within the central office staff to communicate concerns and reach consensus about SDM. A part of this communication process could be to develop a list of items on which central office staff agree regarding SDM and on which they don't agree, and then come to consensus about how to handle those areas upon which they disagree.

6. The district should expand staff and parent involvement in the SDM process. The vertical team could research and develop a list of ways which could be used at the district and building levels to increase parent involvement. Each SIP team should examine existing building plans for increasing parent and teacher involvement. Plans could include round table discussions between parents and teachers, meetings between SIP team members and parents, school needs assessment surveys, teacher and parent involvement on building action teams, rotating memberships on the SIP team, inviting parent guests to SIP planning meetings.

7. Lack of time is a barrier. People need time to work together, to develop team skills and problem solving skills. If the SDM project is to be successful, the district must find time for participants to work together on the decision-making process. A first step should be a written commitment from the Board of Education that SDM is a high priority for the improvement of student learning, that collaborative decision making is a part of the teacher's role, and that the Board recognizes the need for time to work collaboratively to improve teaching and learning. Having that support, the district vertical team should then research ways to gain more time for staff to meet without disrupting student learning. Part of the study should include a time-management analysis to help staff evaluate the efficiency
with which they use the time available. Another aspect of the study should deal with alternative methods of staff utilization within the buildings so as to find more time for collaboration.

8. The district should continue to emphasize development of a positive collegial and cooperative climate. Climate should be annually measured within the buildings and the district through the use of survey instruments and/or focused interviews. Information should be used to establish a climate-related goal. Parents, teachers, staff and community members should be a part of the climate study. The district must be successful in enabling all staff to commit to working together to solve problems.

9. The district and buildings should identify those areas in which staff perceives itself as lacking sufficient power in decisions which affect them. It then should examine the issue of staff empowerment, with special attention given to the areas of curriculum and instruction, building budgeting, and inservice. District procedures in each of these areas should be reviewed, and if necessary revised to assure that staff has sufficient empowerment in these areas. The district vertical team should research and provide a list of suggestions to buildings on procedures which can be used at the building level to obtain staff involvement and empowerment.

Recommendations for further study

1. This study indicated that administrators are important in determining the success of SDM within a building. A future study could deal with SDM from the perspective of the building principal or central office administrator. It could investigate the reasons principals favor or oppose SDM, the skills needed by principals to facilitate implementation of SDM, and the methods used to achieve SDM by principals.

2. This study found that the impact of SDM upon teaching and learning has been slight. The application of SDM to teaching and learning is critical for its success. A future
study could address the specific effects of SDM upon teaching/learning/curriculum, using student achievement as one source of data.

3. Future investigations could entail case studies of individual building SIP teams to identify factors in their development. Case studies which investigate procedures and process of implementing SDM within the building would add to the body of information about building-based decision making.

4. This study could be replicated at the end of the second and third years to note further trends and developments with shared decision making in the district. Follow up studies would provide data about longer-term effects of SDM at the district level and would be helpful to other districts considering an SDM model.

5. A follow-up study could focus on the reasons why individuals or groups are skeptical about or oppose SDM. Such a study would provide insights about barriers which must be overcome during the implementation process.

6. A study could address the degree to which the SDM project has involved students in decision making. This study could examine the types of decisions students are making, effects of their involvement upon learning and socialization, specific decision-making skills taught to them. This information would be helpful in determining whether SDM is a viable means of improving student responsibility for learning.

7. A future study could focus upon parent involvement in the SDM process. Do parents support it? What do they think about it? Do they want to become involved? How can parents become involved? What effect will their involvement in SDM have upon student learning, upon curriculum, upon the structure of the school?
Limitations

1. This study was limited to Marshalltown Community School District. Information generated applies only to the Marshalltown School District.

2. This study was limited to perceptions of SDM in early stages of implementation as related to selected factors associated with school improvement. Data were collected for only the 1990-91 school year. The SDM project had been implemented at the building level during the fall of the 1990 year, so the project itself was relatively new to the buildings at the time the data were collected. Baseline data were not available from which to project trends and make pre and post comparisons.

3. The author of this study has been integrally involved in the design and implementation of the Marshalltown LLI project and its assessment component. This study was further limited to the assessment procedures designed by the district SDM assessment task force.

4. Conclusions developed from the interviews are limited to the interviewer's summary statements about what interviewees said, and their interpretation of the interview data.

5. This study was conducted for the purpose of examining perceptions of SDM in early stages of implementation as related to selected factors associated with school improvement. Conclusions about the perceptions of SDM are limited to the findings of perceptions as related to those factors.

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Appreciation is also extended to the Marshalltown Community School District, the Shared Decision Making Vertical Team, the Assessment Task Force, the Iowa State Education Association, and the National Educational Association for their contributions, cooperation, and work in designing the assessment procedures, and collecting and analyzing the data. Without their collaboration, enthusiastic support and camaraderie, this study would never have been possible.

Thank you to friends and coworkers who expressed interest and encouragement during the past years of study. Dr. Robert McFarland and Dr. Gerald Trullinger offered advice and encouragement during the early days of the doctoral program. Dr. Richard Doyle has continually shared his experience as an in-house advisor, mentor and friend. Dr. Stephen Williams has been gracious in his interest and support.

