LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE
IN SCHOOL-INITIATED CHANGE

by

Elizabeth Grace Bond

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
of the Degree of Doctor of Education
Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Elizabeth Grace Bond 1998
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-35394-X
ABSTRACT

LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE IN SCHOOL-INITIATED CHANGE

by

Elizabeth Grace Bond


This study, which emerged from concerns associated with the role of educators in contemporary secondary school change, examined the influence of school leadership and school culture in a specific change initiated in two secondary schools in a large urban school board. The case study methodology, designed for the study, used multiple data sources including a semi-structured interview format and a teacher questionnaire, developed for the purposes of the research, and relevant school documents. The constant comparative method of data analysis allowed for simultaneous data collection and analysis that refined and shaped the research process. Triangulation of the data facilitated a thorough examination of the phenomena and increased the confidence in the findings. Cross-site analysis, which compared the similarities and differences both within and across the two schools, added to the breadth and depth of the interpretation of the findings.

The study confirmed the complexity and uniqueness of the two secondary schools, as social organizations, and the importance of conducting the investigation from the perspectives of the staff who were involved in the change initiatives. The findings revealed that school leadership was an integral part of the culture of each school and that leadership and culture were interactive and interdependent during the course of the changes. Different staff members played different roles at different times during the
change initiative, with several more experienced teachers playing active leadership or supportive roles throughout the school change. While the nature and extent of leadership and cultural influences were based on the development of shared behaviours, attitudes, and assumptions, they were mediated by variations in both schools' internal and external contexts. Specifically, the history, traditions, architecture, and organizational structures of the schools, the reasons for initiating the changes, the backgrounds and experiences of the staff members, the composition of the student body, and the makeup of the community were significant contextual components in determining the influence of school leadership and school culture in the school change initiatives. The findings show that meaningful and enduring change took time: time for readiness, planning, preparation, implementation, and continuation. Behaviours, attitudes, and assumptions were influenced over time through social interactions and staff involvement in the change process, with ownership, skill, mastery, and commitment building throughout the change initiative, rather than as something that existed in the early stages. The degree of staff support for the schools’ organizational structures, which established the formal patterns of association, facilitated or inhibited opportunities for increased teacher leadership and collaboration in the schools during the course of the change.

Although the results of the study are not intended to be generalizable to all school-initiated changes or necessarily representative of all secondary schools, their application rests on their relatability to other similar circumstances as the basis for further research and the springboard for future change initiatives.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The successful completion of this thesis is due to the generosity of time, expertise, assistance, and co-operation of many people during my doctoral studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

In particular, I want to express my special thanks to the school administrators and teachers with whom I worked in both secondary schools in this study. Without their co-operation and participation, this thesis would not have been possible. Their willingness to share their perceptions and insights about their experiences contributed significantly to understanding the reality of life in the two secondary schools during the course of school change.

I owe an equal debt of gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Dr. John Davis, for his consistent understanding and constructive advice in guiding me through all stages of the study. John, thank you for always being available to answer my questions or address my concerns. I also want to express my appreciation to Dr. Brent Kilbourn and Dr. Edward Hickcox, members of my thesis committee, for their insightful questions and helpful suggestions in the development and review of this thesis.

I am also extremely grateful for the understanding, inspiration, and support of my family, friends, colleagues, and staff throughout this undertaking. They have served as my source of strength, encouragement, and determination during times of uncertainty and have contributed significantly to the success of my endeavours. I shall always remember their belief in me and their confidence in my commitment to see this study through to its completion.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .......................................................................................................................... ii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................................................................. iv

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..................................................................................................... v

LIST OF TABLES .................................................................................................................. x

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION ..................................................................................... 1
  Background to the Study ................................................................................................. 1
  The Research Problem .................................................................................................. 5
  Research Questions ........................................................................................................ 6
  Need for the Study .......................................................................................................... 7
  Purpose and Significance of the Study .......................................................................... 10
  Definition of Terms ........................................................................................................ 12
  Organization of the Study .............................................................................................. 14

CHAPTER II - REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ......................................................... 18
  Introduction .................................................................................................................. 18
  Understanding School Change ..................................................................................... 19
    What Has Been Learned from the Study of School Change ........................................ 19
    The Multidimensional Nature of School Change ....................................................... 31
    The Meaning of School Change ................................................................................ 35
  The Nature of Leadership .............................................................................................. 39
    Theories of Leadership ............................................................................................... 39
    Theory and School Leadership Practice in Perspective ............................................. 45
    Leadership and Power ............................................................................................... 54
  The Nature of Culture .................................................................................................... 60
    The Study of Culture .................................................................................................. 60
    The Function of Culture in Schools ......................................................................... 66
    Learning and School Culture ..................................................................................... 71
    Leadership and School Culture .................................................................................. 74
    Organizational Structure and School Culture ............................................................ 76
  The Nature of Case Study Research Design .................................................................... 81
    Rationale for the Use of Case Study Research Design ............................................... 81
    Summary ...................................................................................................................... 85

CHAPTER III - METHODOLOGY ............................................................................... 88
  Introduction .................................................................................................................. 88
  Purposive Selection of the Two Secondary Schools ..................................................... 89
  Ethical Considerations .................................................................................................. 91
CHAPTER IV - RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction.............................................................111
A General Description of the School-Initiated Change..............117
Secondary School Site I..............................................117
Secondary School Site II............................................119

Part One: Secondary School Site I...........................................

The Context for the School-Initiated Change.........................122
The School Building..................................................122
The Community......................................................122
The Students.........................................................123
The Teaching Staff..................................................124
Significant Events Leading Up to the Change.........................130

Introduction to the Study Participants.................................

Interview Participants..............................................132
Questionnaire Respondents........................................146

Reasons for the Specific Change......................................

The Change Process: Initiation, Implementation, Continuation.....151
Initiation: Supportive Influences................................151
Initiation: Hindering Influences................................156
Implementation: Supportive Influences............................157
Implementation: Hindering Influences............................160
Continuation: Supportive Influences...............................164
Continuation: Hindering Influences...............................166

Outcomes of the Change.............................................167
Practices..............................................................167
Attitudes..............................................................170

General Observations and Comments.................................

Part Two: Secondary School Site II...................................

The Context for the School-Initiated Change...........................
The School Building.................................................

vi
The Community ............................................................................177
The Students ....................................................................................178
The Teaching Staff ........................................................................179
Significant Events Leading Up to the Change .................................184
Introduction to the Study Participants ...........................................190
Interview Participants ...................................................................190
Questionnaire Respondents ..........................................................206
Reasons for the Specific Change ....................................................207
The Change Process: Initiation, Implementation, Continuation .........210
Initiation: Supportive Influences ...................................................210
Initiation: Hindering Influences ....................................................213
Implementation: Supportive Influences .......................................214
Implementation: Hindering Influences ..........................................218
Continuation: Supportive Influences ............................................223
Continuation: Hindering Influences .............................................225
Outcomes of the Change ...............................................................227
Practices .........................................................................................227
Attitudes .........................................................................................231
General Observations and Comments ..........................................233

CHAPTER V - CROSS-SITE ANALYSIS ........................................237
Introduction ....................................................................................237
Antecedents to the School-Initiated Change .....................................239
Established Leadership and Culture .............................................239
Readiness for the School-Initiated Change ....................................243
Critical Incidents and Staff Response ...........................................244
Entry of New School Administrators ...........................................246
Staff Response to New School Administrators ..............................252
School-Community Relationships ...............................................257
Decision to Undertake the Specific School-Initiated Change ...............260
Meaning: Purposes and Sources of the Change ...............................260
The School-Initiated Change Process ............................................263
Initiation: Planning and Preparation .............................................263
Key Leadership and Active Initiation ............................................264
Time for Planning and Preparation ..............................................266
Staff Involvement ..........................................................................268
Support and Resources ................................................................270
Communication ............................................................................271
Resistance and Reticence .............................................................271
Implementation: Experiencing the Realities of the Change .................273
Meeting Student Needs .................................................................274
Staff Consistency ..........................................................................275
Staff Leadership and Involvement ...............................................278
Support and Recognition ..............................................................279
Evaluation and Alterations .............................................................282
# LIST OF TABLES

1. **Teacher Questionnaire Responses Regarding the Day-to-Day Working Relationships at Secondary School Site I**.................................................................125

2. **Teacher Questionnaire Responses Regarding the Distribution of Leadership at Secondary School Site I**........................................................................127

3. **Summary of Background Information About the Interview Participants at Secondary School Site I**..................................................................................132

4. **Summary of Background Information About the Questionnaire Respondents at Secondary School Site I**........................................................................147

5. **Teacher Questionnaire Responses Regarding the Day-to-Day Working Relationships at Secondary School Site II**...............................................................180

6. **Teacher Questionnaire Responses Regarding the Distribution of Leadership at Secondary School Site II**........................................................................183

7. **Summary of Background Information About the Interview Participants at Secondary School Site II**..................................................................................190

8. **Summary of Background Information About the Questionnaire Respondents at Secondary School Site II**........................................................................206

9. **Established Behaviours, Attitudes, and Assumptions at the Two Secondary School Sites**........................................................................................................242

10. **Behaviours, Attitudes, and Assumptions of the New School Administrators at the Two Secondary School Sites**.................................................................251

11. **Behaviours, Attitudes, and Assumptions at the Two Secondary School Sites as the Result of Events that Preceded the Decision to Undertake the Specific Grade 9 Change Initiative**.....................................................259

12. **Behaviours, Attitudes, and Assumptions at the Two Secondary School Sites as Outcomes of the School-Initiated Change**......................................................298
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Educational change in secondary schools has become the focus of increased attention and growing controversy in recent years. Like other organizations, secondary schools are facing shifting economic, political, and societal conditions that present a fundamentally different and more complex environment for change than in the past and in more stable times (Darling-Hammond, 1993; Leithwood, 1994; Little & McLaughlin, 1993). Accordingly, these conditions require new and different ways to address the diverse and changing circumstances within secondary schools and their external environment and present a corresponding challenge to school administrators and teachers in accomplishing these changes. Although Fullan (1993) points out that “schools alone cannot solve all of society’s ills” (p.44), he emphasizes the importance of schools in making significant changes if they “are to see themselves as part of the solution” (p.44).

A growing body of knowledge about educational change that recognizes the centrality of schools in accomplishing fundamental changes also emphasizes the significance of the unique human enterprise of each school in influencing the direction and outcomes of those changes. In fact, some researchers argue that it is only at the school level, through the dedicated efforts of school staff, that change can be adapted in a meaningful way to fit the specific internal and external contextual realities of the school and its practitioners (Hannay, 1994; Schein, 1985; Sirotnek, 1987). Similarly, educational practitioners who realize the need for meaningful change, if secondary schools are to respond to current needs and to adapt to the economic, political, and
societal realities, also emphasize the importance of their active involvement in such endeavours. For example, a recent publication of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation Grass Roots Up endorses the necessity for school-based decision making in the change process and the need for schools to develop planning models that meet their own site-specific requirements. The same publication also asserts that "teachers must be able to take a degree of ownership in the change process [along with] strong leadership and support from school and system administrators, parents and the community" (p.7-8). Providing further theoretical support for this viewpoint, Sashkin and Egermeir (1993) suggest that ideally changes initiated at the school-site level should involve building "school cultures that foster professional and student growth and development, encourage innovation and constant improvement, and are accountable for the results" (p.20).

Both the theoretical and practical lines of thought, just described, envision a radically different approach to school change from that which views change as "an event to be managed, controlled and completed" (Hannay, 1995, p.8) through centralized, control-oriented leadership strategies and prescriptions for uniform teacher practice (Lezotte, 1989). This approach, which stresses the human side of school change and the nature of school change as an ongoing process, questions the perspective of school change as a product, based solely on input and output (Goodlad, 1994). Specifically, advocates of this approach maintain that the emphasis of educational change on the what rather than on the how fails to take into consideration not only the complexity of secondary schools as social organizations (Miles, 1986) but also the meaning of the change for those actually involved in the process (Fullan, 1991).
Evidence for advancing this approach to school change is provided by insights from contemporary studies that focus on the importance of the changing role of school leadership and the power of cultural norms in shaping the changes that occur in a school. These studies contend that in combination school leadership and school culture can exert powerful influence in inhibiting or creating and sustaining the conditions of educational change (Combs, 1988; Cuban, 1988; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Fullan, 1993; Fullan & Miles, 1992; Goodlad, 1984; Griffin, 1988; Leithwood, 1992; 1994; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Little, 1987; Sarason, 1990; Schein, 1984, 1985, 1992; Senge, 1990).

Although the accumulation of recent knowledge on the nature of school leadership and school culture in school change is promising, it also raises serious questions about the variety of challenges faced by secondary school educators in undertaking contemporary change initiatives. For instance, the results of these studies advocate not just improved leadership, but a different kind of leadership, in the current school change environment. They suggest that “the conventional images of leadership in the change process don’t apply” (Louis & Miles, 1990, in Louis, 1994, p.4) and that contemporary school change requires a new set of school leadership practices that provide more inclusive and more flexible approaches than in the past (Brookover & Lezotte, 1977; Burns, 1984; Corcoran, 1987; Darling-Hammond, 1993; Firestone & Wilson, 1985; Hall, 1988; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1992; Louis, 1986). Recent research has also pointed out that the transformation required in school leadership to meet these challenges will be no small feat, since “we are dependent [for the most part] on mid-career professionals to create the conditions for change but lack the shared systematic understanding of the conceptual and
skill needs of people faced with organizational circumstances that are very different from those they faced when they became school leaders” (Louis, 1994, p.19). Added to these circumstances is the fact that the forms of leadership that direct and support the contemporary change process in secondary schools are relatively unknown at this time (Hargreaves, Davis, Fullan, Wignall, Stager, & MacMillan, 1993; Louis & Miles, 1990; Pellicier, Anderson, Keefe, Kelley, & McCleary, 1990).

Another dimension in contemporary school level change that augments its complexity is the diversity of expectations within a generally large social system and complex organizational structure. In addition, the traditions and size of typical secondary schools provide a challenge for “reculturing, unlearning, and relearning” (Hedbeg, 1991, p.18) and “fundamental alterations in relationships” (Prestine, 1994, p.1) during school change. Further, Hargreaves (1994) suggests that secondary schools are often characterized by their dichotomous role of conserving values and standards while, at the same time, reflecting the fact that the world around them is changing. And according to Huberman (1992, in Prestine, 1994), secondary schools have traditionally been an integral component of a “coherent and resilient ecosystem” (p.31) with a capacity to withstand change, and as such, have remained relatively stable organizational structures for most of the century, with very few changes challenging traditional organizational roles and responsibilities (Cuban, 1988; Hannay, 1995).

The resulting combination of factors, just described, depicts the apparent discrepancy about school change that exists in relation to the knowledge that has developed, the intentions advocated by some secondary school educators, and the practices that are currently occurring in many secondary schools. At the same time, these
situations underscore the important reference points to be considered and the significant challenges to be faced in the contemporary study and practice of secondary school change. While the present societal circumstances, the recognition of the need for meaningful school change, and the results of some contemporary research indicate that this is a time when there are serious opportunities for secondary school educators to take charge of change, it is clear that this will not be an easy undertaking (Louis, 1994). However, as difficult as the task may be, if school change is to proceed “in a meaningful way, schools have to change the way they typically do business” (Timar & Kirp, 1989, p.507). The recent report from the Ontario Royal Commission on Learning (1994) reaffirms the significance of this undertaking, stressing that “substantial changes” must take place if schools “are expected to keep up” (p.2).

The Research Problem

Central to this study is the challenge to understanding how educational change occurs in practice in secondary schools when school administrators and teachers seek new opportunities to initiate substantial changes, and how school leadership and school culture influence these changes. As has been pointed out, the unique characteristics and processes associated with leadership and culture in secondary school change and their meaning are imbedded in the relationships that exist or develop within the complex organizational structures and social systems of secondary schools. This complexity is reflected in the characterization of secondary schools as a dual authority structure—the formal one that is defined by the political and hierarchical dimensions of the educational system, and the informal one that is shaped by powerful collective norms and traditions of various organizational or group cultures—and the dichotomous role of the culture,
within this unique ethos and social structure, in relation to the diverse expectations of school leaders, teachers, students, parents, community members, and school trustees (Campbell, 1992; Hargreaves, 1992; McLaughlin, 1990; Sirotnek, 1987). Consequently, when educational change is undertaken in secondary schools, the dynamics of school leadership and cultural influence, inherent in both the formal and informal structures and systems of the school and the larger community, permeate the entire change initiative (Miles, Ekholm, & Vandenb~fghe, 1987). In acknowledging Schein’s (1985) contention, that “leadership and culture are two sides of the same coin and neither can fully be understood by itself” (p.2), the general problem underlying this research directs the study to investigate the influence of school leadership and school culture in a specific secondary school-initiated change.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed as the result of the review of relevant literature on school change, school leadership, and school culture, to address the research problem and to provide a guide for the collection and analysis of the data in the study:

1. What school change was initiated?
2. Why was the school change initiated?
3. In what ways did school leadership and school culture influence the change initiative?
4. What were the outcomes of the school change initiative?

Subsidiary questions, which provide a more specific focus to the study, include:

1. Who was involved in the change initiative?
2. How, when, and why were they involved?
3. What support was provided for the change initiative?
4. What problems arose to hinder the change initiative and how were they resolved?
5. What changes in attitudes and practices occurred, as the result of the initiative?

This study explores answers to these questions by investigating the perspectives of the school administrators and the teaching staff who have been actively involved in a specific school-initiated change over the past four years in two secondary schools in a large urban school board.

**Need for the Study**

Research in the 1980s on effective schools, which “fostered the belief that school improvement planning should occur at the building level” (Wilson & Corcoran, 1988, p.8), laid the groundwork for school-initiated change by promoting school change through the knowledge and skills of educators rather than through prescriptions of uniform practice (Lezotte, 1989). Although based largely on studies of elementary schools, effective schools research has contributed to the “development of new theory in education and has become the basis for an ideology” (Wilson & Corcoran, 1988, p.2) for change adopted by many researchers and educators. However, despite the emphasis of effective schools studies on “more supportive forms of administrative leadership, participative forms of organizational decision making, and increased teamwork” (Rowan, Raudenbush & Kang, 1991, p.239), there is little formal knowledge about the conditions that support such forms in secondary schools (Hargreaves et al., 1993; Louis & Miles, 1990; Pellicier et al., 1990). Moreover, MacKenzie (1983) adds this caution: “Although the results of the few studies that have been conducted in secondary schools have been strikingly similar to the findings from the elementary studies [and] the same or similar factors appear to be related to effectiveness in both types of schools” (p.6), that “even if the theoretical constructs...are similar, their meaning in practice may differ across levels
of schooling because of differences in structure and organization” (p.6). Furthering this argument, Berman (1986) and Hallinger and Murphy (1986) emphasize the significance of the context of each school and the variations in specific conditions associated with the process of change across schools and in particular settings. In other words, as Neufeld, Farrar, and Miles (1983, in Louis and Miles, 1990) suggest: “Approaches [to change] that work in elementary schools may fail when transferred to the more complicated and turbulent environment of high schools” (p.4). Based on their findings, Louis & Miles (1990) conclude that although there may be “images of excellence” (p.5) for secondary schools, there is a lack of understanding of “the complex reality...of getting new practices and ideas into the real life” (p.5) of secondary schools.

Louis and Miles (1990) also point out that recommendations to secondary school administrators about how to manage school change are often borrowed from private-sector research, “although we know that management problems in the public sector, especially in schools, are often quite different” (p.5). While a recent report on high school leaders from the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) notes that the secondary school principalship has been linked of late to school effectiveness and collaborative approaches, Lipsitz (1984, in Wilson & Corcoran, 1988) emphasizes that contemporary secondary school leadership involves making the school “larger than one person” (p.149). Similarly, the findings of a study by Wilson and Corcoran (1988) indicate that “leadership in secondary schools tends to be dispersed [and that] there are a number of people who can and do take leadership roles at different times” (p.81). Although there is clear consensus in the literature about the significance of school leadership in educational change, little research exists on the “formative processes
of...leadership” (Pellicier et al., p.52) that actually occur when change is undertaken in secondary school settings.

School culture has also been recognized increasingly as a potential influential component of educational change (Hargreaves et al., 1993). While much of the research on school culture, like that on school change, has taken place in elementary schools, the few studies of secondary school culture that are beginning to emerge show findings similar to those at the elementary level (Louis & Miles, 1991; Wilson & Corcoran, 1989). On the other hand, there are many features of secondary schools, for example, “their characteristically larger size, complexity, decision making patterns, and subject-based organization, which add a distinctive cast to their cultures in comparison with elementary schools” (Hargreaves et al., 1993, p.7). It is important therefore to address the specific issues and problems of school change and school culture that present themselves within the complex organization of secondary schools.

While current societal circumstances offer different and unique challenges to secondary school teachers and administrators as they initiate change in their schools, to date little research has been conducted on change initiated at the secondary school level. According to Little (1987), although the information is limited, “the accumulated research that is available has made obvious the contrast between the conditions of professional work that prevail in most schools and the conditions that have been achieved in a much smaller number of schools” (p.166). However, in acknowledging the observations of Miles and Ekholm (1991) that successful change does take place in some secondary schools, and that the degree to which changes occur varies from school to school, further empirical study is warranted.
Consequently, although the substantial data on elementary school change and the limited studies on change in secondary schools may serve as a useful guidepost for researchers, practitioners, and policy makers, there is a need for further empirical research to expand the small body of knowledge about school-initiated change, as it actually occurs in secondary schools, and to study "the nature of the...interactions between school leaders and other members of the school organization, in particular" (Leithwood et al., 1991, p.34). Paralleling the comments of Hargreaves (1997) that "educational change efforts need more depth as well as more breadth (p. 2), Louis and Miles (1990) conclude that "we need practical guidelines drawn from the experience of real people" (p.5) who have been involved in specific change initiatives. This information needs "to be communicated clearly to people who care and can do something: principals, school staff, parents, and policy makers at the district level" (p.5). Such is the justification for this study.

**Purpose and Significance of the Study**

Given the need for this study, its purpose is to develop an understanding about what actually happens when secondary school educators engage in a specific school-initiated change, how the various roles and relationships within the secondary school organizational structure and its environment influence the change, and what lessons can be learned about school-initiated change from their experiences.

This study has been motivated by a number of factors: the recent work of educational change theorists and researchers; the degree of public attention currently being given to secondary school change; the intended political agenda for secondary school reform; and the personal experiences and interests of the researcher. As an
experienced educator, the researcher has had a variety of experiences in several school boards in Ontario, working in both elementary and secondary schools and with elementary and secondary school staff, as a teacher, special assignment consultant, program co-ordinator, principal, provincial education officer, and currently as a superintendent. Her more recent involvement in secondary change initiatives at the school board level and her doctoral studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education have fostered a keen interest in the underpinnings of secondary school change, particularly as they relate to school leadership and school culture in contemporary secondary school change initiatives.

There has been substantial research on educational change during the past several decades. During this time, numerous studies have suggested that school leadership and school culture can be significant catalysts in moving towards or blocking school change. On the other hand, relatively little evidence has been produced on the influence of school leadership or school culture in change initiated at the secondary school level. The exigencies of the times are presenting unique challenges to secondary school educators—challenges that build on but differ from traditional roles and requirements. New directions require new approaches. In order to decide what may be possible, there must first be an understanding of what presently is actually occurring. Study that is focused on school leadership and school culture contributes to an understanding of the influences of the persons most likely to shape and sustain effective school change. In addition, a better understanding of the current circumstances involved in actualizing a specific secondary school change, from the perspectives of the participants, may be helpful, not only to the educators taking part in the study, but also to others embarking on the path of educational
change in other secondary school settings. It is hoped that this study can contribute insights and interpretations that will initiate further inquiry as practitioners, researchers, and policy makers pursue their respective responsibilities in educational change.

The research is particularly timely, given the limited and inconclusive evidence about the practical, theoretical, and political implications of secondary school-initiated change. The significance of the study then, is predicated on its ability not only to expand the existing knowledge base of researchers but also to increase the understanding of practitioners and policy makers regarding basic underlying assumptions about educational change in secondary schools and the influence of school leadership and school culture in secondary school-initiated change. Further, the significance of the study is contingent on its ability to raise critical questions that may form the basis for further pursuits in related areas of study and practice.

**Definition of Terms**

The following relevant terms are defined to assist the reader in understanding their use in this study:

**School-Initiated Change** refers to the specific educational change that the school administrators and teachers in each of the two secondary schools in the study initiated, implemented, and continued, in response to perceived school and community needs, as opposed to a generic school change mandated or imposed from outside the school. In both secondary schools, the specific school-initiated change is related to the school staff decision to provide an innovative approach to program delivery to meet the needs of their grade 9 students.
Transition Years refers to grades 7, 8, and 9 as the years in which most students experience two major transitions: one involving the significant developmental changes that occur as students move from childhood to adolescence and the other involving the move from an elementary to a secondary school. The improvement of support for all students in the transition years was a component of the major educational restructuring initiatives announced in the Throne Speech by the Ontario Ministry of Education in April, 1989 and presented in The Ministry of Education Action Plan: Restructuring the Education System: A Framework for Consultation, 1989-1994. Two year school pilot projects were part of the Transitions Years initiative prior to province-wide implementation beginning in September, 1993.

Destreaming, according to the Ontario Ministry of Education Transition Years initiative, refers to the elimination of the grouping of grade 9 students, for instructional purposes, according to basic, general and advanced levels of difficulty (streaming) and the removal of credits for individual courses in the grade 9 program, as described by Ontario Schools: Intermediate and Senior Divisions (Grades 7-12/OAC) and Ontario Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum 115.

Composite Secondary School is a secondary school, comprised of students in grades 9-12/OAC, that offers courses at basic, general and advanced levels of difficulty, in accordance with Ontario Schools: Intermediate and Senior Divisions (Grades 7-12/OAC) and Ontario Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum 115.

Vocational School is a secondary school, comprised of students in grades 9-12, that offers courses at basic and general levels of difficulty, in accordance with Ontario
Leadership involves "the exercise of influence on the part of the leader over one or more people" (Arnold, Feldman, & Hunt, 1992). As such, leadership in this study refers to the roles played by those in appointed authority positions as well as those who emerged to influence individual and group efforts in accomplishing the school change goals (Fiedler & Garcia, 1987). In this sense, leadership may be formal or informal with its influence recognized due to personal characteristics and/or to position in a group (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Since it has been pointed out that "leadership in secondary schools tends to be dispersed" (Wilson & Corcoran, 1988, p.81) and that various people can and do take different types of leadership roles at different times, leadership in this study includes the roles played by the principals, vice principals, department heads, and teachers in influencing others during the course of the school-initiated change under investigation.

Culture, as a social construct, is comprised of the shared orientations of the school staff, as a whole, or of groups within the school, that give each secondary school in the study a distinctive identity. While symbols, artifacts, rituals, stories, and ceremonies are the observable manifestations of the school culture, its essence, as defined by Schein (1985), is in the deeper level "taken-for-granted patterns of basic assumptions" that are "invented, discovered or developed" by the school staff or groups within the school, as they learn to cope with issues "of external adaptation and internal integration" (p.9) and that become validated as the accepted way to relate to these issues. Culture gives "meaning, support and identity" (Hargreaves & Wignall, 1989, p.7) to staff members and their work, provides the unique lenses through which staff members view
themselves and their internal and external environment, and establishes the norms of
behavioural conduct for individuals and groups in the school (Hoy & Miskel, 1991;
Levitt & March, 1988; Schein, 1985). In the secondary schools in this study, culture
includes subcultures, based upon instructional facets of schooling, including specific
subject departments and program areas, as well as social affiliations related to particular
areas of interest or need.

Organization of the Study

The circumstances surrounding the role of educators in secondary school change
have been the source of much speculation in recent times. By identifying the larger
practical and theoretical issues associated with this speculation and the corresponding
challenges facing educators who undertake contemporary secondary school change and
researchers who study these change initiatives, Chapter One establishes the rationale and
framework for this study.

Specifically, the first section of the introductory chapter focuses on the human
enterprise of schools as the centre of fundamental educational change within the current
economic, political, and social environment, and emphasizes the importance of the
changing role of leadership and culture in accomplishing school change. The information
presented in this section points out the apparent discrepancy in relation to current
educational change theory, the intentions of some secondary school educators, and the
practice in most secondary schools, and acknowledges the lack of research in
understanding how school-level educational change occurs within the secondary school
context. As such, this section provides support for the central focus of this study, which
involves understanding the phenomenology of the specific changes initiated in two
secondary schools—how the school administrators and teachers have actually experienced the changes and the meanings they have constructed about the influence of school leadership and school culture in the change initiatives.

The remaining sections of the chapter expand the rationale and develop the framework for the research by introducing the research problem and the questions that will guide the study, by identifying and elaborating on the need for the study, by explaining its purpose and significance, and by defining important terms to be used in the study.

Chapter Two examines selected relevant literature that supports the rationale for the research by addressing the areas of knowledge that the study is intended to expand. Drawing from the fields of philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and education, the literature review focuses on understanding educational change, leadership, and culture through the examination of related empirical research, theoretical approaches, and practical issues that surround and elaborate on the areas under study. To add clarity to the framework, a comprehensive description of case study research design substantiates the use of the case study as an appropriate method of inquiry for this investigation, and connects the introductory chapter to the subsequent methodology chapter.

To address the research problem and the purpose of the study, Chapter Three describes how the case study methodology will be used in the research. Included are discussions of the purposive selection of the two secondary school sites and the ethical considerations associated with the research. Descriptions of the data collection and data analysis procedures emphasize the importance of the multiple sources of information and
multiple analysis methods that contribute to the "trustworthiness of the data" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p.24) and that increase the confidence in the research findings and their implications, discussed in subsequent chapters of the study. The limitations of the study are presented in the final section of Chapter Three.

The findings and their analysis, which address the research problem and research questions, are discussed in Chapters Four and Five. Chapter Four presents the findings of the study in detail in each of the two secondary school sites. The cross-site analysis, which includes a comparison of the patterns of similarities and differences in the research findings across the two secondary school sites, is presented in Chapter Five.

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the findings in the two previous chapters, the conclusions and implications of the study, described in Chapter Six, connect the research problem and the purpose of the study to the major findings, which are described in relation to recent relevant research. The final chapter also offers practical and theoretical suggestions related to the major findings and conclusions and presents ideas for further research on this and associated topics.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This literature review draws upon recent educational thought having a theoretical and practical bearing on the topic of the study—that is, the influence of school leadership and school culture in a specific secondary school-initiated change, and presents important views and findings that serve as a point of reference for the research undertaken in the two secondary schools in this study. Although, the researcher supports Schein’s (1985) position about the integral nature of leadership and culture in understanding school change, the three components are presented separately in the following literature review to provide the reader with a basis for understanding their history and development in influencing contemporary practice and theory.

A logical progression follows, with the initial section, Understanding School Change, setting the scene for the subsequent sections in this chapter by describing what has been learned from the study of school change, highlighting the multidimensional nature of school change from a variety of perspectives, and emphasizing the importance of its meaning for those involved. The next section, The Nature of Leadership, explores leadership theories that have influenced contemporary thinking about leadership in school change, places leadership theory and school leadership practice in perspective, and includes a discussion of leadership and power. The third section, The Nature of Culture, examines theoretical views of organizational culture and its practical functions in schools and discusses contemporary thinking about learning, leadership, and organizational structure and their relationship with culture and school change.
Based on the information provided in the previous sections, the final section describes The Nature of Case Study Research Design and its appropriateness as the inquiry approach to be used in investigating the topic under study in this research.

Understanding School Change

In theory, the purpose of educational change ... is to help schools accomplish their goals more effectively by replacing some structures, programs and/or practices with better ones.

In practice, what people do or do not do is a crucial variable.

Michael Fullan
The New Meaning of Educational Change

What Has Been Learned from the Study of School Change

Although schools have been undergoing changes since the turn of the century, Fullan (1991) points out the relatively short history of the investigation into understanding “how educational change works in practice” (p.5) in schools. This understanding is the result of the accumulation of knowledge through the study of both successful and unsuccessful educational change efforts over the past thirty-five years. Fullan (1991), Hopkins, Ainscow, and West (1994) and Miles (1994) distinguish four major stages during this time period that have been instrumental in developing contemporary thinking about school change: adoption, documenting failure, success, and managing change.

The first stage, initiated in the 1960s, was aimed at the adoption of curriculum materials and specific classroom practices. This post-Sputnik period was accompanied by the development of numerous large-scale curriculum innovations, particularly in the fields of mathematics and science, and the advocacy of individualized “inquiry-oriented and student-centred instruction” (Fullan, 1991, p.5). During this decade of adoption, the
number of innovations that were undertaken served as the benchmark for progress. Although the materials may have been of high quality, having been produced by teams of experts, teachers, as a whole, were not involved in the development process and often received rudimentary in-service training. Teachers may have used some of the materials that they found useful but the innovations, as intended, often did not occur. Therefore, as Miles (1994) points out, it was during this time that it became increasingly clear that "individuals were not necessarily the prime targets of school change and that thought had to be given to the school as an organization" (p.222).

The second stage, throughout most of the 1970s, related to documenting failure of the previous curriculum innovations in effecting change in practice. Researchers observed that many innovations were being adopted without anyone asking why and with little forethought about the follow-through. Implementation became the term used to describe what was happening or what was not happening in practice. Although there were many negative lessons from this period, a number of positive themes began to converge through the studies. As both the issue of implementation by legislative mandate and the concept of the top-down model of change were questioned, several researchers began to look to knowledge and skill acquisition as important factors in bringing about school change (Miles, 1993). As well, it also became evident that school change was "an extremely complex and lengthy process" (Hopkins et al., 1994, p.23), requiring a combination of planning, learning, and commitment to succeed.

During the late 1970s to the mid-1980s, the third stage was characterized as a period of success. Confidence in the validity of several successful school innovations was buoyed by compatible evidence arrived at independently from a variety of research
and practice sources (Fullan, 1991). The first studies of school effectiveness were published (Reynolds, 1985; Rutter, Maugham, Mortimore, Ousten, & Smith, 1979) and a consensus was established about the characteristics of effective schools (Purkey & Smith, 1983; Wilson & Corcoran, 1988). Along with some major large-scale studies of school improvement projects (Huberman & Miles, 1984; Louis & Miles, 1990; Rosenholtz, 1989), the effective school studies produced knowledge of increasing specificity about the dynamics of school change. Leadership studies on the role of the principal (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982) and staff development research (Joyce, 1990) provided further key characteristics and processes associated with successful school change. As researchers began to move intellectually from the add-on or drop-in concepts of change within the school to the study of change of the school, as a whole, this creative period produced a number of developing strategies for school improvement.

However, it was not until the next phase that planned school change and its management were addressed. Stage four, *managing change*, was initiated in the mid to late 1980s and continues to be a source of interest for policy makers, researchers, and practitioners. As this study has revealed and as Hopkins et al. (1994) suggest, this stage may prove to be the most difficult but hopefully the most productive of the stages, “as we struggle to relate strategies and research knowledge to the realities of schools in a pragmatic, systematic, and sensitive way” (pp.23-24). The research on school change in this stage has moved from finding and installing good practices to a “managed process, deeply influenced by the local context, with some predictable regularities and a great many unforeseen contingencies” (Miles, 1993, p.231) inherent in the unique context of each school setting (Firestone & Corbett, 1987).
Acknowledging the variability of school change and Fullan's (1991) observation that "planned change attempts rarely succeed as intended" (p.9), Hannay (1992) points out the importance of "planning that is flexible to meet the needs of the participants—as those needs emerge" (p.3). She adds: "To accomplish responsive planning, those involved must be closely connected to and listening to the participants" (p.3). Further, Hannay (1992) emphasizes what the researcher believes and what this study found: "Planned change must also be incremental, allowing individuals to start from where they are and move ahead at a steady but reasonable pace" (p.3). Accordingly, Fullan (1991) suggests that understanding the distinction "between theories of change (what causes change) and theories of changing (how to influence those causes)" (p.9) becomes significant in the successful management of school change. In the current milieu, he concludes that research findings on school change "should be used less as instruments of 'application' and more as a means of helping practitioners and planners make sense of planning, implementation strategies and monitoring" (p.47).

Another separate yet complimentary theoretical view of the evolution of the study of school change reflects research derived from the behavioural sciences. Based largely on the earlier classical work of Weber (1947) and the more recent findings of March and Olsen (1976) and Weick (1976), this view explains how the study of organizational behaviour has influenced current directions in school change research. From this perspective, up until the 1980s schools were looked upon primarily as formal structures designed to achieve a specific set of clear organizational goals. The behaviour of individuals in schools was perceived as highly integrated, purposeful, disciplined, and rational, with decision making at the top (Herriott & Firestone, 1984). This rational
perspective, accepted by many policy makers, researchers, and educators, concentrated on prescriptive administrative practice as the key to change and on management models to facilitate centralized decision making by a few people to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.

Research during the 1970s revealed “that a school’s goals, structures, activities, and outcomes were not tightly and logically connected with clear lines of communication and that people were not rational actors, guided by what is good for the collective welfare of the organization” (Baldridge and Burnham, 1975, in Dellar, 1996, p.463). These findings brought into question the conceptual underpinnings of the earlier theories. As the research on school change accumulated, it became apparent that many schools, specifically secondary schools, did not function solely as rational systems (Herriott & Firestone, 1984). These circumstances were particularly evident with respect to the manner in which many teachers carried out their instructional activities and made decisions about their work independently from the school administration and the goals of the school (Clear, 1970; Mintzberg, 1979; Schmuck & Miles, 1971).

The results of these studies opened up avenues in the 1980s for the adoption of a social system orientation to the analysis of organizational behaviour that focused on the internal dynamics of groups within schools. Upon examination of the interaction that occurred between and among educators in school change, researchers discovered that a collection of groups collaborated to achieve school goals on some occasions and on other occasions they co-operated to accomplish the goals of their own groups. As issues of goal consensus and centralization of influence arose from these studies a new image of anarchy and the description of schools as “loosely coupled” systems came to the fore
Schools, viewed from this perspective, revealed an absence of clear school goals, a lack of general staff agreement about their purpose, a high degree of teacher discretion in work-related decision making, minimal collaboration among members of the various groups in the school, and a lack of overall co-ordination (Firestone & Herriott, 1984). Further research, conducted by Meyer and Rowan (1983) and Firestone (1985) in the 1980s, indicated that while the view of secondary schools as loosely coupled was more realistic than the traditional view of their being rational organizations, expectations for uniformity of educational outcomes and accountability in meeting these outcomes required certain school functions to be routinized. The current thinking of several school change theorists, which is supported by the findings of the study, points to the importance of both the rational-bureaucratic structure, consisting of tightly linked institutional directions and managerial functions, and the loosely linked professional instructional one in determining how school change initiatives unfold (Hargreaves, 1994; Hoy & Miskel, 1987; Leithwood, 1992; Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1992; Senge, 1990).

Based on this line of thinking, Hoy and Miskel (1987) suggest that at least three subsystems must be considered, each with its own respective decision making authority, within the context of the school organization: the technical which includes teaching and learning; the managerial which encompasses co-ordination and administration, and the institutional which connects the school to its environment.

In distinct yet related work, Wilson and Dickson Corbett (1983) focus on the relationships or linkages that occur to enable the subsystems to function independently and as part of the entire school. They identify three types of linkage: cultural, structural,
and interpersonal. Cultural linkages refer to the organizational mechanisms that emphasize the creation or co-ordination of similar behavioural patterns through the development of shared definitions. The establishment of agreed upon school goals promotes cultural linkages. Structural linkages refer to the way in which a school controls members' behaviour through rules and enforcement and limits the discretion of members over the tasks they perform. Interpersonal linkages refer to opportunities for staff to interact about their work through discussion and observation. These linkages suggest that schools cannot be characterized merely as organizational structures.

Therefore, when the work of Wilson and Dickson Corbett (1983) is integrated with the work of Hoy and Miskel (1987) the result is a view of schools as an organized whole, comprised of subsystems and activities that interact with each other and their larger environment. Consequently, as multidimensional social entities, schools that undertake change also exist within changing environments. Dellar (1996) adds this caveat to explain how this occurs:

In an attempt to maintain internal stability, the interaction between subsystems and their school and external environments, control procedures and structures are established to monitor their environments, control information flow and promote a common sense of purpose. Such schools are stable yet dynamic, flexible yet with tight and loose relationships among subsystems. (p. 465)

A further complimentary theoretical perspective on school change, derived from studies by sociologists, political scientists, and social psychologists, points out the importance of considering the sociopolitical context of schools in understanding school change. From this viewpoint, due to the multidimensional nature of school change and the complexity of schools as social systems, theoretically, the opportunity for conflict exists within and among a number of dimensions of the organizational life of schools as
well as between system components and parts of the school environment. As circumstances shift, values, cultural norms, and identity come into question and individual and collective equilibrium is upset. Change results in loss, anxiety, and struggle as individuals pass through “the zones of uncertainty” (Schön, 1987, p.12). Personal and interpersonal contradictions come to the fore and individuals and groups attempt to influence one another and the change, based on their particular values and beliefs. As issues of power and politics arise within the dynamics of the sociopolitical environment of school change, conflict is inevitable.

Conflict is “a social situation or process in which two parties,” whether individuals, groups, or organizations, “believe that their own goals and the goals of the other party cannot be met simultaneously and therefore oppose or inhibit one another’s efforts for goal attainment” (Arnold, Feldman, & Hunt, 1992, p.681). While it has been suggested that the outcomes of conflict may range from peaceful resolution to violent aggression to avoidance, it has been the experience of the researcher that educators generally tend to find solutions to their problems or to avoid contentious issues, rather than becoming overtly aggressive. This position was supported by the findings of the current study where conflicts occurred.

The complexity of secondary schools, as social systems, is reflected in the diverse expectations, inherent in their formalized hierarchical organizational structures, their unique informal structures—shaped by the collective norms and traditions of various groups within the school—and the larger ecological system of which they are a part (Campbell, 1992; Hannay, 1992; Hargreaves, 1992; McLaughlin, 1990; Sirotnek, 1987). As a result, individuals and groups in secondary schools are susceptible to a variety of
conflicts that include roles, norms, and personality (Hoy & Miskel, 1991).

In *role conflict*, numerous role expectations associated with one’s formal position in the organization may be inconsistent, as in a situation where leaders are expected to be supportive change agents while not necessarily agreeing with the initiation of the new ideas. Similarly, in the formal organization, roles may be subject to a variety of different and incompatible expectations from divergent groups; for example, the school board, the senior administrators, the parents, and the teachers may have different concepts not only of school change but also of the role that should be played by the school staff and the school leaders in the initiative. Principals and teachers occupy several roles in a number of other social systems external to the school. As parents, spouses, members of service clubs, and religious or community groups, staff members face conflicts and pressures related to the demands of a variety of different expectations within their personal role affiliations, separate from those of their work environment. As a result, the after school time that teachers spend in preparing new materials or attending in-service sessions associated with school change may not be readily understood by family and friends.

In the informal organization, *norm conflict* is the functional equivalent of role conflict in the formal structure, and results from tension between inconsistency in informal group norms. This circumstance is often evident in larger schools where one group differs from another in viewing a certain situation; for example, one group of teachers may favour the direction of a particular school change that is highly contentious in the eyes of another group of teachers.

In *personality conflict*, basic incompatibilities within the individual cause tension and discord, as when one has a strong need for the security found in the status quo and at
the same time recognizes the need to take risks that are perceived as part of new school change initiatives.

When individuals find themselves in roles for which they are not particularly suited or when their personal needs do not match the bureaucratic requirements of their positions there is a role-personality conflict. The pressure and tension in this type of circumstance can be found in a leader who is expected to take the lead role in developing a plan for school change with staff but lacks the skills or knowledge to undertake the task or in a staff member whose role has been changed because of changes in the school structure or program delivery.

In norm-personality conflict, personality needs of the individual and the norms of the informal organization are not consistent. This dilemma might face a staff member who supports the direction of the school change but the others in the group to which the individual has affiliation do not.

Role-norm conflict may occur between the formal and informal organization when official job expectations related to school change are inconsistent with the norms of one or more of the informal groups; for example, the principal may expect to take a lead role in initiating change within the school but one or more informal groups do not agree with the direction that the principal is taking.

Conflict, when viewed negatively by some theorists and practitioners, is seen mainly as engendering stress, frustration, and anxiety that challenge morale, cooperation, coordination, and cohesion within groups and in the school. From this perspective, conflict is a circumstance to be eliminated or suppressed, primarily because of its dysfunctional effects on the organizational life of schools.
Those who have a broader view of conflict recognize not only its potential negative consequences but also its benefits. As the study found, this line of thinking, which focuses on both the inevitability of conflict and its desirability, suggests that conflict "can be a catalyst for change both for the organization and the individual" (Arnold et al., 1992, p.683). Specifically, by fostering a re-examination of attitudes and practices, conflict can "jolt organizations out of the status quo and lead them toward more innovation and creativity" (Arnold et al., 1992, p.683). Consequently, during the course of school change, conflict may enhance decision making, as school administrators and teachers are forced to identify problems that hinder change and to recognize the opportunities that are available to address them. Further, conflict may open up new lines of communication, as individuals and groups release tension by confronting one another in solving mutual problems. At the same time, while this line of thinking recognizes that school change may be stimulating, challenging, and rejuvenating, it also notes that it is often upsetting and dislocating and can generate strong emotional responses. Acknowledging that one side of school change is positive, as schools, as organizations, continue to evolve, adapt, and rethink old ways, this view also realizes that the negative effects are often hidden beneath the sense of progress that change brings. Even those members who support the change process feel the effect of the transition and the ambivalence that pervades (Marris, 1975). At the extremes, the consequences may range from "whirling dervishes" caught up in the change to "nostalgic anachronisms who hunker down and cling to the past" (Deal, 1985, p.145). This view suggests that failure to recognize this range of responses as natural and inevitable ignores important aspects of change and lends misinterpretation about the actions of others.
The organizing framework, presented by Ernest House (1981) in a state-of-the art paper in 1979, provides a comprehensive summary of the perspectives on school change that have just been described in the various theoretical approaches to the study of school change and which prevail in the current thinking about school change. He refers to these as technological, political, and cultural.

The technological perspective, characterized by the adoption approach to top-down change, assumes a rational view of the world and a logical approach to the implementation process. Although this approach makes sense and aspects of the logical need to be considered in the overall process of school change, strict adherence to the adoptive approach to change tends to disregard the numerous exigencies that exist within the complex social and organizational structure of secondary schools. Situations that arise, in the form of opportunities, demands, pressures, expectations, or constraints, found in both the internal and external school environment, may be perceived differently by the individuals and groups involved during the course of school change initiatives, and give rise to issues of power and politics. Consequently, there are some circumstances that are not necessarily addressed logically and systematically by people or procedures and that need to be viewed from another perspective.

From the political perspective change inevitably involves conflict. Change, by its very nature, entails certain individuals and groups doing new things that necessarily disrupt the status quo. Opinions differ and often bargains are struck in a fashion "no more straightforward than in other micro-political arenas of social life" (Huberman, 1992, p.17). Studies on school change in the mid-1970s introduced this notion of "mutual adaptation" where both the innovation and the school changed by negotiating
what was "do-able" in practice.

The cultural perspective, introduced in the late 1970s, reflects the importance of the social setting in which the change takes place and focuses on the everyday reality and the cultural norms that are threatened by school change. This perspective also demonstrates the value-laden nature of school change and the importance of considering people's views and values in determining their approach to educational change. Although the cultural perspective has been viewed as the antithesis of the adoptive model, it does share many similar attributes of the adaptive approach.

Supporting the perspectives of House (1981), the researcher suggests that each of these perspectives offers a valuable and unique lens through which to view school change and yet no one perspective is complete in itself. Based on more recent studies of school change, the comments of Hocking et al. (1994) supplement the earlier observations of House (1981): "It is through a holistic overview of all three that one is able to grasp the reality of all those involved in the process of change" (p.35). Corbett and Rossman (1989) come to a similar conclusion that successful school change requires the simultaneous use of multiple perspectives. Additionally, they suggest that focusing on all three perspectives responds to individual needs and increases "the pool of potential implementers" (p.187). Further, their study describes an example of how each perspective contributes to school change:

First, certain antecedent conditions set the stage for how well or poorly a change project will go. Manipulating these to support innovative efforts creates an organization capable of intentionally changing whenever a worthwhile opportunity presents itself. Second, several intervening variables can be very powerful components of a change strategy. The three pivotal leverage points in the network seem to be: the encouragement/assistance, trial run and judgement of fit loop in the technical path; altering rules and procedures to accommodate change in
the political path; and encouraging acceptance of new norms in the cultural path. The common denominators among the three were that at least some of the technical information was shared and systematic discussion of the information and trial runs of the new practices took place. Essentially, then, implementation is greater in social, supportive settings than in isolated environments. . . . Forcing teachers to implement directly as a result of a change in rules or procedures creates problems later. (pp.187-188)

**The Multidimensional Nature of School Change**

School change is not a single entity. The lessons learned from the study of school change, discussed in the previous section, underscore the reality that schools contend simultaneously with a variety of circumstances across various dimensions during the course of change. As the research on school change has evolved, insights and knowledge have developed concerning the similarity of certain dimensions that effect what and how school change occurs.

According to Hopkins et al. (1994), these dimensions include changes in the *structure and organization* of the school; new, revised or additional teaching *materials*; acquiring new *knowledge*; adopting new *behaviours* in terms of teaching and working style; and an alteration of *beliefs* regarding pedagogical assumptions and theories underlying new programs. While the researcher, like Fullan (1991) contends that changes in individual and group practices have to occur along *all* these dimensions if school change is to have a lasting effect, she also concurs with both Fullan (1991) and Hopkins et al. (1994) that, in practicality, due to the non-linear nature of school change, individuals move along these dimensions at different rates. Consequently, both time and the unique contextual features associated with leadership and culture in each school are further dimensions that need to be considered in understanding the variations associated with school change. (Bacharach, Bauer, & Shedd, 1986; Deal, 1987; Firestone and
The work of Matthew Miles (1986), in his analysis of the school change process, presents a number of additional dimensions that further the explanation of the differential impact of school change and the variations that occur as school change unfolds. The three phases of the change process—initiation, implementation, and continuation—although described separately in the following summary, often coexist in practice, with numerous factors operating at each phase as well as across many school initiatives and many levels in the school and the larger community.

The initiation phase refers to the process leading up to and deciding to proceed with the implementation. The existence and combination of the issues of planning, access, pressure, availability of resources, and support and the nature of the school’s internal conditions and structure are all important considerations in this phase (Fullan, 1991). Miles (1986) suggests the following factors that facilitate successful initiation:

- an innovation tied to a local agenda and high-profile local need
- a good quality innovation
- a clear, well-structured approach to change which includes feedback
- an active advocate or champion who understands the innovation and supports it
- staff support for the innovation
- recognition of individual differences in readiness
- active initiation and staff involvement in planning and decision making.

Implementation “consists of the process of putting into place an idea, program, or set of activities and structures new to the people attempting or expected to change” (Fullan, 1991, p.65). It is during this phase that action plans are carried out, commitment is developed, sustained progress is checked, and problems are overcome. In addition, skills and understanding are acquired through various actions and varying degrees of
achievement (Hopkins et al., 1994). Miles (1986) indicates that the pivotal factors for success at this stage include:

- clear responsibility for orchestration/coordination
- shared control over implementation (top-down is not all right); good cross-hierarchical work and relations; empowerment of both individuals and the school
- a balance of pressure, an insistence on doing it right, and support
- recognition of individual differences in carrying out responsibilities
- adequate and sustained staff development and in-service support (an external or internal coordinator, or a combination that builds personal and organizational capacity)
- opportunities for review and revisions
- rewards for teachers early in the process (empowerment, collegiality, meeting needs, classroom help, load reduction, supply cover, expenses resources).

In the continuation phase the innovation is no longer regarded as something new or unusual, and becomes part of the usual way of doing things. As the researchers who worked on the Dissemination Efforts Supporting School Improvement (DESSI) study found, continuation cannot be taken for granted. Huberman and Cranial (in Miles, 1983) observe that “new practices that get built into the training, regulatory staffing, and budgetary cycle survive; others don’t” (p.14). They suggest that assuming that continuation will “magically” happen as the result of a “technically mastered...demonstrably effective project is naive and usually self-defeating” (p.14). Miles (1986) suggests that key activities during this phase include:

- an emphasis on embedding the change within the school’s structures, its organization and resources through continued support
- recognition of the ongoing benefits for students
- the elimination of competing or contradictory practices
- strong and purposeful links to the change efforts, the curriculum, and classroom teaching
- widespread use in the school
- an adequate bank of local facilitators and in-school advisory teachers for skills training.

Based on a summary of a small number of recent studies that have been
conducted in secondary schools, Fullan (1990) indicates the general congruence of the school change dimensions described by Hopkins et al. (1994) and Miles (1986) with those associated specifically with secondary school change:

- active and strong school leadership
- shared goals and vision
- ongoing assistance and supportive professional working environments
- demanding and supportive conditions for students
- community involvement
- a strong focus on relevant curriculum and learning
- an implementation capacity such as evolutionary planning or similar collaborative improvement procedures
- ongoing monitoring and problem solving.

These factors produce or enhance:

- teacher engagement, skill and effectiveness
- student engagement and learning.

Although current information on the dimensions that are specific to secondary school change is limited, the research that is available has generally shown a contrast between the existence of these dimensions in most secondary schools and those in a much smaller number of secondary schools (Hannay, 1995; Hargreaves, Davis, Fullan, Wignall, Stager, & MacMillan, 1993; Little, 1990; Louis, 1994; Louis & Miles, 1990, 1994; Pellicier, Anderson, Keefe, Kelley, & McCleary, 1990). However, in acknowledging the observations of Miles and Ekholm (1991) and Hargreaves et al. (1993) that effective change does take place along these dimensions in some secondary schools, these findings provide a theoretical basis for further inquiry into secondary school change.

While the framework to which Fullan (1990) refers may be helpful in studying secondary school change, the researcher agrees with Firestone and Corbett (1987) and
McLaughlin (1991), who argue that considering these dimensions within the uniqueness of each school setting is critical in understanding secondary school change, where diversity rather than uniformity may be the norm. Furthering this argument, Sirotnek (1987) points out the significance of the distinct sociopolitical context and the prevailing internal and external conditions and circumstances that surround each school change environment. Based on his cumulative research on secondary school change, Hargreaves (1997) concludes that both recognized congruent and unique dimensions related to school change are important considerations and that further study of “educational change efforts need more depth as well as more breadth” (p.2).

The Meaning of School Change

Implicit in the previous sections of this chapter is that school change should not be taken for granted and that consideration should be given to the meaning that individuals and groups associate with school change. Specifically, it is suggested that how school change is interpreted by those who may be involved in or influenced by the school change is critical to its initiation, the success of the implementation, and to its eventual continuation.

Fullan (1982, 1991) has dedicated two books to the exploration of this topic. In the Preface of both publications, he contends that “if change attempts are to be successful, individuals and groups must find meaning concerning what should change as well as how to go about it” (1982, ix; 1991, xi). He underscores the dynamic nature of this process, with the what and the how constantly interacting and reshaping each other during the course of school change. In this process, while the theories of school change provide guidelines for action, particular actions and specific situations require the
integration of the general knowledge of school change with the detailed knowledge of the theories of changing, and how the values, traditions, and norms, inherent in the social structure of the school and its environment, influence the change. In other words, it is important for those involved in determining the meaning of school change to understand both the small and the big picture. According to Schön (1983), this necessitates reflecting on and understanding both one’s own situation and other’s relevant situations in order to plan for and undertake school change. This reflective practice, which Hodgkinson (1991) refers to as praxis, develops not only individuals but also groups in a more multidimensional way, enabling them to think more deeply about the meaning of the change and their respective roles in school change.

While Fullan (1991) has provided a consistent reminder that meaning is ultimately personal and that school change is a subjective activity, with individuals interpreting change from their own history, beliefs, knowledge, and experiences, like Hodgkinson (1991), he acknowledges that “solutions must come through the development of a shared meaning” (Fullan, 1991, p.5). Fullan (1991) adds: “The interface between individuals and collective meaning and action in everyday situations is where change stands or falls” (p.5). This suggests the importance of individuals and groups coming to a common understanding of both the objective reality of the many dimensions of school change and its consequences and their particular individual subjective realities which, according to Fullan (1991), often occurs only through their actual involvement in school change. In practice, if teachers see themselves as having strong influence on school change with a fair amount of discretion, they are more willing and able to explore alternative solutions (Hedberg, 1991). Further, if opportunities are
available for those in the school to work together towards a common goal, there is a generative correlate related to the school as a whole. According to Leithwood (1992):

When teachers are helped to find greater meaning in their work, to meet higher-level needs through their work, and to develop enhanced instructional capacities, this form of facilitative power substantially enhances the productivity of the school on behalf of its students. (p.9)

In the final analysis, since it is individuals who must decide on a course of action, based upon the meaning that each associates with the school change, there is a need for a vehicle to facilitate mutual interpretations of change initiatives. To this end, Fullan (1991) emphasizes the importance of school administrators and school staff in determining the purposes of the school change and the particular goals and outcomes to be achieved through change. He suggests that this is not an easy task because rhetoric may differ from both objective and subjective reality and outcomes may not be easily determined and measured. Fullan (1991) also points out that change initiatives “are not neutral in their benefits and that there are many reasons, other than educational merit, that influence decisions to change” (p.28); for example, school change initiatives may be adopted for political or personal reasons: to respond to community pressure, to appear innovative, or to gain more resources. Acknowledging the view of Nisbett and Ross (1980) that not all change results in progress, Fullan (1991) maintains that “these forms represent symbolic rather than real change” (p.28) and often focus on ends rather than on means. He cautions that school change should not be an end in itself and that changes should be neither accepted nor rejected without careful scrutiny by all school staff.

Therefore, in determining what decisions are made and how they are made, Fullan suggests that “two critical questions” (p.17) should be kept in mind: “Who benefits from the change and how sound or feasible are the idea and approach” (p.17-18). He
concludes that “intentions do not matter if the quality or appropriateness of the innovation is not fully considered” (Fullan, 1991, p.20).

Adding another perspective to the discussion of meaning, Miles (1986) suggests that whether educational change actually occurs in practice depends on skill—the extent to which people have the necessary knowledge and skills to make the changes—and will—the extent to which they believe change is desirable. Like Fullan (1991), Miles (1986) believes that the worth of the change is found in the meaning attached to it by those who are responsible for planning and undertaking it and by those who will be affected by it—a circumstance supported by the researcher and the findings of this study.

While the complexity, size, traditions, and “multiplicity of perspectives and practices” (Little, 1990 p.162) of secondary schools complicate the problem of finding shared meaning in school change, Little (1990) notes that research on how this occurs in secondary school change has been relatively untapped. In existing studies, both the department structure and the large number of teachers in secondary schools have been cited as potential sources of influence in supporting or inhibiting the development of shared meaning in school change (Bennett, 1985; Bruckerhoff, 1991; Fessler & Christensen, 1992; Hannay, 1995; Huberman, 1989; Johnson, 1990; Lieberman, 1990; Little, 1990, 1993; Nias, 1989; Rosenholtz, 1989; Sikes, Measor, & Woods, 1985; Steffy, 1989; Yee, 1986). Although current evidence is inconclusive, how secondary school educators individually and collectively recognize and address the meaning of contemporary school change is aptly depicted in Fullan’s (1992) remarks: “Change stands or falls on the motivations and skills of teachers” (quoted in Grass Roots Up, p.8).

Bringing about meaningful school change, however, entails strong and supportive
school leadership that acknowledges the strengths and needs of teachers in a collaborative environment. The next section discusses the nature of leadership, its study and practice, in relation to the contemporary school change context.

**The Nature of Leadership**

The essence of organizational leadership is the influential increment over and above mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization.

Katz & Kahn

*The Social Psychology of Organizations*

Leadership is the pivotal force necessary to help organizations develop a new vision of what they can be, then mobilize the organization change toward the new vision.

Bennis & Nanus

*Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge*

**Theories of Leadership**

Extensive leadership research has been conducted over the years from a variety of conceptual perspectives. As the result of these studies, there are a number of theories of leadership that offer insights into understanding the development of contemporary approaches to the study and practice of leadership in school change. Although the perspectives range from determining what a leader is through what a leader does to leader effectiveness in particular situations, and the research methodology varies, the studies all confirm the importance of leadership in organizational settings. While earlier theories tended to be more unidimensional in their approach, focusing on personal characteristics, task-orientation, or human relations components of leadership, more recent theories emphasize the importance of the presence of all three dimensions of leadership. Similarly, the focus of many early theories on formalized, hierarchical, or managerial leadership has broadened in contemporary theories to include the concept of mutual
influence in leadership and its implications for informal leadership in organizations.

From the review of the literature on leadership theories, it is apparent "that no one definition, list of descriptors, or theoretical model provides a complete picture of either the theory or practice of leadership in education" (Taylor, 1994, p.9); however, understanding the many connections that exist between and among definitions, descriptors, and theories; the influence of the writings of earlier theorists on current thinking; and the synthesizing of these ideas by contemporary writers is helpful in placing leadership thought and practice in the school change context.

Trait theories of leadership, initiated by early leadership researchers, were based on the belief that understanding leadership required the identification and measurement of distinctive personal attributes of individuals that differentiated leaders from followers. Having their foundation in the writings of Aristotle and the assumption that leaders were born and not made, trait theories were the source of most leadership studies until the 1950s. This line of inquiry focused on a variety of leader traits including personality, physical appearance, social background, intelligence, and ability. Although the results of these studies were generally consistent in showing "that leaders differed in somewhat predictable ways from non-leaders in their personal traits, the results were not especially strong when comparisons were made over time and in different situations" (Arnold et al., 1992, p.287).

Following a review of the research on trait studies, undertaken during the first half of the century, Ralph Stogdill (1948, reprinted in Bass, 1981) and later R. D. Mann (1959) and Bernard Bass (1960) pointed out the inconclusive and contradictory results of the research and essentially dismissed the premise of the early trait theories regarding a
systematic relationship between personal traits and leadership. Their conclusions were emphasized in Stogdill's comment (1948, reprinted in Bass, 1981) that "leadership is not a matter of passive status nor of the mere possession of some combination of traits" (p.68).

A second generation of trait studies, which took a different tact, investigating traits and leadership effectiveness, has yielded more encouraging results, as such traits as intelligence, achievement orientation, and domination have been consistently related to the emergence of leadership in a variety of situations. These findings have led several recent researchers to re-examine the relationship between personal traits and leadership (Arnold et al., 1992). Current thinking suggests that personal characteristics alone and accounts of leadership effectiveness, based on the type of person a leader is, do not provide a complete explanation of leadership; however, they do play an important role to play in understanding the nature of leadership.

Behavioural theories of leadership, which developed in the 1950s, were the result of studies that focused on leader behaviour, when dealing with followers, and understanding the relationship between what a leader does and the satisfaction and performance of followers. The origin of behavioural theories can be traced back to the writings of such theorists as Frederick Taylor (1911) about the production-oriented leader and Elton Mayo (1933) about the human relations-oriented leader, where each theorist represents the extremes in behaviourist thinking: pure production vs. human relations (Gilbert, 1981).

As the result of extensive investigation, involving both production-oriented and employee-centred leadership behaviour, at Ohio State University, the University of
Michigan Research Centre, and the Laboratory of Social Relations at Harvard University, researchers identified patterns of leadership behaviour that they classified into two distinct broad categories. One category related to staff consideration and the quality of relationships and the other attended to task-orientation and the utilization of resources. The three studies, however, were inconclusive about the potential of a dual leadership model, where task leadership keeps the group engaged in the work, and consideration leadership provides recognition of individuals, respect for their needs and values, and maintains unity in the group; however, the Harvard researchers observed that leaders who attended to both job-related and social needs were considered to be more effective. Although the evidence from these studies regarding leadership effectiveness was more speculative than conclusive, the consequential broad classification of leadership behaviours provided a basis for further exploration into more specific leadership characteristics that resulted in the concept of leadership styles.

While research on leadership styles to date indicates that no one style of leadership is consistently more effective than another, it has raised important questions about the nature and quality of leadership-follower relations and the differences that exist from one follower to another. Consequently, while the behavioural investigations into leadership have contributed to empirical knowledge about different leadership styles and the importance of leader-follower relationships in understanding the nature of leadership, they also have pointed out the complexities involved in linking leadership behaviour and the demands of specific situations.

*Contingency or situational theories of leadership* came to the fore in the 1960s in an attempt to determine the factors and dynamics in specific situations that have to be
taken into account in determining leadership behaviour. A variety of theories were developed, including Fiedler’s contingency theory, House’s path-goal theory, the Vroom and Jago model of contingency leadership, and Hersey and Blanchard’s situational leadership model (Arnold et al., 1992). Each model used different approaches to assess the situation and to determine corresponding leadership behaviours, but all highlighted the fact that there is no one best way to lead. While each of the contingency theories has its own strengths and weaknesses, in combination they have contributed significantly to current leadership thought by broadening the research base and increasing knowledge about the intricacy of personal, interpersonal, and organizational contingencies that interact to influence and to be influenced by leadership behaviour.

Transactional and transformational theories of leadership, derived from the writings of James MacGregor Burns (1978) and the later work of Bernard Bass (1985), have recently come to the attention of researchers of leadership and organizational change, as they attempt to understand the effectiveness of leadership in organizations that are making fundamental changes. These theories characterize the typical activities of leadership as transactional or transformational.

Transactional leadership is premised on the business-as-usual approach, focusing on getting the job done, but with little emphasis on vision. Based on these theories, transactional leaders accept the status quo associated with followers’ needs and goals, and structure situations to shape the behaviour of followers to meet the goals of the organization, making attainment contingent on performance.

Burns (1978) sought to build upon what he viewed as bureaucratic features by reducing the impersonal components of organizations through a new form of leadership,
which he referred to as transformational leadership. According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership goes beyond the bureaucratic actions of transactional leadership, recognizing and looking for followers’ needs for meaning and organizational purpose, seeking to satisfy higher needs, and inspiring followers to work at their peak. Accordingly, transformational leaders do not accept followers as they are, but transform their needs and goals in relation to the vision of the organization and engender enthusiasm and commitment to these goals.

For Burns (1978), transformational leadership is a process of “evolving interrelationships in which leaders are continuously evoking motivational responses from followers and modifying their behaviour as they meet responsiveness or resistance” (p.440). He points out the generative correlate of this theory:

Transforming leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation....Their purposes, which might have started out separate but related, in the case of transactional leadership, become fused. Power bases are linked not as counterweights but as mutual support for common purpose....Transforming leadership is dynamic leadership in the sense that leaders throw themselves into relationship with followers who feel ‘elevated’ by it and often become more active themselves, thereby creating new cadres of leaders. (p.20)

Transformational leadership reframes the concept of leadership to actively involve followers in purposeful collaborative decision making and collective problem solving to define and attain organizational goals. As such, some view transformational leadership as inspiring and encouraging, in light of increasing pressures for major changes in many organizations and the need not just for improved leadership but for different leadership approaches than those traditionally used.

However, while transformational leadership has been regarded by several
researchers and practitioners as desirable and even necessary for the achievement of successful lasting change, from the researcher’s experience, in reality, routine everyday tasks must also be carried out in organizations. These are the kinds of problems and demands that require transactional leadership skills. The current thinking, which the researcher supports and which was evident in the study, is that effective organizational change requires both leadership approaches—one to provide vision and engender commitment and the other to take charge and attend to the tasks at hand.

Theory and School Leadership Practice in Perspective

Leadership in school change is a highly complex activity. Its essence “is in the distinctive relationships between leaders and followers” (Owens, 1987, p.126). Its practice is shaped by research and theory and by the changes in a variety of factors in the economic, political, and social environment of schools.

Recent research has proposed both a transformational and transactional style of leadership practice in contemporary school change that entails a different approach to school leadership than that in the past in many schools. How this type of leadership is interpreted and responded to by many current principals and teachers, who began their careers in the 1960s, is due in part to their own experiences with the variations of school leadership that have taken place over the years during their professional careers. The following summary of relevant literature provides a basis for understanding the attitudes and responses that today’s educators may have toward a new form of leadership in school change.

It begins with a comment from Goodlad (1978) about the early behaviourist thinking of the 1950s, which claimed that principals, as the recognized school leaders,
were “enamoured of input, feedback loops, output, and managing by objectives...trying to become more efficient” (p.326). Goodlad (1978) indicates that this approach to leadership led principals to be more concerned with budget and personnel management, with the emphasis on curriculum being viewed as “optional” (p.326). The result was that the image of the principal as the school leader during this time became that of a “technician who applied behavioural skills” (Schmuck, 1992, p.67).

During the 1960s and 1970s, the program manager role of principals began to emerge, as principals became increasingly responsible for managing the implementation of a series of curriculum and program innovations that were mandated during this period. “In contrast to their earlier [technician] role, which was focused on maintaining the status quo, program/curriculum management was implicitly oriented towards school improvement and change” (Hallinger, 1992, p.35). Given the implicit nature of this new role, it is not surprising that researchers who studied principals during this time observed a wide variety of principal responses to the demands of the implementation of change (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986); for example, although certain practices of a number of principals were associated with the success of implementation efforts (Fullan, 1991, in Hallinger, 1992), program innovations mandated from outside the school often continued to lead to more concern on the part of many principals with “meeting criteria for compliance than for program outcomes” (Hallinger, 1992, p.36). In these situations, where principals viewed program implementation as an end rather than as a means for improving learning for students (Fullan, 1991; Leithwood et al., 1994), they limited both their own and staff ownership and responsibility for the long-term continuation of program changes (Fullan, 1991).
Although the 1960s and 1970s represented an evolution in the role of principals in school change and improvement, with the actual practices of many principals fluctuating between technician and program manager, it was not until the 1980s that the school improvement role of principals took on greater significance, as the result of the emergence of the idea of the principal as instructional leader (Hallinger, 1992). Consequently, following an era of curriculum expansion in the 1960s and the documentation of several curriculum reform failures during the 1970s, principals of the 1980s turned their attention to leadership that focused on instruction and learning. Goodlad (1978) refers to this period as a return to “first principles” (p.324) where the role of the school leader was “to maintain, justify, and articulate sound comprehensible programs of instruction for children and youth” (p.326).

The concept of instructional leadership grew out of extensive research, initiated in the 1970s, by Lawrence Lezotte and Wilbur Brookover, to identify common characteristics that contributed to school effectiveness. One of the important findings from their studies was that the instructional leader role of the principal was a significant contributing factor in effective schools. When combined with the implementation findings of the 1970s, this research suggested a central role for principals in school improvement. Subsequently, researchers sought to describe what it meant to exercise instructional leadership (Dwyer, 1986; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986). In contrast to the program manager, the instructional leader was viewed as the primary source of knowledge for the development of an educational program for a school. High expectations for teachers and students, close supervision of classroom instruction, coordination of the school’s curriculum, and close monitoring of
student progress became synonymous with the role expectations of an instructional leader (Edmonds, 1979; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982).

Although much was written in the 1980s about the necessity for the principal to serve as an instructional leader, a persistent weakness of the literature, cited by several critics, was the inability of the effective schools studies to document the process undertaken by leaders to help their schools become instructionally effective. "The mythological language around the principalship," as Deal (1987, p.231) called it, according to Ginsberg (1988), "placed the cart before the horse" (p.276). Further, Ginsberg (1988) suggested that

...while the idea of strong instructional leadership is intuitively comfortable, and as a result quite popular, it remains unclear as to what an instructional leader should do. The research on effective schools throws some ideas into the pot, but the meal is not ready. More time is needed to study and better understand instructional leadership for principals. Indeed, as some have argued, instructional leadership in schools might best be served by someone other than the principal. (p.276)

A number of models of principal effects and effectiveness were devised and, despite the conceptual differences, the models all suggested that a variety of factors influenced principal behaviour. As well, several researchers saw principal effects as indirect, involving the interrelationship of these factors, including both within-school and external conditions that operate concurrently and act reciprocally to influence outcomes (Duckworth, 1983; Ellett & Walberg, 1979; Pitner, 1982, 1986).

These findings, combined with the shifting social, economic, and political conditions of the mid to late 1980s, and the focus on studying the management of change in the school, as a whole, forced a rethinking of school leadership, and provided a basis for questioning the conceptual and practical limitations of the principal as the
instructional leader of the school. As Leithwood (1994) explains: "An emphasis [on instructional leadership] was wholly appropriate and timely to bring to school leadership in the early 1980s," but "instructional leadership conveys a meaning which encompasses only a portion of those activities now associated with effective school leadership" (p.10).

It was during this time period, as well, that several researchers began to turn more attention toward secondary schools and the role of leadership in secondary school change. While the majority of the previous studies had been undertaken in elementary schools, emerging conceptions of teaching and teacher professionalism and the diffuse nature of school leadership in secondary school research, which was beginning to accumulate, added to the questions about the concept of instructional leadership and the centrality of the principal’s role in co-ordinating and controlling curriculum and instruction. (Leithwood et al., 1992; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Murphy, 1992; Sashkin, 1988).

Subsequently, in the early 1990s a new concept of leadership in schools, known as *transformational leadership*, was introduced. Based on the earlier works of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985), transformational leadership appeared to address many of the concerns of more recent educational researchers who suggested that tried and true leadership practices would not effect the changes needed in the schools of the 1990s and thereafter (Louis & Miles, 1990), and who argued that a new form leadership was required that could cultivate staff acceptance of change, by examining the fundamental assumptions, practices, and relationships inherent in the school culture, building on the needs and motivations of school staff.

This line of thinking entailed a new leadership role for teachers, as the
instructional leaders, with principals being the leaders of the instructional leaders (Sergiovanni, in Brandt, 1992). From this perspective, instructional leaders were viewed as "leading from the front or the middle of the band" and transformational leaders as "leading from the back of the band" (Leithwood et al., in Brandt, 1992, p.48). Therefore, as Hallinger (1992) indicates: "The principal, rather than representing the primary source of professional expertise and instructional leadership, is exhorted to tap the expertise and leadership of teachers" (p.42).

Several studies observed how this practice occurred in some schools. For example, Roberts (1985) noted that vision and mission planning and the change agent orientation and skills of school leaders were significant in the transformative process. In addition, Roueche, Baker, and Rose (1989) found that planning that involved others in vision building in a collaborative environment was an important component. Further, they emphasized that transformational leaders were role models who expected nothing more from others than they were prepared to deliver themselves. As risk takers, transformational leaders openly acknowledged their mistakes and recognized the lessons in them and learned from them. Transformational leaders created a "trust relationship" that was "open, sharing, candid, and even critical," (Roueche, Baker, and Rose, 1989, p.170) when the situation demanded criticism. At the same time, transformational leaders created a feeling of being valued through open communication and active involvement of all the educational community. They had a strong value system and attempted to "set a particular tone" (p.169) through an interactive process involving followers and leaders. Their value system included a commitment to learning, both for themselves and for their staff, a commitment to quality education, a commitment to
ethical behaviour, integrity, openness and trust, consistent judgement, and leadership through example.

The findings of Sagor’s (1992) studies identified three building blocks of transformational leadership. These building blocks included the development of a clear and unified student-oriented set of goals that focused “the collective yearnings of a group of empowered professionals” (p.13), a common cultural perspective where the staff shared a common view, and a constant striving for improvement with an accompanying combination of pressure, appropriate support, and leadership that promoted shared decision-making, emphasized personal interactions, and fostered inquiry.

Viewing transformational leadership from another perspective, Vandenberghe (1988) found that it was not the individual specific actions of school leaders that counted so much as the effect those actions had upon the teachers implementing the change. Attempting to explain how this occurred, Peterson (1988) suggested that an essential feature of transformational leadership was that it gave meaning to school change. Based on his observations, Peterson (1988) maintained that effective school change required teachers to learn something new in the change process and that unless school leaders put forth the effort to make the change meaningful to teachers then the motivation to implement tended to dissipate. As Sarason (1990) puts it, “the weaver of the conceptual framework is at the same time the knower of the context” (p.122). “Authentic leaders link what they think, what they seek and what they do. They join, in Sergiovanni’s terms, the head, heart and hand” (Evans, 1993, p.21). Evans (1993) concludes that school leaders, “whose personal values and aspirations for their schools are consistent, coherent, and reflected in daily behaviour are credible and inspire trust—they are the leaders worth
following into the uncertainties of change” (p.21).

As these studies have shown, the work of Burns (1978) has channeled recent educational leadership research and school leadership practice in a new direction. Although the research on this topic is in its early stages, a comprehensive review of relevant studies reveals the conceptions of transformational leadership that are encompassed within certain similar dimensions of leadership practice:

- **Identifying and Articulating a Vision** refers to behaviour on the part of the leader aimed at identifying new opportunities for his or her school, and developing, articulating and inspiring others with his or her vision of the future. When visions are value laden, they will lead to unconditional commitment; they also provide compelling purposes for continual growth.

- **Fostering the Acceptance of Group Goals** refers to behaviour on the part of the leader aimed at promoting cooperation among staff and assisting them to work together toward common goals. Group goals that are ideological in nature are especially helpful in developing group identity.

- **Providing Individualized Support** refers to behaviour on the part of the leader that indicates respect for staff and concern about their personal feelings and needs (verbal persuasion). This dimension is likely to assure teachers that the problems they may encounter while changing their practices will be taken seriously by those in leadership roles and efforts will be made to help them through these problems.

- **Intellectual Stimulation** refers to behaviour on the part of the leader that challenges staff to re-examine some of the assumptions about their work and rethink how it can be performed. Such stimulation seems likely to draw teachers’ attention to discrepancies between current and desired practices and to understand the truly challenging nature of school restructuring goals.

- **Providing an Appropriate Model** refers to behaviour on the part of the leader that sets an example for staff to follow which is consistent with the values the leader espouses. This behaviour is aimed at enhancing teachers’ beliefs about their own capacities, their sense of self-efficacy. Secondarily, such modeling may help create perceptions of a dynamic and changing job on the part of the teachers.

- **High Performance Expectations** refers to behaviour that demonstrates the leader’s expectations for excellence, quality and high performance on the part of staff. Expectations of this sort help teachers see the challenging nature of the goals being pursued in their school. They may also sharpen teachers’ perceptions of the gap between what the
school aspires to and what is presently being accomplished. Done well, expressions of high expectations should also result in perceptions among teachers that what is being expected is also feasible. (Leithwood & Steinbach 1995, pp.257-258)

Transformational leadership involves the pursuit of quality performance, collaborative decision making, collective problem solving, and teacher development. As several researchers have indicated, this type of leadership style is desirable and even necessary for the achievement of effective change in contemporary schools. Nevertheless, routine, everyday tasks must be carried out during the course of school change. These are the kinds of problems and demands on school administrators that require another type of skills, which Burns (1978) referred to as transactional leadership skills (Leithwood et al., 1990). According to Leithwood and Steinbach (1995), “transactional leadership practices help teachers recognize what needs to be done in order to achieve a desired outcome” (p.257). They point out that there is no doubt that visionary and collaborative school leadership is conducive to the pursuit of today’s educational change goals but, at the same time, they recognize that school leaders are faced with the challenge of being able to “take charge” and to attend to the “tasks at hand” (p.257), when warranted. As a result, there is room for and need for variations in orientations to leadership to provide a “balance between top-down and facilitative power” (Leithwood, 1992, p.9). Contemporary school leadership for change embodies elements of collaboration and control combined with the skill of balancing the two to achieve organizational goals. Today’s school leaders are involved in creating and coping (Senge, 1990), being visionary and systematic (Leithwood, 1992). “On the one hand they solve the immediate swampy problem. And on the other, they contribute to the long-term capacity of the school to solve future problems” (Leithwood et al., 1992, p.9).
Leadership and Power

Leadership and power are integral components of influence in the organizational life of schools. School change provides fertile grounds for additional challenges to the forms that these influences take, as the larger issues of collaboration and co-operation in goal setting, planning, and decision making give rise to day-to-day concerns related to timetables, planning time, resources, and staffing.

“Leadership involves the exercise of influence on the part of the leader over the behaviour of one or more other people” (Arnold et al., 1992). Power, as a more encompassing concept, includes, but is not restricted to leadership influence, as it relates to the influence that all members have in the school organization. Specifically, “power refers to the amount of influence one person has over another” (Arnold et al., 1992). In the traditional sense, power is the “essence of organizational control . . . the ability to get others to do what you want them to do” (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p.76), which they otherwise would not do. “Authority,” as a subset of power, involves the “right” to seek compliance and “exists when a common set of beliefs (norms) in a school legitimizes the use of power” (Hoy & Miskel, 1991 p.77). Politics, as another form of power, involves attempts by organizational members to obtain ends, which may or may not be legitimized by formal organizational means, using “influence outside the formal channels of authority or methods outside the normal organizational procedures or goals” (Arnold et al., 1992, p.329). Briefly stated, power, as an organizational control mechanism, exists when leaders as well as other organizational members gain compliance from others that is not mandated or required, through both legitimate and illegitimate means.

There are various conceptual views of the sources of power that deal with
legitimate or illegitimate control, as well as formal and informal power. The pioneer work of John French and Bertram Raven (1968) focused on interpersonal power and identified five kinds of power: reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert. Etzioni (1975) emphasized organizational power, based on the means used to make individuals comply through coercive, remunerative, or normative power, and the corresponding continuum of reactions to power, from commitment through calculation to alienation. Mintzberg’s (1983) typology of power analyzed organizational power around five areas of control: control over a resource, a technological skill, a body of knowledge, legal prerogatives, or access to power holders. Within this typology are four internal power systems to control organizational life: the authority system, the ideology system, the expertise system and the political system.

One of the problems associated with these traditional views of power, which Dunlop and Goldman (1991) have identified in their recent studies of power relationships in schools, is that most interpretations of power have characterized “power primarily as a vertical system of authority based on formal organizations where power is exercised from the top down” (p.5). As this study found and as Dunlop and Goldman (1991) indicate: “facilitative power more accurately describes how power is exercised in school settings,” (p.6) where facilitative power is defined as “an act or relationship between equals where acts of domination are the least desired alternatives” (p.7) or simply as power “which facilitates the work of others” (p.7). In this sense, facilitative power is not seen as a replacement for, but rather as a complement to the hierarchical concept of power. Furthermore, Dunlop and Goldman (1991) argue that facilitative power enables a better identification and prediction of the types of leadership activities that actually occur in
In recent studies of secondary school change, there has been a developing interest in this interpretation of power, particularly as it relates to the changing conception of leadership. In their discussion of leadership in secondary schools, Wilson and Corcoran (1988) indicate:

While it is acknowledged that the principal is the primary force, leadership in secondary schools tends to be dispersed. Seldom do all of the desired qualities or all of the required energy reside in one person. In most of the schools, there are a number of people who can and do take leadership roles at different times. (p.81)

Thus, while the earlier movements in organizational theory often took single perspective approaches, more recently researchers have attempted to investigate the usefulness of multiple views of how and why organizations function the way they do (Bolman & Deal, 1984; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Elmore, 1978; Peterson, 1988; Sergiovanni & Corbally, 1984). Although the hierarchical structure of secondary schools is clearly manifest in role differentiation and authority assignments (Abbott & Caracheo, 1988; Timar, 1989), the recent shift to view the front line worker, the teacher, as a valuable active participant in the achievement of the goals of the organization is reflected by Senge (1990):

Reality, as perceived by most people in organizations, means pressures that must be borne, crises that must be reacted to, and limitations that must be accepted. Leaders as teachers help people restructure their views of reality to see beyond the superficial conditions and events into the underlying causes of the problems and therefore to see new possibilities for shaping the future. (p.6)

This shift has caused a significant change in thinking about the power and authority roles and relationships within a school. While involvement of all members of an organization is considered central to the activities of the organization, "change appears
to demand a model of organization in which both leaders and subordinates exercise a great deal of influence” (Louis, 1991, p.3). In practice, if teachers see themselves as having strong influence on school change, the culture of the traditional organization changes to the Type Z organization, described by Ouchi (1981), where egalitarianism, as a central feature, determines “the amount of discretion teachers have and stimulates their willingness and ability to explore alternate environments” (Hedberg, 1991, p.14). Further, as Leithwood (1992) has pointed out, if opportunities are available for those in the organization to work together towards a common goal, a form of facilitative power develops that enhances the productivity of the school as a whole.

Although the principal may be the key leader, in the formal sense, significant harmonious school change results from the ability of the formal leader to recognize the strength of a diverse group of people to enable them to maximize use of their skills and knowledge. In the words of Wilson and Corcoran (1988): “good leaders develop other leaders” (p.82). This conception of power is similar to the findings of Roberts (1986), whose work on organizational life recognizes the need for “a broader definition and interpretation of the exercise of power” (p.443). Accordingly, Roberts (1986) suggests an alternative view to the interpretation of power:

This alternative view assumes that a social factor derives power from collective and cooperative action, in which two or more actors pool their resources and join forces to work toward a common goal so that all are empowered. Power stems from the collective rather than self-interested action. As social actors pool resources to accomplish common ends, power comes from choice rather than from manipulation or control. (p.444)

Following this line of thinking, school change involves not only issues of leadership and power but also issues of culture and identity, within the context of
Acknowledging Roberts’ view of power, Kearney (1988) points out the importance of leadership responsibility in social organizations in which individuals and groups with differences in beliefs or practices are resistant to domination and control. He suggests that school leaders must be able “to imagine otherwise,” which “entails, at the sociopolitical level, an acting otherwise,” engaging in “the practice of representation and in the representation of such practices” (p.457). This means that leaders need to be conscious about themselves and how they envision and portray themselves in the change process. They also need to be aware of the consequences of their actions in terms of their effects on other staff members, students, parents, the community, and the larger society (Kearney, 1988). Leaders should be continually subjecting their own value systems to critical analysis and examining those of others around them, as well as contributing positively to reconciling divergent views, including their own and those of individuals or groups, to enable those interests to converge upon the goals of the school (Hodgkinson, 1991). Leadership that engenders common understanding is highly desirable for schools in any circumstances, but in the midst of school change, and due to the often isolated and autonomous situation of many teachers, the ability to enable group interaction, participation, and cohesion becomes more than desirable; it becomes an essential component.

Based on these understandings, facilitative leadership should not be confused with the laissez-faire approach. Facilitative leadership entails responsibility and accountability for what happens in the school, as school leaders actively involve others through both pressure and support. This kind of leadership does not need to rely solely on hierarchical
authority to get things done but continually affirms the crucial role of all staff members in the success of school change. Although facilitative decision making may slow the process, the challenge is to balance administrative efficiency with effective outcomes that have the commitment of those involved in their implementation. Since this form of leadership requires all stakeholders—school-principals, vice principals, teachers, students, parents, senior administrators, trustees, and the wider school community—to be involved in attempts to make a greater whole of disparate parts, it is not likely or even desirable, as Hodgkinson (1991) suggests, that dissidence will be eradicated.

Accordingly, as revealed in this study, leadership in school change requires relative comfort with controversy and its sensible anticipation. Rather than energy spent avoiding conflict at all costs, there is a need to learn to live with it and to deal with its more public face. This form of leadership requires the ability of school administrators and staff to rise far enough above a situation to see it rather than becoming lost in it. As Peters and Waterman (1982) point out: “They need to believe deeply in the social value of what they do and they are able to inspire others to do the same” (p.26). The personal styles of those who assume leadership roles, as well as their professional priorities, inevitably influence the perceptions and activities of other school staff and how they interact with one another. These internal processes, reflected in the quality of leaders’ thinking about their purposes and effects, are, in part, a product of innate traits as well as personal and professional experiences (Leithwood, 1994). Since schools do not operate in isolation, school leadership, as a key to linking a variety of in-school components, also connects these components to the larger educational system and to the community, which necessarily results in several often competing forces that offer a challenge to balancing
the many and diverse priorities and demands both within and external to the school.

While the significance of leadership in school change has been clearly delineated in this section, there is also a need to review the internal relationships within the social organization of schools and their response to their external environment in influencing the conditions of change. (Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves et al., 1993; Schein, 1985; Timar, 1989). The next section provides a basis for understanding the nature and importance of these interrelationships and their influence during school change.

The Nature of Culture

Culture is the way things are done around here: how people define their work, rules and relationships.

Corbett & Rossman
Three Paths to Implementing Change

Culture gives the school an identity, an expectation and a reality of sorts. It is this image, real or imagined, that establishes how a school operates.

Jon Wiles
Promoting Change in Schools

The Study of Culture

Schools, as social organizations, are typically characterized by the expectations of roles and relationships, inherent in their formal structure, and the dynamic interpersonal relationships that develop informally and “mediate the rational and planned aspects of organizational life” (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p.204). As staff members interact within school settings, “a collective sense of identity emerges that transforms a simple aggregate of individuals into a distinctive workplace personality or culture” (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p.204). Waller (1932) made this observation about school culture several decades ago:

Schools have a culture that is definitely their own. There are, in the
school, complex rituals of personal relationships, a set of folkways, mores, and...a moral code based upon them. There are games which are sublimated wars, teams and an elaborate set of ceremonies concerning them. There are traditions and traditionalists waging their world-old battle against innovators. (p. 103)

This observation has been reaffirmed over the years by several researchers, using a variety of methods to study school culture (Lightfoot, 1983; Little, 1982; Lortie, 1975; Rosenholtz 1989). More recent research, however, has focused on the study of school culture within the context of school change, to determine the relationship between school improvement and the commitment and active participation of school staff who are involved in creating and sustaining the conditions for change in schools (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Hawley, 1988; Ouchi, 1981).

The cumulative findings of these studies, in both elementary and secondary schools, suggest that “the culture of the school as a workplace may be vital to the success or failure, the presence or absence, of educational change in a school” (Hargreaves et al., 1993, p.6). These findings give credence to the researcher's current thinking that views every school as having a unique dynamic cultural environment that is socially constructed and symbolically constituted, and that envisions school administrators and teachers as the key social constructors in the evolution of the school culture. This stance is supported by Smircich (1985) who perceives school culture not only as being larger than the sum of its parts but also as being socially created and socially encompassing, as well. Furthering this line of thought, Firestone and Wilson (1993) speculate that the encompassing nature of school culture may be the most effective means for today's educators to make a serious contribution to school change.

Understanding the basis for contemporary thinking about the relationship between
school change and school culture and how its study has taken shape can be traced back to the works of Chester Barnard (1938) and Elton Mayo (1945). In their descriptions of “the nature and functions of informal organizations” (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p. 211), they stressed “the importance of work-group norms, sentiments, values, and emergent interactions in the workplace” (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p.211).

Later, in the 1950s, Philip Selznick (1957) developed a formulation of formal organizations that viewed them as institutions, infused with values that produce a distinctive identity and organizational character. This formulation extended the analysis of organizational life to provide a basis for the contemporary analysis of organizations as cultures (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Within this formulation, many theories have developed over the years in the fields of psychology, sociology, and anthropology, contributing to the rich and controversial heritage of the study of organizational culture.

While psychological and sociological theories have traditionally taken single perspective approaches to the study of culture, anthropological studies have generally focused on the diversity of human traditions, beliefs, values, customs, and practices that are collectively referred to as culture (Plog & Bates, 1980). With reference to the influence of the earlier work of Selznick, Meryl Louis (1985) indicates that “what distinguishes the contemporary formulation—as culture, is its anthropological basis” (p.27). From this perspective, Louis (1985) explains that the current understanding of organizational culture is not based solely on the “psychological or sociological components of the phenomenon,” but rather on “the uniquely integrative and phenomenological core of the subject in which the interweaving of individuals into a community takes place” (p.27).
Although no generally agreed upon definition of culture currently exists within these various realms, culture is typically described "in terms of shared orientations that hold [the organization] together and give it a distinctive identity" (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p.212). An example, provided by Owens (1991) suggests that "culture develops over a period of time [and that as] the process of developing acquires significantly deeper meaning [that] it can be defined as "the shared philosophies, ideologies, values assumptions, beliefs...that knit a community together" (p.171). Following a similar line of thinking, Deal and Kennedy (1982) refer to organizational culture as a system of shared values and beliefs that interact with an organization's people, organizational structures, and control systems to produce behavioural norms. Expanding this concept, Evans (1996) perceives culture as "a unique deep structure of assumptions and beliefs that defines an organization's view of itself and its environment and shapes for its members the meaning of experience" (p.141).

While these definitions generally comment on the dominant culture in organizations, it is also recognized that there may be subcultures in organizations that are distinguished by the norms, basic attitudes, beliefs, values, and assumptions shared by members of smaller units or departments in organizations, as well as social elements.

Whether in the organization, as a whole, or in subgroups of the organization, culture may be manifested in symbols, artifacts, rituals, ceremonies, stories, paradigms, overriding ideologies, and established patterns of behaviour (Leithwood et al., 1993; Levitt and March, 1988) that become conserved as a shared way of making sense of their world and serve as frames of reference in times of change and uncertainty. Placing these perspectives of culture in the school setting, Hargreaves & Wignall (1989) indicate that
...either among the staff as a whole, or in particular groups within it, teachers develop shared ways of looking at and behaving in their world. They build cultures, that is,...these cultures of teaching give meaning, support and identity to teachers and their work. (p.7)

Understanding culture as a socially constructed reality that gives meaning to what otherwise would be meaningless behaviour, and that produces norms of behavioural conduct, is compatible with the more comprehensive definition of organizational culture provided by Edgar Schein (1985). Regarding the culture of an organization as “the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic ‘taken-for-granted’ fashion an organization’s view of itself and its environment” (p.6), he defines organizational culture as

...a pattern of basic assumptions, invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to these problems. (p.9)

Schein (1985) helps to unravel some of the problems of definition by viewing culture at different levels of depth. For Schein (1985), basic assumptions are the “essence” of culture, with artifacts and shared values as observable manifestations of the cultural essence. “The most visible level of the culture is its artifacts and creations—its constructed physical and social environment” (Schein, 1985, p.14). Although such elements as physical space, the technological output of the group, written and spoken language, and overt behaviour are observable, the difficult part is figuring out their meaning and how they interrelate.

Shared values are conceptions of what is desirable. “In a sense, all cultural learning ultimately reflects someone’s original values, their sense of what ‘ought’ to be,
as distinct from what is” (Schein, 1985, p.15). As the perception of a successful solution to a new problem is shared and validated in the environment, “the value gradually starts a process of cognitive transformation into a belief, and ultimately, an assumption” (Schein, 1985, p.16). Values that remain conscious and are articulated serve a normative function as well as a guide for dealing with uncertainty in new or difficult situations. “Such values will predict much of the behaviour that can be observed at the artifact level” (Schein, 1985, p.17). However, if those values are not based on prior cultural learning, they may also become what Argyris and Schön (1978) refer to as espoused values, where what people say differs from what they actually do in situations where those values should be in operation.

In analyzing values, to decipher the pattern of overt behaviour, one has “to get at that deeper level of understanding” (Schein, 1985, p.17). “At its deepest level culture is the collective manifestation of tacit assumptions....Since the assumptions have worked repeatedly, they have become so basic that they are taken for granted, tend to be nonconfrontable and nondebatable, and thus, are highly resistant to change” (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p.212). “The key to understanding organizational culture is to decipher the tacit assumptions shared by the members to discover how these assumptions fit together into a cultural pattern” (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p.213).

Dyer (1986) has identified five categories of cultural assumptions, which have emerged from the research, to provide a framework for the analysis of cultural patterns. These categories include the nature of relationships, human nature, the nature of truth, the environment, and universalism/particularism. According to Dyer (1986), finding the answers to questions asked in each of these categories helps to develop a deeper
understanding of the culture of an organization:

- **Nature of Relationships.** Are relationships between members of the organization assumed to be primarily lineal (i.e. hierarchical), collateral (i.e. group-oriented), or individualistic in nature?
- **Human Nature.** Are human beings considered to be basically good, basically evil, or neither good nor evil?
- **Nature of Truth.** Is "truth" (i.e. correct decisions) revealed by external authority figures or is it determined by a process of personal investigation and testing?
- **Environment.** Is there a basic belief that human beings can master the environment or that they must be subjugated by the environment or that they should attempt to harmonize with the environment?
- **Universalism/Particularism.** Should all members of the organization be evaluated by the same standards or should certain individuals be given preferential treatment?

**The Function of Culture in Schools**

Viewing the practical side of culture in an organization, Arnold et al. (1992) regard its primary function as providing "meaning, stability, and comfort" (p.481) to the members of the organization. As this study found, in fostering a shared sense of the goals and mission of the organization, culture establishes the ground rules that enable an organization to operate on a day-to-day basis as a predictable and explainable social system.

Based on Schein's conception of culture (1985), to accomplish its primary function, the culture of schools serves two key purposes: it establishes a consensus about how to adapt and respond to the external environment, which is comprised of parents, the school board, and the larger community; and it establishes a consensus about the best way to achieve and foster internal integration, which consists of communication and coordination networks, norms, values, and accepted ways of behaving. The purposes of culture, envisioned by Schein (1985), regarding **external adaptation** and **internal integration** issues are summarized as follows:

*External adaptation issues* include:
• **Mission and Strategy.** Helps to establish a shared understanding about core mission tasks and functions.
• **Goals.** Fosters goal consensus.
• **Means.** Fosters consensus on the means to be used to attain the goals, such as the organizational structure, division of tasks and decision making process.
• **Measurement.** Fosters consensus on the criteria to be used to measure how well the group is doing in fulfilling its goals.
• **Correction.** Fosters consensus about the appropriate remedial action or repair strategies to be used if goals are not being met.

**Internal integration issues** include:
• **Common Language.** Establishes communication boundaries.
• **Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion.** Establishes a shared consensus on who “is in” and who “is out” and by what criteria membership is determined.
• **Power and Status.** Establishes criteria and rules on how one gets, maintains and loses power and status.
• **Relationships.** Establishes the basis on which relationships can or should be formed.
• **Rewards and Punishments.** Establishes the basis for rewarding some people and punishing others.
• **Ideology.** Helps to give meaning to usual as well as unusual and inexplicable events.

Returning to the primary function of culture in addressing “the human need for order and consistency” (Schein, 1984, p.4), culture serves another key purpose in relation to “learned solutions” to the problems of external adaptation and internal integration. In this regard, Schein (1984) suggests that there are two types of cultural learning mechanisms, intertwined in practice but distinct in structure: “those designed to solve problems and those designed to avoid anxiety” (p.8). The first mechanism includes positive problem solving situations “that produce positive or negative reinforcement in terms of whether the attempted solution works or not” (p.8). In these situations “the group tries out various responses until something works” (p.8) and then continues to use the response until it no longer works. The second mechanism involves anxiety-avoidance situations “that produce positive or negative reinforcement in terms of whether the attempted solution does or does not avoid anxiety” (p.8). In the first situation, whether the response works or ceases to be effective is clear and visible, and is therefore more
easily subject to change than in the second instance, where the response is more likely to be repeated indefinitely, if it successfully reduces anxiety. According to Schein (1984), the reason for this is that successful anxiety-reduction situations are less likely to be tested to determine if the cause of the original anxiety is still operating since the avoidance of the anxiety is itself positively reinforcing. Consequently, as the study found, “cultural elements that are based on anxiety reduction will be more stable than those based on positive problem solving” (p.8), due the human need for stability and the nature of the anxiety-avoidance mechanism. Therefore, when considering a change in any of these elements, it becomes important to analyze which is which and to determine whether innovative sources are needed to find better solutions to the problems, whether the sources of anxiety need to be found and shown to no longer exist, or whether alternate sources of avoidance need to be provided.