Finally, special appreciation is offered to my wife, Joyce, and to my children Douglas, Sarah, Rebecca, and Anne. During the years of course work and the months of writing this dissertation, they supported, encouraged, and understood in every way. Their patience and many sacrifices have enabled the completion of this study and the doctoral program.
APPENDIX A. SURVEY INSTRUMENT
MARSHALLTOWN SURVEY INSTRUMENT

DIRECTIONS PART I: PLEASE MARK ON THE ANSWER SHEET THE ANSWER WHICH BEST FITS YOUR SITUATION:

1. Which category best describes your job?
   (A) Classroom Teacher
   (B) Certificated but Non-classroom (Special subject or support teacher)
   (C) Building Administrators
   (D) Central Office Administrator
   (E) Classified Personnel

2. How many buildings do you serve?
   (A) One building
   (B) More than one building
   (C) Does not apply

3. Do you serve on a SDM/SIP planning team in your building?
   (A) Yes
   (B) No

4. How many years have you worked for the Marshalltown Community School District?
   (A) 1-2 years
   (B) 3-5 years
   (C) 6-10 years
   (D) 11-20 years
   (E) More than 20 years

5. How long have you been working in your present school (or job if classified worker not assigned to a building)?
   (A) 1-2 years
   (B) 3-5 years
   (C) 6-10 years
   (D) 11-20 years
   (E) More than 20 years
DIRECTIONS PART II: PLEASE MARK ON THE ANSWER SHEET THE CHOICE THAT MOST NEARLY STATES YOUR POSITION ON EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS. NOTE: The terms "Shared Decision Making" (SDM) and "School Improvement Program" (SIP) refer to your school's decision making process and School Planning Team.

Strongly Agree more than Disagree Strongly Agree more than Disagree Strongly Disagree Not Applicable
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

6. Participating in the Shared Decision Making process is a worthwhile use of my time.

7. It is more important to me to use my out of class time to plan for upcoming classes than to spend it on shared decision making.

8. Parent members on the School Planning Team at my school add valuable perspectives to our discussions.

9. Student members on the School Planning Team at my school add valuable perspectives to our discussions.

10. The School Planning Team at my school tackles too many "nitty-gritty" operational details and not enough significant instructional issues.

11. With district guidelines, school board policy, master contract, state regulation, and lack of funds, there is not enough wiggle room for a School Planning Team to make significant changes at the school level.

12. It's fuzzy to me as to how decisions are made in Marshalltown. I don't know how to distinguish which decisions should be made by myself, my principal, my School Planning Team, the faculty, the central office, the school board, or other committees, departments, or teams.

13. Under our School Planning Team structure, it is easy for traveling staff to be part of the Shared Decision Making process.

14. The Shared Decision Making process at my school handles agenda items in depth rather than just giving them surface level attention.

15. I'm so busy that, at best, I give surface level attention to decisions that require my involvement.

16. Just let me do my job. I'll live with the decisions made by others.

17. The longer the Shared Decision Making process at my school operates, the more effective it becomes.

18. We are committed to working together as a team at my school.

19. A shared decisions making process is empowering because I am part of the final decision and share ownership for carrying it out.
20. Except for required faculty meetings I rarely meet with any other staff at my school in a scheduled way.

21. Other staff members at my school respect my opinions.

22. My principal respects my opinions.

23. Under our School Planning Team structure, it is easy for classified staff to be part of the Shred Decision Making process.

24. The Shared Decision making process has increased the level of mutual respect between parents and teachers.

25. Our school district provides ample opportunities for me to learn and grow professionally.

26. I have sufficient influence over school level decisions that affect my job.

27. The PSI NET (Computer Network) is a useful tool for teaching and learning in my classroom.

28. I feel bogged down, rather than empowered, by all the decisions I am asked to help make at my school.

29. The Shared Decision Making Process can lead to significant changes in the way schools have traditionally operated.

30. A core of staff at my school blocks almost all forward progress.

31. A building level self analysis is part of my building's plan for improvement.

32. The Shared Decision Making process is important in identifying the vision of what our school can become.

33. I have sufficient influence over decisions involving my own in-service needs.

34. Information from PSI NET (Computer Network) is a helpful resource in the Shared Decision Making process.

35. I am informed of what is happening in shared decision making in my building.

36. Students are actively involved in decision making in my classroom.

37. Our school is able to make appropriate decisions based on the population we serve.

38. Diversity strengthens the Shared Decision Making process.

39. The school district's goals, philosophies, and practices are consistent with my personal goals and beliefs.
40. The purposes of the Shared Decision Making initiative have been clearly communicated to me.

41. I have sufficient influence over decisions about how the budget at my school will be allocated.

42. The staff climate at my school is reasonably free of tension and/or stress.

43. I always make sure my views are heard when we engage in decision making at my school.

44. There is just too much change going on in Marshalltown. It's too much, too fast. Please slow down!

45. I am wondering why there is so much focus on shared decision making in the district.

46. I know that educational changes come and go, but I think we have enough momentum and research behind our current efforts that they last.

47. This school year is intellectually stimulating for me because of my involvement in the Shared Decision Making process.

48. Curriculum changes and new instructional strategies have been largely central office dictates in Marshalltown rather than school initiated efforts.

49. The Shared Decision making process has allowed me to thoughtfully analyze and adjust my teaching practices (curriculum and instruction) on an ongoing basis.

50. Problems in my school are recognized and worked on by the staff.

51. We jump too fast from one new idea to another in Marshalltown and seldom do a quality job of implementing anything.

52. I would welcome a district-wide meeting where the district leadership paints a clear picture of district directions and renewal efforts.
APPENDIX B.  MARSHALLTOWN INTERVIEW SURVEY INSTRUMENT
MARSHALLTOWN INTERVIEW SURVEY INSTRUMENT

DIRECTIONS PART I: PLEASE MARK ON THE ANSWER SHEET THE ANSWER WHICH BEST FITS YOUR SITUATION.

1. Which category best describes your job?
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   (C) Building Administrator
   (D) Central Office Administrator
   (E) Classified Personnel

2. How many buildings do you serve?
   (A) One building
   (B) More than one building
   (C) Does not apply

3. Do you serve on a SDM/SIP planning team in your building?
   (A) Yes
   (B) No

4. How many years have you worked for the Marshalltown Community School District?
   (A) 1-2 years
   (B) 3-5 years
   (C) 6-10 years
   (D) 11-20 years
   (E) More than 20 years

5. How long have you been working in your present school (or job if classified worker not assigned to a building)?
   (A) 1-2 years
   (B) 3-5 years
   (C) 6-10 years
   (D) 11-20 years
   (E) More than 20 years
NOTE: Building = work site

PROMPTS/RESPONSES

A.1.
In the context of your building, who makes decisions regarding teaching and learning? For example, do you make those decisions individually, in teams, whole building groups, cross district groups, or are they made by central administration?

A.2.
Please provide an example of the process currently being used to make decisions about teaching, learning, and curriculum?

A.3.a
Do you think shared decision making will work for purposes of district wide decisions? Why or Why not?

A.3.b.
Do you think shared decision making will work for purposes of making building wide decisions? Why or why not?
B.1.
Describe your involvement in setting goals at your building this year.

B.2.
How do each of the following people participate in making decisions at your building. Please consider parents, classified persons, students, administrators, and teachers.

B.2.a.
Do these various people have the necessary information, resources and support to make the decisions? Please explain.

B.2.b.
Do these various people have the necessary information, resources, and support to carry out the decisions? Please explain.

B.2.c.
How are the decision makers held accountable in your building?
B.3.a
What has your building done to identify some areas for shared decision making?

B.3.b.
What opportunity were you given to participate in the decisions regarding the areas affected by the Shared Decision Making Project?

B.3.c.
What opportunity is available to furnish ideas in the areas that are not identified as part of the Shared Decision Making Project?

C.1.
Are cooperative relationships present or absent in your building? Give examples of either or both.

C.2.
Are cooperative relationships present or absent in this district? Give examples of either or both.
D.1.
How has the Shared Decision Making project affected students in your building?

D.2.
How has it affected teaching?

D.3.
How has it affected learning?

D.4.
How has it made an impact on the curriculum?

E.
Do you have questions that you would like to have answered regarding this project?
F. In light of the stated purposes of the project, do you see barriers that will prevent the project from accomplishing its purposes?

G.1. Have you had any opportunity to use building level self analysis?

G.2. Have you had any opportunity to use educational research and reviews of the literature as it relates to the SDM/school improvement project?

G.3. Have you had any opportunity to use educational research and reviews of the literature for purposes of improving curriculum and instruction?
APPENDIX C. GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWS
GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWS

Following are some directions to guide the interview process in the Marshalltown Community School District.

1. Arrange the setting for a private conversation i.e. to include table and chairs in a quiet, uninterrupted place. You may choose to sit side by side or at the corner of a table so that your writing arm rests on the table. Sitting across the corner provides eye contact while sitting side by side provides a reflective attitude. Regardless, make the seating arrangement comfortable for both of you. Be natural. Be knowledgeable.

2. Initiate the introduction. Share a little information about yourself and look for commonalities. Try to make connections. For example, you are co-learners. Let them know that you, as in interviewer, are interested in Shared Decision Making.

3. Affirm that they were chosen for this interview randomly. Explain how you were chosen as an interviewer to represent an objective outside recorder of the information they provide.

4. Clue them into the fact that you will be taking notes to record their responses accurately. Create co-responsibility for getting the information down correctly.

5. Give the interviewee a copy of the Shared Decision Making Purposes on the teal page and explain that these will guide the questions in the interview. Questions labeled "A" will refer to purpose "A" etc.

6. Give the interviewee a copy of the interview questions and ask them to complete items 1 through 5 on the cover page. Tear this page off and attach it to your interview responses.

7. Ask the interviewee to read the first questions (A.1.) silently. Focus their response by promotion them with the appropriate variable if necessary. For example, you could say, "This question (A.1.) asks about authority. In other words, where are decisions actually made and by whom?" Refer to pages 10-11 in the Learning Lab Initiative Shared Decision Making Packet for these variables and guiding questions.

8. Record information and particularly insightful quotations on the provided duplicating record sheets. Be sure to identify each responses with the question code (example: A.1.). Draw a horizontal line to separate responses and number the next question. Continue to the end of questions.

NOTE: You may want to identify the half-way point of the time allowed for the interview. There are twenty-three questions; you should try to be at the eleventh one (B.3.b.) by the half-way point.
9. After the interview is completed, be sure to thank the interviewee for their time and help. Tear off the duplicate and hand their copy to them as they leave. They may keep the copy of the interview questions if they wish.

10. Immediately after the interview take ten minutes to record key words/phrases that appear to be thematic under the comments column. Likewise, any questions or notes that you as an interviewer deem important should also be recorded under comments. Fill in any incomplete sentences, blank spaces or unclear references at this time.

11. At the end of the interview day, make a copy of your response sheets at the school before you leave. (This copy will include your reflections and comments as the interviewer.) Place these copies in the provided envelope and address to Les Omotani via the school mail.

12. **Sign-off on the privacy of information statement** on the attached page and include it also in the envelope to Les Omotani.
PRIVACY OF INFORMATION STATEMENT

I understand that the information collected in these interviews is privileged information and is to be discussed only in the context of my graduate class for purposes of synthesis and analysis of baseline data. Any use of the interview information beyond the scope of this academic purpose must be approved by the District Vertical Shared Decision Making Team of the Marshalltown Community School District. Likewise, any publication of this interview information is prohibited unless approved by the above authority.

Name ___________________________ Date ___________
PURPOSES OF BUILDING LEVEL ASSESSMENT:

To provide base line data for individual schools
To identify needs regarding school improvement issues
To assess the success of the individual school projects

PURPOSES OF THE SHARED DECISION-MAKING PROJECT:

A. To develop and provide a flexible shared decision-making model which accommodates the differences in each building

Variables: Authority
Where are decisions actually made and by whom?

Process Description
How are decisions actually made?

Belief in SDM Concept
Could SDM work? Will SDM actually work in the building? Will SDM work in the district?

B. To provide an effective means to develop and achieve building goals and objectives within the framework of the district goals and objectives

Variables: Involvement
What is the degree of involvement in setting of building goals?