Terrence Deal (1985) discovered a number of similarities between Schein’s (1984, 1985) perspective of the purposes of culture and the combination of elements of culture that led to school change in the effective schools research:

- Shared values and a consensus on “how we get things done around here”
- The principal as a “hero” or “heroine” who embodies core values
- Distinctive “rituals” that embody widely shared beliefs
- Staff members as situational “heroes” or “heroines”
- “Rituals” of acculturation and cultural renewal
- Significant “rituals” to celebrate and transform core values
- Balance between innovation and tradition and between autonomy and control
- Widespread participation in cultural “rituals.” (p.612)

Deal’s (1985) summary of the effective schools research adds support to Schein’s (1985) view of culture and to that of the researcher, by describing the ways in which organizational culture is manifest or transmitted in schools through the powerful
messages of identified people (heroes and heroines) and processes (rituals) that relay what is valued or devalued and what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. According to Deal (1985), the research clearly pointed out that how organizational culture was maintained or changed depended on the people and processes involved in a variety of activities in the school. These included the selection of new staff members, their socialization into the organization, and the established norms and sanctions associated with encouragement, reward, exclusion, or discipline. Since it is the people and the processes that help to clarify what is actually in use, as opposed to what may be espoused, Deal's (1985) review leads to another important purpose of culture in enabling its members to differentiate between organizational reality and organizational rhetoric in achieving its primary function.

Another separate yet related purpose of culture is found in the prevalent distinction between what is described as strong and weak cultures (Arnold et al, 1992). According to this view, strong cultures exist when the majority of organizational members believe in the same set of core values that reinforce general congruence, loyalty, and commitment to organizational goals. Weak cultures, on the other hand, are characterized by the lack of general agreement on core values and beliefs and less general congruence and commitment to overall goals. While strong cultures generally tend to foster general higher performance than weak cultures, either can lead to superior or inferior performance, depending on the particular circumstances of the organization, as a whole. For example, in a strong culture there may be difficulties when the general congruence of organizational members is not in accord with the values of those in leadership positions. Similarly, in weak cultures, although there may be confusion and
disagreement among members on some issues, there may also be indicators of agreement and success in other significant areas. The diversity of culture, reflected in these examples, represents the reality of schools, as organizations, and the complexity of the function of culture in providing meaning, stability, and comfort in accomplishing the goals of an organization during times of change.

Recognition of the reality of schools suggests another significant and challenging purpose of culture in promoting flexibility, by acknowledging that variations in staff response to change are natural and that these variations need to be addressed in a variety of ways. Related to this purpose is the view held by several theorists and researchers about the importance of an organizational culture where teachers feel good about what they do and feel that they are achieving something worthwhile (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Evans, 1996; Goodlad, 1983; Lightfoot, 1983; Owens, 1991; Sizer, 1984). Accordingly, it is suggested that assumptions, beliefs, and practices that emphasize pride of work, a "can do" attitude, and a strong commitment to change can buffer staff against the disillusionment and fragmentation that may occur during the course of change. This concept attempts to deflect concerns about the dichotomy that may exist between school traditions and traditionalists and school change initiatives and enthusiastic innovators of school change. However, Evans (1996) provides a realistic reminder that "naysayers" are found in all schools, although usually in small and disproportionate numbers, but as "vivid proof of the power of negative cultures to resist change" (p.142). In conclusion, Schein (1985) indicates the significance of the flexibility of culture, described previously:

If organizations face increasingly turbulent environments, one might well advocate not strong cultures, but flexible cultures, where flexibility hinges on cultural diversity rather than uniformity and on looseness in the application of cultural assumptions. (p.291)
Learning and School Culture

As has been pointed out, a significant challenge in contemporary school change is for teachers and school administrators to move ahead, without losing their sense of stability and comfort, and to transform old practices into new ones without jeopardizing individual or collective meaning. Hedberg (1981) indicates that these types of changes involve “reculturing, unlearning, and relearning” (p.18). Garvin (1993) adds that “continuous improvement requires a commitment to learning” (p.78) that must be applied to all members of the organization. In his study of change in business organizations, Garvin (1993) observed that “in the absence of learning, companies and individuals simply repeat old practices” (p.78). Translated into the school change context, as new values, assumptions, and ways of looking at reality are learned by individuals within groups and within the school organization, they are demonstrated in practice by staff members and are understood as the way things are done. Therefore, according to Louis (1994), school change “is not [just] an improvement process that must be managed but rather collective norms and procedures for processing and dealing with new ideas that must be addressed” (p.9).

The uncertainties associated with school change and the suggestion that school staff members need to become perpetual learners in addressing these uncertainties pose an interesting paradox, in that, by its very nature, culture provides a stabilizing and conservative force that makes things predictable in the school environment. This raises the serious question about whether a school culture can become stabilized as “learning-oriented, adaptive, and innovative” (Schein, 1992, p. 361). Expanding on the dimensions of culture, outlined earlier by Dyer (1988), Schein (1992) speculates on the following
characteristics of an ideal school learning culture:

- **Organization-Environment Relationship.** A core shared assumption that the environmental context in which the school organization exists is to some degree manageable.
- **Nature of Human Activity.** A core shared assumption that the appropriate way for school staff members to behave is to be proactive problem solvers and learners.
- **Nature of Reality and Truth.** A core shared assumption that solutions to problems derive from a variety of sources and methods, depending on the nature of the problem. This requires a recognition that learning is a shared responsibility.
- **Nature of Human Nature.** A core shared assumption that school staff members have, first and foremost, the best interests of their students in mind and seek improvement to meet student needs rather than being self-serving and self-protective.
- **Nature of Human Relationships.** A core shared assumption that recognizes the need for a blend of individualism and groupism and participative and authoritarian leadership, depending on the nature of the problem.
- **Nature of Time.** A core shared assumption that the best orientation to time is between the far and near future, as opposed to a past and present orientation, with the length of time to assess whether or not a proposed solution is working dependent upon the situation.
- **Information and Communication.** A core shared assumption that a variety of methods and sources of information and communication are fundamental to the well-being of the school organization. This can only work where there is a high degree of trust among the members of the school staff.
- **Uniformity Versus Diversity.** A core shared assumption that diversity is a strength in a school and that through such diversity subcultures are created that enhance learning and innovation as different subcultures question their own and others’ solutions to problems.
- **Task Versus Relationship Orientation.** A core shared assumption that both tasks and relationships are important in achieving a level of trust and communication that will make joint problem solving possible.
- **Linear Versus Systemic Field Logic.** A core shared assumption that the school and its environment are intrinsically complex and difficult to predict and therefore are not simply linear in their causal logic. (p.372)

Schein (1992) points out that although these dimensions are "a first approximation of our understanding of culture thus far" (p.372), they do provide a basis for "tackling the difficult conceptual problem of how a culture itself can be a perpetual learning system"
Like Schein (1992), who perceives the dimensions of a learning culture on a continuum, Marsick and Watkins (1993) suggest that developing a school culture that focuses on ongoing individual and organizational learning helps to provide a balance between continuity and change. Senge (1990), in his visualization of the art and practice of the learning organization, adds this caveat:

Organizations learn through individuals who learn. Individual learning does not guarantee organizational learning. But without it, no organizational learning occurs. (p.130)

This type of school culture not only offers “a home for new thinking about old educational needs” (Leithwood, 1991, p.261) but also goes beyond that, in linking individual with organizational learning and fostering change in the school, as a whole. From this perspective, organizational learning focuses primary attention on the processes in which people need to engage to determine organizational goals and how they can be accomplished with organizational structures designed to support the people engaged in the process. (Leithwood et al., 1993). In short: “Form follows function, rather than the reverse” (Leithwood et al., 1993, p.56). The Report of the Royal Commission on Learning (1994) supports this contention and recommends that “schools must be learning organizations for teachers if they are to be effective learning organizations for students” (quoted in For the Love of Learning, Vol. IV, p.152).

Leadership and School Culture

From a sociological perspective, several theorists view school leadership as building and shaping culture (Greenfield, 1986; Peterson, 1988; Schein, 1985, 1992). According to Peterson (1988), school leadership can influence a school’s norms, beliefs, values, and practices in a number of ways. What school leaders attend to, talk about, and
reinforce during the course of the day, both inside the building and at school activities outside school premises, will markedly influence the attitudes and behaviours of other staff. From this point of view, as the study revealed, the shaping of a school’s culture is the accumulation of numerous leadership activities, no single one of which could be viewed as critical, yet in combination they exert a powerful influence on the culture of the school organization.

However, recent research on educational change and school improvement has raised a point of contention among cultural theorists about the degree to which leaders can influence culture. Central to this debate is the nature of culture. Some researchers suggest that culture is part of what an organization is; others indicate that culture is what an organization has (Goodenough, 1971; Smircich, 1985). In the first instance, “organizations do not have cultures, they are cultures; and it is extremely hard for leaders to manage and shape these cultures” (Harris, 1993, p.2). In the second instance, others suggest that culture is in the realm of leadership control or influence and that school change assumes a change in culture that has been shaped or directed by organizational leaders (Deal, 1985; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Firestone, Corbett, & Rossman, 1988; Metz, 1986; Siehl, 1985). Siehl’s (1985) following comment helps put this debate in perspective:

It would seem that rather than striving for an unequivocal yes or no in response to the question of managing culture, a more fruitful approach would be to explore the conditions under which it would be more likely that culture could be managed. In other words, the question should be changed from “Can culture be managed?” to “When and what aspects of culture can be managed?” (p.126)

Supporting Siehl’s (1985) argument is the consistent message coming from educational research about the importance of leaders’ awareness of themselves, as well
the group’s behavioural norms and traditions, in making a difference in their effectiveness in shaping the culture of schools (Smircich, 1985). Culture, as a social invention, gives “meaning, support and identity to teachers and their work” (Hargreaves & Wignall, 1989, p.7). “It provides stability, certainty, and predictability” (Sashkin & Walberg, 1993, p.8). Tangible cultural elements “embody or represent the ways of a people or a classroom or a school” (Sashkin & Walberg, 1993, p.6). When change occurs it creates a sense of ambiguity and fear of loss of control.

Understanding what Hargreaves and his colleagues (1993) refer to as the content of culture, which includes shared values, beliefs, and assumed ways of doing things, as well as the form of culture or the patterns of associations among members, is helpful in explaining the issues of influence during school change that were raised by Siehl (1985). According to Hargreaves and Wignall (1989), change in the content of teachers’ beliefs and attitudes may be brought about through changes in the form of the teacher culture and through working relationships among colleagues. Consequently, culture is seen not only as an input to the change process but also as a durable outcome of it. The task of leaders in a learning-oriented culture then is to promote the kinds of assumptions, described in the previous section, by developing their own personal insights along these lines and by helping others to achieve similar insights. Accordingly, Schein (1992) offers this advice:

If leaders are not aware of the cultural underpinnings of what they are doing or the assumptions of the group on which they are imposing new solutions, they are likely to fail. Learning leaders must be careful to look inside themselves to locate their own mental models and assumptions before they leap into action. (p.373)

Organizational Structure and School Culture

The structure of an organization refers to its “formal arrangement of relationships,
operations, and activities" that define "lines of responsibility and authority," help "channel the flow of information," and help "achieve coordination of the work activities" (Arnold et al., 1992, p.419-420) of members of the organization. Briefly stated: "Organizational structure is the plan of who does what" (Arnold et al., 1992, p.420).

Culture, on the other hand, is what makes "every organization feel different, even if it has the same formal organizational structure" (Arnold et al., 1992, p.474). Organizational culture focuses on "the informal and social side of organizations" (Arnold et al., 1992, p.474) with respect to the values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms shared by most organizational members. Organizational culture refers to "how things are done and why things are done in a particular way" (Arnold et al., 1992, p.475). Organizational culture provides a basis for describing and explaining not only observable activities but also the underlying reasons and motives for them. While most organizations have a dominant culture that represents the shared core values and beliefs of the majority, larger organizations, where staff are divided into smaller units or departments and have a lot of contact or share a particular professional identity, tend to develop identifiable subcultures. Subcultures within the structure of an organization can be a positive force in providing cohesion and a familiar point of reference for individuals; however, they can also be counterproductive, if the groups become too exclusive, too inward looking, too protective, or prone to conflict with other groups.

Based on her recent research on change in secondary schools, Judith Warren Little (1993) explains the relationship that she found between the organizational structure and school culture in the schools in her study. Her findings suggest that three organizational and cultural aspects of secondary schools are "potential guarantors of the
status quo or are potential levers of change” (p.160):

First, is the legacy of subject specialization and the conditions surrounding subject expertise and subject status. Second is the departmental organization of the high school and the way in which it opens up or closes down opportunities for a more unifying construction of secondary schooling. And last is the generalized pattern of patchwork involvement among colleagues and the collegial dynamic fostered by competition over student enrollment and other resources. (p.160)

Little’s (1993) findings revealed that only a few school administrators and teachers envisioned “more permeable boundaries between departments, more meaningful ties across subject areas, and more sensible relations between school and work” (p.161). As well, among the “academic” schools, there were few examples of cross-subject curriculum planning on any meaningful scale. While she discovered that collegial exchange occurred with some frequency, it was “less frequent and less consequential than teachers would require to reinvent their work or their workplace” (p. 161). In addition, Little (1993) observed that departmentalization and subject affiliations that remained as powerful facts of life in secondary schools were “sustained not only by the dispositions of individuals but also by a range of internal practices and by powerful externalities” (p.161). She noted that the impetus to change was weakened, in part by the conservative force of teachers, but more specifically by subject loyalties and the departmentalized structures. As this study found, whatever impetus that teachers, themselves, felt for making changes in their schools resided “primarily in the shifting composition of the student population”(p.162) and their perceptions of the changing nature of the options that were available to their students beyond secondary schools. Nevertheless, as the result of her findings, Little (1993) concluded that “the multiplicity of perspectives and practices” in secondary schools “offer more resources for reform than we have so far
been able to tap" (p.162).

Other studies of secondary schools have offered wide and varying portraits of departments and department leadership, from those largely engaging in matters of joint activity on matters of curriculum and instruction to those being principally instruments of administrative convenience (Cusick, 1982; Hannay, 1992; Hargreaves et al., 1993; Johnson, 1990; Little & Brackerhoff, 1991). In many cases, teachers were not only attentive to the formal functions of departments but often regarded them as organizations to which they belonged (Johnson, 1990). Although Stevenson (1987b) noted that staff development was most effective when norms of collegiality and experimentation existed, he observed that these norms were “inhibited by a number of structural features of secondary schools” (p.243), such as socialization into teaching as an individual activity, a subject-based focus, departmentalization, physical isolation, large size, and diversity. These findings pose a critical question about overcoming structural barriers in secondary schools in developing a more school-wide basis of interactive planning and decision making, as opposed to competition and a narrow focus.

Recently, the concept of a school culture that emphasizes teacher influence in effecting school change through staff participation and collaboration has received strong endorsement from various quarters. For example, Shaw (1994) outlines several observable features of this type of culture, which involves teachers in:

- planning and developing programs together and sharing responsibility for the work of the school
- participating in sustained dialogue about teaching practices and procedures across grades and departments
- sharing and reflecting on data and observations from the classroom sharing effective practices willingly with new colleagues accepting and supporting one another in the learning process, seeking opportunities to observe each other and to teach collegially, and taking risks together
turning to each other as resources for solving problems  
reaching out and involving the community  
working together to build a vision for the school that is grounded in the needs of the students.

However, since most of the evidence of the benefits of increased teacher influence through staff collaboration has focused on teachers, rather than on the effects on the educational outcomes of students, Corcoran (1990) maintains that increased teacher influence, although important, is only part of the agenda for effective school change. Emphasizing the encompassing nature of school culture, he does not support the popular contention that teacher empowerment by itself will lead to more effective schools. With reference to the effective schools literature, Corcoran (1990) suggests the inclusion of the following features of a school that foster a changing culture and organizational structure in which teachers are likely to be most effective in the school change context:

- shared goals and high expectations of success  
- respectful and dignified treatment of professionals by school administrators, parents and students  
- an orderly school environment in which discipline is a by-product of school organization  
- strong and supportive leadership and supervision  
- adequate and protected instructional time  
- participation by teachers in the decisions affecting their work  
- regular opportunities for collegial interaction and sharing that promote skill development and professional support  
- recognition and rewards for excellent achievement  
- opportunities for professional growth  
- decent and safe physical working conditions. (p. 150)

When viewed as a gestalt, as Corcoran (1990) has suggested, these conditions provide a framework for the design of a changing organizational structure and a strong professional school culture, which can have significant impact on the skills, behaviours, and attitudes of teachers, by contributing to higher levels of teacher performance, commitment to the school, sense of efficacy, and job satisfaction (Firestone, 1986;
Rosenholtz, 1985).

Following a similar line of thought, recent research on secondary school change endorses the need for both "restructuring" and "reculturing" to effect school change, where "restructuring strategies involve changes in power, authority, resource allocations, and decision making" (Lawson & Brian-Lawson, 1997, in Watson, 1997, p.7), and where "reculturing strategies focus more on the norms, values, beliefs, and attitudes of groups of teachers and students" (Lawson & Brian-Lawson, 1997, in Watson, 1997, p.7). Watson (1997) emphasizes that one occurring without the other will not result in fundamental changes in how secondary schools function. Although the two may go hand in hand, as Watson (1997) indicates, Fullan (1993) has pointed out that reculturing generally leads to restructuring, more than the reverse.

While the accumulation of recent educational change research supports the centrality of school culture in effecting school change, the framework for its empirical study is in its infancy. The complexity of school change, as has been pointed out in the previous sections, is reflected in the unique nature of each school, its leadership and culture, and in the dynamics of the interrelationships that occur within the organizational structure during the course of change. Studying school change, therefore, provides a significant challenge to the researcher who is attempting to determine an appropriate research design to investigate the topic of leadership and culture in a school change initiative. Based on the central research problem and the purpose of this study, presented in Chapter One, and on the information provided in the literature review in this chapter, the concluding section describes the nature of case study research design and the rationale behind its selection as the method of inquiry to be used in this study.
The Nature of Case Study Research Design

Case study research design is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.

R. K. Yin
*Fundamentals of Educational Research*

Case study research is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there.

M. Q. Patton
*Qualitative Evaluation Methods*

Rationale for the Use of Case Study Research Design

Evans (1996) claims that both advocates and critics of educational change, who view school change as a largely rational redesign of school goals, roles, and rules, have often overlooked the fundamental truths of human psychology and organizational behaviour and how people and organizations actually behave during change undertakings. Recognizing that accomplishing school change is an enormous and intricate task that falls on the shoulders of school leaders and those they lead, Evans (1996) argues that those who are involved deserve and require more consideration than most designers and critics of change have given them.

As other theorists have suggested, how school change unfolds ultimately depends on how those involved or affected make the necessary changes in their beliefs, attitudes, practices, and assumptions (Fullan, 1991; Miles, 1986; Schein, 1985). While some educators are captivated by the idea of change, others are not (Deal, 1985). In schools that have undertaken change there are many instances where only minor changes have been made, or none at all (Little, 1987). It is also very easy to find those who remain
strongly opposed to school change (Hargreaves, 1993). Furthering his argument, Evans (1996) maintains that since change is “a vast process of adaptation that must be accomplished teacher by teacher and school by school” (p.xi), the study of school change requires a theoretical base that is close to human nature and to the realities of life in schools, including the dilemmas and the successes associated with change initiatives.

Holistic descriptions, such as those found in case study research, produce a portrait of the life of a school, illuminating the interrelationships and intricacies of the context being studied, and identifying the meanings given to those interrelationships, intricacies, and human action (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As Stake (1988) points out, in case study research “the search is for an understanding of the particular case in its idiosyncrasy, in its complexity” (p.256). This type of empirical approach entails depth as well as breadth to provide a “thick description” of what life is like in schools (Firestone & Wilson, 1985; Hargreaves, 1997). By giving insights into specific events or situations, the case study goes beyond form and structure to the realities of human life, striving to understand how all the parts work together to form a whole.

Patton (1980) concludes:

This understanding is an end in itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting—what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what’s going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting, and in the analysis to be able to communicate that faithfully to others who are interested in that setting. (p.1)

These arguments raise two distinct yet related theoretical and practical issues associated with case study research. The first issue is concerned with the purpose and nature of the case study and the application of its findings. Most researchers agree that
developing theory, based on the findings of a case study, or *generalizing* case study findings are not appropriate (Bassey, 1987, in Bell, 1987), in that a case is a single bounded system or an instance of a class of phenomena, not a representative of a class (Stenhouse, 1978) and that a vividly and fully described case is "educationally valuable in itself" (Elbaz, 1983, in Merriam, 1988, p.120). "By committing to the study and portrayal of the idiosyncratic and the particular as legitimate in themselves" (Walker, 1980, p.33), the intention of case study research is not to concentrate on testing theory, but rather to describe, analyze, and interpret the case, communicating to the reader a holistic picture that portrays the richness and insights provided through the information gathered in the study. Although Walker (1980) concedes that the findings of case study research may contribute to theory by revealing "how theoretical abstractions relate to common sense perceptions of everyday life" (p.34), he emphasizes the significance of the case study in communicating contextual information that is grounded in a particular setting, and therefore its more appropriate application to judgements of *relatability* to other settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The second issue relates to the unique interpretive challenges facing the case study researcher in presenting an accurate description of participant perspectives. Case study methodology allows the researcher to observe, sense, discover, interpret, question, and to be responsive to the variabilities of the various contexts of the participants. Such an approach is "particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic and relies heavily on inductive reasoning in handling multiple data sources" (Merriam, 1988, p.16). In fact, as Yin (1984) points out: "The case study's unique strength is in its ability to deal with a variety of evidence" (p.19). Case study may be differentiated from other research design by
what Cronbach (1975) refers to as “interpretation in context” (p.123). This approach enables the researcher to investigate situations, without being directly involved in them, neither controlling nor manipulating them (Long, Convey, & Chwajtek, 1985). In addition, Bullough, Knowles, and Crow (1991) contend that

...case study methodology preserves the integrity of informants’ experiences and their meaning and encourages sensitivity to changes in the context [and it is] a responsive methodology, avoiding rigid data gathering strategies, just as it avoids interpretations made in advance of data gathering—strategies and interpretations evolve together in response to shifting researcher understandings. (p.12)

By focusing on “discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied” (Merriam, 1988, p.3), the case study approach, as suggested by Bullough, Knowles, and Crow (1991), allows the researcher to learn from and respond to the dynamics of the multiple sources of information throughout the concurrent process of data collection and data analysis. Furthermore, the rigor in case study research “derives from the researcher’s presence, the nature of the interaction between researcher and participants, the triangulation of data, the interpretation of perceptions, and rich, thick description” (Merriam, 1988, p.120).

“The school workplace is a physical setting, a formal organization, and a social environment in which teachers construct a sense of practice, professional efficacy, and professional community” (McLaughlin, 1993, p.99). As part of the formal organization in secondary schools, staff members direct their attention to management structures, governance, technology, and material aspects of the workplace. As part of the social settings, they focus on the norms and beliefs of practice, collegial relations, collaboration, and mutual support. Incorporating both the formal and informal aspects of a school, as an organization, directs research to examine questions that relate to both realities of the
life of school staff and how one influences the other during the course of change (Hargreaves & Wignall, 1989).

Little and McLaughlin (1993) affirm the benefit of inquiries of this nature that give “systematic attention to individual cases and a biographical perspective” (p.186). They suggest that the revelation of individual and collective “whole stories” offers important insights into the culture and leadership of the school, as an organization, and that the study of change in schools during periods of stability, transition, and turmoil “illuminates with greater sensitivity and confidence the contours of culture and context” (p.187). Such studies, they maintain, help to uncover the internal dynamics that account for the similarities and differences in the versatility and stability of certain aspects of school leadership and school culture during change undertakings.

Summary

The review of relevant literature on school change, leadership, and culture emphasizes the complexity of school change and the importance of the role played by school leaders and the culture of the school in influencing and in being influenced by the conditions associated with change. Understanding the multidimensional nature of school change involves consideration of its meaning for those involved, as well as of how both individuals and groups give substance to that meaning in their actions throughout the process. Personal, interpersonal, and group conflicts are integral components of school change from its inception through to its continuation.

Leadership is a central force in school change initiatives. Recent research focuses on the changing leadership role necessary for contemporary school change, a role that not only fosters acceptance for change as an ongoing process but that also supports those who
are involved in a variety of ways. While the principal may be the key leader in influencing school change, there are a number of staff in the school who take influential leadership roles at different times and for different reasons. Consequently, where power is dispersed in a facilitative manner throughout the school organization, leaders champion others to become leaders.

From this perspective, the culture of the school is critical, not only in shaping the educational change but also in being shaped by it. The manner in which individuals and groups define their roles and responsibilities, over a period of time, serves as a powerful lens through which the staff of a school view the conditions of change and forms the basis for staff involvement and participation in the process. Both the formal and informal relationships in the school mediate the sense of collective identity that develops and establish a distinctive workplace culture. The shared values and beliefs as well as the patterns of relationships that are developed represent consequential influences in determining what and why change occurs in addition to how and when it happens.

Case study, as an inquiry approach to the study of school change, reveals the realities of life in schools by providing a holistic and “thick description” of the phenomena, including the intricacies of the roles and relationships in the change initiative, and allows for the relatability of the findings to other similar settings.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Chapter Three provides specific information on the methodology used to facilitate the case study investigation of the research problem presented in Chapter One. Included in the following sections of this chapter are descriptions of the Purposive Selection of the Two Secondary Schools to be studied and the Ethical Considerations associated with the research. The data sources and procedures used for Data Collection are outlined next. Following this is a discussion of the Data Analysis that occurred during data collection and following data collection. The final section addresses the Limitations of the Study.

As indicated in the first chapter, the research problem directs the study to investigate the influence of school leadership and school culture in a specific change undertaken in two secondary schools. To this end, the case study research design, described in Chapter Two, is oriented within the broad theoretical perspective of phenomenology (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). To address the specific questions associated with the research problem, the three data sources from each of the two secondary schools, discussed in this chapter, include teacher and school administrator interviews, a teacher questionnaire, and relevant school documents, which provide evidence related to how and why questions in addition to what and when information. Because there is little formal knowledge about the relationship of school leadership and school culture in secondary school change and even less information on the topic of secondary school-initiated change (Hargreaves et al., 1993; Pelicier et al., 1990), the study is exploratory in nature.
Purposive Selection of the Two Secondary Schools

Adelman and Walking-Eagle (1987, in Bell, 1987) describe the case study as “an umbrella term for a family of research methods having in common the decision to focus around an instance” (p.5). Since the instance in this research is the two secondary schools and since there is a need for more grounded research on the topic under investigation, the researcher acknowledged the advice of Merriam (1988) that “cases should be selected for their power both to maximize and minimize differences in the phenomenon of interest” (p.154). Consequently, the researcher selected two secondary schools that were known by the researcher through her professional association with the schools.

Both are composite secondary schools that have been involved in a similar school-initiated change, over a corresponding time period, within the jurisdiction of the same school board. The schools are located in similar geographic areas of the school board with a similar-sized student population and demographic composition. While the innovation in both schools was specific to grade 9 students and grade 9 program delivery, all teaching staff in each school had the opportunity to take part in the decision making process to initiate the change and to have continued involvement in the implementation and refinement of the grade 9 program and its implications for program delivery in subsequent grades. Although the change was initiated in both schools by the principals and the school staff, the change has been supported by the school board trustees, senior administration, and central office support staff.

In both schools, while the change initiative has included innovation in program delivery for grade 9 students, the researcher noted that the principal and the teachers in
each school initiated the changes for quite different reasons and that the initiative has unfolded in quite different ways in each school. In the case of the one secondary school, the closure of a vocational school was going to entail significant changes in the diversity of the student population in the school for the coming year. The principal and teaching staff of the other secondary school were interested in a different organizational model to provide flexibility in program delivery for an already diverse student population.

Since school staff and administrative turnover have been cited as powerful factors in the implementation and continuation of change (Fullan, 1991), it was recognized that in both secondary schools the same principals have remained since the inception of the innovation. However, although there has been comparable teaching staff turnover due to retirements, promotions, transfers, and cutbacks during the change initiative in each school, the implications of staff turnover have varied with the change initiative.

Consequently, while both schools exhibit a number of similarities, at the same time it was noted that each school had its own discernible history and organizational approaches to the change initiative, as well as distinctive school leadership and school culture qualities. Both the variations and the similarities have enhanced the researcher’s insights during the collection and analysis of the data. What is particularly noteworthy, in relation to the ethical considerations outlined in the next section, is that both secondary school principals willingly agreed to participate in the study and to support teacher participation in the research. Furthermore, the Director of Education of the school board in which the secondary schools are located provided full support for this study.
Ethical Considerations

"The burden of producing a study that has been conducted and disseminated in an ethical manner lies with the individual investigator" (Merriam, 1988, p.184). Researchers can refer to guidelines for assistance; however, as Spradley (1979) points out, the relationship between social science researchers and the people and situations they study is "uniquely varied and complex" (p.34). Consequently, in case study research, the researcher must anticipate and resolve the ethical issues specific to the study before the research is pursued.

Given the purposive selection of the two secondary schools, described previously, particular ethical issues for the researcher in this study concerned both the role and the intentions of the researcher, as they may be perceived by the participants, and the consequential nature of the interaction between the researcher and the study participants. Although the educational background, training, and experiences of the researcher provided her with a personal self-assurance of sensitivity to potential concerns of the participants, she was also cognizant of the possibility that her dual role, as researcher and her current professional position as superintendent, might unduly influence the findings. Conducting the study from this perspective, she sought "to redress the unequal power relations [which may have been] perceived by the researched" (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p.343).

Heeding the advice of Walker (1980) that it is possible to establish trust "through holding strong to a carefully formulated ethic" (p.52), the researcher mindfully selected a research methodology in which the methods and procedures were "explicit and visible" (p.52). Accordingly, a series of safeguards were built into the research design to develop
trust and confidence in the researcher and her intentions and to foster cooperation with the participants, in both the planning and the undertaking of the research study.

In the stages of formulating the study, following the receipt of verbal support for the research undertaking from the Director of Education and Secretary of the school board in which the schools were located (June 12, 1995), the researcher held individual preliminary discussions with the principals of the two secondary schools considered for selection (June 15, 1995), to determine their interest in participating in and supporting the research in their respective schools. Both principals expressed keen interest in learning more about the perceptions of their staff concerning the innovation that had been undertaken in their respective schools and in finding out more about the leadership and cultural influences in their school change initiatives. Having received verbal support from both principals (June 15, 1995), the researcher prepared a written proposal that outlined the parameters and details of the study (Appendix A). She reviewed the written proposal with the Director of Education, who provided a letter of support for the study to be undertaken (September 21, 1995). The written proposal, which was presented to the two secondary school principals for discussion with their respective staff members, also received the approval and written consent of the principals (September 29, 1995).

Based on this support, the researcher developed a thesis proposal that was presented to the Thesis Committee, and formally approved by the Graduate Studies Department of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (November 9, 1995). Following this, the researcher received ethical certification for the research study from the Ethical Review Committee of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (November 28, 1995).
Prior to the research being undertaken in the two schools, the principals of both secondary schools made arrangements for the researcher to meet with their respective staff members to inform them about the study and to discuss the study with them (November 23, and 30, 1995). Included in the presentation sessions were a statement about the purpose of the research, the role of the researcher, the method of data collection and analysis and the reporting format to be used. Stressing researcher accountability, both in the conduct of the research and the dissemination of results, the researcher presented the school staff with the following principles that were adhered to closely during the research:

- The information obtained in the study will be used only for the purposes of the research.
- Participation in the study, whether through interview or questionnaire, is voluntary.
- All information provided by participants is confidential.
- The real names of individuals, schools and school board will not be used in any written or verbal reports, including the thesis; pseudonyms will be used instead.
- There will be no exploitation of individuals for personal gain of the researcher.
- A Letter of Consent, outlining the purpose of the research, emphasizing voluntary participation, protection of confidentiality and the right to withdraw at any time will be reviewed with all interview participants for their signature prior to the interview (Appendix B).
- Although a personal copy of the transcription of his/her interview will be provided to each participant being interviewed for review and feedback to the researcher, the researcher only will have access to all the raw data in the study.
- Shredding of written information and deletion of audio tapes and computer information will occur at the end of the study.
- The final thesis document will be made available to the participating schools following approval of the thesis.

Staff input was welcomed by the researcher during the presentation and discussion sessions and in both schools. Some staff members offered suggestions to the researcher regarding the data that they believed would be helpful in gathering information.
about the change initiative. The recommendations of school staff used by the researcher are described in the following section on data collection.

**Data Collection**

"A crucial element in any educational research endeavour concerns the nature of the sources of data" (Woods, 1986, p.69). Glesne and Peshkin (1992) advise the researcher to choose data sources and data collection procedures that are most likely to extract information needed to gain understanding of the phenomenon being studied; to contribute different perspectives to the issue, and to make optimal use of the time available for the data collection. In terms of this study, data collection and concurrent data analysis, discussed in the following sections, occurred over a six month period between December, 1995 and May, 1996 to concur with school staff and researcher time schedules. This method served as an efficient way to elucidate, either in terms of confirmation or rebuttal, the data gathered by way of the other two and, therefore, facilitated greater understanding and more accurate interpretation during the data collection and analysis process. During the data collection, the triangulation of the three methodologies enabled a thorough examination of the two major constructs in the school-initiated change study of school leadership and school culture. In providing strong support for the use of multiple data gathering methods, Denzin (1970) offers the following comment:

> The rationale for this strategy is that the flaws of one method are often the strengths of another and by combining methods, observers can achieve the best of each, while overcoming their unique deficiencies. (p. 308)

In addition, Marshall and Rossman (1995) emphasize that not only can "data from different sources...be used to corroborate, elaborate, or illuminate the research in
question” but also “can greatly strengthen the study’s usefulness for other settings” (p. 144).

**Interviews: Selecting the Participants**

“Since a case study [interview] uses very few subjects...it is important for those few to be selected very carefully. The purpose of the study should dictate the procedure involved in the selection” (Wolpert, 1991, p.113). Because the main problem of this study was to investigate the influence of school leadership and school culture in a specific school-initiated change, it was important to select and interview participants who could provide detailed information about the change. Following initial discussions between the researcher and the thesis supervisor, and subsequent discussions between the researcher and the principals of the two secondary schools in the study, the researcher requested that the principals nominate ten potential interview participants from their respective schools, based upon the following criteria:

- substantial involvement in and understanding of the school-initiated change in the study;
- ability to articulate the issues, concerns, and successes of the initiative; and
- ability to contribute different perspectives to the school-initiated change process being studied. (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992)

As a result, along with the two principals who agreed to be interviewed, the interview participants selected by the principals from each of the two secondary schools included two vice principals and eight teaching staff who, according to the principals, were not “one dimensional,” who would provide a “total cross-section of the population” of those involved in the school-initiated change, and who would offer an “overall view of the school.” The teachers and vice principals who were nominated by their principals
were contacted by the researcher by letter to determine their willingness to participate in the interview component of the research. Of the eight teachers contacted in each secondary school, only one teacher declined to be interviewed. That teacher’s principal was contacted and based upon the above criteria, the principal nominated another teacher who agreed to be an interview participant.

Interviews: Developing and Conducting the Interviews

An interview is a “conversation with a purpose...to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective” (Patton, 1980, p.196). Essentially an interview is an attempt to gain information about something that cannot be observed readily or to explore alternative explanations of what the researcher does observe. In this study, the researcher wanted to gather information about the opinions, perceptions, and attitudes of the participants towards the change initiative; to obtain comparable data across subjects and sites; to allow for open-ended responses; and to note and collect data on unexpected dimensions of the topic. Based on the type of information required in this investigation, the researcher determined that a semi-structured interview approach was appropriate for this study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Specific issues related to the substance and mechanics of the interview arose during the construction of the interview questions. According to Glesne and Peskin (1992), substantively appropriate questions “are ones whose answers provide you with pictures of the unseen, expand your understanding, offer insight, and upset any well-entrenched ignorance” (p.67). With regard to the mechanics, Glesne and Peskin (1992) also emphasize that “questions must be free of words, idioms, or syntax that will interfere
with your questions and the respondents' understanding of them” (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p.67).

The researcher addressed these issues, with the assistance of a research analyst, in the preliminary development activities. These activities included the pilot testing of the interview questions, in the form of a semi-structured interview guide (Appendix C), with five secondary school teachers and two secondary school administrators who were not involved in the study. After the revisions were made, as the result of the pilot testing, the researcher held interviews with three of the teacher participants from each secondary school who agreed to be interviewed early in the investigation. The feedback from the participants, in both preliminary activities, served to confirm the value of the semi-structured interview guide, in providing consistency in the collection of specific information from each participant, while enabling open-ended dialogue pertinent to the particular circumstances of each individual participant. Having determined the appropriateness and usability of the interview questions through this approach, the researcher continued to revise and refine her technique during the remainder of the interviews held between January, 1996 and April, 1996 with the teaching staff and concluding with the school administrators in May, 1996 (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

All interviews were arranged at a mutually convenient time for the participants and the researcher. Prior to the interviews, the researcher reviewed the purpose of the project, participant rights, the role of the researcher, the method of recording the interviews, and the process for deleting interview information and any other written notes following the completion of the report with each participant, and obtained written
permission in the form of a Letter of Consent (Appendix B) from each person being interviewed. Interview sessions ranged in length from ninety minutes to two hours.

According to Merriam (1988): “Ideally, verbatim transcription of recorded interviews provides the best data base for analysis” (p.82). Using this procedure for each interview, the researcher returned the verbatim transcripts to the participants, generally within three weeks of the interview, for participant review and feedback to the researcher. In all but two instances, the participants agreed to the use of the information provided in the transcripts. With respect to the feedback from the two interview participants who requested revisions, the changes made were minor amendments to terminology in the transcript information. In no case, was any information deleted from the original transcript.

Reflective field notes made by the researcher, following the interviews, supplemented the interview information and the other data collection methods, discussed in subsequent sections. Advancing this approach, Merriam (1988) suggests that “post-interview notes allow the investigator to monitor the process of data collection as well as begin to analyze the information itself” (p.82). Accordingly, the field notes in this study contained the insights of the researcher about the comments of the interview participants and the verbal and non-verbal behaviour exhibited by the subjects, as well as the questions that arose during the interview procedures, in relation to the other data that had been collected.

Questionnaire: Selecting the Potential Respondents

While the administrative and teacher interviews provided the main source of data, additional information on school leadership and school cultural influences on the school-
initiated change was obtained from a teacher questionnaire, which was administered to the teachers of grades 9-12/OAC in both secondary schools in December, 1995. Although it was recognized that some of the teaching staff had partial timetables and that there were some teachers new to both schools, it was determined that all teachers of grades 9-12/OAC would have the opportunity to respond to the teacher questionnaire. In total, 119 teacher questionnaires were distributed: 56 to one secondary school and 63 to the other secondary school. Fifty-four questionnaires were completed and returned: 26 and 28, respectively from the two secondary schools. This represented an overall return rate of 45 percent: 46 percent from the one secondary school and 44 percent from the other secondary school.

**Questionnaire: Developing and Administering the Questionnaire**

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) support the conventional use of questionnaires to enhance qualitative data. They suggest that “these kinds of data may open up avenues to explore and questions to answer” (p.147). Furthermore, this highly structured format may be used “to gather common sociodemographic data from respondents [particularly] when a large sample is to be surveyed [and when] quantification of results is important” (Merriam, 1988, p.73). Although Anderson (1990) points out that “questionnaires are not a panacea in research” (p. 205), Wolpert (1981) suggests that “they are a convenient means of collecting data from a wider sample than can be reached by personal interview” (p.115). For the purposes of this research, the researcher determined that a teacher questionnaire was an efficient method to obtain information from the larger teacher population in each secondary school, which would compliment the interview data by expanding the researcher’s understanding of the “structures and patterns” (Wolpert, 1981,
in the two schools, as they related to the topic under investigation. Specifically, the teacher questionnaire (Appendix D), which was developed with the assistance of a research analyst, included the following areas of investigation:

- the culture of the school
- the leadership practices in the school
- general statements about secondary school-initiated change
- comments about the impact of the specific change on classroom practices
- additional comments about the school-initiated change
- experience and background of the respondents.

The decision to include these particular content areas in the teacher questionnaire, in a format that allowed for both structured and open-ended responses, was the result of the researcher's requirement for specific information related to the research problem, as well as information obtained from the preliminary interviews and suggestions made by the staff of the two schools during the presentation and discussion sessions, prior to the initiation of the research (Anderson, 1990). For example, proceeding from the review of the literature, the researcher determined that the questionnaire would include sections on particular statements related to school leadership and school culture, as well as specified demographic information about the experience and background of school staff. Further, she followed up on the suggestions of school staff members that a comment section concerning the impact of the grade 9 change on classroom practices, if added to the teacher questionnaire, would offer a more open-ended approach and would allow respondents to express written opinions, if they chose. Similarly, the researcher acted upon school staff suggestions to include a section containing general statements about the grade 9 school-initiated change in the final questionnaire. (As it turned out, the majority
of the respondents elected to complete both these comment sections, in detail, in the questionnaire).

Moreover, the three preliminary interviews held in each school, prior to the development of the teacher questionnaire, proved to be invaluable in focusing the information to be obtained through the teacher questionnaire. In reciprocal fashion, data collected from the questionnaires also served as an orientation for the refinement of the subsequent interviews and thus promoted respondent validation (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Since the questionnaire in this research study was to be self-administered by the teachers, the researcher was cognizant of the questionnaire’s reliance on clear and specific written language (Best, 1977) that would convey the intended meaning of the researcher to the questionnaire respondents (Hughes, 1990). Acknowledging the caution placed by Best (1977) on the clarity and purpose of the questionnaire language and the emphasis of Hughes (1990) on the importance of shared meaning in the use of language in questionnaires, the researcher was careful in phrasing questionnaire statements that were definite, straightforward, and comprehensible to promote relevance to the problem being studied, specificity of intent, and reliability across respondents (Dixon et al., 1987).

Denzin (1970) suggests that pilot investigations are particularly helpful in substantiating the appropriateness and usefulness of questionnaires and in addressing any outstanding issues related to specific questions. Heeding this advice, the researcher pilot-tested the questionnaire for this study with ten secondary school teachers who were not part of the study, in order to determine:

- readability, clarity and comprehension of each question;
relevance to the research study and
- the length of time required to complete the questionnaire.

Revisions made to the questionnaire were based on the suggestions made from the participants in the pilot testing. The revised teacher questionnaires were delivered by the researcher to the two secondary school principals for pre-arranged distribution to their respective teaching staff members during the first week of December, 1995, for completion and return in the third week of December, 1995. A covering letter from the researcher to the teacher was part of the questionnaire package, in accordance with Anderson’s (1990) suggestion that “a pre-letter can be a valuable means of enhancing response to research studies” (p.203). Questionnaires were coded by number to indicate the school. The questionnaires were returned directly to the researcher, as predetermined with the principal, in enclosed envelopes marked Personal and Confidential.

School Documents

The use of documentary data “can ground an investigation in the context of the problem being investigated” (Merriam, 1988, p.109). Although documents can provide useful information as part of a research investigation, Denzin (1970) emphasizes the judicious use of written and printed materials, cautioning that documents should be used only when it appears that they will yield “better data or more data or data at less cost than other tactics” (p.11). Based on this advice, the researcher reviewed a variety of documents, provided by the school administrators and teaching staff, and selected the following school documents, which proved to be useful for this study: the school plans, school newsletters, timetables, handbooks, organizational charts, and specific correspondence related to the initiative. While the interviews and the teacher
questionnaires facilitated additional probing regarding information obtained from the documents, the major purpose of the document review and analysis in this study was to verify facts and corroborate statements and opinions, as well as to provide additional contextual understanding of the data collected.

Data Analysis

"Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p.111), with the goal "to come up with reasonable conclusions" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984, p.134), based on the information gathered. "The final product of a case study is shaped by the data that are collected and the analysis that accompanies the entire process" (Merriam, 1988, p.124). In this study, data collection and analysis were simultaneous activities throughout the process to "provide believable and trustworthy results" (Merriam, 1998, p.120). Continued review of relevant literature was also part of the data collection and analysis process. The use of constant comparative analysis, as suggested by Glaser & Strauss (1967), provided a manageable way of handling the large amount of information collected in this multidata source study.

Analysis During Data Collection

The constant comparative method is a research design for multiple sources of data and multi-site participation, in which formal analysis begins early in the study, continues throughout the data collection process, and becomes more intense once the data have been collected. Glaser (1978, in Bogdan & Biklen, 1992) outlines the steps in the constant comparative method:

- Begin collecting data.
• Look for key issues, recurrent events or activities in the data that become categories.
• Collect data that provide many incidents of the categories of focus with an eye to seeing the diversity of the dimensions under the categories.
• Write about the categories being explored, attempting to describe and account for all the data while continually searching for new incidents.
• Work with the data and emerging model to discover basic social processes and relationships.
• Engage in sampling, coding and writing as the analysis focuses on the core categories. (p.74)

Although the method may appear as a lockstep approach, in effect, the steps, as described, occurred as an ongoing process, where analysis and data collection interacted to compliment, refine, and reformulate one another. The procedure was complex but it provided an important way to organize and analyze multiple data sources within each school site and across school sites. In order to facilitate the procedure from the beginning of the data collection process, the researcher developed a series of approaches to assist in data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Data reduction included selecting, simplifying, and transforming the raw data through coding and writing summaries and memoranda. Data display included the organized assembly of information to facilitate drawing conclusions through narrative text, matrices, and networks. Conclusion drawing entailed determining meanings related to the research questions and proceeded primarily from the various data displays. Verification involved testing the robustness and confirmability of the findings through triangulation of the data sources.

These activities were interwoven at the beginning, during, and following data collection (Miles & Huberman, 1984). The discovery phase, during which the analysis was more intuitive (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984), extended as long as possible. The reason
for the delay in conclusion drawing related specifically to the professional obligations of the researcher and the limited time and resources available during the data collection period. Consequently, as conclusions emerged during the process, they were framed within the context of openness and skepticism (Miles & Huberman, 1984) until the researcher had more time to reflect upon and work with the data.

Analysis of the Interviews

Each interview was transcribed and read in conjunction with the accompanying field notes, as a first step in becoming familiar with the data. Upon the second reading, the researcher coded phrases, sentences, and paragraphs that formed the basis for a summary for each interview. This approach served as a practical method to undertake the initial reduction of the data and to guide planning for subsequent interviews. While the primary consideration was on uncovering interview data that addressed the research questions, the coding also provided a reference point for the examination and analysis of the questionnaire responses and the various documents collected.

Analysis of the Questionnaires

The questionnaire information obtained from the teachers in each school was entered on the SPSS computer program for frequency analysis of the responses to the specific research questions. Comparisons were made between the responses to similar statements to determine patterns and discrepancies. The written comments from the respondents were compiled and coded, similar to the approach used for the interviews. The questionnaire findings, which were compared to the interview codes, facilitated further data reduction and assisted in corroborating the conclusion drawing. Information provided from the questionnaire data, analyzed according to frequency distribution and its
correlation with the other data sources, was included as part of the findings in the form of descriptive statistics.

**Analysis of the School Documents**

Similarly, by coding the information in the documents, the researcher was able to refute or substantiate the data obtained in the interviews and the questionnaires and thus to contribute to the data reduction, reflection, and conclusion drawing stages of the analysis.

**Analysis Following Data Collection**

Once the data from all interviews, field notes, the teacher questionnaires, and the documents were collected and reduced, the researcher developed a series of charts and matrices to display the information, and proceeded with individual school site analysis and conclusion drawing. The individual school site analysis of each interview, supplemented by the field notes, the questionnaire data, and the document analysis, identified emerging themes and patterns in each school. Cross-case analysis of all participants broadened the base in order to identify major patterns and themes across the two school sites, as well as the identified differences.

**Limitations of the Study**

Since the research is primarily concerned with the investigation of the influence of school leadership and school culture in a specific school-initiated change in two secondary schools in one school board, the study is not intended to be generalizable to all school-initiated change or necessarily representative of all secondary schools. From this perspective, the emphasis of the case study methodology used in this research is on its relatability rather than on its generalizability in that the readers will ultimately decide
whether or not the findings of the study relate to their own experiences. This position is supported by several researchers. For example, Bassey (1987, in Bell, 1987) indicates that

...an important criterion for judging the merits of a case study is the extent to which the details are sufficient and appropriate for a teacher [or other reader] working in a similar situation to relate his [or her] decision making to that described in the case study. The relatability of a case study is more important than its generalizability. (p.7)

Likewise, Bullough (1989) suggests that case studies are "stories that...invite the reader to question and explore personal values and understandings. They are also a means by which to identify potential problems and a vehicle by which to begin thinking them through" (pp. xi-xii). Stake (1988) advances this viewpoint by asserting that a well-chosen case can also assist in the understanding of other cases. To provide further endorsement, Shulman (1986) points out that

...we know from the literature on human judgement and decision making...that most individuals find specific cases more powerful influences on their decisions than impersonally presented empirical findings, even though the latter constitutes 'better' evidence. Although principles are powerful, cases are memorable and lodge in the memory as the basis for later judgements. (p.32)

Consequently, the researcher hopes that as a result of reading case studies, such as this one, and other accounts, in which the meaning for the participants comes through, that practitioners and policy makers will reflect on their own thoughts and practices and that researchers will gain insights and interpretations that promote further inquiry into the topic under investigation.