Empowerment
What is the degree to which teachers, administrators, classified persons, students, and parents have the power to make decisions, the authority to carry them out, and the accountability for them?

Input
Was there opportunity to participate in the decisions about what areas will be affected by SDM? What opportunity is available to furnish ideas in the areas that are not identified as part of SDM?
C. To provide collegial, cooperative, and professional relationships among teachers, administrators, classified personnel, students, and parents

**Variable:** Collegiality
Are cooperative relationships present or absent in the building? Are cooperative relationships present or absent in the district?

D. To focus the decision-making model on the improvement of teaching and learning

**Variables:** Teaching/Learning/Curriculum
How has SDM affected teaching, learning, and curriculum in the classroom?

*SDM Assessment Task Force: Janet Collison, Karen Jennings-Boland, Judy Lindholm, Gerry Ott, Stan Burke, Tom Renze, Kay Verstraete*
APPENDIX D. GUIDELINES FOR ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW DATA
GUIDELINES FOR ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW DATA

PROCESS NOTES

DANFORTH AND MARSHALLTOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS SDM PROJECT

1. ESTABLISH 4 WORKING GROUPS

2. OBJECTIVES FOR THE ACTIVITY
   a. increase participant understanding of shared decision making as an innovation and the response of others to such an initiative
   b. share the summary information produced by each participant
   c. further develop the consensus decision making skills of participants
   d. complete a small and large group analysis and synthesis of the information collected
   e. identify and develop appropriate generalizations based upon the information collected, analyzed and synthesized
   f. prepare an appropriate report for the presentation to the Marshalltown SDM Vertical Team
   g. determine the who, what and when of the presentation
   h. obtain feedback and discuss significant learnings of the process

3. GROUP PROCEDURES
   a. review mini-lecture: Note on Consensus
      * agree on the task or required decision
      * in round-robin fashion receive and record the opinions of all members of the group without judgement
      * ask clarifying questions of group members
      * provide each group member the option of speaking, in turn, favorably for a stated preferred opinion (what EVIDENCE exists to support the stated opinions?)
      * search for agreement and value the ability to COMPROMISE by modifying rather than discarding ideas
      * arrive at a group position that all members can support (when an individual states an inability to accept a proposed choice the group should honor that individual's stated concern and not force a decision)
   b. review characteristics of an effective group
   c. determine whether the majority of the people you interviewed agreed or disagreed with the identified STRENGTHS of COLLEGIALITY and INVOLVEMENT
      * provide a cumulative AGREE and DISAGREE total for your group's total number of interviews
      * provide no more than 15 rich language words that support or illustrate your decision
   d. determine whether the majority of the people you interviewed agreed or disagreed with the identified AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND GROWTH of (1) INPUT, (2) EMPOWERMENT and (3) PROCESS
* Provide a cumulative AGREE and DISAGREE total for your group's total number of interviews
* Provide no more than 15 rich language words that support or illustrate your decision.

e. You and your group represent the total combine opinion(s) of the people you interviewed. Using only the information you have gathered from the interviews, to support your statements and opinions, develop a consensus opinion regarding each of the MAJOR GOALS AND PURPOSES statements.
* I.e. to what degree do you (collectively) believe that a flexible shared decision-making model which accommodates differences in each building is being practiced? Why is this a desirable or undesirable goal?

f. Identify one, two or three people to summarize the overall findings of the total group in an appropriate written format.

g. Check to see if there are interested members of the Danforth interviewers who would like to present their findings to the Marshalltown SDM Vertical Team.

h. Have each of the four groups share their consensus opinions and decisions.

i. Obtain feedback and discuss significant learnings of the process.
PERCEIVED STRENGTHS AND PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

The Vertical Planning Team for the SDM project has identified the following POSITIVE variables. In addition, the Vertical Planning team has identified two priority areas requiring improvement and growth. Your task is to review the written summaries for each interview and determine whether the individual you interviewed would agree or disagree with the position of the Vertical Team. If someone disagree with the Vertical Team's opinion what are their priorities? (record a few illustrative words under the DISAGREE heading).

STRENGTHS OF THE MARSHALLTOWN SDM PROJECT

1. COLLEGIALITY The SDM project has provided for improved collegial, cooperative, and professional relationships among teacher, administrators, classified personnel, students, and parents. Cooperative relationships are present at the building and district level.

   AGREE          DISAGREE

2. INVOLVEMENT The SDM project provides an effective means for developing and achieving building goals and objectives within the framework of the district goals and objectives. A significant number of individuals are involved in the setting of building goals.

   AGREE          DISAGREE
1. **INPUT**

   More work needs to be done to ensure that, "an opportunity to participate in the decisions about what areas will be affected by SDM" is provided for all individuals. **Providing individuals with more opportunities to furnish ideas and share in decision making process is a desirable growth priority for the SDM project.**

   AGREE  
   DISAGREE

2. **EMPOWERMENT**

   More work needs to be done to ensure that teachers, administrators, classified persons, students, and parents have the power to make decisions, the authority to carry them out, and the accountability for them. **Empowering these individuals with decision making power is a desirable growth priority for the SDM project.**

   AGREE  
   DISAGREE

3. **PROCESS**

   More work needs to be done to ensure that a flexible shared decision-making model which accommodates the difference in each building is actually used. **Changing from the way decisions are actually made, at the present time, to a shared decision-making model is a desirable growth priority and need of the SDM project.**

   AGREE  
   DISAGREE
I. The people interviewed believe that a flexible shared decision-making model which accommodates differences in each building is being practiced. (AUTHORITY, PROCESS DESCRIPTION, AND BELIEF) QUESTIONS A1-A3B

TO A SMALL EXTENT

SOMEWHA T

A GREAT DEAL

I-----------------------------I-----------------------------I

This Is:

A VERY UNDESIRABLE GOAL

A VERY DESIRABLE GOAL

I-----------------------------I-----------------------------I
II. The people interviewed believe that there is an effective means for developing and achieving building goals and objectives [within the framework of the district goals]. (INVOLVEMENT, EMPOWERMENT, AND INPUT) (QUESTIONS B1-B3B)

TO A SMALL EXTENT
SOMEWHA T
A GREAT DEAL

I--------------------------I--------------------------I--------------------------I

This Is:

A VERY UNDESIRABLE GOAL

A VERY DESIRABLE GOAL

I--------------------------I--------------------------I--------------------------I
III. The people interviewed believe that collegial, cooperative, and professional relationships among teachers, administrators, classified personnel, students and parents have improved.

TO A SMALL EXTENT       SOMEWHAT       A GREAT DEAL

I-------------------------------------I-------------------------------------I

This Is:

A VERY UNDESIRABLE GOAL       A VERY DESIRABLE GOAL

I-------------------------------------I-------------------------------------I
IV. The people interviewed believe that the stated goal of focusing the shared decision-making model on the improvement of teaching and learning is being performed (TEACHING, LEARNING, CURRICULUM QUESTIONS D1-D4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TO A SMALL EXTENT</th>
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<th>A GREAT DEAL</th>
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<td>I__________________</td>
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This Is:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>A VERY UNDESIRABLE GOAL</th>
<th>A VERY DESIRABLE GOAL</th>
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<tr>
<td>I______________________</td>
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</table>
V. Do the people interviewed: (E-G3)

A) FEEL POSITIVELY ORIENTED TOWARDS THIS PROJECT?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>VERY MUCH</th>
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B) BELIEVE THAT THE PROJECT WILL BE SUCCESSFUL?

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C) FEEL THAT RESEARCH AND LITERATURE ARE HAVING AN IMPACT ON THEIR WORK?

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<th>VERY MUCH</th>
<th>SOMEWHAT</th>
<th>VERY LITTLE</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E. DANFORTH SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW DATA
May 9, 1991

Tom Renze
616 Fremont St
Marshalltown, IA 50158

Dear Tom:

Enclosed is the summary of data from the Danforth group. Included are the total number of agrees and disagrees and summary of rich language.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline K. Mitchell

Enclosure
PERCEIVED STRENGTHS AND PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

1. Collegiality- Cooperative relationships are present at the building and district level.
   AGREE = 70   DISAGREE = 28   N = 98
   - Phase III = declining cooperation and trust
   - none between teachers and not between building
   - low morale/trust; worried about job status
   - way for administrator to pass off jobs
   - people don't work together for common purposes
   - administrators point fingers at those who don't carry out decisions
   - ineffective communication between administrator and certain staff members causing feelings of low moral
   - segmentation between departments
   - not collegiality at district level
   - relationships between teachers and principal with superintendent are not good- superintendent is not trusted- he values $ over students and faculty
   - differences in PTA's, sizes, efforts causes the absence of cooperative relationships
   - circumstances of students in each building are different - needs to be understanding of differences.
   - SDM sounds good, but at this point not changing district decisions
   - more specific information is needed
   - all teachers need more information
   - not my experience it will work
   - clique in building - "select group"
   - elitism
   - not invited- some staff feel "left out"
   - hand-picked SDPs
   - "ask SDI member"
   - "As an administrator, if want opinions, don't give yours first."
   - administrator- dogmatic/dictatorial, doesn't use input
   - not all decisions can be made using SDM
   - not much cooperative decision-making yet
   - levels don't cooperate (elem/secondary/district)
   - forced cooperation, crossing department lines is a problem
   - doesn't apply at central office
   - isolated departments
   - Building functions as cubicles
   - not easy for everyone to buy into; dependent on attitudes, acceptance and premise of philosophies
   - using this year to establish common language to create yearly outcomes
   - not at district level because of bad feelings

2. Involvement: A significant number of individuals are involved in the setting of building goals.
   AGREE = 61   DISAGREE = 37   N = 98
   - seen little
   - not included in "real decisions"
   - "club directs this"
   - we implement procedures dictated to us
"club directs this"
we implement procedures dictated to us
everyone not equal contributor
team members only - didn't know how they were selected
parents need to be empowered
teachers are involved in carrying out the decisions, but administrators make the decisions
"I set the goals"
at High School level certain departments get all the attention.
Minimum feedback from those few involved
administrator makes all decisions in this building
not involved and information is lacking
not comfortable at district level.
decisions from central office made with no teach input
feedback mission
too much power to volunteers rather than teachers affected by decisions
parents/students/para-professionals not involved
"not sure the school does this"
too few involved
mainly teachers and administrators
classified not will to be a part
people are unsure and uncertain about what is involved
method of goal setting was wrong
NA (I care not to answer this question)

PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND GROWTH

1. Input: Providing individuals with more opportunities to furnish ideas and share in decision making process is a desirable growth priority for the SDM project.

AGREE = 89    DISAGREE = 9    N = 98

- not sure if it will work district wide because of central office administrations; cold feeling from them; not willing to listen.
- parents and classified need more
- needs to be more equal
- really needed at district level
- too many committee meetings
- depends on the principal - will s/he listen?
- Teachers are busy
- chaos - too many involved
- some decisions better off made by principal
- too small of a group making decisions
- like to know more
- very slow process
- teacher burn-out
- no opportunity for giving input
- only through blue slips in my mail box
- NA/undecided
- But they don't really ask my opinion
- parents and students not included
- would like chance to be involved, but not sure how
- It all boils down to $
2. **Empowerment**: Empowering these individuals with decision making power is a desirable growth priority for the SDM project.

**AGREE = 92**

- administration retains total control
- still seems top-down to me
- need to be asked to serve on a committee
- ruins the pleasant atmosphere
- people are questioning decisions
- will administrators ego get in the way of the process
- may have too many meetings
- most important to let teachers teach kids
- We get so busy—too hard to do all the work
- very unsure of this.
- Let's see results
- people are ignorant about needs
- only a token effort is being made
- there are other things that need to be done first

**DISAGREE = 6**

N = 98

3. **Process**: Changing from the way decisions are actually made, at the present time, to a shared decision-making model is a desirable growth priority and need of the SDM project.