Since the research is directed to an understanding of what happens and how it occurs, from the perspectives of the school administrators and the teachers who have been
involved in the change initiative, the study does not explore the perceptions of other school staff or the larger educational community.

Further, the findings of the study depend, to a large extent, on the quality of the methodology and the interpretation of the researcher in terms of the selection of themes and the provision of meaning to the sequence of responses. For this reason, the research cannot be totally objective and without bias, although the methodology is designed to maximize the possibility of replication of the research under comparable conditions.

Summary

The research methodology for this study is based on the assumption that school leadership and school culture are integral parts of school-initiated change and that their meaning is found in the experiences of those involved in the actual initiative. Consequently, through the use of case study research design, the methodology relates back to the main problem of the study: to investigate school leadership and school cultural influences on a specific secondary school-initiated change from the perceptions of those being studied.

Case study research design allows for multiple data sources to be used to obtain evidence in order to provide a holistic and in depth picture of the phenomenon under study. From this viewpoint, case study research is particularistic, in that the focus is on particular phenomena. The phenomena in this case study are the influences of school leadership and school culture in a specific secondary school-initiated change. The case study is descriptive because its end-product is a rich, thick description and analysis of the phenomena. Further, the case study is heuristic in that it illuminates the reader’s
understanding. It is also inductive in that the themes, patterns, and concepts that emerge from the analysis of the data are grounded in the context (Merriam, 1988).

The purposive selection of the two secondary school case study sites and the interview participants served to both maximize and minimize the differences in data collection and analysis. For example, both schools were composite secondary schools, comprised of similar-sized student populations, in a similar geographic area in the same school board, which the researcher knew had been involved in a similar grade 9 change initiative over the past four year period, under the leadership of the same principals; at the same time, there were differences in the distinctive history and traditions of each school, teacher experiences with grade 9 students, leadership practices, the reasons for the change, and the approaches used to accomplish the initiative.

As well, the use of a multiple method design of inquiry, which included semi-structured interviews with school administrators and teachers and follow up field notes, a teacher questionnaire designed for the study, and document collection and review, and the triangulation of the three methodologies, facilitated a thorough examination and a greater understanding of the two major constructs of school leadership and school culture in the school-initiated change in the study. Simultaneous data collection and analysis shaped and refined the process through the interaction of discovery, insight, and interpretation towards the goal of producing believable and trustworthy findings and sound and reasonable conclusions.

Implicit in any research is the concern that the investigation be conducted in an ethical manner. Specific to case study research are issues that may be unique to each particular case: issues that must be anticipated and addressed prior to proceeding with the
investigation. In the current study, the researcher's central concern with participants' perceptions of her dual role as researcher and superintendent prompted the development of a specific course of action directed to the identified ethical issues. The research was guided by a series of principles and involved the participants throughout the undertaking.

The case study is limited in its intent to understand the two specific cases in depth, rather than to know what is generally true about many. With the resultant focus on relatability rather than on generalizability, the study calls upon the reader to determine the applicability of the representations as the basis for future thinking and research regarding educational change. Finally, because the researcher is the "primary instrument" (Merriam, 1988, p.19) for data collection and analysis, the quality of the research design and the interpretation of findings are dependent upon the "theoretical predispositions" (Patton, 1980, p.277) and research skills of the individual researcher. For this reason, the research cannot be totally objective and without bias.
CHAPTER IV
RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of Chapter Four is to report the research findings, the data collected to answer the research questions, in accordance with the methodology described in Chapter Three. To this end, the research findings are presented in descriptive summaries or portraits of each of the two secondary schools in the case study, to provide the reader with a holistic view of the complexity and dynamic nature of the school-initiated change within the unique environment of each school, as a social organization (Fullan, 1991; Miles, 1986; Wiles, 1993). By discussing the realities of the change within the context of each school, this approach to the presentation of the research findings focuses the reader on the relatability of the circumstances in each school in the study to similar familiar settings. It also increases the level of awareness of the reader about each school, in preparation for understanding the similarities and differences between the two schools, which are discussed in the cross-site analysis presented in the next chapter.

While the interviews with the principal, two vice principals, and eight teachers in each school provide the major source of the data, questionnaire information from 26 respondents from one secondary school and 28 respondents from the other secondary school, as well as relevant documents obtained from each school, serve to increase the confidence in the research findings (Denzin, 1978). Although the systematic and thematic categorization scheme, developed to present the school portraits in a comprehensive and organized manner, does itself represent a form of data analysis in the constant comparative methodology used in the study, researcher influence has been
minimized, as much as possible, in describing the findings. Therefore this chapter is composed largely of quotations extracted from the interviews, accompanied by descriptive statistics and comments from the teacher questionnaires, so that the participants' voices are clearly identifiable within each school portrait. Even so, as the data collection process yielded 572 pages of interview transcripts and field notes, as well as responses to 54 questionnaires, including written comments from 45 of the questionnaire respondents, abridgement and inclusive statements became essential in the reporting format.

The organizational framework selected for the presentation of the findings begins with an introductory section, which provides a General Description of the School-Initiated Change at each secondary school, referred to as Secondary School Site I and Secondary School Site II, respectively, and which answers partially the initial research question: What school change was initiated? This general description also serves as the frame of reference for the more detailed findings discussed separately for each school in the subsequent two parts of the chapter. Part One reports the findings for Secondary School Site I and Part Two describes the findings for Secondary School Site II. The decision of the researcher to present the findings for each school in two separate parts and to structure these parts in a similar manner serves two distinct yet complimentary purposes: to describe the unique nature of each secondary school and to provide a common basis for the subsequent analysis of the data across the two secondary school sites. As pointed out earlier, the intent of this organizational format is to assist the reader in understanding not only the individuality of each school and the specific change undertaking, as presented in this chapter, but also the similarities and differences between
the schools and the change initiatives, as described in the cross-site analysis in the next chapter.

In response to the overall research problem, which directs the study to investigate the influence of school leadership and school culture in the specific school-initiated change in each secondary school, and to the specific questions related to the research problem, the sections and subsections in each of the two parts of this chapter represent the six categories which emerged from the research questions and the subsequent twenty eight data codes. These categories include: The Context for the School-Initiated Change; Introduction to the Study Participants; Reasons for the Specific Change; The Change Process: Initiation, Implementation, Continuation; Outcomes of the Change; and General Observations and Comments.

The findings presented in each of these categories reflect Schein’s (1985) contention about the reciprocal nature of leadership and culture and the importance of understanding one in the context of the other. As a result, school leadership and school culture are not presented as discrete categories in this chapter, but rather are included as an integral part of each of the categories, in order to provide a realistic representation of life in each of the two secondary schools.

In addition, the researcher’s decision to select the organizational format presented in this chapter attempts to address, in part, the concerns of Becker (1970) about sociological method where the lines that define categories are not so stringent that all the data may be precisely allocated. In certain cases, where overlap existed, the researcher made judgements and decisions as to where the data seemed to fit. These decisions were
not arbitrary but rather were reflective of the dominant source of the situation, experience, or response to the experience provided by the participants.

The first section in each part, The Context for the School-Initiated Change, answers the research question, in general terms: Why was the school change initiated? Background information contained in this subsection distinguishes the environment in which the school change occurred and relates the school leadership and cultural influences within this context. Five subsections describe each of the following: The School Building, The Community, The Students, The Teaching Staff, and Significant Events Leading Up to the Change. The researcher recognized the importance of providing the reader with the contextual information related to the change initiative at the onset of the presentation of the findings, and consequently determined to place this section before the introduction and description of the study participants. To acknowledge the information provided by the interview participants, prior to their formal introduction, the researcher included a brief descriptor to identify each interview participant who offered specific comments about the context of the school-initiated change in this section.

In the second section, entitled Introduction to the Study Participants, a comprehensive description of the study participants expands insights into their frames of reference about the school-initiated change. Specifically, the first subsection, Interview Participants, provides a descriptive sketch of each interview participant to familiarize the reader with the people who are telling the story. Pseudonyms were chosen to facilitate the quick recollection of each interview participant’s position and school. Thus the principals have first names beginning with the letter P; the vice principals are given first names starting with V; the first names of department heads or teachers with
designated departmental responsibilities start with $D$; and the teachers are assigned the letter $T$ to their given names. In Secondary School Site I, the second letter in the first names of each interview participant is $a$ and in Secondary School Site II, the second letter in each given name is $e$. The second subsection, Questionnaire Respondents, provides background information about the teachers who responded to the questionnaire and presents a statistical description, derived from the information in the completed teacher questionnaires, regarding the respondents' current beliefs about school-initiated change. Raw data from the questionnaires have been converted to percentages to provide a standard of comparison. Tables 1-4 and 5-8 are included in this subsection in Part One and Part Two, respectively, to provide a visual summary of specific information that relates to the interview participants and questionnaire respondents and their responses in each school site.

The third section expands on the previous sections and in particular, on section one, in answering, in specific terms, the research question: Why was the school change initiated? Designated as Reasons for the Specific Change, this section discusses the school-initiated change from the point of view of its sources and purposes. This section outlines the particular reasons why the staff of each school undertook the grade 9 change and describes the influence of prevalent school leadership and school culture influences on how and what decisions were made.

Each of the preceding sections addresses, in part, the third research question: In what ways did school leadership and school culture influence the change initiative? The fourth section, The Change Process: Initiation, Implementation, Continuation, however, relates specifically to this question by presenting the participants' detailed
descriptions of particular leadership and cultural influences during the three phases of the grade 9 school-initiated change process. Recognizing the discrete but interactive nature of the three phases of the change process being studied (Fullan, 1991) and the inevitability of some overlap, the researcher referred to the work of Miles (1986), outlined in Chapter Two, as a guideline in reporting the information discussed in this section. To accomplish this, for each phase of the change process the section is divided into two subsections. The first subsection, entitled Supportive Influences, presents the school leadership and school cultural influences that facilitated the school change process and relates participant responses to the support and assistance provided. The second subsection, referred to as Hindering Influences, identifies the school leadership and school cultural influences that impeded the change process and describes participant responses to the hindrances and difficulties that were encountered.

The fifth section, entitled Outcomes of the Change, answers the final research question: What were the outcomes of the change initiative? This section delineates, by subsection, changes in Practices and changes in Attitudes, as described by the study participants, as the result of their experiences with the grade 9 school-initiated change.

The sixth and final section completes each secondary school portrait in the form of General Observations and Comments made by the study participants as they reflected upon the leadership and cultural influences in the school-initiated change in their respective schools.
A General Description of the School-Initiated Change

Secondary School Site I

The specific change initiated by the staff of Secondary School Site I involved an alteration to the current delivery of the grade 9 program, including the introduction of an innovative grade 9 timetable, as well as new teaching methods, materials, and evaluation procedures, and entailed a significant revision to the existing organizational structure of the school, as a whole.

In the first stages of the initiative, the entire teaching staff had the opportunity to participate in the planning and decision making related to the proposed grade 9 change. The school change initiative grew out of a school needs assessment initiated by the principal and was in response to growing staff concerns about the changing needs of their student population and their ability to meet those needs. Once the staff agreed that a change would be made in the organization and delivery of a new grade 9 program, a group of eighteen teachers, who generally volunteered to teach the grade 9 program, undertook the final planning and subsequent implementation of the program. During the planning phase, the Ministry announced future changes to grade 9 in the form of destreaming. While destreaming was not part of the original grade 9 plan, as the result of the announcement, other changes were incorporated into the plan and became part of the implementation process.

Initially, the grade 9 timetable provided for fifty minute grade 9 class periods throughout the school day while the grades 10-12/OAC class periods remained as seventy-five minute periods. This meant that the grade 9s, organized in cohort groups, followed a different schedule from the rest of the school. This change involved the
suspension of class change bells in the school and the movement of students at different
times during the school day. As well, the introduction of a grade 9 teacher advisor
program required all the grade 9 teachers to be assigned to a small group of grade 9
students for the first period every afternoon. The grade 9 morning classes and the advisor
program were non-semestered while the afternoon classes were semestered or
quadmestered. Consequently, although the changes to the grade 9 program affected the
organization of the entire school, in effect, the grade 9 program functioned as a school
within a school throughout the instructional day.

Through ongoing informal evaluation by the grade 9 teachers and the other
teachers in the school, minor modifications were made during the first two years of
implementation. Towards the end of the second year of implementation, as the result of a
formal evaluation process, significant alterations were made to the initial grade 9
timetable and program delivery, as well as to the school organizational structure for the
following school year—the year in which the study took place. These modifications,
which were based on student and staff experiences and feedback, were enabled through
the flexibility of the timetable that was developed originally. As a result, the current
grade 9 program continues to function as a school within a school during the morning,
with the grade 9 students still organized in cohort groups on a five day schedule with fifty
minute class periods throughout the school year. In the afternoons, however, the grade 9
students now have seventy-five minute periods, on a semestered or quadmestered basis,
similar to the grades 10-12/OAC students. Although there is no longer a grade 9 teacher
advisor program, two grade 9 transitions classes have been established to assist grade 9
students who are experiencing learning difficulties. Some of the original grade 9 teachers
are still involved in the continuation of the program, while others have changed assignments, and new teachers have been added to the grade 9 complement. The grade 9 teachers continue to meet regularly, as a separate group, to discuss and make decisions about the grade 9 program. They do, however, maintain ties with their respective departments and have resources available to them through the departments and the rest of the staff in the school, as required.

Secondary School Site II

The specific change initiated by the staff of Secondary School Site II focused on the development and delivery of a new grade 9 curriculum designed to meet a wide range of student needs in heterogeneous groupings. This initiative was an approved Ministry pilot project, undertaken by the staff of Secondary School Site II to support grade 9 students in a destreamed program, which had been announced by the Ministry as part of the Transitions Years initiative. The staff decision to proceed with the pilot project was made within the context of other changes that would be occurring at Secondary School Site II, due to the closure of a neighbouring vocational school and the move of some of the students and staff from the vocational school into Secondary School Site II. The grade 9 school-initiated change, therefore, became part of a series of changes that were being introduced into the school to accommodate a new student population with a diverse range of abilities and needs, which were unknown to most of the staff at Secondary School Site II. As one of the interview participants explains: “It wasn’t just the grade 9s coming in. It was basically a change for the whole school.” Consequently, not only did the entire teaching staff have the opportunity to participate in the decision to undertake the grade 9 change initiative, but also nearly every staff member in the school
was involved in the grade 9 change initiative, in varying degrees, during the school-initiated change process.

Although the organizational structure of Secondary School Site II was not altered, the grade 9 project entailed changes to the existing grade 9 curriculum, the organization of the grade 9 classes, and innovative in-service for teachers to learn about using new teaching methods, materials, and evaluation procedures. While a different timetable and structure for the grade 9 program was discussed, because of the other major changes in the school with the vocational students coming in, the general feeling of the staff at that time was “one thing at a time.”

Once the staff agreed upon the grade 9 initiative, a steering committee, comprised of a project leader, department representatives, and a vice principal, developed a plan that served as a guideline for the pilot project. The major focus of the plan was on curriculum development and teacher in-service to meet the needs of the students who would be entering grade 9 the following year at Secondary School Site II. Development teams for the grade 9 courses were established in all subject areas but two, during the first year of the initiative. Grade 9 course development for the remaining two subject areas began in the second year of the project while the teachers of the other subject areas initiated the implementation phase. During this time period, system subject co-ordinators assisted department heads and teachers in the development of the new grade 9 curriculum, which emphasized a student-centred and activity-based approach. Guidance and special education were the major areas of focus for the in-service opportunities provided for the teaching staff of Secondary School Site II. As part of the in-service, a Special Education course for the teachers of Secondary School Site II was offered at the school in
conjunction with the local faculty of education. A working team of school administrators and teachers from the elementary feeder schools and Secondary School Site II was established to assist in the transition of the grade 8 students and to develop the awareness of classroom teachers at Secondary School Site II about the abilities and needs of the students coming to grade 9. As well, provisions were made for cross-panel teacher observations and teaching exchanges with the elementary feeder schools.

While the intent of the project was to foster interdisciplinary planning and delivery, for the most part grade 9 course development occurred within each department. The in-service component, however, provided opportunities for staff in all subject areas to explore a variety of teaching strategies and classroom techniques.

During the implementation of the grade 9 initiative, attempts were made to involve as many teachers as possible in the delivery of the grade 9 program. Although some communication occurred among departments through individual teachers, as well as through department head and staff meetings, generally teachers within their departments worked together to review and revise the curriculum they had developed.

Although no formal evaluation process was built into the project, individual departments made significant changes in curriculum revision and program delivery, through ongoing informal evaluation during the implementation, in response to the needs of the students and the experiences of the teachers.

As the grade 9 initiative continues during the year of the study, some modifications have been made in the organizational structure of the grade 9 classes, which are currently organized in cohort groups, although the school structure and timetable remain unchanged.
PART ONE: SECONDARY SCHOOL SITE I

The Context for the School-Initiated Change

The School Building

Secondary School Site I, built in 1966-1967 to accommodate an increasing student population at that time, is situated in a highly industrialized area of the city in the eastern section of the school board. The architecture is representative of the 1960s—streamlined and unpretentious. Attached to the school is an indoor pool with a community outdoor pool and a hockey rink across the street. Taylor, a teacher at Secondary School Site I and a childhood resident of the community, refers to the school as “a present to the community.” As you walk around the thirty year old three-storey building you don’t see a mark on the walls or a locker that has anything written on it. According to several long time staff members, respect for the building and pride in the building have been carefully cultivated over the years by the custodial staff, teachers, and school administrators, and as one teacher pointed out: “For the most part, the kids really respect that.” The staff room, Learning Resource room, and Guidance offices are situated on the second floor, adjacent to the main office where the offices of the principal and vice principals are located.

The Community

Once a largely middle class school, due to changing economic and social circumstances, the downsizing of industry, and the growth of city housing in the area, the school has come to serve a mostly lower socioeconomic population. Taylor observes: “Our whole society has undergone change, and at this end of town, I think socio-economically a lot of people are hurting.” According to Patrick, the principal of
Secondary School Site 1, approximately 48 percent of the families receive welfare assistance, with single female parents with less than a grade nine education leading several of these families. He also indicates that about 10 percent of the students under the age of seventeen live on their own. Patrick adds: “Because of all that, we have a very limited resource base on which to call, but the one that is there is what I call a good gray collar. Nothing is too small for them to take on if it makes a difference for their kids.” Further, he emphasizes: “We get a tremendous amount of support when we have a specific project in mind, but if we talked in big picture thinking, the parents have real difficulties in comprehending that.”

The Students

Over the past five years student enrolment in Secondary School Site 1 has decreased from over one thousand students to less than nine hundred students. Commenting on this decline and the 12 percent drop out rate at the school, Patrick suggests that “many of our young people do not see futures.” He clarifies this statement in his following comment:

I’m going to say that about 40 percent of our kids feel very positive about where they might be able to go. I think about 20 percent are really concerned and maybe somewhat discouraged with the increased costs, etc. because of their financial status and where they can go, but they’re looking at strategies to compensate for themselves. The other 40 percent of the youngsters are looking forward to the life that they currently have because they don’t see a way out of it.

Darryl, a department head, relatively new to the school, elaborates on Patrick’s perspective: “Many of the kids are very low motivationally. To come to school, to be on time, these are things that you really have to work at with them.” He suggests that for some students, “the more pressure you put on them, they just wilt. They back away and
turn the other way and you can’t get things from them.” So according to Darryl, “you’re always encouraging them and you really have to treat a lot of the kids individually, as opposed to grouping them.” Dan, who has been a department head at the school for a number of years, agrees and explains further: “Some of these kids come from a whole different life. A lot of these kids have seen so much more in their lives than you and I will ever see in our lifetime.” However, he notes: “You can talk turkey to these kids and you don’t have to pussyfoot around like you do in other schools.” In addition, Darryl states what most of the interview participants have suggested about the loyalty of the students: “Once the kids around here get to know you and you build up a rapport with them, you really have a friend for life almost.”

The Teaching Staff

Questionnaire respondents indicate that the majority of teachers at Secondary School Site I take pride in their own work and accomplishments (100%) and take pride in the accomplishments of the school (88%). Additionally, the respondents suggest that most teachers care about and strive for excellent performance (100%), generally feel that their work is important (92%), and continually seek ways to improve their own teaching and learning (88%). Patrick acknowledges these perceptions and emphasizes the significant “front line role of the teachers” in Secondary School Site I. He comments accordingly:

The teacher is the first line of authority but is also the first line of advocacy. The majority of the staff, by far, are not just disciplinarians; they’re real advocates for the kids and they know where the youngsters are coming from and they modify programs for them.
“Part of it,” according to Tammy, one of the current grade 9 teachers, “is that we want our kids to try and believe in themselves; they get so many knocks.”

Table 1. Teacher Questionnaire Responses Regarding the Day-to-Day Working Relationships at Secondary School Site I

By Percentage (N=26)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements from Questionnaire</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feedback is given and received in helpful ways by teachers:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) within my department or program area</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) in other department or program areas</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers help others with on-the-job problems:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) within my department or program area</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) across departments or program areas</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in my department or program area:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) work together effectively</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) work effectively with teachers in other departments or program areas</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) work effectively with the school administrators</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is effective communication between/among the following:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) teachers within my department/program area</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) my department/program area and other department/program areas</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) my department/program area and school administrators</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in my department or program area discuss regularly:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) new teaching strategies and new program ideas</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) mutual on-the-job concerns</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) issues about student needs</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff development and in-service are provided:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) by teachers within my own department or program area</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) by teachers in other departments or program areas</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) by board staff</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) by staff in other schools or school boards</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher accomplishments are recognized within my department or program area:</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most decisions are made collaboratively within my department or program area</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tanya, a former grade 9 teacher, also points out that this “is a school where you congregate, as opposed to being an individual.” She explains: “First thing in the morning
it's the staff room that you go to. You sit down and have a chat. You don't go off into your separate little areas right away.” Although Tanya realizes that some schools use their department prep rooms as their base of operation, she maintains: “It would never work here.” Several interview participants agree that informal interaction occurs frequently among many staff members and questionnaire respondents indicate that where matters affect them directly, they are kept informed similarly by department heads (85%), by other teachers (85%) and by school administrators (81%). However, as Table 1 shows, questionnaire respondents suggest that teachers still generally look to the teachers in their respective departments or program areas for support in their day-to-day work, rather than to teachers in other departments or program areas.

Due to the nature of the grade 9 program, many interview participants indicate that, in effect, the grade 9 teachers have a dual support system that includes one another in the grade 9 program as well as the teachers in their own departments. Although not all department heads have been directly involved in teaching the new grade 9 program, Dale, a department head who has been teaching the grade 9 program since its inception, affirms that “most department heads have offered support for the staff in the department” who have undertaken this role.

Responses from the teacher questionnaires, which appear in Table 2, show the range of both formal and informal leadership practices that occur within Secondary School Site I. The distribution of formal and informal leadership varies with the circumstance; however, evidence of informal leadership, in varying degrees, in a variety of aspects of the life of the school, confirms the observation of 81 percent of the
questionnaire respondents that informal leadership opportunities are provided for teachers.

Table 2. Teacher Questionnaire Responses Regarding the Distribution of Leadership Practices at Secondary School Site I By Percentage (N=26)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements from Questionnaire</th>
<th>Formal</th>
<th>Informal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Leaders set a positive example for teachers and other staff.</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Leaders are equally concerned for people, as well as results.</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leaders share the responsibility for things that go wrong in the school.</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Leaders receive feedback willingly from teachers.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Leaders demonstrate regularly their commitment to what the school is trying to accomplish.</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Leaders give constructive feedback to others.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Leaders make a strong effort to involve and motivate teachers.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Leaders have expectations for excellence, quality and high performance on the part of all staff.</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Leaders promote co-operation among teachers and other staff.</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Leaders show respect for individual differences of staff and concern about their needs and feelings.</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Leaders challenge staff to re-examine some of their assumptions about their work and to rethink how it is performed.</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Leaders reinforce staff beliefs about their value to the school.</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Leaders help to find resources to assist teachers in their work.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Leaders alter schedules and work arrangements to support staff planning.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Leaders share decision making with teachers.</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Leaders assist staff in working together toward common school goals.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Leaders take time to follow up on the jobs that have been assigned to staff.</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Leaders support and participate in school-initiated changes.</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Leaders recognize the strengths of teachers and encourage them to make maximum use of their knowledge and skills.</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Leaders point out errors constructively.</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Leaders encourage teachers to develop new knowledge and skills to assist them in their work.</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note: The Formal Leadership Practices include those involving the Principal and Other (the Vice Principals, Department Heads, and Assistant Department Heads) in appointed positions of authority or responsibility. The Informal Leadership Practices include those involving teachers not appointed to positions of authority or responsibility.
While there have been some changes in department heads and teachers during the course of the grade 9 school change initiative, due to retirements and promotions, Patrick indicates that there have been only a few administrative or voluntary transfers from the school in this time period. From Tanya’s perspective: “Ninety five percent of the teaching staff understand where the kids are coming from and they’re here because they want to be here. If that were not the case, you’d see a lot of people transferring out.” When the opportunity has arisen to fill new positions, Dale suggests that “the administration has gone out and looked for people who fit the Secondary School Site I mold.” As well, a number of teachers at Secondary School Site I have come from vocational schools or have alternative or special education experience, so according to Valerie, the vice principal: “They come with a different set of values and different ways of handling things. They work around issues in order to accommodate kids.” Others, who have come from what Valerie refers to as “academic schools, often haven’t met these kinds of problems.” She observes: “Some people manage to turn it around. Some people can’t.”

Currently, approximately 30 percent of the teachers in the school have less than five years of teaching experience, about 30 percent are experienced teachers who have come to the school in the past five years, and the other 40 percent have been at the school from six to over twenty years. At Secondary School Site I, 65 percent of the teaching staff are male and 35 percent are female. Comments from most of the interview participants suggest that there are at least two distinguishable groups within this staff complement. David, a long-standing department head at the school, refers to one group, although not a large number, as “the strongly entrenched traditionalists who resist change
of any kind” and the other group, larger in size, as “the people who are flexible and where
the most movement has taken place.” Commenting on the second group, Tanya observes:
“These are the people who are always very much involved with what’s going on around
here.” On the whole, however, in Dan’s words: “It’s a good staff and a strong staff. We
know what we want. And I think most of us here like one another.” Questionnaire
respondents generally support this contention, in that 86 percent indicate that teachers
respect individual differences in one another. While only 48 percent suggest that the
majority of teachers confront other teachers’ negative behaviours, 81 percent state that the
majority of teachers avoid “blame placing” and concentrate on looking for constructive
solutions.

Although most teaching staff is over forty years of age, Dan maintains: “A lot of
us think young, act young. A lot of us are really involved in other things in the school.
We have a lot of fun and we kid one another.” In addition, Patrick points out: “They’re
not new, but they are changing.” With so many teachers on staff for a number of years,
Darryl notes that “as a newcomer, you have to break through, but once you get to know
them, it’s a lot easier.” He suggests:

Part of it may be just comfort. You get in and you get comfortable with a
group, and so there is an advantage to being here for a number of years.
You get to know the kids and they build ties with you, and so it’s easier to
work here after you’ve been here for awhile.

While several of the interview participants express similar comments about their initial
impressions of the school staff or concerns about the external perceptions of the school,
all agree with Tate, a long-time teacher at the school, that “this school sort of grabs you
and makes you loyal.” Tammy also refers to Secondary School Site I “as one of the best kept secrets in the east end.”

**Significant Events Leading Up to the Change**

According to Dale, “the grade 9 program isn’t something that happened solely on its own,” and he speculates that “it wouldn’t have happened if there weren’t events that occurred prior to that.” Dale recalls that when he arrived at the school thirteen years ago Secondary School Site I “wasn’t in the mainstream, as far as curriculum development was concerned, as far as the image and the type of students.” He remembers the school as being “top-down” and that there was a “chain of command,” which he suggests was comfortable for most people and which was accepted by most at that time.

The “key turning issue,” Dale maintains, came about eight years ago when the school was thrust into a tenuous situation due to the threat of closure. Taylor also has vivid memories of this time period, which he refers to “as a very exciting year—a roller coaster ride emotionally for everybody.” The “Save the School campaign” comes to his mind as being something he will “never forget about this school and this community.” Taylor believes that there is “a gut feeling” that developed with the issue as the staff, students, parents, and the community became “heavily involved” and took “tremendous ownership of the school” and overcame “a huge problem.” As staff, students, parents, and community members mobilized to save the school from closure, Dale suggests: “That gave us a focus and provided the first stage of empowerment.” He comments further: “We became known. We were no longer in the back, down in the east end going to sleep and collecting moss.” Taylor recalls that shortly thereafter the initiative and active involvement that had developed on the part of the school staff, students, and community
members continued in the planning of a “a very successful” twenty year reunion for staff and students and former staff and students of Secondary School Site I.

The next significant step leading up to the grade 9 school initiative, according to Dale, came the following year, with the opportunity for the staff of Secondary School Site I to participate in a two year pilot project involving school-based management of the school’s component staffing. At that time, Patrick was assigned to the school in his first vice principal role. He had experience as a member of the system Component Staffing Committee and proceeded to work with the Secondary School Site I staff on this new concept. Under the component staffing model, staff was able to decide on the deployment of a number of staffing lines within the school. This was another new challenge for the staff, according to Tate, since “this meant that everyone had to look at the programs across the whole school” to determine where the staffing lines should go. Dale observes that due to the necessity for staff interaction during this pilot project undertaking, “things were starting to change” within the organizational structure of the school, itself. Rather than decision making through the principal or the traditional cabinet structure of department heads and school administrators, Dale comments:

We broke into this idea of staff on different committees with representatives pretty well from every department, due to people’s interest rather than position. So now we had an opportunity to deal with fellow teachers, to sit down and talk to them about what was happening in the school.

This series of events occurred over four years. In recollecting the issues that the staff faced during this time, Tate suggests that “there are still enough people in the school to retain the memory of the results of the past actions that were taken.” Adding a futuristic
note, Taylor suggests that "as a result of all these happenings, this school was willing and able to take on the grade 9 changes."

**Introduction to the Study Participants**

**Interview Participants**

As indicated in Table 3, with the exception of one teacher, all Secondary School Site I staff who participated in the interviews have over twenty years of experience in education. All but one interview participant have been at the school for at least four years. Four have had direct experience teaching the new grade 9 program and all have had some involvement in the grade 9 program during its course.

**Table 3. Summary of Background Information About the Interview Participants at Secondary School Site I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Years in School</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Experience in Grade 9 Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patrick</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>34 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valerie</td>
<td>Vice principal</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>26 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vance</td>
<td>Vice principal</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>34 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
<td>13 years</td>
<td>23 years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>26 years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darryl</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>24 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>26 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanya</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>21 years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tate</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>23 years</td>
<td>32 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>30 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Patrick is in his thirty-fourth year in education and in his sixth year as principal of Secondary School Site I. For two years prior to his appointment as principal, Patrick served as one of the two vice principals in Secondary School Site I. Patrick started his educational career as a teacher in the elementary panel of the school board in the study.
After eight years, he moved to the secondary panel, spent a brief period of time in private business, and then returned to secondary education as a teacher and department head in several secondary schools in the system. Patrick has also had system level experience as a curriculum consultant.

Patrick indicates that although being “an individual” has always been his style, he has “never liked being out front for any particular reason.” He acknowledges that he is a “task-oriented person” who likes “the streamlined approach,” but he recognizes that “not everybody operates that way and not everybody can accept the criticism to get them back in line.” He attributes this learning to a compilation of personal and professional life experiences and, in particular, to his role as a consultant with “no line authority, where co-operation, although more time consuming, is far more effective and ends up with better results and better feelings among all the people involved.” Although Patrick has “always liked working in a group or as part of a team,” he admits to his “competitiveness,” and indicates that “it did take him a long time to learn to be more patient, as to letting people catch up or get involved.” He recalls that it probably took him “the first twenty years” of his career “to work that out.” However, as the result of these experiences over time, Patrick believes that he has learned “when to let go and when to hold on.” Patrick followed through with this approach in the grade 9 school-initiated change.

While Patrick is recognized by 88 percent of the questionnaire respondents as a strong advocate and supporter of school change, Vance, a former vice principal, suggests that Patrick’s “willingness to sit back and let us do this and listen was the biggest help” in the grade 9 change initiative. Vance adds: “Maybe if Patrick had tried to do it himself, it
wouldn’t have gone.” Patrick indicates that by “sitting back, letting people go ahead with
the things they wanted to do, and getting feedback from a wide variety of people,” he was
able to monitor the support and the concerns that had to be dealt with during the process.

Even though Patrick emphasizes that he prefers the “enabler approach,” that does
not mean he does not or is not capable of “dropping a hammer when the time comes.” He
recognizes that sometimes he has to make unpopular decisions, but that the role of the
principal requires “someone who is capable of making a hard decision based on rationale
and data.” At the same time, Patrick suggests that a principal “has to be willing to listen
to staff in the front line who have a better idea.” In this regard, he states: “Many of the
decisions in our school have been designed by staff.” In situations where he has been
“wrong,” Patrick suggests that he has “admitted it openly” and that he has “gone in
another direction,” based on staff input. He comments: “I switch because I don’t think
it’s so important that you stay with something that you started if you see it isn’t working,
and that another way may have a better outcome, even if it’s at my expense.”
Furthermore, he emphasizes: “When I stop making mistakes, it’s because I haven’t done
a heck of a lot. We’re all accountable!” Patrick’s expectations for excellence, quality,
and high performance are indicated by 81 percent of the questionnaire respondents.
Similarly, 81 percent recognize his leadership in encouraging teachers to develop new
knowledge and skills to assist them in their work.

Valerie, the current vice principal, indicates that Patrick is very much a “big
picture thinker who puts his ideas into practice, and he is a person with a clear vision of
education, based on student needs for the present and for the future.” According to 92
percent of the questionnaire respondents, this vision is addressed through the goals
established in the school. Patrick states that “you start where the kids are at and take them forward.” He suggests that his “vision is a compilation of experiences and data” and that “in this school and time, [the vision] is not going to be the same from one year to the next.”

He also stresses the importance of active student, staff, parent, and community involvement in school level decision making, which he has fostered during his tenure at Secondary School Site I. He indicates the importance of asking people: “What are you good at? I want you to do it. What are you bad at? I want you to try it.” Although Patrick suggests that staff may find him “blunt and straightforward about issues at times,” he contends that he does not “hide information from them.” His experience has shown that “when you provide people with the data and then the opportunity to make changes, they make changes and they change.” Accordingly, 77 percent of the questionnaire respondents indicate that school improvement efforts are based on facts rather than feelings. In this respect, Patrick points out that a significant amount of money has been spent on staff development since he has been the principal, to enable staff to visit other schools, to take courses, and to attend conferences. As well, he indicates that certain staff members and school board support staff have offered in-service programs for the teachers during the course of the grade 9 change initiative. Questionnaire respondents confirm that staff development and in-service are provided in a variety of ways by teachers within their departments (73%), by teachers in other departments (46%), by board staff (66%), and by staff in other schools (35%).

Aware of the diversity of the school staff, Patrick acknowledges that some may see him as “a gambler,” and that “he does it for the good of the children;” some may see
him as “a marketer, trying to promote” himself, and others may say that he doesn’t know “where the heck” he is going. He continues: “You have to understand that in any staff, and in our staff, they go from the very energetic, recognizing me for change, to those who say if I go for this change, it means I’ve got to challenge everything I’ve ever done since 1960.” Although he realizes that there are “naysayers,” as well as “front runners” on the staff, Patrick suggests that “the majority of them are positive in supporting where we’re going” because he believes that they are not “his ideas,” but rather “staff ideas” that he has fostered through ongoing communication with individuals and small groups. He emphasizes that “communication is listening as well as talking.” With regard to the large number of teachers in the school who are over forty years of age, Patrick comments: “We’ve got to start using their experience and provide them with new opportunities to go forward, and if not, we’re still going to be calling it the Socratic method when I’ve got grand children in the system.”

When asked why he selected the particular teachers to be interviewed, Patrick noted that he wanted to provide “a total cross section of the population” of those involved in the school-initiated change.

Valerie, the current vice principal of Secondary School Site I, has been in secondary school education for twenty-six years, initially in another school system for two years, and in the school system in the study since then. Four years ago, Patrick selected Valerie from the “vice principal pool” to come to Secondary School Site I to be part of the school’s administrative team. Valerie arrived at the school in the second semester of the year that staff was planning for the grade 9 change.
According to Patrick, Valerie "is organized and she is focused" but "she has the ability to recognize when the focus may have to be 'manipulated' a bit" to get the task accomplished. In this regard, Patrick views Valerie as "a tremendous sounding board" for himself and other leaders throughout the school.

As Valerie recounts her varied experiences in both composite and vocational secondary schools, she appreciates the variety of learning opportunities she has had through her work with school leaders with different leadership styles. Like Patrick, her previous experience includes a position as a curriculum consultant. Valerie explains that this experience has provided her with a broader picture of the system and how schools fit into that picture. This scope, she feels, is particularly important in today's changing climate. Valerie also points out that her "skills are with people." Consequently, she is very comfortable with the program aspects of her vice principal role and enjoys the in-service work with staff and meetings with parents and community members, as well as her regular contact with students. With regard to the traditional disciplinarian role of secondary school vice principals, Valerie indicates that "staff expect that we're going to solve the discipline problems" when students are sent to the office. She explains that "the rules are very clear here and we really try to help the teachers by enforcing the rules that we have. So that when they send a kid down, we take it seriously." Valerie emphasizes that "the cooling off time" and "the mediation process," developed collectively by the school staff, students, and parents, clearly suggest that "there is only one person in charge of the classroom, and it's the teacher, and if you can't abide by what he or she is saying, then we've got to look at alternatives."
Acknowledging the numerous changes, including the grade 9 initiative, that have been occurring in the school over the past four years, Valerie acknowledges that “Patrick has brought the staff along, some of them kicking and screaming.” In this regard, she observes that “some people don’t see the need for change and that some don’t want to change.” She elaborates: “This isn’t the perfect staff and they’re not all keen on Patrick and they weren’t all keen on Vance and they’re not all keen on me.” She adds: “So it’s at the other level, other than principal and vice principal, that has to be on track, and I don’t think we’re all there.” Valerie points out that “there are some who would have laminated their day books and carried on with life as it always was, because it was comfortable.”

On the other hand, she suggests that there are enough key leaders in the school who are interested in “making changes for the students and who are perceived by other staff as doing jobs that are vital,” so that change has become an integral part of Secondary School Site I. She clarifies this point: “Things were happening before I came. Things will continue to happen after Patrick’s gone and I’m gone. We’re always preparing for something new.”

Valerie considers Patrick to be “an interesting leader. He makes it very clear to everybody how he wants to see things happen.” A lesson she has learned from him is “that you have to show by example and participation, the degree to which you think an issue is important. And he’s done that.” She recalls Patrick’s active endorsement of the grade 9 change initiative from the beginning. Specifically, Valerie remembers very clearly Patrick’s saying at a staff meeting: “If you didn’t want to become involved in the way we are going in grade 9, then maybe you should leave and go to another school.”

With reference to these remarks, she concludes:
That to me is very simple. If a committee has decided that this is important, or this is part of our school plan, or this should be done, then let’s do it. Don’t sit back and complain about it. And if you don’t want to do it, then okay, but get out of the way so we can get on with what we feel is important.

In order to accomplish this end, Valerie emphasizes the importance of using all the resources possible “to help staff and to try to make it work.” She indicates: “That’s one of the things that happens in this school, that the resources and people work together in the best interests of the students.” Regarding the administrative team, Valerie observes:

We all have very different skills, but we get along very well too, and that’s important. I can’t imagine being able to do all the things we were able to do with different people because we were able to bounce ideas off each other, get along, and always stop and have a laugh and become friends too.

Vance, like Valerie, was selected by Patrick to come to Secondary School Site I four years ago, as one of the vice principals. Because of the declining student enrolment in the school and the subsequent reduction to one vice principal, Vance agreed to be the vice principal to be transferred to another secondary school during the year of the study. However, due to the recognized key role played by Vance in the school-initiated change, particularly in the early stages, Vance agreed to be an interview participant.

Vance has been a secondary school educator in the school system in the study for thirty-four years. Following a variety of experiences, as a teacher and as a department head, Vance received his first vice principal appointment nine years ago. Secondary School Site I represented his third vice principal appointment. According to Patrick, Vance is a “pragmatist” and is also “hyper-organized,” with a “mathematical mind, but also a tremendous warmth within him.” Every interview participant attested to these qualities and to the significance of Vance’s leadership, not only “in setting the tone for
the initiation of the grade 9 change in the school” but also “in providing direction and support in the implementation process.” The comments of Tammy, one of the grade 9 teachers, represent a summary of the general feelings towards Vance expressed by several other interview participants in the study:

He was the glue of this school. He was kind. He was sensitive. He worked very hard. He wanted us to be informed. He wanted the communication to be there. It was very important to him. He wanted us to know every thing that was going on as it happened. He said: ‘You’re giving your one hundred and fifty percent and I’ll give mine.’ And he certainly did and he did it quietly. He did it with no fanfare. He just went and did it. And I respected that because he was not out for glory. That’s what makes me admire and respect him even more. I would go to the wall for him because you want to do that for a leader who is kind and gracious and really means what he says.

When talking about his role in the grade 9 school change initiative, Vance emphasizes, first of all, his strong support for the change: “I always felt we were moving in the right direction.” Based on that premise, he indicates that he used “the skills of the people” he worked with “to make changes for the good of the kids.” He suggests that he was “willing to take risks and trust other people and their judgement.” Vance explains: “If staff wanted a change, he was willing to help them try it, and if it didn’t work out, he would help them try to correct it.” He admits: “And we did a lot of that. We had a lot of things that weren’t perfect, but we all had our jobs and I think it was sorted out so that we used our strengths to do the best we could for the school.”

Dale, with twenty-three years of experience in secondary education, including vocational schools, has been a department head at Secondary School Site I for thirteen years and an active participant in the grade 9 change initiative during the past four years.
Consequently, Dale has a history of the school prior to the change initiative, as well as experience in the entire school-initiated change process.

Dale recognizes not only the opportunities for growth that he has experienced through leadership training and committee work, during his tenure in the school, but also the changes that have occurred in the school, as a whole. In this respect, he comments: “The school that I came to and the school that I am at is different than it was.” Accordingly, Dale emphasizes “that it does take a combination of the right kind of people, the right kind of leadership, and sharing a common belief” for change to occur. He continues: “Because if [change] can be positive and you think you can do it, you can. And once you’ve had the taste of success, that’s it.” Although he admits that involvement in school change can “eat up an awful lot of time, because you really get involved,” he concedes: “But that’s part of it.”

Dan is in his eighth year at Secondary School Site I. In total, he has twenty-six years of experience as a secondary school educator, including teaching assignments in five other secondary schools in the system. Prior to his involvement in the grade 9 program over the past four years, Dan recalls that he assumed a “very teacher-centred” approach” to program delivery in his particular subject orientation. He acknowledges that his work with the grade 9 students helped him to change to a student-centred methodology “that was new” to his subject area. He suggests that he took part in the grade 9 change initiative because he thought “we were doing the right thing” and he wanted to see “how it would work.”

Dan believes that the staff “are strong” and that they “know what they want.” Generally, he feels that staff has been supportive of the change initiative, with a few
exceptions. As well, he believes that Patrick “is very supportive of the staff” and that “he let’s them do what they feel is right” within the legal parameters. However, he adds: “If we can’t do it, of course, he tells us.”

Darryl, described by Dale, as “a high-powered person who likes to see progressive ideas,” is a relative newcomer to the school. He was attracted to Secondary School Site I as the result of a presentation about the grade 9 program made by Vance, when the program was getting underway. Darryl came to the school two years ago, with a varied teaching background of twenty-four years in seven different secondary schools, both within and outside the school board in the study.

Darryl indicates that “this is probably one of the weaker schools” he has been in, “in terms of the student population.” However, he suggests that this is “one of the things that forces change” since, “as a result, you don’t feel comfortable.” He adds: “You can never sit back and say that went well or that worked well enough that I’ll do it the same way again.” Darryl suggests that in the Secondary School Site I environment “you really have to work at it,” and that “you need to keep changing” to build programs that can interest many students “who have very low motivation levels.” For Darryl, “it all goes into looking at how we can make it better for kids.” Although Darryl has not been involved directly in the teaching of the grade 9 program, as a department head he has shown strong interest in the program and has provided support to the grade 9 teachers in his department. He emphasizes: “They can always come and ask about decisions they have to make and things that are available to them.” Darryl indicates that he “wouldn’t like to see the grade 9 program pulled away as a separate department,” and suggests that the current structure enables the grade 9 teachers “to be part of a department and part of
the rest of the staff.” While he points out that the grade 9 model of program delivery has proven to be beneficial for many students, he concedes “that it’s difficult to keep up with exactly what’s going on in the grade 9 program because it is such a separate entity.” He adds, however: “But the way the program runs, I have no problem with it.”

**David**, with twenty-seven years of experience in secondary school education in the system, came to Secondary School Site I nine years ago from an alternative education setting and a strong background in working with needy adolescent students.

David recalls his perception of the staff when he arrived at the school: “People had become so inbred, so complacent that they didn’t want any change at all and anybody who came in had better not rock the boat.” He observes, however, that “over time and as a result of circumstances, there were enough of us who said this isn’t working any more. Let’s do something different.” David indicates that there are still some staff who continue to “resist change of any kind,” but to a lesser degree now. He believes that Patrick was instrumental “in terms of opening up the decision making process and laying everything on the table,” and suggests that it was “a real eye opener for a number of people.” Although not directly involved with the teaching of the grade 9 program, David played a significant leadership role in the beginning stages of the initiation of the grade 9 school change.

**Tammy**, in her tenth year as a teacher at Secondary School Site I, started out there as a first year teacher. She has taught grade 9 every year since she began teaching and volunteered to teach the new grade 9 program because she felt that due to her “energy level and flexibility” she “would be sort of a natural person to do it.”
Tammy comments on some of the advantages of the grade 9 program: "I get to see the kids the whole year. I get to see a growth. It allows me to, over a longer period of time, more firmly establish the rules and the way things should be at school." She adds: "When you have the grade 9 students for five months, you can’t establish that kind of rapport." Although Tammy suggests that she is "toying with the idea" of making this her last year teaching grade 9, she indicates that "it’s the kids" who will probably change her mind. She says "they’re easy to motivate" and she enjoys teaching them because she likes "their eagerness."

Tanya has been a teacher for twenty-one years, including five years at Secondary School Site I. For two of those years she was a teacher in the grade 9 program initiative. Previous teaching experiences include alternative and vocational education. "Those various experiences, and they were varied," according to Tanya, "change the way you look at things, not only the way you handle the classroom but the way you work with other teachers, and the way you work in a school."

Tanya perceives her previous experiences as "beneficial entering the grade 9 program because you were no longer just working within a department area. You were working as an entire school and as an entire program." She chose to change this year to get some different experiences in the senior division. Accordingly, Tanya suggests:

Where possible, it’s good for us to move in and out and spread the exposure. With only two people [in a department] teaching the grade 9 program in any one time, those are really the only two people who truly understand what is going on at that point and time.

She believes that she has "a better sense" now, when comments are made about the grade 9 program, because she can recall what happened over the last two years,
whereas “the other people, who haven’t really had that in depth exposure to the grade 9s, are just sort of going along with the flow.” With regard to the benefits of the grade 9 program for the students, Tanya continues: “I like the fact that the students are being exposed to as much as they possibly can, whereas in the past, they may have had only eight courses throughout the year and exposure to only the ones that they think they like.” Through the grade 9 program, she suggests that “the students have a bit of a taste of it” so consequently, “we’re opening up programs beyond grade 9 that they wouldn’t have considered because, they didn’t know what it is.”

Tate has been at Secondary School Site I for twenty-three years. He is well-versed about the history of the school and the sense of community support that has developed during that time. He feels that “there has always been an emotional chippiness surrounding the school” and that it may account for the desire on the part of some people to do something different for the grade 9s. Although Tate acknowledges “the aging teaching population in the school,” he points out “the rise in energy level of those who opted in” to teach the grade 9 program. Tate has not been involved directly with the teaching of grade 9, but he has provided active support to the program, to the teachers, and to the students. While he favours the collaborative leadership that has developed in the school, Tate suggests that sometimes “we are so busy carrying out our jobs, that we need a formal leader to provide us with some direction.” Tate is heavily involved with the co-instructional activities in the school and is recognized by Patrick for his ongoing growth and development in seeking new ventures and challenges to benefit the students. According to Valerie, Tate “has come a long way in the four years” she has been at the school.
Taylor spent his teenage years as a resident in the community, prior to the construction of Secondary School Site I. During his thirty year teaching career, he has had a variety of teaching experiences within the school board, including ten years in elementary schools, primarily in the inner city and in special education, and eleven years in several vocational schools. Taylor is in his ninth year at Secondary School Site I and points out that this has been the longest period of time that he has been in any one school.

Like David, Taylor is a strong advocate for the grade 9 changes and although not a teacher of grade 9, he provided support to the grade 9 teachers during the early stages of the change initiative. Due to his tenure in the school, Taylor has a sense of the history of the school leading up to the school-initiated change in the study. Concerning the change process itself, Taylor comments: “I think you have to have some people in the mix who are willing to roll with the punches,” but at the same time, you need “an organizer” to “put things into place,” and to provide the “logistics.” In summary, he says: “You need both kinds of people like that if you’re going to effect change.” Taylor believes that “the majority of the staff care about kids,” although he adds: “Some have a funny way of showing it, at times.” His experience has shown that “most of the staff care about what they are doing and, for the most part, they will give the kids the benefit of the doubt.”