**AGREE = 81**

- attributes success to administrator
- clearer portrayal of project
- in theory SDM should be used
- fear of time commitment and burnout
- size of district may make it difficult for some
- too many people and opinions
- administration needs to do many but listen to us
- both sides, administrators and teachers need to change
- some decisions will always be made by administrators
- Only same few will get to do...trips/extra planning time
- barriers between buildings
- varies between administrators
- too many meetings - not productive
- decisions by consensus would not be effective
- concern with time, $, teacher burnout
- I cannot sure I see the need at this building
- practicality of the project
- time element
- We are not sure if all of this can be shared
- higher-ups will still make the final decisions
- I don't know

**DISAGREE = 17**

N = 98
I. The people interviewed believe that a flexible shared decision-making model which accommodates differences in each building is being practiced.

To a Small Extent Somewhat A Great Deal

I-------------------------------------------------X-------------------X------XX---------I

It is a belief that a flexible shared decision making model is being practiced somewhat in individual buildings.
There is a lot of sharing going on, however, some feel they are not participating fully in this model.
Those involved with SDM believe it is working, while those not involved do not.
On a scale of 1-10, elementary staff perceive their SDM model very practical at a level of 7; the secondary staff perceive the SDM model being practiced at level 2.

A Very Undesirable Goal A Very Desirable Goal

I-------------------------------------------------I-------------------X------X---------I

This is a very Desirable Goal

II. The people interviewed believe that there is an effective means for developing and achieving building goals and objects (within the framework of the district goals).

To a Small Extent Somewhat A Great Deal

I-------------------------------------------------X-------------------XX---------X---------I

At this time, most people feel they have some input and it is being used effectively in achieving and developing building goals.
While some believe this is an effective means for developing goals, the majority see it as a mystery process.
On 1-10 scale, staff perceived the SDM model being practical.

A Very Undesirable Goal A Very Desirable Goal

I-------------------------------------------------I-------------------XX------X.X-------I

Majority feel this is a desirable goal if realistic considering time, and administration.
This is definitely a desirable goal.
This is definitely a desirable goal.
III. The people interviewed believe that collegial, cooperative and professional relationships among teachers, administrators, classified personnel, students and parents have improved.

To a Small Extent Somewhat A Great Deal

I-----------------------------X-X------------------X-------------------X-----I

Cooperative relationships are seen the strongest at team level, and weakest at district level. The people interviewed...have improved to some extent. Depending upon the building, position and administrator, relationships have either improved, stated the same or deteriorated.

A Very Undesirable Goal A Very Desirable Goal

I-----------------------------I-------------------X---------------XX----X-----I

Attempting SDM means trying to improve communications- better way to pull resources in addressing problems. This is an area in which most people would like to see improvement. This is a very desirable goal if given the time.

IV. The people interviewed believe that the stated goal of focusing the shared decision-making model on the improvement of teaching and learning is being implemented.

To a Small Extent Somewhat A Great Deal

I------------XXXX-----------------------I-----------------------------I

So far there appears to be a lot of talking but no action. While a few teachers see the effect in the classroom, most believe it has not been in effect long enough to effect teaching and the learning process.

A Very Undesirable Goal A Very Desirable Goal

I-----------------------------IXX---------------------X-------X-----I

This would be a desirable goal with more communication needed.
V. Do the people interviewed:

Feel positively oriented towards this project?  
Somewhat

Believe that the project will be successful?  
Somewhat

Feel that research and literature are having an impact on their work (how they do things?)  
Very little.
SYNTHESIS STATEMENTS FOR THE DISAGREES

Collegiality:

1. Segmentation between departments and buildings.
2. Perceptions are that central office is not using collegiality.
3. Seems to be some underlying animosity toward central office.
4. Low trust, low morale.
5. Only a select few are involved, elitism, cliques.

Involvement:

1. Only a select few are involved in process.
2. Many things being dictated from the top-down.
3. Not much involvement from classified staff and parents.
4. A bit of uncomfortableness with decision in process.
5. A lack of understanding of information.
6. Minimum feedback - wanting more information about "Where do we go from here". Not hearing back later if not directly involved. Information void.
7. Dissemination of information is ineffective (perceived to be). A lack of feedback about how involvement is used. Many people feel left out of the process because they don't understand.
8. Feedback is sparse (about impact of peoples involvement).
INPUT:
1. There seems to be a concern about time/energy for more input, committees.
2. It would be better if they had more opportunities for information and input.
3. They need more information to see if they even want to get involved.
4. There needs to be an equal acceptance of opinions from stakeholders.
5. From some, a sense of futility.

EMPOWERMENT:
1. Does empowerment mean taking time away from teaching?
2. There appears to be some skepticism about the reality of empowerment.
3. Will empowerment be token or real?
   Can we make important decisions that affect us?
4. Will leaders really empower?

PROCESS:
1. Is there enough time to make this work?
   (Concerns about teacher burnout)
2. Success appears to depend on skills and philosophy of different administrators.
APPENDIX F. MARSHALLTOWN LEARNING LABORATORY INITIATIVE
SHARED DECISION-MAKING ASSESSMENT PLAN
Marshalltown Learning Laboratory Initiative
Shared Decision-Making Assessment Plan

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES
- Establish assessment task force
- Define purposes of district and building level assessment
- Implement district assessment procedures
  1. District-wide staff survey
  2. Individual interviews
  3. Documentation/artifacts collected

ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS
A. Assess the implementation of SDM district-wide
   1. Gather information
      a. All staff survey
      b. Individual interviews
      c. Documentation/artifacts
   2. Reflect on the information
      a. Summarize and report back data
      b. Draw conclusions and identify needs; i.e., what do we need to look at?
         - Positive beliefs/feelings
         - Areas needing attention
      c. Develop action plan based on:
         - Where we are now
         - Where we want to be
         - How we want to get there
   3. Implement action plan
   4. Complete action research cycle and repeat
      a. Gather information by repeating survey and/or interviews
      b. Reflect on the information
      c. Implement new action plan

B. Assess the implementation of SDM at building level
   1. Gather information
   2. Reflect on the information
   3. Implement action plan
   4. Complete action research cycle and repeat
Shared Decision-Making Assessment Procedures

PURPOSES OF DISTRICT LEVEL ASSESSMENT:

To assess the implementation of SDM district-wide
To use information in the district to provide feedback to building teams
To collect base line data for purposes of measuring progress toward goals at a future point in time

District Assessment Procedures

1. Conduct a district-wide survey of all staff.* Surveys are anonymous and further will not be identified by building. It is recommended that the survey be completed during a staff meeting, if possible, or in a group setting. Results of the survey will be available to the district on a building by building basis, but the identity of the individual buildings will not be available: e.g., the results will simply be identified as Building 1, Building 2, Building 3, etc. Specific results will be available to each building at that team’s request.

2. Follow the survey with individual interviews sometime during the second semester.* The District SDM Team will develop the content of the interview, which will be conducted by a team from ISU.

*In future years the survey or interview could be repeated or conducted more than once per year.
PURPOSES OF BUILDING LEVEL ASSESSMENT:

To provide base line date for individual schools
To identify needs regarding school improvement issues
To assess the success of the individual school projects

PURPOSES OF THE SHARED DECISION-MAKING PROJECT

A. To develop and provide a flexible shared decision-making model which accommodates the differences in each building

Variables: Authority
Where are decisions actually made and by whom?

Process Description
How are decisions actually made?

Belief in SDM Concept
Could SDM work? Will SDM actually work in the building? Will SDM work in the district?

B. To provide an effective means to develop and achieve building goals and objectives within the framework of the district goals and objectives

Variables: Involvement
What is the degree of involvement in setting of building goals?

Degree of Empowerment
What is the degree to which teachers, administrators, classified persons, students, and parents have the power to make decisions, the authority to carry them out, and the accountability for them?
Input
Was there opportunity to participate in the decision about what areas will be affected by SDM? What opportunity is available to furnish ideas in the areas that are not identified as part of SDM?

C. To provide collegial, cooperative, and professional relationships among teachers, administrators, classified personnel, students, and parents

Variable: Collegiality
Are cooperative relationships present or absent in the building? Are cooperative relationships present or absent in the district?

D. To focus the shared decision-making model on the improvement of teaching and learning

Variables: Teaching/Learning/Curriculum
How has SDM affected teaching, learning, and curriculum in the classroom?

SDM Assessment Task Force: Janet Collison, Karen Jennings-Boland, Judy Lindholm, Gerry Ott, Stan Burke, Tom Renze, Kay Verstraete.
APPENDIX G. DISTRICT VERTICAL SHARED DECISION-MAKING TEAM
Marshalltown Community School District
Marshalltown, Iowa 50158

DISTRICT SHARED DECISION MAKING TEAM

Mary Ann Botulski
Annen Elementary Parent
2115 25th Street
515/752-6073

Mary Lou Bunger
City PTA Parent
2205 Waterfield Drive
515/752-6618

Barb Burgess
District Resource Specialist
District Media Center
212 W. Inglewood Street
515/752-6767

Stan Burk, UniServ Director
NEA/ISEA UniServ Unit Five
1454 30th Street, Suite 207A
West Des Moines IA 50265
515/224-4043

Janet Collison
Woodbury Elementary Teacher
7th Ave. and E. Main Street
515/752-5927

Richard Doyle*
Associate Superintendent
Administration Building
317 Columbus Drive
515/752-4583

Larry Erzen
Director of Educational Services
AEA 6
210 S. 12th Avenue
515/752-1378

Ralph Finch
Miller Middle School Teacher
South 11th Street
515/752-3624

Feen Hermanow
Marshalltown School Board
411 Innes Blvd.
515/752-8584

Jane Joch
Hogan Elementary Parent
2509 S. 2nd Avenue
522/752-7224

Karen Jennings-Boland
Fisher Elementary Teacher
2001 S. 4th Street
515/752-6754

Judy Lindholm
District Resource Specialist
Administration Building
317 Columbus Drive
515/752-4583

LaDonna Linsa*
Annen Middle School Teacher
South 3rd Avenue
515/752-3644

Robert McCormack
Senior High Principal
1602 S. 2nd Avenue
515/752-4535

Dana Meyer
Franklin Elementary Principal
West Main and 14th Streets
515/752-5831

Jean Moras
Senior High Teacher
1602 S. 2nd Avenue
515/752-4555

Eleanor Murdock
Gick Elementary Teacher
South 3rd and Lenin Streets
515/752-3159

Gerd Ott, ISEA
Implementation Specialist for Education Policy
4025 Tonawanda Drive
Des Moines IA 50312
515/279-9711

Joan Redalen
Director of Instruction
Administration Building
317 Columbus Drive
515/752-4583

Tom Renze*
Rogers Elementary Principal
406 Summit Street
515/753-3384

Phil Tetzloff*
Senior High Teacher
1602 S. 2nd Avenue
515/752-4535

Kay Vonsorto*, Educational Consultant
Professional Learning Services
515 23rd Avenue
East Moline IL 61244
309/753-7486

Steve Williams, Superintendent
Administration Building
317 Columbus Drive
515/752-4583

Fred Willis
Annen Middle School Principal
South 3rd Avenue
515/752-3641

*Steering Committee
APPENDIX H. VERTICAL TEAM TASK FORCES
VERTICAL TEAM TASK FORCES

STEERING COMMITTEE
Phil Tetzloff
Dick Doyle
LaDonna Lines
Tom Renze
Kay Verstraete