Questionnaire Respondents

From a total of 56 questionnaires distributed to Secondary School Site I, 26 were completed and returned. Of the 26 respondents, 54 percent currently teach grade 9 and 81 percent have had previous experience in the grade 9 program. Although the respondents do not represent all subject areas in the school, there are a variety of subjects represented, as well as a variety of teaching backgrounds and experiences. Years of teaching
experience range from less than 5 years to over 20 years, with the majority of the respondents having been at the school for 3 to 10 years. While the age range of respondents is from 30 years to over 50 years, the majority is over 40 years of age. There are 27 percent of the respondents with previous elementary school experience and 31 percent with previous vocational school experience. Seven females and 19 males responded to the questionnaire. Table 4 provides a summary of the background information about the questionnaire respondents.

Table 4. Summary of Background Information About the Questionnaire Respondents at Secondary School Site I by Percentage (N=26)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Specific Experience</th>
<th>Years at School</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 yrs.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1-2 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 yrs.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>3-5 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 yrs.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6-10 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-19 yrs.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11-19 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+ yrs.</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20+ yrs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All respondents (100%) agree that the prime purpose of secondary school-initiated change should be to improve student learning and that school-initiated change has more potential for successful continuation than externally mandated change. Likewise, all respondents (100%) support the fact that all teachers should have the opportunity to be involved in the planning stage, including determining why the change is being considered, as well as how to implement the change. The majority (87%) suggests that most teachers should agree with the change before implementation begins. Time for
planning is considered as essential by all respondents (100%), as well as supportive leadership from a number of in-school persons (100%). The majority (96%) supports the need for an action plan and 87 percent confirm the importance of building evaluation procedures into the process from the beginning. As well, 88 percent consider support from parents and 92 percent consider support from students as necessary for successful school-initiated change. While 84 percent of the respondents agree that conflict is inevitable during the course of school change, 100 percent indicate that collaborative interaction among staff is essential to the success of school-initiated change. The necessity of the use of new teaching strategies and practices for successful school-initiated change is noted by 92 percent of the questionnaire respondents.

Reasons for the Specific Change

Due to principal and vice principal retirements, transfers, and promotions, the year prior to the implementation of the grade 9 change brought a new school administration to Secondary School Site I. Patrick was appointed as the principal, along with Valerie and Vance as the vice principals. As one of the former vice principals of the school, Patrick had two years to “observe and develop a plan.” He emphasizes that “being there, seeing the atmosphere we were in, the clientele we were dealing with, the staff we had to work with” helped him in deciding how he wanted to make the school “different for the clientele that were there,” and how “to develop a more progressive school” that could meet the changing needs of the students, the staff, and the community. Recognizing the community support that had developed, as well as the growth in the desire of many staff members to be more involved in school level decisions, Patrick set out to initiate further staff, student, and community participation in the school. From the beginning, he
explains that he was “open” to expanding the committee structure and the concept of informal leadership that was developing in the school, because he believed that it could be “a far more effective tool than formal leadership in bringing all the people along.” Dale points out: “It was through these committees that a series of in school professional development days were arranged to enable staff to work together and get involved.” One of the professional development days was organized by Vance and a committee of representatives from the various departments who participated in the component staffing project. Through a series of departmental and interdepartmental discussion sessions during the professional development day, staff evaluated the results of the component staffing pilot project and identified significant issues they felt needed to be addressed in the school, as a whole. “As an off shoot,” Tanya recalls: “Some of the very basic concerns that came up focused on grade 9.” She remembers one of the priorities as being “the exposure to a wider variety of subjects in grade 9.” Another, she says, “was working on literacy, both language and number skills, and computer literacy.” Dan observes that many of the staff “felt that semestering in grade 9 was a bit much for the kids and that some of the skill subjects, in particular, should be year long rather than semestered.” According to Tate, some staff were also concerned that “seventy-five minute periods were too long for grade 9 students.” David also points out that “because of the timetable, there wasn’t a lot of consistency in the teaching of the grade 9s and the school administrators felt that was creating some difficulties, as well.”

Darryl considers another possible reason for the school change initiative, as it related to his own experiences as a newcomer to Secondary School Site I. He indicates:
When you’re put in a situation, where you are out of the comfort of a nice comfortable classroom, nice group of kids coming in, and if you really care about the kids, and I think the teachers here care about the kids, then you begin to realize the need for change.

Dan agrees and adds: “We see our kids and we know they come from a whole different life. Their needs are always changing. And we realize that and we realize that we’ve got to try and do something with them.”

Discussing the concerns of the Guidance department, Taylor offers a further explanation behind the grade 9 change:

They were seeing some kids coming in here faltering; some kids coming in here misbehaving; some kids coming in here, who after the middle of the first semester, were failing four out of four courses. Other kids were sort of ciphers that you didn’t pick up on because they weren’t behaviour problems, they weren’t attendance problems, they were just having difficulty.

“When problems came up with the grade 9 students,” David recalls that “the Guidance department didn’t know enough about them. There wasn’t anything to indicate any history of behaviour or family problems.” As a result, the Guidance staff took the initiative to develop a communication link between Secondary School Site I and the three elementary feeder schools. “Out of that, according to David, “the Guidance department began to focus on the incoming grade 9s as an entity that we needed to treat in a slightly different way.” Consequently, David concludes:

When we married the classroom teachers’ concerns and the Guidance department concerns with the administrators’ concerns, that’s when we decided we should start looking at if there was a different way of delivering program to the grade 9s.

While the grade 9 school change initiative was identified as a need by the staff, and focused primarily on meeting the needs of the students in the school, Taylor
acknowledges that staff members were also aware of “the changes in the transition years that were going to be coming from the Ministry.” However, as Dan points out: “Although the idea of destreaming was looming in the background, destreaming was not an issue during the initial decision making.” Nevertheless, he speculates that the knowledge and understanding that the school administrators and the staff had about destreaming, at that time, “were probably a catalyst” for the timetable and program delivery changes that were made. Generally speaking, however, Dan comments:

We just felt that grade 9 was a good time to try this because, with destreaming coming and having all three levels in the same class, it would give us a better idea of where the kids should be going in grade 10, and we would get to know the kids and perhaps give them a better handle on being prepared for going on. I mean, after all, it is sort of a bridging year, isn’t it. So we thought, this was a perfect opportunity to try something new.

The Change Process: Initiation, Implementation, Continuation

Initiation: Supportive Influences

Patrick’s role, according to Vance, “was to help make this go, to sell it to the people that it had to be sold to.” In that respect, Patrick, was involved with the superintendents, the trustees, the federation, the elementary principals, and the parents. Vance recalls that because Patrick “knew the political scene, he helped set everything up for us.” Patrick put Vance in charge of the grade 9 initiative and, according to Vance, “Patrick sat back” and relied upon Vance to “keep him up to date” and to “keep reassuring him that things would work out.”

In order to develop a more unified approach to planning and to use staff time more efficiently, Vance suggested that the two committees that had been formed, as a result of the input from the professional development days, the Timetabling Committee
and the Transitions Years Committee, work together. The members of the two committees agreed, and through the Budget Committee, time was made available throughout the planning year for members of the joint committee to visit a number of schools and to attend conferences to gather information. Dan affirms the importance of this part of the planning process, “so we weren’t completely reinventing the wheel.”

According to Dale, Vance received input from the joint committee and established the following procedure to obtain further information at the school level:

Vance developed a questionnaire, which he took to all the departments, asking if they could have their ideal, how would they treat grade 9? Would they like semestered, unsemestered, long periods, short periods, every day for half the year, every other day for the whole year, as much variety as he could get. The other thing was that the departments were asked for some rationale as to why they thought that delivery model would be best. Vance took all this information and developed three different timetable models, which he presented to the whole school, and asked for response back. So it was the whole school that had input into which timetable seemed to be the most suitable.

Furthermore, Dale points out: “In terms of timetabling, Vance never ceased to amaze me.” Working closely with the Guidance staff “to find out about people who shouldn’t be together in the same class,” Vance “made sure that there were no conflicts for the kids—people they may be in trouble with or other buddies in the school type thing. So they didn’t have to worry about that.” In addition, David recalls that Vance “had the kind of mind that could manipulate the times so that they fit contractual agreements and were also fair to all the people who were involved.”

Tammy speaks to Vance’s commitment to the grade 9 change initiative and her perceptions of the influence of his actions on the staff:

Vance is like a pitbull. He likes to get his teeth into something and he really believed in [the grade 9 program]. He believed in it and he’d go for
it and you wanted to go for it because you knew his heart was in the right place. He looked beyond the guidelines and said ‘Anything is possible.’ He actually would say that. ‘You tell me what you want and we’ll see if we can make it come true.’ And it got to the point where most of us would drop the barriers and say maybe we could do different things. And when the reality took over, where we could say I want this and it would happen, that’s when creativity just went and everyone sort of went: ‘Wow!’ ‘Why don’t we do this?’ And our brainstorming sessions went wild. Some of the stuff was just crazy! But the whole process was just so exciting and we were just like a bunch of kids and it was just going, going, going.

Acknowledging this vote of support from staff members, Vance maintains that his main purpose was to work with the joint committee and the staff “to try to satisfy a variety of needs” in the development of the timetable. He also indicates that the timing of the proposed Ministry Transition Years changes was very helpful in this regard. “With the disappearance of 110 hours for a credit,” he comments: “We could create a timetable that met most of the needs that they wanted.” Although Vance admits that “getting the timetable across to departments was not necessarily easy,” he believes that a significant reason for general staff acceptance of the timetable was “because we went to every department” and “they set the parameters.” He gives credit to the teachers who “made decisions that affected them” and to the “questions that came from departments that helped straighten things out, things that [he] didn’t think about sometimes.” Nevertheless, during the planning process, Vance stresses that he “did make it clear to the staff that if they wanted all these changes in the grade 9 program, they would also have to make some changes and some compromises somewhere else.” And he notes: “They agreed to sacrifice to make those.”

Although everyone on the school staff had an opportunity to play a role in identifying some of the organizational and curricular changes to be considered in the
delivery of the new grade 9 program, the Guidance department took the initiative in promoting an additional component, in the form of a teacher advisor program, which Guidance staff believed would provide more consistency to the school day for the grade 9 students. David recalls other issues, which he feels prompted the initiation of the advisor program, as they related to Guidance staff concerns about “the kids not getting lost, having somebody with whom they could identify, and somebody who got to know them very well.” Guidance staff “did a lot of research” on the teacher advisor concept and “went to workshops” to learn more about the approach. Further, Vance’s examination of the information gathered in the earlier professional development session confirmed that the school staff recognized the need to “improve student self-esteem and student confidence” and “to make them feel comfortable.” As a result, David notes that the proposal for “the advisor component of the program was seen as being important at that particular time and so was incorporated into the timetable” for discussion with each department. Once the timetable, which included the teacher advisor program, was agreed upon and the grade 9 teachers were selected, both teacher advisor materials and initial in-service sessions were provided ahead of time through Guidance staff, other teachers in the school, and some staff from outside the school.

The voluntary nature of the selection process, to determine the grade 9 teachers, was another key factor in getting the initiative underway. As Dale points out: “It was the departments that decided who was going to teach grade 9. They put down the perks and also the negative side of taking grade 9, so that a person knew what they were getting into.” However, as Dan indicates: “It was not by choice in all departments because, in some cases, by the process of elimination,” because of timetables, qualifications, part
time people, size of department, “you only have a certain number of people to choose from.” As one of the people “conscripted” originally, Dan discusses why he believes certain teachers volunteered or were selected for the grade 9 program:

I guess maybe because we weren’t afraid of taking a risk, primarily because we thought we were doing the right thing. So we figured let’s try it and see how it works. If it works, fine; if it doesn’t, we’ll go back to the old way, but we weren’t satisfied with how things were.

The grade 9 teachers, once selected, set out as a group to begin their own planning during lunch hours and after school for the remainder of the school year. Tanya comments on this phase of the change process and how she believes the responsibilities for the change initiative were perceive by the rest of the staff:

As soon as it became the grade 9 program, the grade 9 teachers became the decision making group for what happened in the grade 9 program. It was generally recognized by the rest of the staff that those who didn’t teach the grade 9s shouldn’t be telling the grade 9 teachers how to handle the situation they’re in. Let them deal with it. If they need our input, we’re there.

Tanya does indicate, however, that “at the preliminary stages of the organization, members of the Guidance department attended all the meetings because of the total implication of what they were doing.” As the planning for the grade 9 program progressed and “became more specific,” David recalls that the Guidance department went to each of the feeder schools in the spring of the planning year and “did a fairly extensive advertising campaign.” He comments on the next occurrence: “We held the grade 8 parent night in our school so we could show them the facilities and give them a tour of the building, as well as to explain the grade 9 program.” David credits Patrick, the Guidance staff, and some of the teachers who would be teaching the new grade 9 program for their work with the parents in explaining this new endeavour and “why we thought
that it was critical to help the kids adjust to make the transition a little bit smoother.” He also recalls that Patrick provided “a very clear explanation to the parents” regarding the implications of their decision to have their children start the program “because of the difficulties they might have in transferring to another school during the school year.” David points out that there was “a really good turnout” and that “the majority of parents who came were very enthusiastic about it, which gave us the interest to continue.”

**Initiation: Hindering Influences**

During the process of getting feedback from the departments to develop the timetable, there was only one department that displayed significant internal discord, where the department head and the teachers in the department could not agree on the desired approach. The department head wanted a semestered program and the teachers wanted a year-long program. David recalls that the teachers in that department felt so strongly about their stance and were “so frustrated with the leadership in the department, that they took on leadership themselves” and submitted their own feedback and rationale to Vance. As it turned out, the majority ruled and according to David, during the change process “retirement has taken care of this concern.”

Although there were some departments that did not view the new timetable as being ideal for their subject area, once they realized that all the grade 9 students would have an opportunity to experience their courses, rather than only some grade 9s, as in the past, they agreed to participate.

David also notes that several teachers expressed concern that, with the new timetable, the grade 9s “wouldn’t be integrated into the rest of the school, and wondered how they would keep things straight.” Despite this concern, the staff decided to continue
with the timetable, as planned, and agreed to monitor it throughout the first year of implementation.

**Implementation: Supportive Influences**

Recalling the benefits of the “ground work” that was laid through the planning process, the initial involvement of all staff, and the time that the grade 9 teachers had prior to implementation, Tanya suggests that “a lot of the really time consuming things were probably taken care of.” She discusses how the process unfolded from that point:

Vance got the framework going and kept us moving for the first little bit, but he actually backed off, as far as a lot of the discussion that went on with the grade 9 teachers. Many times the grade 9 teachers would have a meeting without a formal leader present. It would just be us talking. If a decision or an idea came up in a small group, we would go back and meet as an entire group and present the idea, or present the idea to Vance and he would bring it back to everybody. But, I think just keeping the grade 9 program going became the grade 9 teachers’ responsibility and there would probably be a few people within the group that would stand out more than others as leaders. But as far as a group of people working together, I think you would find that everybody pretty well had a share.

Tammy agrees and comments on the manner in which both formal and informal leaders in the group worked together:

As for leadership roles, I am just a teacher, a classroom teacher, it’s all I ever wanted to be, it’s all I ever will be. I would sit at the meetings and it was heads of departments who were part of the team, as well, and my voice was just as equal. There was never any power play. There was never anyone on the team, I could say that for three years, who was out for glory. Everybody there worked as a team.

Dale points out that “there is a certain commonality that runs through the grade 9 teachers: their willingness, their amazing amount of energy, and their commitment to making the grade 9 program work.” From her experience as a grade 9 teacher, Tammy elaborates: “The people that are on the team are just that kind of personalities. We’re all
really different but we all work well together.” Tanya adds: “When you’re working with a group of people, you sort of go with what the general feeling of the group is and when you feel that you’re getting a little bit too uncomfortable with things, then you speak up.”

Tammy also relates how Vance provided leadership to the grade 9 teachers during the implementation period:

He was always there. He would be up to here in work and if you had a problem with the grade 9 course, something wasn’t working, he’d be at your door. He’d drop everything. I’m not just talking about behavioural things, I’m talking about the day-to-day things where something wasn’t working. That would be taken care of, and not in two weeks; it would be taken care of today. He was very supportive. Vance let us have as much or as little rope as we wanted. He sat on the sidelines and he would jump up and be there if we had a question. If not, he just sat back down and was one of the crowd.

David indicates that, like Vance, the Guidance department bowed out of their initial leadership role once the implementation got underway, to enable the grade 9 teachers “to take over the meetings” and “to solve their own problems in the group.” He observes that, “as a result, the grade 9 teachers developed common ways of dealing with a student in a given situation.” Although he indicates that initially “some hung back,” he suggests that “when it proved to be an effective means of classroom management, then they bought in, as well.” To clarify this point, David provides the following example:

Because they had the same kids, they learned that it was okay to have a problem with that kid, if everybody else was having a problem. But if nobody else was having a problem, then it became, well, how should I be dealing with this kid?

Although the grade 9 teachers did not have formal and regular communication with the rest of the staff regarding the grade 9 program due, in part, to time constraints, varying interest levels of department members, and other activities in the school, Dan
indicates that the grade 9 teachers did receive positive staff input during the second year of the program as it related to the students who had been in the grade 9 program the previous year. He comments that the teachers who “had those kids were really pleased with what they had.” Several questionnaire respondents support Dan’s observations. For example, one respondent comments: “The grade 10 classes I taught were more distinctly divided into general and advanced levels. I feel this is the result of the work of the grade 9 teachers.” Another questionnaire respondent adds: “The students seem to be much more successful when they enter grade 10. They have a much better learning experience in the ‘core’ and their knowledge and mastery of course material.”

From his perspective, Vance feels that “one thing that really helped was that other teachers in the school appreciated the fact that these people were willing to go ahead and teach all the grade 9s.” Stressing the importance of mutual staff recognition, Vance recalls the first staff meeting of the second year of the grade 9 change initiative, when staff members “got up and thanked the grade 9 teachers for the work that they had done the previous year to get students ready for grade 10.” David reports a similar experience that he had after the first year of implementation of the grade 9 program:

The biggest boost we got spiritually from those who hadn’t been involved the first year was the next year, when a couple of grade 10 teachers, who were new to the school, came down to the office to say that the grade 10 classes they had were the most co-operative, best organized kids they had ever run into.

During the implementation process, the grade 9 initiative evolved and changed through an informal evaluation process during the first year, and as the result of a more formalized process in the second year. Taylor indicates that during the first year, “it was evaluated just by people’s responses and reactions and input into what changes needed to
be made.” Vance emphasizes: “We made changes often, starting the first month of implementation, as teachers identified concerns.” Toward the end of the second year Tanya recalls that “it was done through “a questionnaire to the department heads, the administration, the parent group, and the students.” Patrick explains why he believes an ongoing evaluation process is a necessary component of school change:

Teachers have got to see physical changes and they’ve got to be immediate to their needs. We changed some things that very first year that they said they needed. They weren’t formally done. Then we formalized them the next year and they were in on the design.

Implementation: Hindering Influences

While Taylor suggests that “no one made any attempt to undermine the grade 9 initiative,” David says that “the biggest critic of the program had nothing to do with the grade 9s and he blamed the new program for creating all the problems in the school.” Several of the grade 9 interview participants commented on this type of criticism, as well, but generally accepted the fact that some people have a tendency, as Vance puts it, “to complain about anything.” The interview participants also recognized that when you make changes, you have to be prepared for the criticism that comes with the change efforts. Tanya explains: “I don’t think criticism and putting things down from time to time will necessarily undermine. There are some people who just love to play devil’s advocate and they will do it constantly.” Accordingly, most of the grade 9 teachers who were interviewed accepted the problems associated with the changes. As Dale concludes: “That’s something you find with innovation: all the heat, the arrows, and the slings that we took because we changed and were different.”

As a former grade 9 teacher, Tanya remembers another problem:
Destreaming, no doubt about it, put an extra burden on us, as classroom teachers. That’s where, I think we probably felt the pressure of the time factor. These new programs had to be put in place, as well as our new structure.

While the grade 9 teachers who were interviewed indicate that, as a group, they generally worked well together, as Dan suggests, “with only little things that had to be ironed out,” there was some fragmentation between the two teacher groups that had been established for advisor purposes. Dan’s comments reflect how this circumstance came about:

We divided ourselves into odd and even advisor groups, only because of the number of kids. However, there was a real distinction between the work that was being done by one group, as opposed to the other. I think a lot of it had to do with the people who were in the one group, as opposed to the other, and the type of people who happened to get together in one group and worked very well together and really got things going. I think all of the decisions came out of that group, as opposed to the other, because they didn’t meet as frequently.

Tanya also recalls “some of the negative leaders” in the grade 9 group, but she emphasizes that “there were enough of us that were committed to making it work,” so that “they were outnumbered.” She describes how the situation was handled:

Sometimes you just dismiss it, okay, consider the source. We know that this is always the way they attack things. Our concern was were they doing the job that had to be done and if they were, then let the criticisms come in and we’ll work with those, too. Sometimes it’s a good way of venting and we did a lot of that. Make no mistake, things were not perfect. We would sit an awful lot and just gripe about what was wrong, to get it out of our systems, so that we knew where to go from there. Once it’s out, then you deal with it. But if it just sits and festers, then the problems aren’t getting solved.

Another situation that arose within the grade 9 teacher group, related to the communication between the morning and afternoon teachers. There were ten teachers who taught the grade 9s in the morning and they were consistent all year long. As well,
there were eight teachers who taught the grade 9s in the afternoon. Some of the afternoon teachers, however, taught the grade 9s the first semester and some the second semester.

Dan, as one of the teachers who taught in the morning year-long program, reflects on the nature of the problem:

I think [the afternoon teachers] felt a little bit short-changed, at times, because if they were part of the decision making the first semester, they really did not necessarily come back into it until the first semester of the next year. And the same thing with the second semester people. I don’t think [the morning teachers] always realized that we had to inform them of everything that we decided on, because they weren’t part of the group then. That created a few conflicts and a few minor problems.

The most contentious issue of the whole process for the grade 9 teachers, once the grade 9 change actually got underway, was the teacher advisor program, itself. David suggests one reason for this: “The teachers didn’t have the subject expertise between the kids and themselves. If we can’t talk about business, what are we going to do?” He comments:

Some of the advisors had difficulty getting into the spirit of the process and wanted out of the program by Christmas of the first year, and for a couple of them it worked because Vance was able to make some changes. It wasn’t for everybody. I think the ones who really wanted to get out were able to get out.

From Vance’s perspective, “although some were very good at it, a lot of the teachers were not ready for that.” Although several of the grade 9 teachers continued to work at developing the advisor program during the second year of implementation, Tanya admits that many of the teachers felt that by the end of the second year the daily advisor program “wasn’t necessarily a productive time, except at special times of the year, like option time and orientation, when it was really beneficial.” She suggests that because of time
constraints and the question of the usefulness of a regular teacher advisor program, “they wanted to try something else.” She explains how this occurred:

We had the stats from the previous years. We knew that within each class of the 8 or 9 in the advisor groups we had, we always had two or three who were not really going to be successful the way things were. There had to be a solution. We didn’t know exactly what or how we were going to handle this. The idea of a transitions class came about sometime over the course of last year. Again, we went back to Vance. Can this be done? He came up with a couple of scenarios of how we could handle this. The original plan was that there would be one transitions class and the other teacher in that subject would run a resource room. As it turned out, by mid term when the grade 9 teachers sat down to discuss this, they decided: ‘No, we won’t have one transitions class, we’ll have two. Let’s keep them really small. We’ll both take a transitions class.’ Again, that was primarily a teacher decision.

The most significant issue for staff members who were not teaching grade 9 was related to the implications of the different grade 9 timetable from the rest of the school.

As Dale observes:

One of the problems with the two timetables running parallel in the school is that you’ve got kids out of class at different times and people got upset with that, especially that the grade 9s were changing classes in the middle of the grades 10 and up classes.

Vance indicates that another problem with the grade 9s being on a different schedule from the rest of the school was that “the kids, themselves, did not like being different. They thought, I’m in grade 9 now, I should be the same as the rest of the high school.” Tammy adds: “When we lost the bells, that seemed to really upset the 10s to OACs. From what my friends in other departments say, it was an irritation that the bells weren’t there for both the teachers and the students.” To respond to non-grade 9 staff concerns about the different grade 9 timetable and to the grade 9 teacher and student concerns about the teacher advisor program, after the second year the advisor time was dropped
from the timetable, which enabled the grade 9 afternoon classes to run parallel with the rest of the school. According to Vance:

This was a compromise. You’ve got an afternoon schedule that coincides with the rest of the school, but the morning is different. So now, you’ve got more flexibility. But the grade 9 teachers still have the opportunity to work as a group.

As well, the revised schedule enabled certain activities to still be organized, with the previously scheduled time freed up for teachers assigned to help individual students through the formation of the two new transitions classes.

Continuation: Supportive Influences

While the grade 9 morning program continues to function as originally planned, alterations have been made to the afternoon schedule, as well as changes in the delivery of the grade 9 program. According to Patrick, “this ability to be flexible within the structure” has been instrumental in the continuation of the grade 9 program and he emphasizes that this flexibility will have to continue if the grade 9 program is to meet the changing needs of both the students and the teachers in the school. Specifically, Taylor points to the timetable that Vance developed and to the flexibility built into it as “a key factor” in continuing to meet the concerns of both the grade 9 teachers and students and the other teachers and students in the school. Although Vance is no longer at the school this year, Valerie also acknowledges that the ground work laid by Vance “made it much easier” for her to work through changes with the staff this year, albeit, she admits, “with a lot of consultation with Vance.”
Tanya suggests that another important aspect that has helped in the continuation of the grade 9 change initiative has to do with the general acceptance of the staff of the role of the grade 9 teachers in the school. She comments:

The main thinking now is let the grade 9 teachers run this. A part of it is that those who do not teach the grade 9s feel that they shouldn’t be telling them how to handle the situations they’re in. Let them deal with it. If they need our input, we’re there.

As a former teacher of the grade 9 program, Tanya advocates and appreciates this response from the other teachers. Accordingly she maintains: “I don’t think, as a grade 9 teacher, I would appreciate someone else saying you should do this or that when you haven’t been in the grade 9 classroom with the full program to see how it works.”

Tanya also suggests that another factor helpful to the continuation of the grade 9 program relates to “the specific focus of the group,” and to the fact that it is a relatively “small group of people who are affected.” She believes that the focus and the size of the group have facilitated both the formal and informal communication processes that have been established within the grade 9 group. Tammy explains how this communication presently occurs:

We have fairly regular meetings for all grade 9 teachers, and that means morning and afternoon, but it’s the morning teachers who tend to meet on a regular weekly basis to touch base. Those meetings are usually on Tuesday at lunch hour, but at any given time we could be sitting in the staff room, somebody could be reading the paper and somebody who’s on the team could come in and say, you know I had so and so today and we end up having a meeting, very informal.

As the change initiative progressed over the first three years, the grade 9 teachers assumed more responsibilities for the growth and direction of the grade 9 program. In the fourth year of the initiative, with Vance no longer in the school, Tammy suggests the
willingness and ability of the grade 9 teachers to recognize the need for further changes in their role as being significant to the continuation of the initiative:

With Vance gone, we’ve assumed a lot more of the responsibilities. We’ve called our own meetings. Valerie does come when she can, I’m sure, and I won’t fault her for that. But we were really starting to sputter and run out of gas because we were assuming that Valerie would take over Vance’s leadership role and she didn’t. So we were sort of sitting around and we weren’t going anywhere and our problems were starting to mount. So we had a meeting and said ‘Look, we’ve got to do something. We don’t have a team leader anymore; we’re going to have to be our own leaders.’ We all agreed. We said ‘Let’s get on with the business. Let’s run it like Vance was here. We’ll all take a little bit of Vance’s job.’ And that’s what we’ve done.

Each year there have been some new grade 9 teachers added to the complement, as those who have had the experience have retired or have selected other teaching assignments. Tammy suggests that the changeover of grade 9 teachers has been a positive force in the continuation of the grade 9 program. She cites a particular teacher who said that she wanted “to start this program off on the right foot and if I’ve done the right job, I can put someone else in there and they can continue it.” According to Tammy, “that’s a true test of a good program and it’s also growth and development because one of the things that can happen with this kind of situation is that it can lead to stagnation.” Because the grade 9 program is “demanding” and there is “a lot of paperwork,” Tammy feels that some teachers changed because they were “sort of tired.” However, she adds: “But the fact is, the opportunity is there for those teachers who don’t feel comfortable, to go.”

Continuation: Hindering Influences

The grade 9 program is currently imbedded within the organizational structure of Secondary School Site I, through an established, yet flexible timetable, continued staff
involvement in the deployment of resources, and practices widely accepted by both the grade 9 and non grade 9 teachers and department heads, as well as the school administration. Consequently, during the course of the study, in the fourth year of the school change initiative, study participants do not express major concerns regarding internal hindrances to the continuation of the program, with the understanding that appropriate changes would occur, should staff and student needs warrant them.

The only significant hindrance to the continuation of the grade 9 program in future years, according to several study participants, relates not to the continuing support expressed within the school, but rather to the external challenges facing education, as a whole. As Dan points out: “Just from an economic and financial standpoint, being able to do with what we’ve got and what we’ve got is getting less and less” may affect the grade 9 program. He suggests: “Sometimes quality can be affected by quantity because there is only so much a human being can do.” In conclusion, he states: “We’re tired, but we’re still concerned. But the times are different now.” And Dale adds:

My concern is that as we get into downsizing, centralized control, and decision making, that program might have to pay the price for the economic realities, and that decisions will be made for us. Some people will say it’s their job to make those big decisions, you know, I just teach in a classroom. Whereas here, we’ve had a taste of what it’s like to be able to do things. That’s going to hurt a lot.

Outcomes of the Change

Practices

Describing his experiences during the grade 9 change as “a learning process,” Dan comments on a lesson that the grade 9 teachers learned, which he believes has assisted them in working more effectively with the grade 9 students:
We went into it green. We weren't as tough on the kids at the outset as we could have been. So, we learned that lesson. So the second year of the program and this year, we said, okay, this is the way it is and we were quite strict and we haven't had nearly the same problems that we had in the first year.

Dan also relates how the experiences in the grade 9 program have changed the teaching methodology that he and some of the other grade 9 teachers currently use:

We've gone to more student-centred type things. A lot more group work type things. They have their certain assignments and that sort of thing, individual, but a lot of them, we try to get them to work together, which is something new for us, because it used to be so teacher-centred.

When asked if they would have done that if they had not been involved with the grade 9 program, Dan speculates: "Not to the same extent, I don't think." He adds:

The kids that want to get on with their work, can get on with it, rather than being held up. So, depending on how fast they are, how quickly they get their work done, then they can go on and do other things, rather than having to wait for the rest of the class. So, in that respect, I think the kids benefit. It's a bookkeeping nightmare, but I think it's good. It's good, but you've got to have things ready. You can't go by the seat of your pants.

Several questionnaire respondents make reference to the positive changes in practices and the resulting benefits to students due to "the rewriting of classroom curriculum, the initiation of new materials, and the development of new evaluation tools."

At the same time, a few questionnaire respondents comment on "the increase in discipline and behaviour problems," and the changes in classroom management practices that have had to occur to overcome these concerns.

Valerie also notes that because of the specific focus of the grade 9 teachers, regardless of subject area, that "a lot of integration was able to take place." As the grade 9 teachers developed "some trust and respect" for one another, they "realized what was happening in other subject areas" and decided to "try and pull it together and do some
kind of an integrated program.” Dale points out that “through this process, there are several areas that have worked together that normally wouldn’t have worked together. He adds: “Who would have thought that a few years ago?” According to one of the questionnaire respondents, “interdisciplinary collaboration was an unexpected benefit!” From his observations, David cites a specific example of how this practice actually developed and is continuing:

The way the timetable was set up, the two English teachers and the two Math teachers, for example, would have a common time off. And when you would go into the staff room, they would be together talking about the program. They had different kids, so they weren’t talking kids, they were looking at where are you going, how did you do this? Then they started trading kids, as well. If there was one teacher who felt particularly good about a particular unit, then that teacher would take that group and do the lesson with both classes.

This example is representative of the informal leadership and collaboration that has developed within the grade 9 group. A questionnaire respondent comments: “Informal leadership emerged in the grade 9 group who, for the most part, worked together for moral support and encouragement, as well as continued evaluation of the students and the program.” Further, as Tanya indicates:

It’s running now so you don’t necessarily need somebody totally in charge at this stage of the game. When an issue comes up that a major change has to come into play, then we’ll probably all get in on it.

As the grade 9 program initiative has progressed and the results of the program have been increasingly recognized by the rest of the staff, the grade 9 teachers have assumed a broader scope in their decision making. Tammy says that while the grade 9 teachers still continue with their regularly scheduled meetings “to identify behaviour problems and learning difficulties and things like that,” they now also hold “special
meetings if there is a specific problem that needs to be addressed.” For example, Dale points out: “They’re meeting this week to discuss the timetable for exams, which was unheard of in the past.” Whereas the administration has usually determined the exam days across the school, now the grade 9 teachers have the opportunity to say, “let’s make adjustments” to meet our needs.

According to Dale, continued liaison with the elementary feeder schools has been a natural outgrowth of the grade 9 program “to give us some insight on dealing with problems with students and different learning levels.” He adds that by “looking for what is coming out of grade 8s,” the teachers are able to more readily “design a program that helps the kids to make the transition.” As well, Taylor suggests that the changes in the grade 9 program have enabled the grade 9 teachers to “pick up on problems very quickly, as opposed to previously, maybe mid-semester, marks told the story.” He comments:

Because we were better aware of those kids and their abilities, because we knew their strengths and their weaknesses, the recommendations of the grade 9 teachers for placement in grade 10 have been more successful and the grade 10 teachers are more prepared for the students that they receive.

With regard to the students, Tanya adds: “The majority of the population moving into grade 10 was probably better prepared than they had ever been before, as a group.”

Attitudes

Tanya emphasizes that there’s no doubt that the grade 9 program “had an impact” on the non grade 9 teachers, “in that the rest of the school had to get used to the fact that the grade 9s were doing something different.” She adds: “They had to get used to the kids moving in the hallways at different times, so there were some adjustments to be made. And they had to basically come to grips with that themselves.” Further to this,
Dale indicates that although not all the non-grade 9 teachers necessarily agreed with this particular aspect of the grade 9 change, once they saw the “favourable” results when the students got to grade 10, they were more willing to accept the different grade 9 schedule. Similarly, Tanya suggests: “I think they realized there was some validity to this, so they bought into it a little more, even if maybe they hadn’t been totally sold on it initially.” One non-grade 9 questionnaire respondent comments, accordingly: “The emphasis of the grade 9 teachers on participation, problem solving, co-operation, inventiveness, and shared experiences has had a carry over effect into the other grade levels and has stimulated the curiosity of several of us.” Other questionnaire respondents refer to the “great effort, the ‘were in this together’ survival attitude,” and “the many hours put into the process by the grade 9 teachers and the vice principal” as significant factors in changing their attitudes.

Another reason for the growing acceptance, according to Tanya, may have been the increasing number of teachers who had experience in the grade 9 program over the four-year period. She believes that as a result of that experience, “they have come to understand the problems inherent within the entire program and how much work is involved.”

Although the majority of the grade 9 teachers came into the program on a voluntary basis and with a positive outlook, the concept of a multidisciplinary team approach that included both department heads and teachers was relatively new for many of them. Tammy explains how the interaction within the grade 9 group has affected her:

The communication has been excellent. The support has been excellent. I can’t feel more equal and I really feel that what I say in those meetings is important and that hasn’t necessarily been the case for me in my teaching
career, up until this point. And with my voice having the same loudness as everyone else, it makes me care a little bit more because now I’m taking ownership and I’m finding myself, as a result of the three years, in informal leadership roles. And I didn’t know how I would feel, but I feel comfortable giving as much support as the rest of the people on my team, and I think it has made me a better teacher. I think it’s made me a much stronger professional. I have really grown an awful lot and I can’t let the energy go.

Tammy also emphasizes the significance of Vance’s leadership in this initiative:

I personally felt like I was a thoroughbred race horse and you take real good care of your race horses, because when you do, they’ll come across the finish line for you first every time. And that’s the best analogy for Vance’s leadership and the results. I think that has a lot to do with us taking ownership because he said ‘Thank you’ lots of times.

Regarding the ownership and informal leadership that developed within the group,

Tanya comments:

There were a couple of people that showed leadership within the grade 9 program that I would not have expected, because a couple of them would be what I would call the general naysayers around here. But within the grade 9 program they became so involved that they actually took on responsibilities for the program. Some people, you knew, were going to be involved, were going to make it work, were going to do everything they could to keep everybody working together, and there were others that were real surprises!

Similarly, David observes: “Some people, who I wouldn’t have thought were particularly flexible, turned out to be really good.” On another dimension, “some teachers really softened in their approach to kids,” and as “they saw kids in a different light,” they developed a more empathetic style for their classes.”

From Dan’s perspective, the grade 9 change initiative has demonstrated the need for teachers to be risk takers. He states: “You’ve got to be a risk taker because we have so many challenges facing us in education now.” As Dale observes, the element of risk taking has become prevalent in the grade 9 teacher group:
We have a brand new way of doing business in the sense that what you find is that you have people that are now willing to take risks. I think there is a common belief that yes, we can do it. Let's take the risk. What do we need to do? We all have that same belief, let's try it.

Further, he suggests that as the "territoriality" has disappeared and "an open door policy" has developed, that the "them and us" attitude has become less prevalent. Dale also believes that the decrease in territoriality and the element of risk taking that prevails in the school can be attributed, in part, to the grade 9 undertaking. He comments on his observations of several staff:

They feel, that hey, I can make a contribution. They recognize me, that I have ideas. I can be listened to. They'll give me that room to develop. They feel that they've got that support, that if they've got an idea, whether they're a department head, an assistant head or a teacher, that the door is open. They can walk in there and say let's try this idea. And then they evaluate it and say, well did it work out as well as they would have liked? Well maybe it did and they keep going. Maybe it didn't, so they rethink it and redo it. But they encourage teachers that way. So it's not just always the same traditional structure that's giving advice to the person at the bottom.

The ongoing interface with the elementary feeder schools has prompted a new view, on the part of some grade 9 teachers, about the possibility of a different school organization that includes grades 7 and 8 students and staff within a secondary school building. Dan comments accordingly:

I think it has a lot of merit. If they were in our school, we could learn a lot from them and they could learn from us and it would give them a much broader experience and a broader outlook on things. And I think we could probably do a lot more with our kids because there wouldn't be the duplication. I think we could learn if we had some of the grade 7 and 8 teachers come in.
General Observations and Comments

According to Dale: “It’s been an interesting process. It hasn’t happened overnight. But it’s a series of events that have come in that have made us change, a series of opportunities.” From Darryl’s perspective: “There’s got to be a need and I think this place is one of those places. It’s quite easy to find a need for something else and as things change, I think there will be more need for change.” Adding to the comments of Dale and Darryl about time and need in the change process, one of the questionnaire respondents points out the importance of involving the people who will be initiating and implementing the change:

There are many benefits from school-initiated change that are not so identifiable in externally initiated change. The level of enthusiasm to tackle the planning process and the willingness to problem solve, once involved in the process, would be the most obvious to me. Undoubtedly, this is tied to the ownership taken in the process.

With reference to ownership, Vance comments on the importance of the various roles played by the people in the grade 9 change initiative:

One of the reasons it worked at Secondary School Site I was maybe the fact that Patrick sat back. It wasn’t being rammed down teachers’ throats by administration. The teachers decided right at the start and maybe the way we did it, my approach, and so on, trying to involve everyone in it, that helped.

Stressing the importance of a key leader at the beginning, Valerie indicates that “Vance took a great deal of interest in the grade 9 program and it would never have gone if he hadn’t.” Tammy emphasizes what several study participants have stated: “Vance was very much the cornerstone of the change.” While Vance is highly regarded by the study participants for his leadership role, he is also recognized for his skills in timetabling. However, he suggests that the timetable he developed for the grade 9 change
“wasn’t Vance’s timetable, it was Secondary School Site I’s timetable, and this is what the teachers wanted.” Another key leadership role in the school-initiated change was played the grade 9 teachers. As one questionnaire respondent comments: “When we launched the grade 9 program, about one half of the staff energy went into this task. Once underway, the grade 9 teachers put their total energy into it.” Another questionnaire respondent comments: “The ‘we’re in this together’ survival attitude of the grade 9 teachers and their willingness to persevere are major factors in the success of the grade 9 program.”

As a former grade 9 teacher, Tanya emphasizes the importance of time for in school planning prior to implementing the change: “We didn’t jump into this. There was lots of planning so that a common vision was developed.” She comments that, as a result of the planning process “we realized that we couldn’t do everything all at once.” One of the questionnaire respondents, who has been a grade 9 teacher, adds: “Not everything was predetermined. We accepted that we could cross little hurdles when we reached them and save our energy for the big issues.” According to both Tanya and Tammy, the ongoing communication resulted “in a focus” and “a sense of support” within the grade 9 team, as well as a comfort level “in speaking up” when the occasion arose.

While all interview participants and several questionnaire respondents who are teaching or who have taught grade 9 indicate that the collaborative planning and leadership that developed within the grade 9 group has been most beneficial, one questionnaire respondent points out what some interview participants have expressed: “Being on a team with some teachers that have not bought into the philosophy can be antagonizing.” In that respect, however, nothing really stands out in Tammy’s mind as
being a significant conflict during the change process: "I think the departments have worked pretty well together. It's been pretty well out in the open. To me conflict is when you get into a real paralysis. Things just don't move. We don't have that."

Recognition of staff accomplishments has also played a significant role during the change process. While communication about the progress of the grade 9 change initiative was generally accomplished within the departmental and cabinet structure of the school, the accomplishments of the grade 9 teachers were recognized by all staff at monthly staff meetings. Vance emphasizes: "There were a lot of measures in place to be constantly reinforcing people. And we kept saying, if you have an idea, try it, let us know about things like that. And they were willing to try things."

PART TWO: SECONDARY SCHOOL SITE II

The Context for the School-Initiated Change

The School Building

Secondary School Site II was constructed in 1924 as a Collegiate Institute. As the secondary school population increased, a substantial addition was made to the school in 1951. Since that time, there have been two major renovations: the first in 1970 and the second in 1990. The most recent renovation was undertaken to update the existing facilities at Secondary School Site II to provide new vocational level programs in the school. Consequently, Secondary School Site II is now a sprawling three-storey structure, situated in a mostly residential area of the city, in the eastern section of the school board. The offices of the principal and vice principals are located together on the second floor, at the front of the building, adjacent to the Learning Resource room and
Guidance services. The staff room is situated on the first floor directly below the main office. The department preparation areas are spread throughout the building, with most academic areas on the second and third floors.

The Community

Vernon, a former Secondary School Site I teacher and vice principal, suggests that Secondary School Site II is still considered “a flagship school” by many residents in the community. Commenting on the reasons for the continuation of this perception, Peter, the principal, indicates that “there are a lot of people in the Secondary School Site II community who went to school here, when it was considered an academic school, and they have moved back into the community to raise their family.” Peter points out that the majority of the residences in the area are “single family dwellings, not expensive ones, with only one large apartment building and a few apartments over some small stores or offices.” Although Secondary School Site II, at one time, served a largely upper and middle class community, Peter indicates that currently “only about one third of the community might be considered upper and middle class with the remaining two thirds being middle and lower class.” He does emphasize, however, that “there is still an academic community in the area that wants to be looked after.” In this regard, Ted, a long time teacher at the school, comments on the community reactions to the grade 9 change initiative: “We got some negative feelings, actually once we got things started, from some of the ‘academic’ students.” He suggests, however: “I’m not too sure how much of it was from the kids themselves, or from the parents, who neither understood what we were doing nor did it fit their preconceived conceptions of what grade 9 should be.”
When Peter arrived at the school, he established a Home and School Association at Secondary School Site II. He comments: "It's not as big and vibrant as I would like, but I've also realized that I could work for the next ten years and I'm not going to get that." Debra, a department head of long standing at the school, provides the following perspective: "The Home and School is not something that is just given lip service. What they have to say is paid attention to." Peter indicates that there is a "core of parents that come out and that are involved." and who are "very helpful in deflecting some of the school problems" and "help us communicate with our community." He adds: "there's a lot of trust from the parents. You break that trust and you get nailed."

**The Students**

Student enrolment at Secondary School Site II has been on the decline over the past eight years. Once a school of more than twelve hundred students, Secondary School Site II currently has a student population of just over nine hundred. During the past five years, the student composition has changed significantly, with the addition of vocational program offerings in the school. Peter indicates that "about one quarter of the students in the school are very low academically." And Della, a relative newcomer to Secondary School Site II, adds:

The type of kids we're dealing with are needy; that involves poverty, single parent homes, in some cases, trouble in the community and alcoholism. We're running into a whole range of these types of problems, which is a reflection of society. In general, we're seeing a lot of that here now."

Along with all these issues, student attendance, in general, has continued to be another major concern at the school, a situation which Peter and the staff have attempted to address in a variety of ways. Despite staff concerns about the nature of the student
population and the problems they face, Terry, a teacher of several years at the school, observes how appreciative many of the students are for the work that the teachers do to help them out. He speculates that this may be due to the fact that "they don't take things for granted like students in other schools in the city may tend to do."

The Teaching Staff

While 92 percent of the questionnaire respondents feel that the teachers in the school take pride in their own work and accomplishments, 100 percent indicate that teachers take pride in the accomplishments of the school. As well, 100 percent believe that, in general, teachers care about and strive for excellent performance, 82 percent generally feel that their work is important and 89 percent indicate that most teachers continually seek ways to improve their own teaching and learning. Terry emphasizes that because Secondary School Site II is an inner city school, "this school really needs outstanding teachers because of the caliber of the kids that are here," and he adds: "We have a lot of excellent teachers!" Teresa, who has been teaching at the school for five years, also points out that she has found that "the majority of teachers at Secondary School Site II care about their students and do care about them doing well." Although she suggests that many of the teachers have not had a great deal of experience with "integration" and "different levels of learning," she senses that "they find it rewarding within themselves to see the student do well."

Similarly, Peter indicates that while staff members are generally positive, as a group, and "recognize that schools have to make changes," there are some negative forces within the school. Some of this negativity, he attributes to personal life experiences and the inability to adapt to change, to subject orientation and the views obtained through
their professional background, or to people not being able to let go of the traditions of the past, due to the length of time in the school.

Table 5. Teacher Questionnaire Responses Regarding the Day-to-Day Working Relationships at Secondary School Site II
By Percentage (N=28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements from Questionnaire</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feedback is given and received in helpful ways by teachers:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) within my department or program area</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) in other department or program areas</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers help others with on-the-job problems:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) within my department or program area</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) across departments or program areas</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in my department or program area:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) work together effectively</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) work effectively with teachers in other departments or program areas</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) work effectively with the school administrators</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is effective communication between/among the following:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) teachers within my department/program area</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) my department/program area and other department/program areas</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) my department/program area and school administrators</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in my department or program area discuss regularly:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) new teaching strategies and new program ideas</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) mutual on-the-job concerns</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) issues about student needs</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff development and in-service are provided:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) by teachers within my own department or program area</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) by teachers in other departments or program areas</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) by board staff</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) by staff in other schools or school boards</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher accomplishments are recognized within my department or program area:</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most decisions are made collaboratively within my department or program area.</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Confirming Peter’s perceptions of the staff, Vernon recalls his earlier experiences:

“There were entrenched groups of progressive people who were buying into whatever it
was we were asking them to do to make the place better. Other people wanted the hammer back.” Dennis, who has been at the school for over twenty years, and Teresa feel that this situation is still prevalent, to some degree. Teresa suggests: “You may get a few, a handful, that say I’m not going to do that, the heck with it.” As well, Ted observes that “some people don’t want to be empowered. They want to be told what to do and have a very clear direction and not be given a little bit of a free reign in terms of how they want to do things. “As a whole,” however, Teresa has found that “the school pulls together extremely well. While she notes the diversity in staff, she also recognizes the history of the school and the fact that many staff “want to see it move” and “make it work.” From her experience, she finds that “you can rely on them, at least to listen,” and adds: “I think there is a lot of communication and I don’t think that teachers are afraid to go to somebody and say, hey listen, there is a problem here, can you help me?” From Terry’s perspective “the strength of the school is in the staff who are not afraid to say things and to make changes if they are in the best interests of the students.” Regarding this openness, Debra states: “We’re used to the fact that you can say what you want to anybody at any level. It’s really not a hierarchy in that way, in the communication.” She attributes part of this to Peter’s style and his willingness to hear “the negatives, as well as the positives.”

The degree of informal communication that occurs, as expressed by several interview participants, is supported by responses to the questionnaire, which indicate that where matters affect them directly, teachers are kept informed by department heads (96%), by other teachers (82%), and by school administrators (86%). However, as Table 5 shows, questionnaire respondents suggest that teachers generally look to teachers in
their respective departments or program areas for support in their day-to-day work, rather than to teachers in other departments or program areas. This occurrence was particularly evident during the school-initiated change, where the departments, although generally very active in the process, functioned relatively independently of one another. Della suggests that some of the reasons for this may be attributed not only to “where they’re located in the school” but also “on the department and the people.” Dennis points to particular department heads and suggests, as well, that it depends upon the nature of the department heads and “their comfort level” and their willingness “to do something about things” beyond the department level. From her experience, Della observes another aspect: “I think it depends upon the issues that come up. If it’s in your area that you’re trying to protect then maybe it’s a little bit more difficult to move outside those boundaries.” As a teacher, Ted acknowledges the importance of the support he has received and has given within his department following some “tough” experiences in one of his classes. From this perspective, he suggests that “we know one another really well and we know the curriculum we are dealing with.”

Responses from the teacher questionnaire, which appear in Table 6, show the range of both formal and informal leadership practices that occur within Secondary School Site II. While the distribution of formal and informal leadership varies with the circumstance, evidence of informal leadership, in varying degrees in a variety of aspects of the life of the school, confirms the observation of 86 percent of the questionnaire respondents that informal leadership opportunities are provided for teachers.
Table 6. Teacher Questionnaire Responses Regarding the Distribution of Leadership Practices at Secondary School Site II
By Percentage (N=28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements from Questionnaire</th>
<th>Formal Principal %</th>
<th>Informal Other %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Leaders set a positive example for teachers and other staff.</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Leaders are equally concerned for people, as well as results.</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leaders share the responsibility for things that go wrong in the school.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Leaders receive feedback willingly from teachers.</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Leaders demonstrate regularly their commitment to what the school is trying to accomplish.</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Leaders give constructive feedback to others.</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Leaders make a strong effort to involve and motivate teachers.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Leaders have expectations for excellence, quality and high performance on the part of all staff.</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Leaders promote co-operation among teachers and other staff.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Leaders show respect for individual differences of staff and concern about their needs and feelings.</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Leaders challenge staff to re-examine some of their assumptions about their work and to rethink how it is performed.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Leaders reinforce staff beliefs about their value to the school.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Leaders help to find resources to assist teachers in their work.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Leaders alter schedules and work arrangements to support staff planning.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Leaders share decision making with teachers.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Leaders assist staff in working together toward common school goals.</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Leaders take time to follow up on the jobs that have been assigned to staff.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Leaders support and participate in school-initiated changes.</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Leaders recognize the strengths of teachers and encourage them to make maximum use of their knowledge and skills.</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Leaders point out errors constructively.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Leaders encourage teachers to develop new knowledge and skills to assist them in their work.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The Formal Leadership Practices include those involving the Principal and Other (the Vice principals, Department Heads, and Assistant Department Heads) in appointed positions of authority or responsibility. The Informal Leadership Practices include those involving teachers not appointed to positions of authority or responsibility.

At the beginning of the grade 9 change initiative, a number of staff members were added to the Secondary School Site II complement. According to Vernon, “the pilot
project generated smaller grade 9 class sizes and therefore a lot of new staff. So we had a fairly young staff. As well, several vocational people came over.”

While there have been changes in department heads and teachers during the course of the grade 9 change initiative, due to retirements, promotions, and voluntary transfers, Peter indicates that there have been no administrative transfers from the school during that time period. Teresa adds: “All the vocational teachers that did make the transfer are still at Secondary School Site II and are content at Secondary School Site II.”

Currently, 13 percent of the teachers in the school have less than five years of teaching experience; 36 percent are experienced teachers and have come to the school in the past five years and the other 51 percent have been at the school from six to over twenty years. At Secondary School Site II 48 percent of the teaching staff are male and 52 percent are female.

Significant Events Leading Up to the Change

Several of the interview participants, who have been at Secondary School Site II for some time, recall a series of events which occurred prior to the initiation of the grade 9 change at Secondary School Site II, which they suggest, helped to prepare the staff and the community for the changes involved in the grade 9 initiative. “Although in one sense,” as Ted points out, “they had nothing immediately to do with the grade 9 program,” the events did impact upon the “school-based decision” to undertake changes in the grade 9 program “in response to the changes that were coming around us.” These events occurred sequentially, and in some instances, concurrently, at various levels: the school board, the community, the school, and the Ministry. At the school board level, two years prior to Peter’s appointment as principal of Secondary School Site II, a report
was presented to trustees regarding declining enrolments in vocational and secondary schools across the system. In response, a system long-range plan was developed to close designated vocational schools and to transfer the students and staff to other vocational schools and to Secondary School Site II.

Secondary School Site II was selected for several reasons. Student enrolment was on the decline, and according to Terry, to avoid school closure, there was an immediate need "to attract a number of students." He suggests that "one of the ways was to kind of transform [Secondary School Site II] from where it was, to improving a number of areas of specialities, especially in the Tech area." As well, the majority of the student population from the vocational schools that were closing lived in the eastern part of the city, and Secondary School Site II had classroom space available to accommodate these students and new technical programs. At that time, there was also Ministry technological renewal funding available to the school to enable the appropriate renovations to occur in the building.

Information regarding the pending changes to Secondary School Site II was highly publicized through the media. Consequently, when Peter and Vernon arrived at the school, they knew that the school "was going to go through some big changes." Based upon his knowledge of the existing situation, as well as the changes that were going to occur, Peter emphasizes that "from the beginning, it was very important to establish a tremendous relationship with the community." Peter indicates that prior to his coming to Secondary School Site II, he had been told "how strong the community was." He recalls that the previous principal had tried to deal with "some tough things in the community" and that "they’d lost focus of what Secondary School Site II was for." As a
result, he suggests: “There were a lot of fears out there.” Consequently, he thought: “If I’m known and respected, when the change comes in, they’re going to accept it.” Therefore, based on his own personal philosophy and his understanding of the events of the past, Peter set out to “establish” himself “in the community” and to “have a good profile at the beginning.” In order to accomplish this objective, Peter, along with Vernon and Dennis, as assistant to the principal at that time, undertook an innovative and unconventional approach to reaching out into the community. The interview participants, who were at the school at the time, still recall this event and the impact on the community, the staff, and the future grade 9 students. Dennis offers the following details about this occurrence and its effect on parents and students:

Peter, Vernon and I went door to door to every grade 9 student’s home. I think that that has had years of benefit in terms of making the school part of the community. Maybe they didn’t have someone knock on their door again, but the connection was made there. You wouldn’t believe the reception. Parents actually said who’s out there? The principal? What? Three or four people would be at the door. Unbelievable. And people were having a good time about this and they were having a good time. A lot of the people have since come in and said, you know, I still remember the day you guys knocked on our door. So I mean, it had a real impact. It was a great introduction of Peter to the school and you knew things were going to happen because of stuff like that. So that was really a positive. These grade 9 kids knew who was at the school when they were going to arrive, they already knew who was going to be there.

In addition, Dennis points out some benefits “in terms of the staff.” He indicates how their attitudes about communication with parents changed: “It made other members of the staff feel very comfortable about calling home, and before that, calling home was considered an elementary thing.” He comments on a common practice that developed, as a result:
Now, you had a lot of staff members here who call home not just to say that so and so wasn’t in class today, but to say, I just wanted to let you know that this project was really well done. Lots of departments have form type letters that they send out to keep in communication with the parents of children in their departments.

This outreach into the community not only made a significant impression on the parents, students, and staff but also made Peter more aware of the school community. He comments: “We really got to know our community and I learned so much from it. As a result, Peter indicates that he has continued to recommend to the new teachers, in particular, “to walk around, at lunch hours or after school and see the environment that your kids are coming from.”

At the same time as Peter was trying to establish a closer affiliation between the school and the community he was also attempting to make some organizational changes to develop more collaboration among school staff. He points out that he was well aware of the current practices in the school and that he believed that some procedural and attitudinal changes had to occur within the school to foster an environment of acceptance for the impending transfer of the vocational student population. Peter suggests that although the former principal “ran things efficiently, it was all by the front office,” and consequently, he found that there weren’t “a lot of things in writing; so when you wanted to find a procedure, it was not there.” He changed that by developing an organizational manual for staff, where the school vision and mission, and procedures were clearly laid out. Peter also suggests that “because the [previous principal] ran an effective school,” the department heads would abdicate to him.” He notes that he “felt they had to be more involved than that” and that because of the future changes, he “had to change that.” In response, Vernon developed a schedule for department heads to chair the meetings to
provide "leadership opportunities," to foster "open discussions," and to develop more unity within the department heads.

The "excellent department facilities," their disparate locations, and the "sprawling nature of the building" presented yet another challenge for Peter. When he arrived, he found that most departments congregated together "in the department areas" and did not communicate with one another. This was a concern for Peter as he contemplated how he was "going to get them out of there and into the staff room," which he wanted to be a "focal point" in the school." He comments: "If you can't get them down there, you lose contact, that communication, and you become isolated." He indicates how he accomplished this challenge to the status quo:

I did a simple thing. I moved the teachers' boxes from the office to the staff room so people had to go to the staff room to collect their mail. I explained the reason for it and why I thought we needed it, as a staff, that we needed to come together at least every morning.

Peter emphasizes that he did not do this on his own, but rather that he established a committee, which included secretaries, to survey the school staff and other secondary schools in the system. As a result, the change in school policy was voted on and the majority determined the need for a change. This change in policy was just one of the "vehicles" Peter attempted to "put in place to help break down" the departmental barriers that had developed over the years. Another significant procedural change, which Peter initiated "to get communication across departments," was the establishment of interdepartmental committees to involve staff from different departments in the development of common school goals and the implementation of the school plan. Peter indicates: "The more I get themes that run across departments, then the more unity I'm
going to get because they have to be discussed and they have to be evaluated.” In the initial stages, Peter recalls that every staff member “had to be a member of one of these committees.” He adds, however:

If you’re going to give people a chance to do committee work, then you’ve got to give them some of the authority, as well, and if you don’t like their whole decision, then you swallow it. If you don’t do that, pretty soon when you ask for somebody to go on a committee, they’ll say what’s the sense, you’re going to make the decision anyhow.

This was a significant change from the way in which the previous principal had handled decision making in the school, but it was rooted firmly in Peter’s belief that “you can’t control everything in the office.” He suggests that delegating responsibility “was not a fact of downloading,” but rather, “giving them leadership” and “a more balanced approach.” Vernon believes that “some of them were ready for that, probably a lot of them, more from the standpoint that they’d been frustrated for a long time because of people coming in and telling them what to do, rather than asking them what they’d like to do.”

As Peter and the Secondary School Site II staff were preparing for the anticipated changes, associated with the transfer of the vocational school students and staff and the renovation of the facilities at Secondary School Site II that would be occurring the following year, an unexpected event occurred, which prompted them to consider yet another change—that of initiating a new grade 9 program in the school. This decision was in response to the Ministry announcement about future plans for changes to the grade 9 program, in the form of destreaming, and the invitation for applications from schools to participate in a grade 9 provincial pilot project.
Introduction to the Study Participants

Interview Participants

With the exception of one teacher, all Secondary School Site II staff who participated in the interviews have had over twenty years of experience in education. Similarly, all but one interview participant had been at the school for at least four years at the time of the study. While only six interview participants had direct experience teaching the new grade 9 program, all have had some involvement with the teachers or students in the grade 9 program. Table 7 summarizes the background information about the interview participants at Secondary School Site II.

Table 7. Summary of Background Information About the Interview Participants at Secondary School Site II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Years in School</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Experience in Grade 9 Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>31 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vergil</td>
<td>Vice principal</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>34 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vernon</td>
<td>Vice principal</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>26 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debra</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>21 years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Della</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>27 years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
<td>23 years</td>
<td>23 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derek</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>30 years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ted</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>26 years</td>
<td>31 years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teresa</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>13 years</td>
<td>31 years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tessa</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>16 years</td>
<td>22 years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Peter is in his thirty-first year in education and in his seventh year as principal of Secondary School Site II. He has fourteen years of experience as a secondary school principal and four years of experience as a secondary school vice principal in the school board in the study. As well, Peter has served as president of the local secondary school
teachers' federation during his tenure with the board, an experience which he believes "was most beneficial" during the grade 9 change initiative.

Peter has an extensive background in vocational education, as a teacher, assistant to the principal, and principal. In fact, he comments that it was by choice that he started his teaching career in a vocational school. He recalls that he "had heard stories about vocational schools" and he decided that "if it's that tough, I'll find out right away if I like teaching." Recalling his first year of teaching, he indicates: "I found that I liked those kids," and consequently, he has spent much of his educational career in vocational school settings. With reference to his background and training and the types of changes that were going to take place, with the closure of the neighbouring vocational school and the movement of the students from the vocational school to Secondary School Site II, Peter suggests that he probably "had the best experience to handle the situation" and explains: "That's why I chose Secondary School Site II."

Terry, one of the interview participants, describes Peter as "the very best cheerleader we have ever had," and indicates that that "he is good for this school" because "he always likes to work with" what Terry refers to as "the underdog." Ted, another interview participant, suggests that "Peter always wants a school that serves its community the best way it can." According to Peter, his arrival at Secondary School Site II prior to the changes due to the vocational school closure and the grade 9 initiative, enabled him "to get to know the staff and the community" and "to get organized." For Peter, being organized entails having a sound "knowledge base," and making a "good first impression." He emphasizes the importance of planning and "doing your homework when you get into a job" and adds: "It doesn't matter whether it's a principal or any job,
the first couple of months are the most important ones.” Peter points out that, once appointed as principal of Secondary School Site II, that he “did a lot of work” over the summer to prepare for his new role in the school in the fall.

Peter suggests that part of his style is to “lead by example.” According to 79 percent of the questionnaire respondents, he sets a positive example for teachers and other staff. Similarly, 82 percent say that he demonstrates regularly his commitment to what the school is trying to accomplish, 75 percent add that he assists staff in working together toward common school goals and 75 percent indicate that Peter supports and participates in school-initiated changes. Further, while 79 percent indicate that Peter has expectations for excellence, quality, and high performance on the part of all staff, 75 percent suggest that he is equally concerned about people, as well as results.

Although Vernon attests to Peter’s “tremendous people skills, care, and concern,” from his experience, Vernon maintains that with this style, Peter doesn’t necessarily “empower people to get involved, he expects people to get involved!” Vernon believes that Peter “understands what he needs to have happen” but he also feels that Peter “doesn’t really appreciate what it is that people need to know and should be learning to do the job.” Related to this perception, only 50 percent of the questionnaire respondents report that Peter encourages teachers to develop new knowledge and skills to assist them in their work, and an even smaller number (29%) suggest that Peter takes time to follow up on jobs that have been assigned to staff. On the other hand, some of the staff members interviewed perceive Peter’s style as allowing them “to get on with the job.” For example, Ted explains:
He will allow a committee to form, a leader to come up, whoever the leader is, and let them go ahead. You haven’t got him breathing down your neck, but at the same time, if you want him, he’s available. Although he doesn’t expect you to check back, he leaves it up to you to go to him, as you need to.

Similarly, Debra, another interview participant, suggests that “Peter may get more out of people, if he lets them experience stuff themselves.” From a personal perspective, she claims: “I’m more apt to try a couple of things, rather than somebody saying you can’t do that.”

Although Peter indicates that he has always had “an open door policy,” he acknowledges that he’s “finding it more difficult to do now because of all the demands being placed upon principals.” Because he believes strongly in direct communication with staff, Peter points out that he is searching for other ways “to still communicate with staff.” He believes that regular monthly staff meetings, which include “secretaries and caretakers,” are a “vehicle for input” and a method to “communicate with staff.” He also emphasizes: “It’s a gathering point” and provides an opportunity “to recognize people.” He suggests that, given the “negative stuff from outside, at least you can feel good about your own school.” He comments: “We’re doing a lot more recognition from within now because of the pressures outside the school.” While 89 percent of the questionnaire respondents indicate that school administrators share the credit for successes with teachers 68 percent state that teacher accomplishments are recognized within their departments and 60 percent say that teacher accomplishments are recognized by school administrators.

Although 78 percent of the questionnaire respondents indicate that there is effective communication between their department and school administrators, Peter
continues to be concerned about his ability to communicate with staff: “As a result of downloading, I’m involved with even more people now. I hate to go to appointments, but I may have to go to a happy medium.” Peter feels that because of the times, as a principal “you have to go out of your way to be accessible to people.” Although he doesn’t want to suggest the term “godfather,” he indicates that “it’s in that sense that you have to be all things to all people.” Regarding his relationship with his staff, Peter states:

I don’t think you can take viewpoints, one way or the other. I think you have to be open to different viewpoints and let the staff know and I think they know me, that I will respect everybody’s opinion and I think I have been very successful in doing that.

Peter stresses the importance of trying to “get consensus in a group” and understands the value of “that feeling of togetherness, that unity” that you must have for such a process to take place. However, he also realizes that when you make decisions, “if you have everybody thinking like you do, you don’t get honest input.” Therefore, he recognizes the value of having “different personalities” on staff, “different leadership styles of department heads, and different styles of teachers.” Consequently, he notes that he has taken some staff that others in the system have referred to “as difficult people.” He adds:

But to me, the priority is are they an excellent teacher and do they like kids and if that’s the case, then I can work around the other things. I can bring them on side. I think I have enough energy to eventually change their view.

Based on his observations, Vernon emphasizes that indeed, “Peter would do things like that and eventually he would wear people down. And eventually the staff would just say: ‘Oh here’s another change,’ and they became accepting of it.” Similarly, Teresa submits: “Some may not agree with him, but sooner or later, he’ll get you thinking his way.”
Several interview participants refer to Peter as a “catalyst” for change, with an “infectious spirit.” For example, Dennis comments: “Someone has to get the staff on board and I think that’s what happened.” Ted also acknowledges “that had it not been for Peter, the changes at Secondary School Site II probably would not have occurred as they did.” Peter is no stranger to change, as the result of “a great deal of change” in his own personal life from early childhood. Although he believes that his background has helped him in the grade 9 change initiative he adds: I’m not saying it’s the driving force because I also think the energy level I have and the ideas I have are part of it.” Many of those interviewed speak of Peter’s high energy and activity level. According to Della, an interview participant: “I’ve never seen anyone quite like Peter. He’s definitely one of a kind. He’s so enthusiastic that you’d be hard pressed not to go along with him.” While several interview participants recognize Peter’s ability to “infiltrate the school,” from Vernon’s experience, “Peter’s mind is always working and he’s not always focused on what you’re talking about. Peter’s always got a million things he’s doing. He throws balls in the air and somebody has to catch them.” Ted points out, as well: “Sometimes trying to pin him down is not easy. You’ve got to take a hammer and nails with you when you want to talk with him.” In addition, Dennis speculates: “I don’t think people would want to see two Peters in the office, because that would be too much.” Vernon’s following statement reflects the feelings expressed by many of those interviewed: “While they really like him, he drives them crazy. But they really like him.” From his own point of view, as a vice principal, Vernon acknowledges, however: “Peter is certainly interesting and I enjoyed the challenge.”
While Peter admits that he has a tendency “to run the school with passion and to run it with a lot of energy” and that he looks for school leaders and teachers with “that same type of energy,” he also realizes “that’s very difficult,” because “a lot depends on their own situation in the school, how they feel about themselves, their home situation, and their families.” Consequently, he concludes: “It’s difficult because I don’t think you can teach energy. I think you can teach skills but I think in that respect, it’s part of your personality.”

Recognizing that the times are changing and that “the old ways won’t work,” Peter stresses the need to look ahead and to “try to adjust to that.” An example he provides is that of the traditional role of the secondary school vice principal, which he emphasizes: “We are trying to change.” He suggests that while he wants “them to be more congenial,” he also recognizes that that school change initiative has made this role more difficult because of the number of vice principals that have been assigned to the school since he has been there. He recalls that since the grade 9 change initiative began, there have been two experienced vice principals and three “rookie vice principals come in.” From that perspective, he suggests that consistency has been difficult to achieve, as has the development of a cohesive administrative team. As well, Peter acknowledges that he has spent a lot of time with the new vice principals helping them to develop their skills and with the experienced vice principals helping them to recognize the need for changes in their role. He believes that he has been successful, to some extent with several, but not all of the vice principals, although he feels that many of the staff still expect the traditional vice principal role to be in place.
Although Peter has attempted to change many of the traditions of the school, one tradition that he has carried on, which he believes is important and “very positive” is “to have the first social at the principal’s house.” He suggests: “It’s one of the best decisions I ever made. The attendance was almost 100 percent. It’s the power of the job.”

When asked why he selected the staff that he chose as interview participants, Peter comments: “They are the staff who have been involved in the school change initiative and they’re involved people in the school,” so that they are not what he refers to as “one dimensional.” He explains: “They’re not only involved in their subject area but are also involved in the school, either through committees or the nature of their job involves them with more than one subject area.” He concludes: “So that’s basically the reason, to get an overall view of the school, not just subject specific.”

Vergil began his educational career thirty-four years ago at Secondary School Site II. He has had teaching assignments in a variety of subject areas and experience as a department head in several secondary schools in the system. Nine years ago, Vergil was appointed to his first vice principalship. Following vice principal experience in three other secondary schools, Vergil returned to Secondary School Site II as a vice principal in the year of the study. Although Vergil was not at the school during the initiation and implementation phases of the grade 9 change initiative, he has been involved in the continuation phase of the process. Vergil has an interest in the grade 9 change initiative, from two perspectives: “making changes for the good of the kids” and “helping make it easier for teachers as they are making the changes.” He explains that if staff want a change, he is “willing to try to help them make the changes, providing that it is in the best interests of the kids.” He believes that “there is a lot of strength in the staff at Secondary
School Site II” and he has welcomed the opportunity to be involved in the grade 9 continuation phase, where he has observed that “changes are still occurring to respond to the needs of the kids and the teachers.”

Vernon came to Secondary School Site II in his first vice principal role the same year that Peter was appointed as the principal. Vernon has a long time affiliation with Secondary School Site II, as a former student, coach, and student teacher. He explains: “Going to Secondary School Site II was going back to a school that I knew, people that I knew. There were several parents that I had gone to school with who were now parents of students at the school.”

Vernon has had a variety of secondary school teaching experiences during his twenty-six year educational career in the school board, including system level responsibilities where, he suggests, he had many opportunities to explore “a variety of leadership styles.” Regarding his own leadership style, he indicates that he is “somewhat organized and linear and wanting things to progress and wanting to know how they finished and evaluate how they finished.” Although Vernon states that his own leadership style is contrary to that of Peter, as far as his attention “to the big picture,” organization, detail, and follow through are concerned, he believes that his style was complimentary to Peter during the grade 9 undertaking at Secondary School Site II. He recalls: “The energy between the two of us, at times, was astounding! For a first assignment as vice principal, Secondary School Site II was absolutely incredible. I got to do so much. I learned so much.”

Vernon recalls that in his first year as vice principal, as he was learning the job, “it was very much the traditional vice principal type thing” but he maintains:
It was a critical year because people got to know me and I got to know them. And if I said I was going to do something, it got done and if I was going to meet with someone or we were planning something, that happened. There was the follow through. So I think my reputation got established in the first year. The second year, when we got into the Ministry pilot with planning and budget, I did that. I sat down with the department heads and said: 'We've got all this work to do, all this organization to do and if we don't do it, it's not going to happen.' My goal was to make that group of heads the most powerful group that had ever existed in the school.

According to Dennis, "Vernon was somewhat instrumental in carrying the ball, as far as what took place at Secondary School Site II. Vernon emphasizes his propensity for change and recalls the frustrations that he faced early in his career in a department that had difficulty "coming to terms with change." Consequently, he expresses his appreciation for the opportunity to be involved with the Steering Committee and to use his "people and organization skills" to work with a group of people who were "really keen" and "progressive," although "anxious," in undertaking the grade 9 change initiative at Secondary School Site II. He acknowledges that these experiences, undoubtedly, helped him to learn about the importance of "involving staff" in developing school directions and empowering them to "take leadership in the school" in order to accomplish these directions. Vernon concludes: "Focus, organization, and delegation help staff make good use of their time, and makes sense, in terms of the larger scheme and what you're trying to do." While acknowledging the many positive experiences during his tenure at Secondary School Site II, Vernon indicates that his biggest disappointment was the inability of the principal and vice principals to "come together in some kind of meaningful way as an administrative team. We didn't communicate. We didn't work together."
Debra, with twenty-one years of experience in secondary education, came to Secondary School Site II fourteen years ago, as a teacher. She has been a department head in the school for seven years and was a member of the Steering Committee for the grade 9 initiative. Vernon refers to Debra as a “very strong and quiet leader in the school,” who is “well organized and willing to do extra stuff to make things better.” Not only has Debra played an active role in the grade 9 school change initiative, but also she has a sense of the history of the school prior to the undertaking.

Della, in her fourth year at Secondary School Site II, has a total of twenty-seven years of teaching experience in the school system in the study. She came to the school during the initial phase of the grade 9 change, with five years of experience in a vocational school setting and eighteen years in elementary schools. Della has an extensive background in special education, particularly in working with students with lower academic ability. She suggests that she elected to come to Secondary School Site II because of the leadership opportunities that were available in the area of special education, particularly as they related to the changes that were being initiated within the school.

Dennis, who has been at Secondary School Site II for twenty-three years, started out there as a first year teacher. During this time period, Dennis has undertaken a variety of different teaching and leadership experiences in the school. He has taught in three different subject areas and was appointed as assistant to the principal for the school year prior to the initiation of the grade 9 school change. Although not directly involved with the teaching of grade 9 over the past four years, Dennis has been a member of the Steering Committee for the grade 9 initiative and his assignment has involved his
association with all the departments in the school. Consequently, not only does Dennis have a sense of the history of the school but also he has an overall perspective regarding the entire school-initiated change process.

**Derek** is in his fifth year at Secondary School Site II. In total, he has thirty years of experience as a secondary school educator in the school system, teaching grades 9 to 12/OAC. During the first twenty-four years of his career, Derek taught in a particular subject area in three other secondary schools. After his first year at Secondary School Site II, Derek made a significant change in his career path and since then, he has been involved in a school assignment that enables him to work with all departments in the school. Although not directly involved with the grade 9 initiative, Derek has been very supportive of the teaching staff during the process.

**Ted** has been a secondary school teacher for thirty-one years, including the first five years “abroad” and the past twenty-six years at Secondary School Site II. Ted indicates that although he has been teaching general and advanced level courses in grades 9 to 12/OAC for several years, his “early teaching career began in an inner city school” where he had varied teaching experiences with “students who ranged from the reasonably bright to the extremely weak.” He believes that his inner city background, prior to coming to Secondary School Site II, enables him to understand student needs from a different perspective. Although he emphasizes that he cares about all students, Ted comments about his concern for the weaker academic students: “I’ve always been very interested in doing the best I can for students at that level.” According to Tessa, one of the interview participants, Ted’s department was a “frontrunner in the grade 9 change initiative.” Ted explains why this may have occurred:
If you've got a narrow academic background, your ability to embrace a wide change is reduced, or potentially so. In our department, because of varied experiences, we could look back at what we had seen in the past and have some idea what was in store for us. All of us in the department had long experience with downtown schools. We had experience with the customers we expected and I think that was important because I think it did stop us from looking at things from a purely academic viewpoint.

Ted suggests, however:

If anybody had asked me before we got into this, I would have said we were a pretty conservative lot. So, in a sense we made the changes in self-defense. We figured it’s inevitable, so let’s get on with it. We were willing skeptics.

He indicates that no one in the department was “dead set against making the change” and he comments, accordingly:

We talked around it and I think the very least anybody said was, well, it’s the best of a bad job, but we knew we were going to have very basic level students in the school and destreaming was going to happen. Once we bought the idea, and that didn’t take very long, the idea was then, how do we make it work? Let’s go for it.

**Teresa** has eleven years of teaching experience, with the first six years spent in the neighbouring vocational school that closed. Teresa came to Secondary School Site II five years ago as part of the vocational teacher transfer. Teresa was involved not only “in the transition of vocational staff and students” but also “in the design and development of one of the vocational programs” at Secondary School Site II. When Teresa came to the school, the implementation phase of the grade 9 change was beginning, and as a result, she indicates: “I became involved with the change, once I made the transfer, so I’ve been able to view the change from two perspectives.” Regarding her experience with the grade 9 change initiative, Teresa recalls that although she had “her differences with the grade 9 program,” she said from the beginning: “Let’s give it a try.” She explains: “You
shouldn't always look into the past because you should be ready for change.” However, Teresa is quick to add: “Providing it is in students’ best interests.” Although she doesn’t agree with all aspects of the grade 9 change initiative, she comments on the importance of teacher flexibility in initiating change:

If you’re a good enough teacher, you’ll modify program. And you can see that early. Then you’ll make changes for that student. I know that I do because I always want the kids to succeed. I always tell them it’s a two-team effort, you and me both and we’ll get you through this. So I will make concessions and I’m sure that most teachers will do that for the student.

Along with her flexibility and ability to modify programs Teresa also indicates that she has “a high energy level, similar to Peter,” but that she believes “in task completion.” Teresa explains: “When I start something, I believe in finishing it. I believe in student success and I’ll work my heart out for the students.” Teresa also emphasizes: “I’m a firm believer that kids need structure.” While she sees both “the positive and the negative” aspects of destreaming, she contends that students “need structure and guidance, regardless of what some of these destreaming concepts may say that we have to develop in the students.”

**Terry** has been a teacher at Secondary School Site II for thirteen years. During his thirty-one year secondary school teaching career, Terry has taught in a particular subject area, including eighteen years in three other secondary schools. Terry is especially “proud” of “the strength of the department” he is in and “how it’s developed” with “very capable individuals” during his tenure at Secondary School Site II.
Although Terry indicates that “a number of departments got into it very quickly,”
Terry’s department did not initiate changes to the grade 9 program until the second year
of the project “because many didn’t see the advantages for the students.” He explains:

We weren’t ready to jump in at that time because we had to work things out. We wanted to make things work and we wanted to make sure. We didn’t want an on-the-job type learning situation. We wanted to do things but we also had to learn first.

While Terry acknowledges that he and many teachers in his department questioned the
value of destreaming, he emphasizes:

I think you’ve got to go into it with a positive attitude, that it’s going to happen, whether you agree with it or not, and you’ve got to find a way to make it work. And we found a way to make it work for the grade 9s and it’s worked for other grades, as well.

Despite the department’s staying behind for a year in the process of grade 9 curriculum
changes, Terry recalls that as they got underway, that there was a lot of “trial and error,”
in the department, not unlike that which occurred in other departments in their earlier endeavours.

For Terry, what makes a good teacher is “knowledge and the ability to get to the
simple language so you can get to a kid’s level.” He stresses the importance of
“attendance, punctuality, and equipment as important tools” and emphasizes that “if
you’re going to go to work, you have to have your tools. If you haven’t got your tools,
you can’t work.” He maintains that he has always been particularly interested in the
transition of students from elementary to secondary school, and according to Derek, once
Terry’s department got underway in the grade 9 change initiative, it has been Terry who
“has taken the bull by its horns and has been meeting with the middle schools, because of
that concern with the bridge.”
During this process of discussing "the type of individuals [they] would be getting in the grade 9 classes," Terry remembers thinking about the concerns that they had and how they would deal with the "deficiencies" and the lack of readiness of the students for the new grade 9 program. He remembers that it was really an "eye opener" and that they realized how much work had to be done in getting ready for the grade 9 students. During the past four years, Terry has also spent some of his instructional time teaching in the learning resource room to assist students with special needs in meeting the expectations set out for his particular subject area. With regard to some of the changes he has observed in the students in the new grade 9 program, Terry comments: "Regardless of what you have, if you aim high, you get more than what you would get if you aimed somewhere in the middle."

Tessa came to Secondary School Site sixteen years ago, following a brief experience in vocational education and four years in one other secondary school. Tessa and Terry are in the same subject department and continue to work together in fostering the elementary to secondary school transition and in establishing high standards for grade 9 students. Like Terry, Tessa recalls that although their department started out later than other departments in planning for the grade 9 program delivery changes, what they came up with "influenced the other grades, as well, in a really positive sense." She suggests that the changes are still ongoing and says: "We're still learning. It hasn't stopped." While Tessa recognizes that she has had to make many changes, she also acknowledges that change requires "extra work" and that for some teachers, change takes them "out of their comfort zone" because they "have to do something that is different." While she is
not sure whether she is a risk taker, Tessa does acknowledge that “you always have to look for better ways,” which, in effect, “does involve some risk sometimes.”

Questionnaire Respondents

From a total of 63 questionnaires distributed to Secondary School Site II, 28 were completed and returned. Of the 28 respondents, 54 percent currently teach grade 9 and 93 percent have had previous experience in the grade 9 program. While the respondents do not represent all subject areas in the school, there are a variety of subjects represented, as well as a variety of teaching backgrounds and experiences. Years of teaching experience range from less than 5 years to over 20 years, with the majority of respondents having been at the school from 3 to 10 years. While the age range of most respondents is from 30 years to over 50 years, the majority are between 30 to 49 years of age. There are 14 percent of the respondents with previous elementary school experience and 18 percent with previous vocational school experience. Eighteen females and 10 males responded to the questionnaire.

Table 8. Summary of Background Information About the Questionnaire Respondents at Secondary School Site II by Percentage (N=28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Specific Experience</th>
<th>Years at School</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 yrs.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1-2 yrs.</td>
<td>-30 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 yrs.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3-5 yrs.</td>
<td>30-39 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 yrs.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>6-10 yrs.</td>
<td>40-49 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-19 yrs.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11-19 yrs.</td>
<td>50+ yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+ yrs.</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20+ yrs.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of the respondents (96%) agree that the prime purpose of secondary school-initiated change should be to improve student learning and 89 percent indicate that school-initiated change has more potential for successful continuation than externally mandated change. There is an indication by 96 percent of the respondents that all teachers should have the opportunity to be involved in the planning stage, including why the change is being considered, as well as how to implement the change. The fact that most teachers should agree with the school-initiated change before implementation begins is supported by 79 percent of the respondents. The majority (88%) indicate that time for planning is essential and 96 percent suggest the need for supportive leadership from a number of in school persons. Similarly 96 percent note the significance of an action plan while 84 percent confirm the importance of building evaluation procedures into the process from the beginning. Additionally, 81 percent agree that support from parents is necessary and 71 percent consider support from students as necessary for successful school-initiated change. The inevitability of conflict during the course of change is recognized by 92 percent of the respondents while 96 percent indicate that collaborative interaction among staff is essential to the success of school-initiated change. Teacher use of new strategies and practices as necessary for successful school-initiated change is noted by 81 percent of the questionnaire respondents.

**Reasons for the Specific Change**

According to Dennis, not too long after the Ministry announcement about grade 9 destreaming Peter and Vernon approached the staff about the possibility of becoming involved in the Ministry grade 9 pilot project. Generally speaking, all the interview
participants indicated that staff responded in a positive manner. Dennis suggests why this may have occurred:

At the time, I was here as assistant to Peter and Vernon and the enthusiasm that they brought into the school, I think was very important. I think the most important thing from staff’s point of view was that they laid out right from the beginning what was going to happen and I think that was fresh in education because that doesn’t always happen. It’s sometimes laid on. We’re going to do it and we’re going to make it work. But this time they came to the staff and made the staff part of it right from the beginning, even before the proposal was put together, they came to the staff and said this is what we’d like to do. Do you think it will fly? And everybody kind of grabbed on and said, yes, let’s make it work.

Debra adds:

If it had just been presented to staff that this is going to happen, it wouldn’t have worked because already we had staff who might have been a bit apprehensive about changes that were going to come about by incorporating another group of students. We cast a secret ballot, the whole staff voted and I think the understanding was made pretty clear that everybody had to agree or we would not go forward with it. That it wasn’t fifty or sixty percent, but everybody had to be in agreement or we wouldn’t do it.

Dennis indicates that during the presentation “it was very clear that if people liked the idea, but would prefer to be somewhere else, that they would do their utmost to accommodate them to move to another school.” He explains:

Everybody knew at the outset, what was going to happen, what role the Ministry was going to play in it, the fact that there was going to be some money available, who the players would be. It was very well laid out. No one could ever say, I didn’t know they were going to do that. Everybody knew what was going on at the onset because they wanted it to be successful and they wanted to make sure everybody was going to be a stakeholder in the process.

With regard to the vocational school staff Dennis comments:

They also had the opportunity to determine where they wished to be accommodated. So I think it was a very considerate type of approach. I don’t think anybody was left out.
And pertaining to Secondary School Site II staff, he observes:

I don’t think there was a lot of turnover, as far as staff was concerned and they were offered the opportunity. If you don’t want to do this and you want to leave, that’s fine.

Adding this comment, Debra emphasizes:

The enthusiasm from Peter and Vernon was really impossible not to catch. They just looked at it as such a positive thing for the school and what the long-term benefits would be for the school and we just got swept up in that.

Debra also suggests:

It was kind of exciting to be involved in something new and something that was going to be different and I think the staff kind of looked down the line and saw it coming anyway. People knew and said let’s be the first and not wait till the timelines were so short we were going to be forced to make changes. This way we had more time.

Ted confirms Debra’s observation. He indicates that with the vocational students coming to the school, “that meant that Secondary School Site II was going to have basic level programming, which it never had before and we understood that.” He continues: “Destreaming was going to happen, so we figured we were much better to start from the ground floor than anywhere else. We figured it was inevitable, so let’s get on with it.” Ted also suggests that the thinking at that time was that “we were perhaps in a better position to make changes because we could be more critical of what we were doing.” He indicates that rather than waiting to be told what to do, “we said we’d rather have a look at it before it started officially.”

Although Debra suggests that the key reason behind the changes to the grade 9 program was due to staff perceptions “that the changes that we were being asked to
implement were beneficial to students,” she comments on an additional reason for staff undertaking the grade 9 change initiative:

One thing we looked at, it was a way to take advantage of some money that might be available that was designated for the grade 9 program but that would also benefit us, in terms of some of the other changes we saw we would have to put in place because of the vocational students coming. That we could balance the two, so changing the grade 9 program would benefit right through.

The Change Process: Initiation, Implementation, Continuation

Initiation: Supportive Influences

Once the staff made the decision and the pilot proposal was approved, Derek suggests that “Secondary School Site II kind of took front stage in the development of destreaming.” He indicates that “a number of departments got into it very quickly.” A Steering Committee, which included Vernon, a project leader, and department head representatives, was established to determine timelines, staff needs, and procedures to facilitate the grade 9 change process. According to Vernon, “the Steering Committee was really keen. The project leader played a very large part because she had developed a curriculum in her department and now she was setting things up to help other people do that, as well.” As a member of the Steering Committee, Debra comments: “I can remember having several meetings going through what was happening and what needed to happen next.” Although Peter was invited to participate in the Steering Committee meetings, he assumed a supportive role in the planning and became more involved in the public relations and in-service aspects of the initiative.

Ted indicates that “the staff, in the subject areas that decided to go ahead for the first year, had effectively 9 months to plan the reorganization of curriculum and the
change in the delivery of the grade 9 program.” For the most part, the teachers in the departments worked individually on the development of new courses but with a significant amount of time and support offered by the school board’s curriculum support staff. Ted points out the value of this assistance: “They were a tremendous help. Without that, we couldn’t have gotten off the ground.” Ted also indicates that the involvement of Peter and the vice principals with the curriculum planning “was more a matter of you have my blessing, please go for it, rather than active, right in there with us type support.” He adds:

Their expertise was not in the subject areas, although they were interested in what we were doing. They took the ideas and suggested how others might get on board. This is where indirectly, they proved to be very supportive. They handled the Ministry end of it and believe me, that was a very important end of it.

Regular in-service was integral to the initiation phase at Secondary School Site II. As Peter indicates: “We did a lot of in-servicing with our staff the first year, so they knew what was going on.” He emphasizes: “To me, that’s the key in any change. You’ve got to give the people the information. Information takes away from the fear, apprehensions and concern about the unknown.” He comments: “One of our vice principals was tremendous at that. She had great strengths in professional development.” Terry also recalls that “Peter arranged trips where the whole staff was able to visit schools already in destreaming.” Tessa refers to the value of “the special education course that Peter introduced.” Through funds allocated to the pilot project, Peter arranged for the local faculty of education to offer a special education course at the school for interested staff members. Peter comments: “I’m proud that twelve of the fourteen department heads took the course.” As one of the twelve department heads, Debra recalls that “there was
representation from each department, so they could go back to their department members with the things they had learned.” According to Dennis, the very fact that the course was provided and that a large number of staff took the special education course “showed a real commitment that this was really going to take place.” He observes what happened during the special education course:

It became almost a gathering. The idea was to get the special education program but it was also a time for discussion on what was happening through the school. We had people from the vocational school come over and talk to us so we kind of got to know them. They weren’t just the other school. There was a little bit of sharing going back and forth. It was an opportunity to socialize to a certain extent with people in the group so it was just one more thing to solidify the whole process.

Dennis notes that staff meetings also provided a method of communicating information: “We had staff meetings where this was the primary topic.” In many instances, the updates “took the form of a small in-service” with memos prepared to keep staff informed between the meetings. Debra adds that Secondary School Site II staff were not only kept apprised regularly but that the Home and School Association and the Student Council were also kept informed throughout this stage of the change initiative. She points out: “We set up storefront kind of things where vocational staff presented little bits of their program to help the Secondary School Site II teachers as they were developing new grade 9 programs.” Teresa recalls that with regard to “any suggestions that we had, as vocational teachers, they were willing to sit there and listen to us.” She credits the Peter and vice principals for their leadership and understanding and commends the teachers for their supportive role, as well. She continues: “There was nothing that was under the table.” “The kids were fully aware of everything” and “the parents were brought in, as well.”
During the initiation phase, Peter suggests that because the trust of the community had been established the community went along with the proposed changes. As well, because the changes were publicized in the media and the school had a high profile, he indicates "that the people in the community, at that time, backed off."

According to Debra, the Guidance department held a series of meetings with the elementary feeder schools, as well, "to inform them about what was going to be happening at the school." To facilitate the transition, Dennis comments on the additional procedures undertaken by the Guidance staff:

I can recall them actually bringing students over on a one-to-one type basis. They wanted the transition to be comfortable and smooth and so they wanted to include them as much as possible before it actually took place just to kind of get rid of any ideas they may have about the school.

Peter recounts the support that they received from a variety of external sources:

We had the go ahead from the Federation, the Board, and the Superintendent. I think the Federation trusted me a little bit more because of my background there. So that did go a long way, but I don’t apologize for that, that’s using some of your strengths. I think both sides thought of me, hey, if I needed this, this is what I needed. I think I was respected in that way.

Debra adds:

I think knowing that we had that support from the Board, that we wouldn’t be left by ourselves to develop this program, and that there was money available to visit other schools, to go to conferences, to get ideas, that really helped to make people understand that this should be manageable and not too difficult to do."

**Initiation: Hindering Influences**

Although the staff made the decision collectively to undertake the grade 9 pilot project, not all departments began curriculum development during the first year. As a member of one of the departments that held back, Terry suggests that they did not all
believe "that destreaming was in the best interests of students" in their subject area and that they wanted some reassurance that this was going to happen before undertaking significant curriculum changes. While Vernon expresses his concerns about the lack of unanimity from the beginning, other interview participants, like Ted, indicate: "We got on with the job anyway, on the understanding that the other two departments would follow our lead." Dennis also recalls that "although they did not come on board at the same time, they did give a time when they would come on board." In the meantime, the staff from the two departments attended regular updates on the project and took part in school visitations to learn as much as they could about what was happening in other school boards. Consequently, although the initiative began on a broken front, those not involved actively from the beginning did not attempt to undermine others who were developing new curriculum.

**Implementation: Supportive Influences**

While Dennis suggests that "the first year, it was pretty well run out of the main office" through Vernon and the Steering Committee, in the second he maintains that "already, at that time, the leadership roles were spread more amongst staff and away from the administration."

Although Teresa admits that Secondary School Site II has "different rules" and a different philosophy" than they had at the vocational school, she indicates that she has found the staff of Secondary School Site II "most receptive" to the teachers who transferred in from the vocational school. She also points out that, even initially, the vocational school teachers "didn't cluster." She comments: "We were teaching all over in different areas and occasionally we'd bypass one another or see one another in the staff
room or cafeteria.” Teresa also recalls that “the new teachers were involved on the various committees that had been set up in the school.” From the beginning, Teresa indicates: “The teachers were willing to help one another. The special education department was superb. They came around to various teachers and asked if they needed any assistance with modifying programs.” As vocational teachers, she says: “We were used to flexibility, we were used to changing programs on a daily basis, so it wasn’t difficult for us.” She recalls how staff interaction occurred during the first year of the implementation:

I can remember some of the teachers would ask some of us from the vocational school, how did we handle certain situations in the classroom and I think it was a little bit more difficult for them than it was for us. But they were willing to share, work with us and modify programs and were most receptive to the teachers that were coming over to Secondary School Site II.

Della confirms Teresa’s experiences and suggests:

One of the other things that facilitated change in this school was that people weren’t afraid to make mistakes and to mention it to one another. There wasn’t the idea that you had to be perfect or even excellent all the time. If you had an idea and you went with it and it failed, that was okay, too. So people felt a lot more comfortable in that kind of environment.

Debra also recalls that “a lot of sharing took place at the beginning, in terms of classroom teaching strategies.” Teachers would “adapt from one program to try in another classroom and nobody would question why did you take it when it was mine.” She indicates “that kind of thing” happened “a lot” and teachers, for the most part, were “very supportive.” Although Terry’s department did not begin planning at the same time as most other departments, he comments on his department’s experiences, once they got underway: “We experimented initially. We had to devise a lot of different strategies and
some of the strategies were done by trial and error at the beginning because we were never quite certain." As the teachers worked with the students and found out their strengths and weaknesses, he acknowledges:

We had to do things quite differently and we had to change our philosophy to make it work. Because there are different strengths in different teachers, for some certain things worked out and for others, other things worked.

Tessa emphasizes that "the department head and assistant head had active leadership roles in all this." As well, the teachers in the department were instrumental in "varying things." She adds: "Everybody sort of worked together to come up with a lot of excellent ideas to deal with the type of students we had here." She compliments Terry for his work "in making things better" and for his "excellent suggestions in making this work."

Debra observes that during the course of the implementation that "most department heads have tried, as much as possible, to involve as many people in their department, as possible teaching grade 9." She explains:

There are a couple of people who just teach grade 9, but in a lot of cases, I would think, by this time, just about everybody has had some experience for the first couple of years. To keep it consistent, one person would get a handle on it and then in-service other members of their department.

With regard to his department, Ted discusses the reasons for having several teachers involved in teaching grade 9:

We tried to get as many people involved in teaching the grade 9, as possible. We knew it was going to be a lot of hard work in terms of marking and so on, so we were trying to avoid having anybody teach more than one line of grade 9 in a semester and having teachers teaching other things, as well, including grade 10s. To a considerable extent, the same people who were teaching grade 9 were teaching grade 10, so that some of
the changes that we made in the grade 9 program have reflected what we’ve seen in grade 10.”

Other departments and staff members were helpful, as well. According to Teresa, “the Guidance department staff were great. They were trying to accommodate the students’ timetables, especially in the shops areas where there were problems.” Additionally, Debra indicates that the addition of a new staff member in the library “brought a new level of enthusiasm and new ideas to make the grade 9 program more beneficial by doing things via the library.”

Della indicates that as a result of the special education course offering at the school the previous year a lot of the teachers became involved in the learning resource program on a part time basis. She suggests that this approach was taken because of Peter’s concern for the need for more special education support for the students. Della was instrumental in providing in-service and mentoring of teachers who undertook this role. The advantage, as she sees it, is that it has given her “a chance to work with almost everybody in the whole school, at one time or another.” She indicates that “through the resource room, they got a new understanding of special education and all the work that is involved.” She also suggests that “they would go back to their departments and explain what is really going on there.” Although Della admits: “It meant a lot of in-servicing and it was very difficult, at times, to get to my own caseload when I was doing a lot of those consultative things with other people,” she acknowledges the importance of having a variety of other staff members and their styles involved with the students “to the betterment of the students who get help here.”
Debra also recalls: "The first few years it was kind of nice. We had a smaller grade 9 class." According to Dennis, this was due "to a section in the contract, the Secondary School Site II Clause, which was negotiated." He adds: "And again it helped the whole situation, right from people saying, okay, we are a little bit different. We are going to be treated a little bit different so there is more reason to make it work." In this regard, Terry points out:

We were pioneers, in essence, because we were into this earlier than anybody else. So we produced a lot of materials that were available to others. We produced different concepts. We showed them different concepts than what they were used to.

Peter alludes to another feature of the grade 9 initiative that assisted in the implementation:

The first couple of years, we had a lot of public recognition. When people came to our school they would talk to the teachers and see things. We had tours. We could have hired a tour guide. So that helped.

When visitors came to the school, Debra indicates that "Vernon was extremely supportive in getting supply teachers in to free us up to be with these visitors. She continues: "It was so nice to have that opportunity to talk to people from elsewhere."

**Implementation: Hindering Influences**

Despite the extensive planning during the initiation phase, most interview participants comment on the struggles during the first year of implementation. For example, Terry observes:

This change brought to Secondary School Site II a lot of youngsters that might have had problems in some other schools and this created a whole bunch of problems because a lot of teachers were not quite prepared for the type of individuals that we were staring to get. And there were a lot of them. That created discipline problems that people didn't just quite expect.
As Ted explains, rather than a reduction in behavioural problems, the new grade 9 program, “in some cases, enhanced them.” He suggests how this may have occurred and how they dealt with it:

One of the mistakes we made, from the word go, was that we set things up on the assumption that we would get co-operation from all the kids. I’m not going to say that we didn’t get co-operation from some of them but there were a couple of things that happened to us. The first year we ran the course, there were a number of kids who came to us from the elementary schools, who were real behavioural problems, and we were totally unprepared for that. But reality sort of struck and we started talking about things and we started getting a little feedback indirectly from the feeder schools. And we realized, wait a minute, it’s not us, we’re dealing with some kids here that have a history of problems. It’s not a large number but enough to cause us a significant problem and so we tried suggesting to Peter that a little better vetting should be done on some of these kids. We also started looking at the ways in which we were managing the kids to find ways of reducing the problems. So there were a number of things that we did in response and quite candidly, we looked at some of the things we had set up in the first place and we said to ourselves, we were crazy. Because you know that when we started setting things up, we became idealistic and we lost sight of realism. And I think that is all too easy to do. You get caught up in change and you say, hey, this is exciting! And we said, hey, we’re looking forward to putting this into practice and here’s all the ideal things. And then reality hits! And you’re disappointed.