TASK FORCE ON FUNDS (established September 14, 1990)
Duane Meyer
Karen Jennings-Boland
Sonny Finch
Dick Doyle
Joan Moore

TASK FORCE ON LONG RANGE INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING (established Sept. 14, 1990)
Steve Williams
Fran Hermanson
Eleanor Murdock
Joan Redalen

TASK FORCE ON ASSESSMENT (established October 5, 1990)
Tom Renze
Janet Collison
Karen Jennings-Boland
Judy Lindholm
Gerry Ott
Stan Burke
Kay Verstraete

TASK FORCE ON INFORMATIONAL LITERATURE AND RESEARCH (established January 4, 1991)
Barb Burgess
Sonny Finch
Joan Redalen

TASK FORCE ON COMMUNICATION (established January 4, 1991)
Eleanor Murdock
Dick Doyle
Joan Moore
APPENDIX I. SURVEY LETTER
January 14, 1991

Dear Marshalltown Staff Member:

The district's SDM Vertical Team must now begin assessing the shared decision making project. As a first step, all certified and classified staff members will be asked to anonymously complete a questionnaire distributed by their principal or supervisor sometime between January 18 and January 22. The next step, to come later, will be interviews conducted by a team from ISU with randomly selected staff persons.

Procedures and contents for the survey and interviews have been designed by a vertical team assessment task force. Individual and building confidentiality is guaranteed through steps that have been built into the data collection process. Attached is a copy of the SDM project's assessment procedures.

The written survey will focus upon effectiveness of the shared decision make process at the DISTRICT level by combining data from each building. No attempt will be made by the vertical team or district administration to use information specific to any building. The data collection procedure will provide a "snapshot" of what is happening throughout the district while assuring each building's anonymity and ownership of its survey results.

The questionnaire is designed to be completed in a relatively short time. Your individual cooperation is needed in order to gain a baseline picture of shared decision making in the district. Please complete the form by January 22 and return it to Les Omotani, administrative intern, at Central Office. Your cooperation is appreciated by the MEA, ISEA, and the Marshalltown district.

Dr. Phil Tetzloff
Gerry Ott, ISEA
Dr. Steve Williams
APPENDIX J. INTERVIEW LETTER
February 12, 1991

To:

A few weeks ago you had the opportunity to complete a survey form to help the district gather baseline data and assess the status of the shared decision-making project. As a follow-up to the paper-pencil questionnaire, the district is gathering further information from selected staff members through personal interviews. You were selected as one of those being offered an opportunity to participate in the interviews.

The interviews will be conducted by a team of graduate students from Iowa State University who have been trained by NEA assessment consultant Peter Holly. Each interviewer is a practicing teacher in central Iowa. Interviews will be conducted sometime between the dates of February 25 and March 18, and will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes each. Sources of comments will remain strictly anonymous so that no statement can be associated with any specific person.

Eighty-five names have been randomly selected with a table of random numbers through the use of a stratified sampling technique. They include 10 classified persons, 35 elementary teachers, 20 middle school teachers, and 20 high school teachers. In addition, each building principal, supervisor, and central office administrator will be interviewed.

Please complete the attached form to indicate whether or not you choose to participate in the interview. Return it to Les Omotani at central office by Friday, February 15. Released time will be provided for the interview, and you will receive sufficient advance notice as to day and time. If you choose not to participate, it is important to indicate that choice on the card and return it so that an alternate can be selected.

Your viewpoints are valuable in helping the SDM vertical team assess the shared decision-making project at the district level and plan further direction and services. There will be no attempt to analyze the interview data on a building-by-building basis.
APPENDIX K.  SUMMARY OF PRINCIPALS' SURVEY ON THE SHARED DECISION-MAKING PROJECT
Summary of Principals' Survey on the Shared Decision-Making Project

In December, 1990, a survey was conducted to ascertain the opinion of the 10 district principals about SDM and the SDM project as it pertained to their buildings. The survey was distributed at a principals' meeting, to be completed and returned at the convenience of the respondents. All principals returned the survey. Data are summarized in the accompanying Table.
Table K.1. Summary of principals' survey on the shared decision-making project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>(1) Strongly Agree</th>
<th>(2) Agree more than disagree</th>
<th>(3) Disagree more than agree</th>
<th>(4) S/D</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SDM will result in better decisions in my building</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM will work in my building</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am enthusiastic about SDM in my building</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM will work better for long-ranged planning than day to day problem solving</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My daily tasks have changed because of SDM</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way I spend my time has changed because of SDM</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work more closely with teachers because of SDM</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work more closely with other principals as a result of SDM</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work more closely with parents as a result of SDM</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work more closely with central office personnel as a result of SDM</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My approach to the principalship has changed as a result of SDM</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM will reduce my ability to run my building</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My building already has a structure for carrying out SDM on a day-today basis</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications in my building have improved as a result of SDM</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have sufficient knowledge and skills to implement SDM in my building</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The district has provided sufficient training for principals to implement SDM at the building level</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table K.1. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>(1) Strongly Agree</th>
<th>(2) Agree more than disagree</th>
<th>(3) Disagree more than agree</th>
<th>(4) S/D</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SDM is another fad which might or might not go away in a few years</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM diminishes the principal's authority</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM can be used effectively to resolve problems in the building</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principals are involved in SDM on issues at the district level</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The district's involvement in the learning lab initiative project has increased my commitment to SDM</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The decision making process in my building has changed as a result of SDM</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other comments:

Connection between SIP and SDM is still unclear in minds of the troops. Second half of I/D/E/A training needed.

Have been exercising SDM for a long time.

Try it, you'll like it. It works!!!

Do not assume that much SDM has not taken place in buildings previous to this movement. Let's not overkill a good thing by a parade of exhortations and questionnaires. This will tend to promote a monitoring and surveillance character of central office and the vertical team which doesn't exist.