Dennis’ words also express the feelings of several other interview participants as they began to implement the grade 9 program:

There was definitely that struggle because there were people that found it very difficult. Whether it be getting caught up in the change or whether it be the type of student that we were now dealing with, as opposed to what we had up until then. There were definite problems, as far as some staff were concerned. During my time in the office, people would come in and they weren’t very happy. They were making it work but they weren’t very happy.

Another significant issue for many staff, according to Dennis, was “the great variance of [student] abilities” and “not having enough hands to get to students when they
need you.” Consequently, a lot of time was spent by departments, Guidance, and Special Education staff to determine strategies to assist classroom teachers in handling these situations. As a result, a program of peer helpers was instituted, where older students worked with the grade 9 teachers and students to assist them in their programs. As well, some grade 9 students were moved to other classes to balance the classes.

During the second year, the vice principal who had provided a great deal of professional development for staff left the school, due to illness. Peter admits:

We lost the continuity of the professional development component and we did not do as good a job for the new people that came into Secondary School Site II two and three years down the road. They should, at least know the historical background and our mission and vision.

He suggests that although the new vice principals tried to continue the in-service, it was difficult to maintain the consistency.

Another aspect that hindered the grade 9 change process during implementation was the lack of consistency in the philosophy of the vice principals that came to the school. Debra comments:

Everyone who’s new into a building brings a little bit different flavour in philosophy. I think it probably would have been beneficial if the new vice principals that came in were kind of brought up to speed, instead of just assuming that they knew what was happening.

She cites an example:

Vice principals have different ways, certainly different philosophies and different things that they believe in, in terms of discipline and while I don’t think you can say to a vice principal, this is how you have to behave when you’re here, I think it might be useful to say, in the past, we’ve encouraged staff to deal with some of the discipline problems themselves and we’ve encouraged them to call home. I don’t know if they are told that or if they just come in and impose their style and then the staff have to change.
Dennis indicates, however:

It’s remarkable, the number of vice principals that we’ve gone through but the whole thing stayed together. We have had numerous leadership styles since this change started and this place is running well, in spite of it. We’ve just kind of hung in there.

While Peter and the department heads interviewed, view the number of vice principal changes as a hindrance to the grade 9 change process, the classroom teacher interview participants offer another perspective. For example, from Ted’s experience, “having new vice principals in and out does not bother the school, generally speaking.” In fact, he indicates that he “found that they seemed to fit in” with what was happening in the school. He does suggest, however, that “having a constant at the beginning” was more critical than “the changes that were made,” once they got underway. He feels that the turnover of teachers during the implementation may be more of an impediment than the vice principal turnover, “because they don’t know what the score is so they really don’t know what can be changed” as far as classroom practices are concerned. Similarly, Teresa suggests: “I haven’t seen the change of vice principals as a major problem. However, like Ted, she feels the change in teaching staff has had an effect:

They may have different views. If you haven’t been there at the start of the process, it’s really difficult for one to understand why you’re doing things this way. It’s like anything, you know, you start a task and you want to finish it. I don’t want to hand this over to somebody else. I’m sure this was perhaps a problem. I would also think that probably people’s decisions, their input was a problem because they didn’t have the background.

From her experience, Debra points out her concerns about the problems of staff turnover in some departments:

Sometimes it’s difficult to bring new people on board and start doing something and then you remember, well that person wasn’t there a year
ago or a year and a half ago, so they don't know the history of why we may be doing things in a different way. Not that we had a lot of staff turnover, but it doesn't need to be that many. I don't know if there was anybody whose role it was to give those people the past history. We just brought them in expecting them to move from that point, instead of taking an hour or an afternoon to go through this is what we have done here.

Dennis adds:

Maybe people didn't buy into it as strong when they came in and I know of a few things where people left and nobody ever really took the ball up. Maybe it wasn't that important a part of the whole process, but still at one point, it was.

Debra continues:

And if people had known. I think if you take the time to orient when people first arrive or even in June, if they're starting in September, it could prevent problems that might have happened because people didn't understand the 'why' of something. Most new staff were people who had been in other schools so their perception of what was going on here might have been a little bit coloured from what they had heard at their school and not actually what was going on.

Ted also recalls an experience with "a rookie teacher" in the department who, he suggests "quite frankly, found it a horrendous experience to start with." Although he says the teacher "found it very tough, indeed," he indicates that the department members rallied around the teacher and provided "moral support" and "a shoulder to cry on" and to tell the teacher "as often as we could, yes, we've been there, too."

"Lack of uniformity," because two departments weren't involved from the beginning, was cited by several interview participants as another hindrance to the process. However, although they did not participate initially they also did not impede the progress being made by the staff in other departments. Nevertheless, the situation did cause some problems in staff unity because not everyone was involved in the implementation at the
same time and it was difficult to discuss issues across all departments. However, as Della points out:

Change is a process. So to expect everyone to be as enthusiastic and gung ho as Peter himself is, would be unrealistic. So the fact that some departments came in right away and that there were some holdouts, I think that's part and parcel of the change process.

Continuation: Supportive Influences

Dennis underscores the significance of staff ownership as a key in the continuation of the grade 9 initiative. He indicates that “they’ve gone down the rough road. They’ve improvised, they’ve perfected, and now they’re kind of happy with where they are in the whole scheme of things.” As a result, Dennis suggests that “now that the grade 9 program is in place,” he doesn’t “see any major changes occurring, program wise, within the school.” At the same time, he recognizes the continued flexibility and adaptability of staff as key contributors to the ongoing revisions that continue to take place in program delivery. As Teresa points out: “The staff are still positive. They adjust and they adapt, probably on a daily basis. There is always room for improvement, so if any ideas come up or ways that we can better things, we’re always open to suggestions.” Derek observes, as well: “We are continuing to evaluate the changes in the school. We may not always agree with one another but the evaluation process is ongoing.”

Debra sees the “openness” of staff, the ability to agree or disagree with one another, and the “understanding that you can say it and get it out” with “no grudges” as another important factor in the continuation of the grade 9 initiative. Ted suggests: “This approach enables them to support one another with their eyes open. They’re looking outward, they’re not just looking completely inward.” The fact that “communication is
no longer a hierarchy” Debra attributes, in part to Peter, who is willing to hear “the negatives, as well as the positives.”

According to Derek, the way in which staff cohesiveness has developed during the grade 9 change process has also contributed to its continuation, either within departments or throughout the school. He explains: “I think it’s happened because of necessity. You can’t survive here by yourself and the bigger the support group, the more legs you have holding you up.” He adds: “It’s really tough in some classrooms and if things get tougher, you need more support and you become stronger outside the classroom to sort of counteract how difficult it is in there.”

Ted also refers to the support that the staff continues to receive from the school administration as being helpful in the continuation. Despite the changes in vice principals this year, Ted suggests that “by and large, they have done what they can in trying to help staff cope with the changes.” For example, Vergil assisted staff in developing a different timetable structure for the grade 9s, in response to outcomes-based curriculum changes introduced by the Ministry and to address some staff concerns that had developed the previous year. In-service was provided on different timetables and the staff voted on the model they wanted. As a result, the grade 9 classes are now formed as cohort groups, with the “academic” subjects being taught in the morning. Class periods are still seventy-five minutes in length, with semetering of all subjects, as in the past. Vergil indicates that what has happened, as a result, is that there is now more flexibility for the teachers to exchange classes and to have more interaction with one another about a specific group of grade 9 students. From his perspective, this is a starting point but he feels that further changes can be made that will be beneficial to both the students and the
teachers. Although the timetable change has "presented some added work load for the staff," Debra suggests that "they bought into it because they bought into the grade 9 program." Speaking personally, Debra elaborates:

I think it's been a real benefit here to have gone through what we did in destreaming, how we initiated the change and the time we spent in directing that program has been a benefit as to how we are adapting to the [learning] outcomes. I think we are far ahead of what I see happening in other boards and how program is delivered. The way we deliver program makes addressing those [learning] outcomes much easier, as a teacher and for the students, as well.

In this regard, one of the questionnaire respondents comments on the benefits of the grade 9 program for the teachers: "Time spent in the grade 9 classroom was a vivid demonstration of the wide variety of abilities in the student population. Subsequently, one can spot the variations more easily in the 'streamed' classes, as well." Since most teachers in the school have either taught students in the grade 9 program or have taught students who have been in the grade 9 program, they have had the opportunity to experience the results for the students. While Terry acknowledges the "tremendous development in their [subject] ability," Ted suggests that "overall," he believes that most teachers "have felt the program has been beneficial to the grade 10s." Tessa also speaks to the results of these changes: "You don't hear the comment that this is boring anymore." Terry adds: "I've never heard one negative comment from the students, and I keep an eye on most of them."

Continuation: Hindering Influences

The grade 9 program is currently imbedded in the organizational structure of Secondary School Site II, through continued staff involvement in the deployment of resources and widely accepted practices by most of the teaching staff. However, due to
external financial restrictions and a reduced school budget, Peter points out: “That’s where the changes initiated in Secondary School Site II ran into problems this year.” One questionnaire respondent comments accordingly: “I like the idea of the grade 9 program, but we haven’t received the support needed in its continuation.” Another respondent states: “After the grade 9 change was initiated, the other changes have been reactive. For example, staffing and budget cuts have increased grade 9 class sizes and reduced resources and supplies.” Although Vergil suggests that the grade 9 class size situation could be remedied through some creative timetabling, at this point, he has not been able to discuss with the staff how this can happen. Ted concurs with Vergil and believes that “a structural change in the grade 9 program has to come next.” However, he suggests that due to the external circumstances that “people are sitting back at this point and watching the changes that have been tried elsewhere to see what works and doesn’t work well before they decide whether or not to proceed.”

Several of the interview participants comment on the “busy” nature of the school and the number of changes that have been occurring since the initiation of the grade 9 project as problematic in the continuation of the grade 9 initiative. While some staff members have accepted these changes as part of the changing times, for other staff members, according to Dennis, “thriving on change” has been replaced by “coping with change.” As one questionnaire respondent puts it: “There seemed to be too much change: every year something new, with little time provided to evaluate what was happening to the other changes.”

Another specific issue described by several interview participants as a hindrance to the continuation of the grade 9 program relates to the staffing cuts and the resulting
substantial reduction of learning resource support. According to Della, "this has not only increased the workload of all staff, but has also changed the way teachers and students receive additional support." She comments on the changes that have occurred:

When I first got here, we had a larger special education department and more resource teachers going into the classrooms. Now we are finding with the cutbacks that we haven’t got as much time to help teachers in the classrooms. So now we work more on a consultative basis. There are fewer lines in resource but the problems remain the same.

Thus, while the staff generally tend to support the in-school changes, according to Peter: "What is affecting the in-school changes now are the things that are happening outside the school." In this regard, several interview participants suggest what Della points out in the following comment:

We’re in a different atmosphere now. Just the fact that the times have changed, the whole way we look at some of those things. I think with all the pressures on teachers nowadays, with the changes that have been enforced and reading in the newspapers what an awful job we’re doing, it’s difficult to keep up with that kind of spirit. Some people are feeling a little bogged down, not necessarily for things in the school but just changes in education, in general. It takes more of an effort now to get to that feeling we had earlier.

Derek adds: “It’s the apprehension. What’s happening next?”

Outcomes of the Change

Practices

From his work with several teachers who have been involved with the grade 9 project, Derek discusses the changes in practices that he has observed to help teachers work more effectively with the grade 9 students:

With the type of kids we were having to face, you know, the old stand up, lecture in front of the room, do this and then do this and then do this, and remember, you’ve go four more other things to do, that style was not
going to work anymore. The old Socratic lesson, it just wasn’t going to work with the kids that were here.

He indicates that “individual programs, based on where they left off the previous day, was the kind of pace that some of the students really needed.” Several questionnaire respondents, in their written comments also recognize the changes in practice. One questionnaire respondent states that the grade 9 initiative “has given life to the grade 9 program.” Another respondent says:

The grade 9 program provided a new approach. This required new materials and new methods of evaluation. The management of a broad range of abilities offered new problems and challenges. Therefore plans made had to be flexible and nothing could be engraved in stone.

Similarly, several other questionnaire respondents indicate:

The grade 9 program forced teachers to consider creative, alternative programs. The nature of the program has necessitated a change from teacher-centred learning to the teacher as facilitator, due to the program’s activity-based nature. Having to deal with students of varying levels of ability necessitates a more flexible teaching approach. There has been increased use of information technology, increased collaborative planning, activity-based learning and formative evaluation. There is a need to develop a wide variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students. Sharing of material has increased. There are more conferences with colleagues and there is uniformity of curriculum taught in grade 9.

Tessa also relates how the experiences in the grade 9 program have changed her teaching methodology and that of some of her colleagues in the department: “Now we’re constantly varying things throughout. There is always something to keep their interest. They get tired of one thing and we move on to something else.”

Teresa adds her perspective on some other changes in practice. “At the beginning of the grade 9 change initiative,” she suggests that they were “trying to make it comfortable for the students,” but that as a result of their experiences with “all levels
together,” they found out that the “students function better if there are structure, guidance and rules.” Recognizing that “program delivery is very different now,” Dennis points out that it is “not just in grade 9, but right through grades 9 to 12/OAC, as a result of what we did in grade 9.” He explains: “Some of the things we did to accommodate the grade 9s have been a great benefit to other grades, as well. So there has been a carryover.” With respect to the carryover of practice to other grades, Terry explains:

Not only did we find different ways to deliver the grade 9 program but we also expanded it into our grade 10s, 11s and 12s. And we think now that we have a very effective program because of what we had to do with the grade 9s. We used that philosophy and took it to the upper grades and I think that from all the tests that we have, our students seem to measure up, certainly better than average. And I think a lot of it is because of the grade 9 change.

When asked if he would have made as significant a change in the curriculum, if the grade 9 initiative had not occurred, Ted answers: “No. I don’t think so. I think if destreaming hadn’t been looming, the only thing we would have done is introduce a basic level grade 9 course. That was a key factor.” Terry concurs and comments: “We did it because we saw a problem. We probably wouldn’t have seen a problem unless we went destreamed.” Like other interview participants and questionnaire respondents, Terry concludes: “It’s influenced the other grades too. And now that we’ve found a way to make it work in grade 9, it’s worked for other grades.

Several interview participants and questionnaire respondents comment on the increased workload and time required for preparation. One questionnaire respondent suggests that “the old fashioned way of teaching was much easier on the teacher” and adds: “I spend one-tenth of the time preparing for a grades 11/12 advanced level class
than I do for the grade 9,” while another respondent indicates: “There has been more hands on and more variety in my lessons in grades 10 to 12/OAC.”

Another change in practice that has occurred at Secondary School Site II relates to the increased behavioural problems in the school during the grade 9 change process. While staff concerns about student behaviours are not restricted to the grade 9s, according to one grade 9 questionnaire respondent: “Classroom management demands the highest priority when dealing with students of varying learning capabilities. You need to exercise strong classroom control and management techniques to operate a successful program.”

Both Debra and Teresa refer to the subject integration that has been initiated by some staff. Teresa says: “I can see it now that more and more departments are trying to come up with ideas and ways that perhaps units or parts of units can be integrated.” However, Debra is quick to point out that while “there is some integration going on,” it “all depends upon the subject and the department personnel.”

Dennis comments on the changes that have occurred in the way that the teachers work with the grade 9 students through the library, “that hadn’t been happening up to that point.” He indicates that “people are linked more to the library than they were in the past, when you might just send senior students for research projects.” Now, he says, “it’s almost impossible to book a class in sometimes, because it is so busy with teachers working with their students, not just sending classes.”

According to Debra, another change in practice has resulted from the large number of staff who took the special education course offered at the school. She suggests that “it was a big help because it gave people strategies and insights that they wouldn’t
have had before” and consequently, “a lot of people have undertaken a line in the learning resource room.”

Continued liaison with the elementary feeder schools has been another result of the work that was done initially in the grade 9 program. While Terry indicates that he and some other teachers visit the elementary schools on a regular basis, he would still like to see a more structured communication process to obtain program information about the needs of the students before they enter secondary school.

Attitudes

Although Debra began the grade 9 initiative with what she perceived to be a viable curriculum for the students in the new grade 9 program, she reflects upon her change of attitude as the implementation process unfolded:

I can remember thinking to myself, that I had never taught kids like that before, that I had never realized that some kids had so many difficulties in learning and that reading levels were so low. I thought I had all these great lessons ready and then there were kids who were outside those bounds and I had to change so many things.

Citing a similar experience, Ted refers to the importance of the insight that developed in his own department during the process of change:

We became aware of this very early. Nobody ever formally said it, but you can’t be so wedded to the changes that you’ve made that you can’t change the changes. And we knew we were trying new things. We had no guarantee that things would work and quite a lot of things we put in place, at first, with a lot of work, we threw out because it didn’t work. So we rebuilt things and learned how to do various other things in the process.

Similarly, Terry’s words express the sentiments of several of the interview participants:

What it started out as initially and what evolved eventually were two different things. We found that the calibre of the student that we came up with was not what we expected. We found out that how they learned wasn’t basically what we anticipated. So what we had to do was change
our ways of delivering program, change all our ways, basically and not only did we change here, but we brought these changes along and we kept doing what we thought were better things as we went on. We are always in a state of change to try to improve our position in delivering program.

Dennis also suggests that "more of a team effort has developed, as far as the philosophy and the goals" are concerned. "Everybody seems to have bought into the philosophy and wanted to make it work." In this regard, Della comments: "I don't know exactly what it is, but people have become closer because of the 'you're all in this together' attitude that has developed and you hold each other up." She also believes that "teachers, as a group, are realizing that they have to move out of those department lines" and indicates: "I certainly see those times coming now. It may be a little bit more difficult for the more mature teachers on staff. I think the younger ones have an easier time with that."

While staff generally express a positive attitude towards the grade 9 school-initiated change that is continuing, Debra indicates:

There is almost a holding pattern right now because we don't know what is going on and also, staff is feeling a bit tired too, in terms of all the change that's been accommodated over the past few years and they're pretty happy with the way they're offering the programs at the destreamed level.

Similarly, Dennis suggests:

If someone came out and said this is a definite, like this grade 9 project, we would go with it, but we're getting tired of starting things and then somebody changes the rules so we have to back up again. If it was a definite direction, I don't think there would be any problem.

Della comments in a similar fashion:

Now we've got more pressures on us as a teaching profession and last year there were some teachers on our staff who were quite vocal about the large number of students in their classes. We've come a long way, but now
with all the additional pressures that we’re getting, I’m afraid we’re going to be going back again.

**General Observations and Comments**

Several interview participants refer to the general atmosphere surrounding the grade 9 change initiative as “contagious” or “infectious.” According to Dennis: “It seemed to be the right place at the right time.” Vernon alludes to “the chemistry between the people who were there, what they’d gone through and what they believed they were going to go through” as significant factors in the change process. Although Debra points out that “the enthusiasm was really impossible not to catch” and that “we were right for a change,” Vernon suggests “that there was never a unanimous feeling about what we were doing,” mostly due to the attitude of some staff about destreaming.” Nevertheless, there were a significant enough number of staff who perceived the changes as being beneficial to students and according to Debra, “that’s why it worked.” Dennis recalls that from the beginning of the grade 9 project:

> Everything was laid out for us all along. The plan was laid out-dates, timelines and everything was there. This was the blueprint or the map and it just naturally moved along. I don’t think we ever really ran off base or behind time. Things ran fairly smoothly. They had something in front of them to show the direction and they kept checking base.

He indicates that when “the kids came in, they knew it was different but they were also relaxed because there had been some sort of preparation done and they felt included in the whole theme of things.” Debra speaks to the importance of the support that they received and comments: “The staff have to know that the support just isn’t there at the school level but that it’s also there at the board level, as well, and it can’t be just verbal support.” She also adds:
I don’t think you can expect people to do the job they have to do every day and do all the things that have to be done in order to initiate change without allowing time to do it. We had permission to have some short classes so that we could give some of our time but also we were getting some time back. We did a lot of planning at the beginning; we did a lot of surveying of staff to find out what it was that they wanted and then tried to structure those afternoons so that they met needs.

In support of Debra’s observation, Dennis adds: “You can’t put anything into place without time and support.” He emphasizes:

It was really important that we saw senior management in our building. That we knew that this was important. Everybody is serious. That this isn’t just another change. How many times have you heard teachers say, ‘oh, here we go again.’ When all this started to happen, we felt support from everybody. This is not just another scheme.

Other interview participants refer to the amount of risk taking that has occurred on the part of many staff members. From his experience, Ted points out what has been involved:

First of all, you have to be prepared to take risks because change involves risks. And I think what necessarily goes along with that, the changes you make you’ve got to be prepared to change the changes. You’ve got to keep in mind the needs of the kids, but you’ve also got to keep in mind the needs of the staff. And if you find that either are not being met, you make changes to do so.

Dennis suggests that the change initiative has entailed not only looking at the program you’re delivering but also looking at what you are doing. He adds: “I suspect all of us who were involved in the changes were changed ourselves to a certain extent.”

Several of those interviewed refer to how their initial perceptions changed, once they actually experienced the students:

You really need to take a good look at the reality of the kids that are going to be coming to you as a result of change and make your changes with what they’re really like in mind, as opposed to an idealistic view of kids.
Most of the problems we ran into were physical problems in terms of management. We had some great ideas, but the kids bent the ideas for us.

In addition, several staff members suggest that what made the change work was that it was “exciting.” Although some interview participants speak about the “drawbacks of being caught up in the thing,” they also suggest that “the excitement sustains it and it’s a very, very important element.” Ted explains: “When you get excited about what you’re doing, you do it well.”

One of the opportunities that occurred during the grade 9 project was the sharing of information with people from elsewhere, either through visits or conferences. Ted points out, however: “It’s a sad thing, very few people from this board came to visit the school. People were not asking and it wasn’t because we didn’t offer.”

During the grade 9 project, many classroom teachers focused on their own subject areas and did not have a great deal of communication with the other departments. According to Debra: “mostly that was handled at Cabinet level and also at staff meetings but, essentially, departments went their own way.” And Ted reflects:

In retrospect, we shared far less than we should have done. We just sort of went our own way. We didn’t start to share until after we tried to put some of it into practice and that’s got good and bad points. Good points, inasmuch as you had a chance to find out what would work. Bad points, in that we probably missed out on sharing of ideas, which would have been beneficial.

Debra comments that the staff who were at the school from the beginning of the grade 9 project “were all very familiar with what was happening” but she says: “I don’t know how well we could continue to say that, by let’s say the third year,” as new staff came in, due to inconsistency in the orientation of new staff about “the philosophy or what we’re about at Secondary School Site II or why we initiated the change.”
Reflecting on his experience with the grade 9 change initiative, Peter suggests:

"We were too energized in one area." Taking responsibility for this circumstance, Peter comments:

I think I lost focus. We were doing so much for the special kids; we were known, we got all kinds of calls that made us feel good. Although we focused on the other areas, I did not communicate that well back to the community to show them. So from that standpoint, you do learn and I don't say it's a mistake but I think you must publicize all your good things and you must give equal weight to them. We were doing such a good job in one area that we just lost focus on publicizing the good things we were doing in other areas.

He also indicates:

I didn't recognize that there was a portion of my staff that felt the same way as the parents. And maybe my personality submerged that and that was the biggest shock to me and that's something I have learned from the experience: to evaluate what we're doing. We never had that before.

Peter suggests that another thing he learned is that "change cannot be revolutionary, it's got to evolve. You're talking about people's livelihoods. So I think there's got to be a transition. But for some people, if the change is too big, it becomes too much of a challenge." According to Vernon, the change was too big: "We took on far too much at one time." As a result, he suggests: "It was not manageable." However, he does add: "But if we had been a cohesive administrative group, we could have handled that much better."

While Peter recognizes that educational changes continue to be imminent within Secondary School Site II he contends that "what is affecting the in-school changes now are the things that are happening outside the school." In that regard, he points out that "as long as we do something within the school, the staff supports it, but the moment we start getting pressure outside the school, they're resisting that change."
CHAPTER V
CROSS-SITE ANALYSIS

Introduction

As described in Chapter One, the general research question underlying this study is directed to the problem of investigating the influence of school leadership and school culture in a specific school-initiated change in two secondary schools. To understand the phenomenology of this influence, Chapter Five analyzes the findings presented in the previous chapter, using a cross-site analysis of the behaviours, attitudes, and underlying assumptions of the teaching staff and school administrators involved in the change in their respective schools. Acknowledging that underlying assumptions, which are manifested in behaviours and attitudes, are formed over time (Wilkins & Patterson, 1985), this analysis includes an interpretation of the influence of the leadership and culture in the two secondary schools on the external adaptation and the internal integration that occurred during the course of the school change initiative (Schein, 1985).

In analyzing the data across the two secondary school sites in the study, recurrent themes or patterns emerged. This chapter presents a summary of the recurrent patterns in three sections, which correspond to the time frame described in Chapter Four: Antecedents to the School-Initiated Change, The School-Initiated Change Process, and Outcomes of the School-Initiated Change. These sections are further divided and subdivided to capture the specific details related to the patterns within the time periods in which they were noted. This approach adds to the breadth and the depth of the analysis by describing those patterns that were discrete and those that overlapped and flowed from one time context to another (Patton, 1980).

237
The first section, Antecedents to the School-Initiated Change, is comprised of the Established Leadership and Culture that preceded the change initiative, the leadership and cultural Readiness for the School-Initiated Change, which resulted from a series of prior events, and the variations in meanings that were attached to the Decision to Undertake the Specific School-Initiated Change. Contained in the second section, The School-Initiated Change Process, are the leadership and cultural influences that facilitated or inhibited the Initiation: Planning and Preparation, the Implementation: Experiencing the Realities of the Change, and the Continuation: General Acceptance phases. The third section, the Outcomes of the School-Initiated Change, identifies the nature and degree of the changes that occurred in Attitudes and Practices and includes the reflections of the school staff members about the outcomes of the school-initiated change.

Since this is a descriptive and interpretive case study and since relatability, rather than generalizability, is emphasized, the cross-site analysis provides a comparison of both the similarities and the differences in the patterns in the two schools. In addressing the general research problem and the purpose of the case study, this approach preserves the holistic data from the two school sites, described in the previous chapter, while providing a comparative analysis across the two sites. Accompanying the descriptive and interpretive insights, Tables 9 through 12, found throughout this chapter, serve as a visual summary of the results of the cross-site analysis by providing an interpretation of the comparative behaviours, attitudes, and assumptions of the staff at the two school sites at key time periods during the change initiative.
Antecedents to the School-Initiated Change

Established Leadership and Culture

Researchers, who have studied the phenomenon of change in secondary schools, have discovered not only that secondary schools are structurally alike "in a familiar litany of ways" but also that there are also "striking differences" in the beliefs and assumptions attached to their similar structures (Metz, 1990, p.43). Both findings were particularly evident upon analysis of the leadership and the culture in the two secondary schools prior to the school-initiated change in this study.

Secondary School Site I and Secondary School Site II were consonant in a variety of easily discernible ways. Over 60 percent of the staff members had been at their respective schools for three to over twenty years and the majority was over forty years of age. Both secondary schools had become well-established secondary school organizations, with certain elements of leadership and culture imbedded in both the structure and major processes of the schools. Most teachers taught groups of students in the conventional teacher-directed manner, according to similarly structured semestered schedules. Students moved on individual timetables to a variety of grades 9 to 12/OAC classes, based on a seventy-five minute period schedule. The teacher's role in relation to students, colleagues, and school administrators was defined similarly in both schools through the traditional subject departmental structure. Upon further analysis, descriptors, such as "chain of command," "departmental barriers," "control," and "all run by the front office" indicated the general acquiescence to the "top-down" approach to leadership that had developed, with the principal as the acknowledged formal authority. Additional remarks about several staff being "complacent," "inbred," "not wanting to rock the boat,"
“comfortable,” “entrenched,” and “not wanting to be empowered” not only implied general staff acknowledgment of the status quo, but also alluded to the manner in which many of the teachers viewed their roles and relationships in the school and community. As well, implicit in the comments about Secondary School Site I being “in the back, down in the east end, going to sleep and collecting moss” and Secondary School Site II being “well-organized and well-controlled but it wasn’t changing” was general staff acceptance of well-maintained and “frozen” organizations (Lewin, 1951).

Analysis beyond the internal similarities of the two schools, which delved into both the external and internal environments of the schools, supported Ball’s (1987) contention that what happens inside schools cannot be totally understood without taking into account the external settings in which schools operate. Both were urban secondary schools in the east end of the city in the same school board. However, the different historical backgrounds of the two schools and their communities and the nature of the demographic, economic, and social changes that had occurred in their respective communities, over time, had been instrumental in determining the variation of beliefs, assumptions, and practices in each secondary school (Berman, McLaughlin, et al., 1979). These differences are presented in the following descriptions of the two secondary schools.

Secondary School Site I, originally built in 1967 as “a present to the community,” over the years had become a school that served a less well-educated, lower socioeconomic, and more mobile population than in the past, with interaction between the community and the school generally limited to parental issues related to their children. While there was little direct pressure put on the school by the parents, for the most part,
the teachers tended "to go out of their way to contact parents and deal with their concerns" and "to make it more comfortable for the parents." Several Secondary School Site I staff members, who had been at the school for some time, had first-hand experience with the changing student population, and many had previous experience in vocational education, elementary education, or alternative education settings. Comments are recalled from several staff members, who were interviewed, about many of their students who were "from a whole different life," who were "faltering," "discouraged," and "low motivationally," and who did "not see futures" beyond their current way of life. In turn, Secondary School Site I interview comments reflected general staff care about the well-being of their students and concern about their own ability to meet student needs. On the other hand, at Secondary School Site II, which originated as a Collegiate Institute in 1924, vestiges of past academic traditions continued to be in evidence. Once a largely upper and middle class community, the Secondary School Site II neighbourhood, like that of Secondary School Site I, had experienced the results of changing social, economic, and demographic circumstances. While the community that Secondary School Site II served had become a mainly a middle and lower class population, the school was still considered a "flagship school" by many residents in the community who had been former students. As a result, there was still a large "academic community" at Secondary School Site II that wanted to be "looked after" and who were vocal about the academic orientation of the school in meeting the needs of their children. Generally speaking, however, there was relatively little direct communication between the teaching staff of Secondary School Site II and the parents.
Table 9. Established Behaviours, Attitudes, and Assumptions at the Two Secondary School Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary School Site I</th>
<th>Secondary School Site II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of Leaders</strong></td>
<td><strong>Role of Leaders</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “top-down” approach</td>
<td>- “top-down” approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- principal as acknowledged formal authority</td>
<td>- principal as acknowledged formal authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- department heads represent teachers’ interests in school level decision making</td>
<td>- department heads represent teachers’ interests in school level decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of Teachers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Role of Teachers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>with students</em></td>
<td><em>with students</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- academic and relationship orientation</td>
<td>- academic orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- meeting overall student needs</td>
<td>- meeting student academic needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- recognition of student diversity</td>
<td>- limited recognition of student diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>with other teachers</em></td>
<td><em>with other teachers</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- subject knowledge and knowledge about students</td>
<td>- subject knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- solutions to problems mainly through interaction within departments</td>
<td>- solutions to problems mainly through interaction within departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- limited informal interaction in problem solving beyond departments</td>
<td>- limited informal interaction in problem solving beyond departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>with parents/community</em></td>
<td><em>with parents/community</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- recognition of the importance of parent communication</td>
<td>- limited recognition of the importance of parent communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- responsiveness to the changing community</td>
<td>- limited responsiveness to the changing community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Educational Change**

- change occurring at the classroom level
- management of the school environment through limited changes to the status quo
- past and present orientation

- minimal change at the classroom level
- management of the school environment through maintenance of the status quo
- past orientation

The staff of Secondary School Site II, with mainly subject-based backgrounds and experiences with more academically oriented students, generally expressed a more traditional academic role orientation than the staff of Secondary School Site I. In this regard, one Secondary School Site II staff member commented that the “narrow academic background” of many staff, who did not have “a wide range of experiences” with
students of varying abilities, “significantly reduced” their ability to focus their thinking beyond their academic perspective.

Other variable meanings that were attached to the different environments of the two schools were clearly visible in the different ways in which the staff dealt with the courses offered and the levels of difficulty of those courses (Hemmings & Metz, 1990). Although the curriculum scope and sequence in traditionally defined subjects was standard in both schools, Secondary School Site II continued to be geared to general and advanced level courses, whereas Secondary School Site I had changed its offerings to provide more basic and general level courses, with less advanced level courses. The resulting paradigms that had been established in the two secondary schools at that time are depicted in Table 9.

**Readiness for the School-Initiated Change**

Although an attempt was made by the staff of Secondary School Site I to initiate some course changes and to communicate with parents to address student needs in their classrooms, at this stage, both secondary schools, as organizations, for the most part, were “frozen” and well-maintained (Schein, 1985), in that most staff did not envision their involvement in initiating changes beyond their classrooms or departments. According to Schein (1985), “the first condition for [organizational] change is that . . . the organizational culture must be unfrozen” (p.294). He suggests that “either because of external realities that threaten organizational survival or because of new insights and plans,” on the part of key members of the organization, that “the organization must come to recognize that some of the past ways of thinking, feeling, and doing things are indeed obsolete” (p.294). In both schools in this study, it was a combination of both external
and internal events that helped to "unfreeze" the organizations and to prepare the staff for undertaking the changes involved in the grade 9 initiative. These events, described in the following four subsections: Critical Incidents and Staff Response, Entry of New School Administrators, Staff Response to New School Administrators, and School-Community Relationships reveal the ways in which school leadership and culture influenced the readiness for the school-initiated change.

Critical Incidents and Staff Response

When an organization faces what it perceives to be a critical incident, its members are challenged with change, destabilization, uncertainty, and anxiety (Fullan, 1991; Marris, 1975). According to Schein (1985), the manner in which the leaders and others in the organization respond, reveal important aspects of the culture that have already been built, and at the same time, may create or inhibit opportunities for culture building in the form of new norms, values, and working procedures.

Several interview participants recalled a specific critical incident in their respective schools that threatened the existing status of their school and the equilibrium that had been established. In both instances, the critical incident reported by the staff was the result of external decisions related to the viability of the schools. It was, however, the difference in the timing and the nature of the perceived implications of the critical incidents, as well as the corresponding variance in leadership and staff responses to the incidents, that proved to be significant in revealing both existing and developing behaviours, beliefs, and assumptions.

At Secondary School Site I, four years prior to the initiation of the grade 9 change, the school board announced plans that would effectively close the school and
transfer the students and staff to other secondary schools in the system. In response, the former principal and the staff assumed an active, co-operative, and collaborative role with the community in an effort to save the school from closure. As the result of the series of events related to this incident, which provided “a roller coaster ride emotionally for everybody,” the staff of Secondary School Site I experienced firsthand the success of their individual and collective efforts in achieving their goal of maintaining the school. This incident was a “key turning issue” for many staff members in that it provided “the first stage of empowerment” and increased their confidence in their ability to pursue further opportunities for empowerment within the school. This momentum continued the following year, as the staff of Secondary School Site I agreed to participate in a two year component staffing pilot project that involved a new form of school level decision making about the distribution of staff allocated to the school.

For the staff of Secondary School Site II, two years prior to the grade 9 initiative being undertaken, the school board decision to move some vocational students and staff into Secondary School Site II to maintain its viability, presented a perceived critical incident of a different nature than that addressed by the staff of Secondary School Site I. Although Secondary School Site II staff were not facing the immediate threat of school closure, they were aware that this external decision would effectively change the composition of both the student body and the staff, as well as the existing programs and their delivery. Therefore, while the staff of Secondary School Site II generally acknowledged the importance of the proposed changes in keeping the school open, paradoxically, their concerns, at that point, were rooted in individual and collective speculation about what might occur with regard to their status quo, depending on the
results of their future responses. Despite staff apprehensions, the principal at that time was preoccupied with "some other tough things in the community" and did not assume a leadership role in addressing these issues. Consequently, the anxiety of the Secondary School Site II staff continued to build during this time, as they contemplated the uncertainty of the implications of the future changes.

In summary, the active response of the school administration and the staff at Secondary School Site I to the critical incident that occurred four years prior to the school-initiated change provided them with the opportunity to reduce their anxiety, as they experienced the successful results of their working together through the external and internal issues engendered by the incident. As well, during this time, they developed some new assumptions about their role in the community and the importance of a more collaborative approach in their working relationships in the school. In contrast, the anxiety of the staff of Secondary School Site II regarding their viability was only partially resolved by the external decision to maintain the school, since specific actions to address the pending changes in student and staff composition and program delivery were yet to be determined. As a result, the working relationships and the assumptions behind those relationships at Secondary School Site II did not have the opportunity to develop and grow like those at Secondary School Site I. Therefore, while the motivation for change was evident in both schools, the behaviours, attitudes, and assumptions associated with the readiness for change, at this point, were quite different.

**Entry of New School Administrators**

Both Patrick and Peter entered their respective schools two years prior to the initiation of the grade 9 change, Patrick, initially as a first time vice principal, and Peter
as an experienced principal. Their entry followed the critical incidents cited previously, and in both instances, their backgrounds and experiences proved to be a timely fit, given the existing circumstances of their respective schools (Wilson & Corcoran, 1989). Patrick’s previous experience with the component staffing model, at the system level, provided him with a common frame of reference with the staff at Secondary School Site I, as they implemented the pilot component staffing project at the school level. Similarly, Peter’s background in vocational education enabled him to help staff understand and deal with the changes that were going to take place with the movement of the students and staff from the neighbouring vocational school. Within these contexts, the assumptions of Patrick and Peter and the corresponding relationships that developed with the staff, students, and the community, within the intervening two year time period, were important in developing and furthering the state of organizational readiness for the changes involved in the grade 9 initiative.

Several authors have pointed out that the first task facing any leader wishing to undertake organizational change is to understand the existing culture, since it is the foundation of any future cultures and provides the background for change (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Sathe, 1985; Wilkins & Patterson, 1985). Schein (1985) reiterates the importance of the perceptions and insights of school administrators who are attempting to foster changes in their organizations. This includes their degree of objectivity about themselves, as well as about their organizations. In this regard, Schein (1985) suggests that not only do school administrators need to be able to diagnose the ways in which leadership and culture can aid or hinder the fulfillment of the organization’s mission to be most effective for the future, but also that they must have insights into the types of
intervention skills that are needed to effect the desired changes. As seasoned educators, with a variety of experiences in diverse settings, both Patrick and Peter discussed openly their perceptions of themselves and their respective schools and the various strategies that they viewed as necessary for change to occur.

Patrick’s inclination for “results” was reflected in his admitted “task orientation” and “competitiveness.” While Patrick had an inherent desire to be “an individual,” since he “never liked being out front,” he learned, over the years, that the “enabler approach,” although time consuming and requiring more patience in “letting people catch up or get involved,” was more effective over the long term than his preference for streamlining. In this regard, he emphasized the respect that he had gained for “the front line role of the teachers” and for their importance in making decisions in the school. At the same time, Patrick also expressed the importance of active student and community involvement with school staff in the decision making process. While he recognized that some might see him as “blunt and straightforward” and capable of “dropping the hammer, when the time comes,” Patrick suggested that he “doesn’t hide information” and he emphasized the importance of being “capable of making a hard decision, based on rationale and data.” However, he also indicated that “communication is listening, as well as talking” and that you always have to be “willing to listen to staff in the front line who have a better idea” and to admit “openly” when you are wrong, even if it’s at your “own expense.”

Accompanying these insights about himself and his relationship with staff were Patrick’s perceptions of the culture of Secondary School Site I. He recognized that the previous school closure incident and the subsequent decision by staff to undertake the component staffing pilot project were important situational factors in influencing the way
in which staff members were currently relating to one another. He also recognized the diversity of the predispositions of school staff members within these contexts. Patrick commented that there were both “naysayers” and “front runners” on the staff of Secondary School Site I, and he accepted this diversity as a natural part of a secondary school organization.

His initial tactic then, as a new vice principal, was to work within the parameters established by the existing principal and school staff and the changing working relationships that were developing within Secondary School Site I. Patrick had two years of experience in Secondary School Site I, as a vice principal, to “observe and develop a plan” for the school, prior to his appointment as principal. Consequently, his plan and subsequent course of action were based upon his own assumptions, as well as the information that he gathered through his interactions with the staff, the students, and the community during this time.

Peter’s expressed care and concern about his relationship with the staff and the community and his desire for “direct communication” with them was reflected in his emphasis on “making a good first impression,” being “all things to all people,” going out of his way “to be accessible to people,” and having “an open door policy.” At the same time, his concept of empowerment was based more on “expectations,” through his “lead by example” style, rather than through enabling and ongoing monitoring to which Patrick subscribed. While Peter recognized the importance of trying to “get consensus in a group” and the necessity of “the feeling of togetherness” and “unity” for such a process to take place, he also realized the value of having different perspectives to enhance the credibility of school level decision making.
Like Patrick, Peter acknowledged that while staff members were generally positive, as a group, that there were some negative forces within the school, which he attributed to personal life experiences, subject orientation, professional backgrounds, and the length of time in the school. Peter admitted to his own "passion" and "energy" in "the running of a school" and that he looked for leaders and teachers with "that same type of energy." At the same time, he understood the inherent difficulties in his expectations of staff, due to "their own situations in the school, how they feel about themselves, their home situation, and their families."

Peter's penchant for people was balanced by his attention to being organized. While his concept of being organized was similar to that of Patrick, in "having a sound knowledge base" and "doing your homework when you get into a job," Peter's timelines for planning were more abbreviated and his development of a course of action was more dispersed, due in large part, to the imminence of the circumstances of Secondary School Site II and to his particular leadership style. In effect, following his appointment as principal, it was basically during the summer months, prior to his entry into the school, that Peter gathered information about the staff, students, and community in order to develop a plan to address the number of changes that would have to occur in the school. Based upon his own assumptions, his knowledge of the impending changes, and the existing working relationships in the school, within a condensed time frame, Peter, as the new principal of Secondary School Site II, set out to make several school policy and procedural changes that he believed were necessary to prepare the staff for the future changes.
Table 10. Behaviours, Attitudes, and Assumptions of the New School Administrators at the Two Secondary School Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary School Site I</th>
<th>Secondary School Site II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of Leaders</strong></td>
<td><strong>Role of Leaders</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• authoritarian and facilitative</td>
<td>• authoritarian and facilitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• task and relationship orientation</td>
<td>• task and relationship orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sharing information and decision making</td>
<td>• sharing information and decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• distribution of leadership</td>
<td>• distribution of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• actions based on diagnosis of self and the situation, clearly articulated expectations, staff empowerment, group planning involving staff, students, parents and community, and recognition of student, staff and community diversity</td>
<td>• actions based on diagnosis of self and the situation, expectations implied by example, group planning involving staff, students, parents and community, and recognition of student, staff and community diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of Teachers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Role of Teachers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>With students</em></td>
<td><em>With students</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• academic and relationship orientation</td>
<td>• academic and relationship orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• meeting overall student needs</td>
<td>• meeting overall student needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• recognition of student diversity</td>
<td>• recognition of student diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>With other teachers</em></td>
<td><em>With other teachers</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• subject knowledge and knowledge about students</td>
<td>• subject knowledge and knowledge about students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• assuming leadership beyond the classroom</td>
<td>• assuming leadership beyond the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• problem solving through departmental and interdepartmental interaction</td>
<td>• problem solving through departmental and interdepartmental interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>With parents/community</em></td>
<td><em>With parents/community</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• active involvement as integral to school decision making</td>
<td>• active involvement as integral to school decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Change</strong></td>
<td><strong>Educational Change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• management of the school environment through planned school change to meet student needs</td>
<td>• management of the school environment through planned school change to meet student needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• near and far future orientation</td>
<td>• present and near future orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• actions based on school change as &quot;evolutionary&quot; and incremental</td>
<td>• actions based on school change as &quot;revolutionary&quot; and immediate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As newcomers to their respective schools, Patrick and Peter brought new leadership styles and new assumptions about change. They both indicated their comfort level with change and their perceptions of the need for specific changes in their schools.
Through what Mortimore (1988) and his associates refer to as “purposeful leadership,” Patrick and Peter attempted to foster staff collaboration through interdepartmental committees and to distribute leadership throughout the school. While differences in their styles were evident, they both became actively involved in their schools and communities to stimulate, shape, and strengthen a change orientation (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Louis & Miles, 1990).

Consequently, while each school administrator introduced innovative approaches to “top-down,” centralized decision making that had been the norm, their endeavours differed, due to their past experiences, their unique leadership styles and personalities, their current authority roles, and the different time frames and working relationships that existed within their schools. Peter’s up front, dispersed and “revolutionary” approach was clearly evident in the number of organizational changes he attempted to make in a short period of time to encourage staff communication in the school. Patrick, on the other hand, based on his acknowledged task-orientation and due to his initial position as vice principal, proceeded in a more “evolutionary” fashion, by focusing on a specific area and goal already being undertaken by Secondary School Site I staff, in order to foster incremental changes in staff participation during the same time span (Schein, 1985). The comparative behaviours, attitudes, and assumptions of the two school administrators are shown in Table 10.

Staff Response to New School Administrators

The previous subsection revealed many similar assumptions on the part of Patrick and Peter. It also noted that the differences in their assumptions, methods, and styles were tempered not only by their personalities and backgrounds, but also by the variance
in the settings in which they were placed (Smith & Andrews, 1989). Consequently, just as the actions of Patrick and Peter to communicate their assumptions were based on their unique subjective and objective realities, so too were the interpretations and responses of the staff to their actions (Fullan, 1991). As Fullan (1991) points out: “Change is a highly personal experience” (p.127) and one that requires everyone affected by the change to have an opportunity to work through the experience. Such was the case for Patrick and Peter and their respective staff members. The variations noted in staff responses to the new school administration were revealed in a variety of ways.

As the result of retirements and transfers, several changes occurred in the staff complement of both schools following the arrival of Patrick and Peter. Through school administrative staff selection, several teachers were introduced into the two schools, with a range of different backgrounds, experiences, and assumptions (Schein, 1985). The implications of these changes were reflected in comments at Secondary School Site I, such as “there were enough of us who said this isn’t working anymore, let’s do something different” and at Secondary School Site II, such as “there were enough progressive people” who “wanted to make the place better” and “to see it move.” However, while the addition of some newly selected staff bolstered support for the assumptions about change, already held by some of the existing staff and by the two new school administrators, not everyone welcomed these new ideas. The differentiation in staff responses in both schools was inferred from the comments of staff who indicated at Secondary School Site I that there were still some teachers who were “strongly entrenched traditionalists” who continued to “resist change of any kind” and at Secondary School Site II that there were some teachers who “wanted the hammer back,” preferring “to be told what to do” and not
wanting "to be empowered." Recognizing this diversity in their respective schools, Patrick and Peter used a variety of mechanisms to communicate their assumptions through both deliberate and unintended actions. Both school administrators had a clear concept of where they eventually wanted their schools to end up and demonstrated consistency in their major assumptions and beliefs to this end, although each had a very different approach and received different staff responses to their ideas and actions.

Patrick, as "a big picture thinker," with a clear vision of developing "a more progressive school" that would meet the changing needs of the students, staff, and community, consistently made his vision "clear to everybody," through both his words and actions. He persistently looked for opportunities to make small changes to influence the staff in a certain direction toward a new set of assumptions. He constantly checked with key staff members to determine how these changes were working, as he concentrated on using fortuitous events to move forward incrementally. In this respect, he was perceived as being both directive and enabling. While several staff viewed him as "very supportive," letting them do what they felt was "right," it was also indicated that he let them know if they "couldn't do it," with accompanying data and rationale. On the other hand, there were some staff who were "not keen" on Patrick and saw his approach as being too "blunt and straightforward." Nevertheless, generally staff acknowledged that he was instrumental "in terms of opening up the decision making process and laying everything on the table." This change was "a real eye opener for a number of people," although not accepted readily by all. One staff member at Secondary School Site I pointed out: "It takes the right kind of people, the right kind of leadership, and sharing a common belief for change to occur." While it was recognized that "not all staff were
there," there were enough key leaders in the school who were "interested in making changes for the students" and who wanted to be involved. Although some staff members indicated that Patrick's approach created dissonance, it was also noted that the resulting behaviour changes, which "worked for the school," over time, brought several staff to the realization that they were no longer acting in accordance with their prior assumptions and that it became easier to change their assumptions to fit the behaviour rather than to undo the behaviour to fit the original assumptions (Cooper & Croyle, 1984). Such incremental change, as one staff member pointed out, generally developed "a strong staff," whose changing behaviours, values, and beliefs helped them better understand and cope with their daily environment (Quinn, 1978; Schein, 1985). Likewise, Kasher (1990) argues that a series of small successes may overcome staff inertia and reinforce new values. Rather than being based on rigid rules and practices, this approach allows for long-term success, which has unobtrusive, internalized control, and committed energy.

Peter's vision of a changing school to meet the needs of the impending new student population was communicated mainly through his energetic "lead by example" style. Consequently, his exuberant actions, in preparation for the changes, were more diffuse and, while generally accepted, proved to be challenging for several staff in determining a specific focus. As some staff members explained: "Peter's always got a million things he's doing" and "sometimes trying to pin him down is not easy. You've got to take a hammer and nails with you when you want to talk with him." At the same time, it was indicated that while his style "drives them crazy," staff "really like him." It was also noted that "the strength of the school was in the staff who were not afraid to say things" due, in part, to Peter's willingness to hear "the negatives, as well as the
positives.” Peter’s expectation of staff involvement in the initiatives that he undertook when he entered the school was viewed by some as “allowing them to get on with the job,” while others saw it as lacking “clear direction.” Nevertheless, his “infectious spirit,” “high energy level,” and “tremendous people skills” were recognized by most staff as being the “catalyst for change” at Secondary School Site II. Described as “the very best cheerleader we have ever had,” Peter was also acknowledged as being so “enthusiastic” and so “passionate” that “you’d be hard pressed not to go along with him.” As one staff member observed: “While initially some may not agree with him, sooner or later, he’ll get you thinking his way.” Recalling previous experiences and Peter’s ability to “wear people down,” one staff member commented: “Eventually staff would say: ‘Oh, here’s another change,’ and they became accepting of it.” Based on the school’s past history and the anticipated circumstances that the school was facing, one staff member explained: “We were right for change” and Peter seemed to “infiltrate the school” to provide the inspiration needed for staff to undertake change. Another staff member added: “Someone has to get the staff on board and I think that’s what happened.” Still another concluded: “Had it not been for Peter, the changes at Secondary School Site II probably would not have occurred as they did.”

In summary, although both schools may have been tempted to retain their status quo or to have undergone a natural evolving stage, if they had not encountered particular external stress and if their previous principals had remained around for an extended period of time (Schein, 1985), such was not the case in either secondary school. The consequent similarities and differences in staff responses reflected both constant and changing values and underlying assumptions about how they viewed their external and
internal environment and their relationship with it. Both defense mechanisms and adaptive techniques were an integral part of the ways in which different staff members addressed the issues that they perceived as being important. Some wanted to keep and enhance the culture that existed; others were more open to change and confronting the maintenance of some current behaviours, beliefs, and assumptions. These were some of the variations in the culture that faced the two principals during their entry into their schools.

School-Community Relationships

As pointed out earlier in this chapter, both the history and the composition of the two school communities varied, and different combinations of factors contributed to different school-community relationships and the way in which school staff perceived and responded to their communities. These variations and their implications played an important part in differentiating Patrick’s and Peter’s initial tasks with their respective school staff and their communities.

Fullan (1991) suggests that although less well educated communities are “less likely to put effective pressure” on their schools to initiate changes, that “once activated,” they can “react strongly and effectively against changes that they do not like” (p.58). Such had been the case at Secondary School Site I. The strength of the community and the support for Secondary School Site I had already been established, through effective staff and community response to the school closure events, which had occurred prior to Patrick’s arrival. However, Patrick pointed out that because of the many variables associated with a less well educated community that Secondary School Site I had “a very limited resource base on which to call.” While the parents were not likely to be involved
in “big picture thinking” about school change initiatives, Patrick emphasized that “nothing is too small for them to take on if it makes a difference for their kids.”

Peter’s circumstance was quite different. The parents and the community of Secondary School Site II had been somewhat isolated from the actions of the previous school administration and staff. Due to the lack of information and “misinformation,” about the changes that had been announced for Secondary School Site II, Peter found that many parents were anxious about what might happen at the school. He recognized that, despite the demographic shift, there was still “an academic community in the area” that required attention and that put pressure on the school to maintain the existing quality or to adopt high quality-oriented changes (Neufeld, 1984).

Consequently, while Patrick’s role was related more to continuation and expansion of the existing school-community relationship, Peter’s task was to develop a good school-community relationship before undertaking the announced changes. To gain trust, Peter established a Home and School Association to “provide a structure” that was helpful in “deflecting some of the school problems” and “communicating with the community.” As well, Peter’s innovative approach of reaching into the community with his vice principals, through door-to-door visitations to the future grade 9 students and their parents, not only garnered further community support, but also resulted in several Secondary School Site II staff reconsidering their own methods of communication with parents.

As shown in Table 11, the influence of school leadership and school culture, during the series of events described in this section, served to change some of the previously established behaviours, attitudes, and assumptions at the two secondary
schools, and prepared the staff in each school, albeit in different ways, for making the decision to undertake the specific grade 9 school-initiated change.

**Table 11. Behaviours, Attitudes, and Assumptions at the Two Secondary School Sites as the Result of Events that Preceded the Decision to Undertake the Specific Grade 9 Change Initiative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary School Site I</th>
<th>Secondary School Site II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of Leaders</strong></td>
<td><strong>Role of Leaders</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• authoritarian and facilitative</td>
<td>• authoritarian and facilitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• task and relationship orientation</td>
<td>• task and relationship orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sharing information</td>
<td>• sharing information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• distribution of leadership versus representation of teachers' interests in school level decision making by department heads</td>
<td>• distribution of leadership versus representation of teachers' interests in school level decision making by department heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• actions of leaders foster staff empowerment and increased staff self-confidence</td>
<td>• actions of leaders foster staff involvement and enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of Teachers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Role of Teachers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>with students</em></td>
<td><em>with students</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• academic and relationship orientation</td>
<td>• academic orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• meeting overall student needs</td>
<td>• meeting academic needs of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• recognition of student diversity</td>
<td>• limited recognition of student diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>with other teachers</em></td>
<td><em>with other teachers</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• subject knowledge and knowledge about students</td>
<td>• subject knowledge and speculation about knowledge of new students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• leadership within and beyond the classroom</td>
<td>• leadership within and beyond the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>with parents/community</em></td>
<td><em>with parents/community</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• continued responsiveness to the changing community</td>
<td>• beginning stages of understanding the importance of responsiveness to the changing community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• increased reciprocal interaction between the school and the parents</td>
<td>• beginning recognition of the importance of reciprocal interaction between the school and the parents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Educational Change**

- • management of the environment through school change as "evolutionary" and incremental
- • present and near future orientation

- • uncertainty about managing the environment due to speculation about the nature of the imminent school change
- • present and near future orientation
Decision to Undertake the Specific School-Initiated Change

"Given the contingencies specific to local situations, . . . innovations get initiated from many different sources and for different reasons" (Fullan, 1991, pp. 47 & 51). Innovations that are perceived to be appropriate and relevant to the existing organizational orientation have been cited by several researchers as significant in exerting influence on the nature of changes that are undertaken, as well as the processes that staff are able to use in making the decision to initiate changes (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977, 1978a; Berman, McLaughlin et al., 1979; Crandall et al., 1982, 1986; David, 1989b; Firestone, 1989; Firestone, Fuhrman & Kirst, 1989 a,b; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Marsh & Bowman, 1988; Miles, 1987; Rosenblum & Louis, 1979). The resulting combination of existing and developing strategies within the school and its community and the effects of the external and internal forces provide an impetus for a change in the state of the organization (Schein, 1985). This circumstance was particularly evident in the variations noted in school leadership and cultural influences on the decision to undertake the specific school-initiated change in each secondary school.

Meaning: Purposes and Sources of the Change

Fullan (1991) states that "the purpose of educational change . . . is to help schools accomplish their goals by replacing some structures, programs and/or practices with better ones" (p.15). Whether schools decide to embark on educational change to achieve this end depends not only on the perceived appropriateness of the change for the task at hand but also on the readiness, willingness, and ability of staff to proceed with the changes (Miles, 1987).

The majority of the questionnaire respondents from both secondary schools
indicated that the prime purpose of secondary school-initiated change should be to improve student learning. Likewise, most respondents indicated that all teachers should have an opportunity to be involved in the decision to undertake such a change. In this regard, both Patrick and Peter undertook their leadership roles with the expressed intent of making the necessary changes in their respective schools to meet the changing needs of their student population. Each school administrator envisioned a more collaborative school environment, with more interdepartmental interaction in the decision making process in the school to accomplish that end. The variations that occurred were related to the manner in which the two school administrators went about involving staff in the decision to undertake the grade 9 school-initiated change, as well as the consequential meanings attached to the change initiative.

At Secondary School Site I, Patrick arranged for Vance, one of the vice principals, and one of the established interdepartmental committees to develop a school needs assessment that involved all staff. According to Patrick, this was a new concept for the staff, but he felt that their experiences with the pilot component staffing project had prepared them for this next step in their approach to school-based decision making. As the result of the needs assessment, the teachers proposed the concept of a new grade 9 program in the school. During further discussions about the results of the needs assessment, several staff members expressed concerns about their ability to provide for their students within the existing grade 9 structure and came up with a series of specific suggestions for changes. The school administrators and the staff of Secondary School Site I were aware of the Ministry’s plans for destreaming grade 9 at that time, which provided “a catalyst for the specific timetable and program changes” that were
contemplated. However, generally speaking, they felt that a change in their current grade 9 program was warranted, regardless of Ministry directives, and that these changes would better prepare them and their students when destreaming was actually initiated. As one staff member pointed out: "We thought we were doing the right thing" and we "wanted to see how it would work, to give us a better idea of where the kids should be going in grade 10." Another added: "We thought this was a perfect opportunity to try something new."

At Secondary School Site II, the Ministry announcement about destreaming was the springboard for staff decision making about undertaking the grade 9 pilot project. Through a formal presentation to staff, Peter and Vernon, one of the vice principals, introduced the possibility of staff participation in a Ministry grade 9 destreamed pilot project. According to several staff members, "the open manner" in which Peter and Vernon presented the proposal for staff response was "new" to the teachers at Secondary School Site II, and was a significant factor in gaining staff agreement to participate. At the same time, the possibility of "additional funding and extra staff resources," which some perceived as advantageous to the other changes in the school, also played a role in the staff decision to partake in the project. Additionally, for several staff, the "enthusiasm" of Peter and Vernon for the grade 9 pilot project, and "the excitement of being involved in something new" were other factors in making the decision to proceed. Also, as one staff member indicated: "It looked as if destreaming was going to come in the following year and we felt we’d rather have a good look at it before it started officially than do what somebody told us to do." The same staff member also suggested: "We figured we were much better to start from the ground floor than anywhere else."

Following a series of staff discussions, a secret ballot was cast and the staff voted to take
part in the pilot project.

While the decision to undertake the school-initiated change was not unanimous at either secondary school, several staff in both schools welcomed the opportunity to become involved in a new initiative. The staff of Secondary School Site I, however, made the decision to change the existing grade 9 program, based upon their experiences with the needs of the types of students that they were already encountering, whereas the staff of Secondary School Site II decided to proceed with the grade 9 pilot project in the context of an unknown student population, with some staff members not as yet convinced of the benefits of destreaming for grade 9 students. Moreover, while Secondary School Site II staff contemplated additional staff and monetary resources, as the result of their participation in the pilot project, Secondary School Site I staff made their decision to initiate change within the existing funding and staff resources available to them. Nevertheless, in both schools, while the principals were advocates of the grade 9 change, they also recognized the individual differences in staff readiness for and acceptance of the change, and offered alternatives for staff who did not feel comfortable participating in the grade 9 initiative.

The School-Initiated Change Process

Initiation: Planning and Preparation

Following the decision to undertake an innovation, the next step is initiation, namely “what happens by way of mobilization and planning to prepare for the change” (Fullan, 1991, p. 61). Therefore, while the initiation process is rooted naturally in the diversity of individual and organizational behaviours, norms, and assumptions that have preceded it, it is through the process of planning and preparation that meanings may be
clarified or confused and that commitment or alienation may be generated (Fullan, 1991). A variety of leadership and cultural influences, which either facilitated or inhibited the initiation of the school-initiated change in the study, are discussed in the following subsections.

**Key Leadership and Active Initiation**

As the result of a review of several major research studies on educational change, Miles (1987) cites the importance of strong advocacy and active initiation on the part of key members of the organization. In both schools, there were a variety of key leadership roles played by several individuals and groups of individuals for the purposes of planning and mobilization. Patrick and Peter provided strong advocacy and active support of the initiative through their political roles with school board and federation personnel and their public relations roles with parents and the community. Peter also arranged for a special education course for Secondary School Site II staff, offered by the local faculty of education. Through the staff budget committee at Secondary School Site I and the Steering Committee at Secondary School Site II, resources were provided for staff visitations to other innovative schools and for conference attendance to enable teachers and school administrators to become more familiar with the possible implications of the change.

In each school, one of the vice principals played a key leadership role with the staff in the initial stages of the school-initiated change process. At Secondary School Site I, recognizing Vance’s skills in developing a new grade 9 timetable and in working with the staff in the process, Patrick put Vance in charge of the grade 9 initiative, while he “sat back” and played a monitoring role through input from Vance and other staff members.
At Secondary School Site II, Vernon assumed a formal leadership role on the Grade 9 Project Steering Committee, developing timelines and procedures, addressing staff needs, and providing liaison with Ministry personnel for the pilot project. Peter attended more to the school renovations that were occurring in the Secondary School Site II during this time and participated in the Steering Committee meetings, as required. At both schools, the other two vice principals provided support to the staff and school administration, with the vice principal at Secondary School Site II offering a series of ongoing in-service sessions for the staff to assist them as they planned their new grade 9 curriculum.

Integral to the Secondary School Site I grade 9 program initiative was an organizational change in the school. Vance worked directly with the members of each department to determine their specific needs prior to the development of a new timetable. While the departments established the parameters, Vance made them aware that they also had to be willing to make some concessions to accommodate the changes across the school. Several staff members commented on the thoroughness of the process and the amount of staff involvement that occurred to reach a decision about a new grade 9 timetable. Although not all departments or department members were entirely satisfied with the outcome, there was general respect for Vance’s skills and the fact that the timetable was flexible enough to enable changes to occur in the future, if necessary.

At Secondary School II, the decision by the staff to undertake the grade 9 pilot project focused on the development of new curriculum and did not include changes to the existing school organizational structure and timetable. Consequently, while Vernon met with the department heads on a regular basis, his role with the departments, as they developed their curriculum, was more indirect than that of Vance. Although supportive
of departmental endeavours in curriculum development, Vernon relied upon the expertise of the department heads and the teachers, as well as assistance provided by the board’s curriculum support staff, to move the project along at this time.

**Time for Planning and Preparation**

Several studies of the teacher workplace reveal the importance of adequate time for teachers to plan and prepare (Bacharach, Bauer & Shedd, 1986; Purkey and Smith, 1983). Hargreaves (1994) adds: “Time is a fundamental dimension through which teachers’ work is constructed and interpreted” (p.95). Consequently, time for teachers to plan and prepare for the grade 9 change initiative was both an objective and subjective reality, which defined the constraints and possibilities associated with the school change initiative (Fullan, 1991). The similarities and differences in these realities were reflected in a variety of ways in the two secondary schools in the study.

Prior to the decision to undertake the new grade 9 program, substantial time had been provided for the staff of Secondary School Site I to discuss their concerns and needs. Following their decision to make changes to the grade 9 program, Vance spent time with each department to identify specific organizational and curricular changes that needed to be considered in the new timetable. The departments were also given time to discuss “the perks and also the negative side,” before deciding who would teach the grade 9 classes. Consequently, those who volunteered or were selected from each department “knew what they were getting into,” and generally were ready to undertake the planning process, once the grade 9 teacher group was formed.

At Secondary School Site II, although information sessions had been held prior to the staff decision to participate in the grade 9 pilot project, not everyone was equally
prepared to initiate the development of new grade 9 curriculum. In this regard, Adelman and Walking-Eagle (1997) indicate that often teachers, who “do not initially have confidence in or commitment to the validity” of the changes that are being proposed, need time to understand the purposes and intended outcomes through further study and observation of others, before they actually undertake the changes themselves. This situation was particularly evident in the case of the two departments that “held back” at Secondary School Site II. Questioning the value of de-streaming for students, a staff member, in one of the departments that did not participate initially, indicated: “We weren’t ready to jump in at that time because we had to work things out. We wanted to make sure. We wanted to make things work, but we had to learn first.” While the two departments that “held back” did not hinder the planning progress of the other departments, they waited and watched to see what was happening in other pilot projects, as well as what was occurring in their own school. Once they determined their direction, however, like the other departments, they proceeded with the development of new grade 9 curriculum in their respective subject areas the following year.

The participants who were involved in the early stages of planning for the school-initiated change, in both schools, emphasized the importance of the nine month period of time for planning and preparing for the implementation of the grade 9 change initiative. According to one staff member at Secondary School Site I: “We didn’t jump into this. We did lots of planning, and as a result, a lot of the really time consuming things were taken care of.” At Secondary School Site II, a staff member commented: “I don’t think you can expect people to do the job they have to do every day and do all the things that have to be done in order to initiate change without allowing time to do it.” Another
added: “You can’t put anything into place without time and support.” Similarly, staff in both schools appreciated the time that was provided to visit other schools and to attend conferences related to the change initiative, so that they “didn’t have to reinvent the wheel.” At Secondary School Site II, staff also referred to the value of the time spent at in-service sessions and the special education course that was offered during the planning phase.

What was different in the two schools, however, was the nature of the planning process that occurred during this time. At Secondary School Site I, the teachers involved in the grade 9 initiative planned during lunch hours and after school for the remainder of the year, while the staff of Secondary School Site II were allocated time during the school day, as well as giving some time after school, for the development of new curriculum. Also, at Secondary School Site I, “not everything was predetermined.” As one of the grade 9 teachers pointed out: “We realized that we couldn’t do everything all at once. We accepted that we could cross hurdles when we reached them and save our energy for the big issues.” Consequently, as the result of the planning process, “mutual support,” a “focus,” and “a common vision” were developed by the staff at Secondary School Site I. In contrast, at Secondary School Site II, “everything was laid out” by the Steering Committee from the beginning: “the dates, time lines and everything was there” to provide a “blueprint” for the staff. The Secondary School Site II staff “had something in front of them to show the direction and they kept checking base” as they moved along.

**Staff Involvement**

The number of teaching staff who were directly involved and the nature of their involvement added another dimension to the variations related to time for planning and
preparation. At Secondary School Site I, eighteen teachers and department heads from various subject areas generally volunteered or were selected from their departments to teach the grade 9 program. As one of the grade 9 teachers noted: “We weren’t satisfied with how things were” and “we weren’t afraid of taking a risk, primarily because we thought we were doing the right thing. The same teacher added: “So we figured, let’s try it out and see how it works. “If it works, fine; if it doesn’t, we’ll go back to the old way.” Once formed, this group of eighteen was “recognized by the staff” at Secondary School Site I as “the grade 9 teacher team” and assumed the leadership and decision making role in planning for the new grade 9 program across all the subject areas. Although not all department heads were directly involved with the grade 9 team in the planning process, “most offered support for the staff in the department,” if requested by the grade 9 teachers. At Secondary School Site II, although two departments did not become involved in curriculum development in the first year, those departments that decided to participate initially “got on with the job anyway, on the understanding that the other two departments would follow the lead.” However, even in those departments that were “front runners in the grade 9 initiative,” some staff admitted that they were “willing skeptics” in deciding to make “the best of a bad job.” Nevertheless, the participating department heads attempted to involve as many department members, as possible, in curriculum development, so that they would become more knowledgeable about the new grade 9 program. As a result, for the most part, the teachers worked exclusively within their departments on the development of new subject courses, under the direction of their respective department heads, with assistance from the board’s curriculum support staff.

Members of the Guidance department, in both schools, were also an integral part
of the grade 9 initiative during this time. They made contact with the elementary feeder schools, grade 8 students, and parents to establish ongoing communication about the changes that would be occurring. In addition, Guidance staff at Secondary School Site I initiated the development of a new teacher advisor program, which was included in the initial grade 9 timetable. Some of the Guidance personnel provided in-service and materials for the grade 9 teachers, as they prepared for the advisor component of their new role. Some Guidance staff members also joined the regular planning meetings of the grade 9 teachers, along with Vance, to provide assistance and direction, as required.

Regular in-service was an essential component of the initiation phase at Secondary School Site II, to provide information for staff “so they knew what was going on,” and to “take away the fear, apprehension, and concern about the unknown.” These in-service sessions were offered by a variety of staff members, including the former vocational teachers, the special education staff, Guidance personnel, system curriculum support staff, and one of the vice principals to share methodology and materials with the teachers who were preparing the new grade 9 curriculum. Staff attendance at the special education course, arranged by Peter, “displayed a real commitment on the part of many staff” and provided “time for discussion and sharing about what was happening through the school.” Despite these efforts, however, the interdepartmental collaboration, evidenced in the special education course, generally did not carry over into the formal curriculum planning that was occurring within each subject department.

Support and Resources

The accumulation and provision of support and resources needed for change to proceed is an essential consideration in the initiation of change (Fullan, 1991). In both
schools, support and resources for the school-initiated change were obtained from a variety of sources and in various ways. While both principals acquired board level and federation support for their initiatives, at Secondary School Site I, Patrick focused on “the skills of the staff” in finding appropriate resources, both internal and external, so that “the resources and the people worked together in the best interests of the students.” At Secondary School Site II, staff relied more heavily on the Steering Committee and the school administrators to provide the support and resources outlined in the pilot project plan, for reassurance that “they wouldn’t be left by themselves to develop this program,” that “there was money available,” and that “this would be manageable and not too difficult to do.”

Communication

In both schools, “there was nothing that was under the table” and everything was “up front” during the planning process. Staff members were kept informed through staff meetings or department heads’ meetings. Parents and students were made aware as the planning became more specific. As one Secondary School Site II teacher pointed out: “You could never say around here you didn’t know.” The difference between Secondary School Site I and Secondary School Site II, as it related to communication to the larger community, however, was in the amount of media publicity received by Secondary School Site II, due to the nature of the other changes in the school, as well as the grade 9 Ministry pilot project.

Resistance and Reticence

While many staff in both schools indicated that generally there was a great deal of “excitement” during this phase, not all staff responded favourably to the planned changes.
The inevitability of disagreement, acknowledged by several participants as "part of the change process," began to surface during this time, as individuals and groups displayed their resistance or reticence in a variety of ways.

At Secondary School Site I, as indicated earlier, although not everyone agreed with all the changes to the grade 9 program, most went along with the school level decision. At the same time, one department head, who did not agree with the grade 9 changes, was outright in his resistance to develop a new departmental plan. However, he was taken to task by his own department members who favoured the changes and who took it upon themselves to develop a plan, exclusive of the department head. Some other staff members, while not as openly obstructive, conveyed strong concerns about the loss in staffing lines that might accrue in the senior grades, as the result of the changes to the new grade 9 program. Another concern at Secondary School Site I was the potential lack of uniformity in the school, due to the segregation of the grade 9 students, who would be on a timetable different from the rest of the school. Nevertheless, the grade 9 teachers and other staff members, who were committed to the changes, continued with their planning, because they believed that the changes were in "the best interests of the students."

At Secondary School Site II, all departments but two began curriculum development of the new grade 9 program during this time. As indicated previously, the two departments that "held back" were not convinced of the benefits of de-streaming for students in their subject areas and waited until the second year to begin curriculum development. Consequently, although the change process started on a "broken front" at Secondary School Site II, those staff members in the departments who supported the
change, like the grade 9 teachers at Secondary School Site I, carried on with their planning, despite the concerns of some other staff members in the school.

Another notable difference between the two schools was the approach of the school administrators in dealing with these contentious issues. While Patrick and Vance continued to work with dissenting staff members at Secondary School Site I, in an attempt to address their concerns, the school administration at Secondary School Site II did not subscribe to a similar process. As a result, Secondary School Site II staff began the change initiation without resolution to some fundamental underlying philosophical issues related to the benefits of the grade 9 initiative for the students.

Implementation: Experiencing the Realities of the Change

Although “the relationship between initiation and implementation is loosely coupled and interactive” (Fullan, 1991, p.64), implementation refers to the process of putting into practice the ideas and structures that were formulated through the planning and preparation period (Fullan, 1991). To accomplish this end, the importance of both the technical and the social dimensions cannot be overstated. As Majone & Wildavsky (1978) point out” Implementation depends on what people bring to it, as well as what’s in it” (p.25). In both secondary schools, the influence of the established and changing cultural norms and assumptions of individuals and groups continued to be evident as the implementation process got underway. While staff at both schools commented on the benefits of the “groundwork” that was laid in the initiation phase, despite the extensive planning, there were “struggles,” particularly during the first year of implementation, as some of the plans did not go in the direction that the staff had planned (Fullan, 1991). As well, although the planning process had addressed many issues, others remained unsettled
and resurfaced during the next few years. Meanwhile, new realities appeared during this time, as staff moved from planning and preparation into practice. The nature and degree of past and present realities varied with the circumstances of the changes and the variations in the perceptions and responses of the staff to these realities. How school leadership and culture assisted or hindered this phase of the change process is discussed in the following subsections.

**Meeting Student Needs**

Several studies indicate the significance of student-teacher relationships in defining and shaping teachers' definitions of their work and their sense of efficacy (Johnson, 1990; Lortie, 1975; McLaughlin, Talbert, & Phelan, 1990; Metz, 1990; Pauly, 1991; Sarason, 1990). In striving for excellent performance, teachers in both schools expressed a strong sense of pride in their work and accomplishments. Consequently, as they began implementation, many teachers at Secondary School Site II felt threatened by their inability to deal effectively with the needs of an unfamiliar and diverse group of students. As one staff member indicated: “There were a whole bunch of problems because a lot of the teachers were not prepared for the type of students they were starting to get.” Their lack of preparation for the variance in student abilities, “not having enough hands to get to the students when they need you,” and the increase in behavioural and discipline problems that they encountered presented major concerns for the staff at Secondary School Site II. Although the teachers “were making it work, they weren’t happy,” and there was a lot of frustration, as many attempted “to survive on a daily basis.”

While the grade 9 teachers at Secondary School Site I also felt the extra “burden”
and pressure of destreaming within their new structure, they were familiar with dealing with a variety of student needs, and generally accepted the changes as part of their additional grade 9 workload. Because they were dealing with the same grade 9 students, the grade 9 teachers developed common ways “to solve their problems in the group.” Although some initially “held back” in expressing their concerns, when “it proved to be an effective means of classroom management, then they bought in, as well.” It was the newly introduced teacher advisor component of the grade 9 program at Secondary School Site I, however, that was cited as the most contentious issue for the grade 9 teachers. Some teachers recognized the value of the advisor time with students, whereas others had a great deal of difficulty, due, in part, to the lack of subject orientation in the program. As well, there was fragmentation between the two advisor subgroups, due to differences in personalities and work ethic. One subgroup met frequently and generated a variety of suggestions, while the other subgroup tended to sit back and criticize the other subgroup’s ideas. In addition, some negative individuals had a propensity for finding fault rather than for problem solving. A few teachers left the grade 9 program, as a result, while the others who remained worked at making changes to the advisor program during the second year. However, by the end of the second year, through student, parent, and staff feedback, the advisor program was replaced by an alternative structure, which staff generally agreed could still meet the needs of the grade 9 students.

Staff Consistency

Metz (1990) suggests that common perspectives, developed by staff through shared experiences and shared reflections, form the basis for the continuation of common points of view. She adds that when new staff come on the scene, orientation about these
commonalities is critical if common points of view are to continue.

The school administration at Secondary School Site I remained constant during the implementation process. There were also relatively few changes in the teaching complement during this time. Consequently, collective perspectives about the change initiative continued to be generated by common experiences as implementation progressed. Despite the differences in their skills, styles, and personalities, Patrick, Valerie, and Vance became a cohesive school administrative team that provided strong support for the change initiative.

Similarly, the staff at Secondary School Site I generally recognized the "commonality that ran through the grade 9 teachers: their willingness, their amazing amount of energy, and their commitment to making the grade 9 program work." Because of their focus on the grade 9 program and their constant interaction, the grade 9 teachers at Secondary School Site I developed mutual "trust and respect" for one another. In addition, one staff member indicated that "the emphasis of the grade 9 teachers on participation, problem solving, co-operation, inventiveness, and shared experiences also stimulated the curiosity of several staff who were not involved in the grade 9 program." In some cases, this interest resulted in new volunteers for grade 9 program during the implementation phase, and therefore an increasing number of teachers who "actually had the opportunity to understand what was going on in the grade 9 program" and its "inherent problems and work." Consequently, the shared experiences of the grade 9 teachers "had a carry over effect into the other grade levels" through the involvement of additional staff during the implementation phase.

On the other hand, staff turnover at Secondary School Site II presented a
challenge to both the development and continuation of common perspectives during this time. Peter, as the only constant school administrator, worked with four different vice principals during the implementation period, and therefore, the development of a cohesive administrative team did not materialize.

During the first year of implementation, as well as a vice principal new to the role, several new teaching staff arrived at Secondary School Site II: some from the vocational school that had closed, some from other schools and some new to teaching. Accompanying the changes in the staff complement was an increased diversity in perspectives and actions and an increased number of staff who had not been involved in the decision making and planning for the grade 9 initiative at Secondary School Site II.

The resulting circumstances associated with the staff changes raised several concerns, which were expressed by many staff members, and in particular, by Peter and the department heads. Among some of their concerns about the number of vice principal changes were the differences in philosophy and style of operation, as well as the lack of understanding about the process, as it had unfolded, and how they could provide some continuity for the staff and students. The department heads and teachers related similar concerns about the changes in teaching staff and the lack of a consistent approach to orientation of all staff new to Secondary School Site II.

Regardless of the differences in staff consistency in the two schools, what helped to unite the staff, in both schools, during the implementation process, was their individual and collective sense of pride in their teaching and their concerns for student accomplishments, as they worked through similar problems.
Staff Leadership and Involvement

As an extension of the planning process, the group of eighteen grade 9 teachers at Secondary School Site I continued their leadership role in the beginning stages of implementation of the grade 9 program, with input from their departments and other staff. Throughout the implementation phase, however, as the composition of the grade 9 complement changed, more teachers at Secondary School Site I became actively involved in the grade 9 initiative and assumed leadership roles as part of the grade 9 team. In contrast, based on the larger number of staff involved in the planning process at Secondary School Site II and the anticipated workload for grade 9 teachers, most departments involved “as many people as possible” in the implementation from the beginning. This approach, which avoided “having anybody teach more than one line of grade 9 in a semester” and gave teachers the opportunity to “teach other things, including grade 10,” spread the workload across each department and enabled more Secondary School Site II staff to become actively involved early in the implementation of the curriculum in the new grade 9 program.

As implementation got underway at Secondary School Site I, Vance and the Guidance department reduced their direct involvement with the grade 9 teachers to enable them “to take over the meetings” and to take more responsibility for decision making within the group. However, at Secondary School Site II, Vernon, a newly appointed project leader and the Steering Committee still provided formal centralized leadership for the grade 9 program during the first year of implementation. It was not until the second year, with Vernon’s departure and the retirement of the project leader, that “the leadership roles were spread more amongst staff and away from the administration” at
Secondary School Site II. Staff leadership and involvement continued through the previously established interdepartmental committees and individual teacher interaction that had developed during the first year of implementation. While informal sharing continued to take place to some extent, "in terms of classroom strategies," for the most part, teachers indicated that they still looked to their own departments and department heads to provide consistency in the specific approaches to be used in their own subject areas.

Support and Recognition

The implementation process at Secondary School Site I involved a small group of grade 9 teachers, with an expressed focus on the new program and the grade 9 students. At Secondary School Site II, implementation involved several teachers teaching the grade 9 program, as well as other grades. However, both groups of grade 9 teachers underscored the importance of the support and recognition they received from one another during the implementation process, as both a motivator and a source of satisfaction (Stein, 1983; Yankelovich & Immerwahr, 1983). This support and recognition, however, occurred in a variety of different ways and at different times during the implementation process in each school.

At Secondary School Site I, from the beginning, other teaching staff recognized the grade 9 teachers for "their commitment to the new grade 9 program" and "appreciated their willingness to teach all the grade 9 students." However, because of the different organizational structure of the grade 9 program from the rest of the school, during the first year of implementation regular support and recognition of their accomplishments was generally limited to interaction between the teachers within the grade 9 team and
through their respective departments. The following year, once other teaching staff had experience with the students who had been in the grade 9 program, the grade 9 teachers received a great deal of positive feedback about the results of their efforts from a variety of other sources. Positive comments were made to individual grade 9 teachers by other staff about the preparation of the students for grade 10, as well as general appreciation and recognition of the teachers and the grade 9 program at staff meetings.

At Secondary School Site II, throughout the implementation process there was considerable teacher recognition, in the form of media publicity and numerous visitations by teachers from other school systems. Along with the ongoing public recognition of the innovations in the school, there was also substantial informal support and recognition through sharing of information about classroom strategies and program modifications among teachers within departments, and in some instances, due to their reciprocal understanding of the nature of the program and the grade 9 students, between individual teachers across departments.

What struck the teachers and school administrators in both schools in the study, however, was the lack of overt interest shown for their change initiatives by the school administrators and teachers in the other secondary schools in their own school system. They indicated that although there seemed to be "a lot of rumours and innuendo" and "misconceptions about what was going on," they had very few visits and inquiries from the staff of other schools in the board to find out what was actually occurring in their schools.

The Guidance departments in both schools continued to play a supportive role to the grade 9 teachers and students during the implementation phase of the grade 9
initiative. At Secondary School Site I, the Guidance staff had done extensive work during the planning stages to accommodate the individual needs of the new grade 9 students. Consequently, during the implementation phase, their support was more in the form of monitoring the progress of the students and making the necessary changes on an individual basis. At Secondary School Site II, however, the Guidance department took a much more active supporting role during the implementation phase, as the new grade 9 program got underway and teachers began to experience many unexpected difficulties with the new grouping of students and their ability to deliver the newly developed curriculum.

Due to the nature and extent of the discipline and learning problems that were encountered at Secondary School Site II, the Learning Resource teachers, as well as the Guidance staff, spent a great deal of time with the teachers of grade 9 to support and assist them in dealing with these issues. Further, as the result of the special education course offering the previous year, several classroom teachers became involved in the learning resource room, as part of their teaching assignment. The mutual support and the mentoring provided by Secondary School Site II Learning Resource staff, in turn, fostered a better understanding, on the part of many teachers, of the variation of student needs across the school, as well as their increased ability to make program changes to meet student needs.

In general, although recognition and support were provided for the grade 9 teachers in a variety of different ways in both schools, at Secondary School Site I, personal networks within the school fostered more dispersed patterns of socialization than at Secondary School Site II (Metz, 1990). As one staff member at Secondary School
Site I observed: “This is a school where you congregate. First thing in the morning, it’s the staff room that you got to. You sit down and have a chat. You don’t go off into your separate areas right away.” While Peter had attempted to foster a similar approach at Secondary School Site II, the department preparation rooms remained as the predominant base of operation for many staff members. Although departments were cross-cut by unofficial social affinities that brought together informal groups to discuss strategies, the locus of interaction at Secondary School Site II, as it related to subject specific curricular changes to the grade 9 program, generally occurred within the respective departments.

**Evaluation and Alterations**

Capacity for reflection, feedback, and problem solving is essential for school staff members to respond effectively to changes to meet the changing needs of today’s students (McLaughlin, Talbert & Phelan, 1990). Despite the extensive planning and preparation undertaken in the two secondary schools, the grade 9 teachers in both schools altered their original plans during the implementation process, as the result of their daily interactions with their students (Johnson, 1990; Lortie, 1975; McLaughlin, Talbert & Phelan, 1990; Metz, 1990; Pauly, 1991; Sarason, 1990). In both instances, changes were made to the curriculum, program delivery, and student evaluation. These classroom modifications were made by the grade 9 teachers, in conjunction with the departments at Secondary School Site I. At Secondary School Site II, the modifications were based upon the changes requested by the grade 9 teachers within each department. In both schools, however, the participants emphasized the necessity of “immediacy” in making the classroom changes to enable them to meet the daily needs of their students.

While the ongoing informal evaluation that occurred in each school was
significant to the day-to-day implementation process, the majority of questionnaire respondents in both schools also supported the importance of building evaluation procedures into the change process from the beginning. It was only at Secondary School Site I, however, that a formal evaluation of the entire grade 9 program was built into the process and was undertaken in the school towards the end of the second year of implementation. A questionnaire, developed by Vance, with staff input, was distributed to all staff, as well as previous and current grade 9 students and their parents, to determine any further changes that should be made. The feedback from the questionnaire resulted in some significant changes being made to the grade 9 program. These changes represented a compromise on the part of the grade 9 teachers and the other teachers in the school, as the result of their experiences during the two year implementation period.

**Grade 9 Teacher and Staff Relationships**

There were many similarities in the “cohesiveness” and “survival attitude” that developed among the teachers of grade 9 in the two secondary schools during the implementation process. At the same time, there were also significant differences as the result of the variation in the structures and processes that had been developed and accepted by the staff. At Secondary School Site I, due to the relatively small size of the grade 9 teacher group and their particular focus, conflict, although acknowledged, was minimized and overridden by attempts to problem solve within the group. As the need arose, the grade 9 teachers took it upon themselves to advocate and deal with particular issues with the rest of the staff in the school. At Secondary School Site II, the size of the grade 9 teacher group was much larger and the focus was more dispersed. Consequently, although the conflicts within most departments were also acknowledged and minimized
through problem solving, similar to the grade 9 teachers at Secondary School Site I, those conflicts which occurred beyond the department level were left to the department heads to present to other department heads within the existing structure. The variation in approaches at the department level was reflected not only in the different expectations in each department but also in the different types of leadership provided by the department heads in sharing information with and beyond their respective departments (Little, 1993). Consequently, in some instances, resolution to identified problems was obtained and, in other cases, it was left outstanding.

As noted earlier, while some staff members at both schools had initially expressed “their differences with the grade 9 program,” as the implementation process progressed the norms of respect for the grade 9 program became more positive on the part of the teachers of grade 9 and those teachers of other grades. Accompanying the attitudinal changes of staff toward the grade 9 program was the respect for the teachers of grade 9 who were instrumental in carrying out these changes. While the recognition of the grade 9 teachers by other staff members was more explicit at Secondary School Site I, by implication, the teachers at Secondary School Site II also recognized the value of the work of the teachers of the grade 9 program.

**Organizational Uniformity**

Lack of uniformity across the school proved to be another consequential issue for several staff in both schools during the implementation of the grade 9 program. This concern revealed itself in different ways in the two schools. At Secondary School Site I, the fact that the grade 9 students and teachers had a timetable different from the rest of the school impacted on the school organization as a whole, through a change of routines
in class movement and the loss of period change bells. While these changes did not necessarily concern the grade 9 teachers, there was enough pressure exerted by the other teachers and the students to warrant a compromise, which maintained the morning schedule and changed the afternoon program for the following year. At Secondary School Site II, while the "hold back" of the two departments continued to cause some communication difficulties among the teachers during the first year of implementation, once the two departments began implementation the second year, many of these problems were alleviated. Generally speaking, Secondary School Site II staff did not express undue concerns about the effects on the final outcomes of the entire process. In fact, some teachers indicated that "it should not be expected that everyone would be ready to undertake change at the same time" and that this was "a natural part of the change process."

As the implementation process proceeded into the second year at Secondary School Site II, however, other issues of organizational inconsistency were raised, in the form of comparative staffing lines and the availability of resources for various subject and program areas. Moreover, many staff began to question the role of the interdepartmental committee structure, which Peter had established, and its value in relation to the departmental structure. The two differing subgroups not only overlapped, but often their perspectives competed (Metz, 1990). During his tenure at the school, Vernon had worked with the department heads to enhance their leadership skills, and following his departure, they assumed a stronger decision making role, which effectively reduced the influence of the previously established interdepartmental committee roles in decision making across the school. This circumstance resulted in loss of teacher interest
and participation in interdepartmental committee work, since their recommendations all had to be approved by the department heads (Corcoran, 1987; Kanter, 1983; Shedd, 1987).

**Class Size and Staff Deployment**

In both schools, the grade 9 class size was reduced at the beginning of the implementation phase. At Secondary School Site I, this decision was made by the school staff deployment committee within the context of the school plan, the agreed upon timetable for the grade 9 program, and the staff resources available to the school. In the case of Secondary School Site II, however, a special clause, which had been negotiated into the collective agreement, increased the staff complement for the grade 9 pilot project and served to reduce the grade 9 class size during the course of the pilot. After the second year of implementation, the project was no longer considered a pilot and the staff at Secondary School Site II ran into some difficulties, once the collective agreement clause was no longer in effect.

The situation was exacerbated by a reduction in the number of staff allocated to the school, as the result of system budget decisions, and by the role played by the school staff deployment committee in determining how the existing staff complement would be deployed in the school. While the staff deployment committee at Secondary School Site I had been involved in the decision making from the beginning of the initiative, this had not been the case at Secondary School Site II. Moreover, a formal process for staff evaluation of the initiative, which involved all staff, had been built into the Secondary School Site I initiative, whereas this did not occur at Secondary School Site II. In hindsight, Peter acknowledged that once the original resources were withdrawn, that staff
inconsistency, the lack of staff involvement in the deployment process, and the absence of a formal evaluation were probably all significant contributing factors to some of the problems encountered in maintaining the grade 9 smaller class size (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978).

**Continuation: General Acceptance**

“Implementation is not a self-sustained process” (Miles, 1990, p.243). While “implementation is the big hurdle at the level of practice” (Fullan, 1991, p.88), for implementation to evolve into continuation depends on whether the change gets imbedded into the organizational structure through both bureaucratic and cultural means.

Bureaucratic linkages help to create opportunities for teachers to continue to act on the plan; cultural linkages enable the plan to become part of the teachers’ professional culture (Wilson and Corcoran, 1990). Therefore, change that has been built into school policy, procedures, budget, and timetables; has generated a critical mass of school administrators and teachers who are skilled and committed to the change; and has established orientation and socialization procedures becomes generally accepted and institutionalized as part of the assumptions of the staff (Corbett et al., 1984; Huberman & Miles, 1984).

While the staff in both secondary schools cited several similar specific reasons for general staff acceptance of the change initiative, the manner in which the continuation process occurred varied with the circumstances and staff responses to these circumstances in the two schools. The role played by school leadership or culture in fostering or interfering with this stage of the process is presented in the following subsections.
Benefits for Students

“Students are the workplace context of greatest consequence” for teachers (McLaughlin, 1990, p.81). Crucial to the continuation of any change are the results of the dedication and commitment of the teachers that are perceived as beneficial to their students (Wilson & Corcoran, 1988; Lortie, 1975). In both schools, the benefits of the grade 9 program for the students and the new teaching strategies that were developed by the teachers during the grade 9 change process were instrumental in staff support for the continuation of the program.

At Secondary School Site I, as the result of the change initiative, according to the grade 9 teachers, their ability “to pick up on problems very quickly,” to more readily “design a program that helps the kids to make the transition from grade 8 to grade 9,” to make “more successful recommendations for placement in grade 10,” and to better “prepare the grade 10 teachers for the students that they receive” were all of benefit to their students. Similar general Secondary School Site I staff satisfaction with the results of the work of the grade 9 teachers was revealed in a variety of questionnaire comments: “The students seem to be more successful when they enter grade 10; they have a much better learning experience in the ‘core’ and their knowledge and mastery of core material; the grade 10 classes were more distinctly divided into general and advanced levels;” and “the grade 10 classes I taught were the most co-operative I had ever run into.”

Many teachers of grade 9 at Secondary School Site II also confirmed the student benefits of “what they had gone through in making changes to the grade 9 program,” in that the new program provided “a new approach, new materials, and new methods of evaluation” and “the kind of pace that some of the students really needed.” One teacher
indicated: “You don’t hear the comment that this is boring anymore. Now we are constantly varying things throughout so there is always something to keep their interest.” Another stated: “I’ve never heard one negative comment from the students.” Still another added: “We have found that there has been a tremendous development in their ability.” Beyond the grade 9 level, it was also pointed out “that what we came up with influenced the other grades, as well, in a positive sense,” so that some of the changes that were made to accommodate the grade 9 students also “had a benefit for students in the other grades, as well.” For example, one of the Secondary School Site II questionnaire respondents noted: “There has been more hands on and more variety in my lessons in grades 10 to 12/OAC.” Additionally, one of the Learning Resource teachers emphasized the value of the involvement of several regular class teachers in the learning resource program, on a part time basis. It was noted that through this participation that several staff developed a “new understanding of special education and all the work that is involved” in meeting the needs of students with varying abilities “to the betterment of the students who get help in the resource program.”

Ownership and Commitment

“Ownership in the sense of clarity, skill, and commitment is a progressive process” (Fullan, 1991, p.92). Although there were variations in the manner in which they were established in the two secondary schools, staff ownership and commitment, which developed throughout the change process, were indicated by several participants as significant to the continuation of the grade 9 initiative.

At Secondary School Site I, due to a small staff turnover throughout the change process, most staff had had the opportunity to be involved in the decision making and
planning from the start. Although initially less than one third of the staff had assumed
direct responsibility for the growth and direction of the grade 9 program, the ongoing
responsiveness of the grade 9 teachers in addressing the concerns of other staff members
in making appropriate changes was recognized throughout the school. As well, as the
change progressed over three years at Secondary School Site I, the grade 9 team
complement also changed, to provide opportunities for increasing numbers of staff to
expand their knowledge base, as they experienced the grade 9 program themselves. This
gradual changeover not only broadened the scope of staff ownership and commitment but
also enabled the grade 9 program to progress in new directions. For the staff who were
not involved in teaching the grade 9 program, the “trust and respect” that they had
developed for the grade 9 teachers, as the result of the benefits for their students in grade
10, engendered not only a commitment to the continuation of the program but also an
interest in extending the concept into grade 10.

At Secondary School Site II, due to staff additions for the first year of
implementation, several of the teachers had not been involved in the initial decision
making and planning for the grade 9 change. However, over the implementation period,
most teachers in the school had taught students in the new grade 9 program or had taught
students who had been in the grade 9 program. Consequently, the majority of Secondary
School Site II staff had direct experience with the implementation process and many had
the opportunity to experience the results of the program for their grade 10 students.
Underscoring the significance of staff ownership and commitment that developed during
the implementation process, as the result of many “struggles” and attempts to overcome
their problems, a Secondary School Site II staff member concluded: “They’ve gone down
the rough road. They’ve improvised, they’ve perfected and now they’re kind of happy with where they are in the whole scheme of things.” Additionally, it was pointed out that “now that the grade 9 program is in place, staff don’t see any major changes occurring program-wise within the school.” At the same time, while the staff of Secondary School Site II were not looking beyond the grade 9 program at that point, due to their collective desire for continued improvement of the program, they decided to make alterations to the grade 9 program, in the form of some timetable and structural changes to the grade 9 classes, in order to better reflect the changing needs expressed in the school.

Flexibility

The importance of continued flexibility and adaptability to make the necessary revisions to meet the needs of both the students and the staff was clearly recognized by the staff in both schools, as they continued the grade 9 program. As one Secondary School Site II staff member pointed out: “We adjust and we adapt, probably on a daily basis. There is always room for improvement, so if ideas come up or ways that we can better things, we’re always open to suggestions.” Similarly, at Secondary School Site I, a grade 9 teacher referred to the importance of ongoing changes so that nothing “has to stay that way, and if something isn’t working we will come up with a way to fix it.” Another Secondary School Site I teacher commented: “At any given time we could be sitting in the staff room and somebody who’s on the team could come in and say: ‘You know I had so-and-so today,’ and we’d end up having a meeting to discuss it.” The flexibility and adaptability that resulted in both secondary schools was in keeping with the beliefs of Patrick and Peter, who emphasized the importance of ongoing responsiveness for the grade 9 program to continue to meet the changing needs of both the grade 9 students and
the teachers in their respective schools.

The main difference between the flexibility and adaptability that occurred in the two schools, however, related to both the manner and the timing in which school staff responded to their existing organizational structures. It is recalled that at Secondary School Site I, as the result of previous experiences with their students, that staff determined the need for a change in the organization and structure of the grade 9 program, prior to undertaking the initiative. The flexibility that Vance built into the initial timetable was perceived as a "key factor" in enabling staff to "be flexible within the structure," in order to continue to make changes to respond to the needs of those involved with or affected by the change initiative. At Secondary School Site II, although a similar capacity for flexibility was evidenced in staff revisions to the grade 9 program within the existing structure, it was not until later on in the continuation phase that staff accepted the need for a changed timetable to facilitate other revisions to address some staff concerns that had developed. In effect, as the staff at Secondary School Site II worked through the grade 9 program changes with their new group of students, they began to understand the need for some of the structural changes that the teachers of Secondary School Site I had envisioned much earlier in the process.

In this regard, Vergil's entry into Secondary School Site II proved to be timely as the change initiative continued. As an experienced vice principal, with expertise in scheduling, Vergil supported and assisted staff in developing a new grade 9 timetable in order to provide more flexibility for teachers to exchange classes and to have more interaction with one another about a specific group of grade 9 students. While Secondary School Site II teachers generally acknowledged that the new timetable "has presented
some added workload for staff,” they also indicated that “they bought into it because they bought into the grade 9 program.”

Distribution of Leadership

“Good leaders develop other leaders, drawing on the strengths of a diverse set of goals” (Wilson & Corcoran, 1990, p.237). In both schools, while the principals were key players in actively advocating the grade 9 initiative throughout the change process, the vice principals took formal leadership roles in providing staff with the organizational framework and support in the planning and initial implementation phases. Thereafter, a number of staff assumed both formal and informal leadership roles in implementing and continuing the school-initiated change.

Secondary School Site I staff emphasized that “Vance clearly set the tone for the grade 9 initiative by establishing the timetable and becoming directly involved” with the grade 9 teachers, fostering their leadership of the grade 9 change. Similarly, Vernon’s “attention to organization, detail, and follow through” were considered as important factors for the staff at Secondary School Site II in developing a comprehensive plan for the change project and in providing a focus for the department heads in carrying out the overall plan. While both vice principals had attempted to enhance staff leadership through their involvement with various staff members in the grade 9 initiative, once Vance and Vernon left their respective schools during the implementation phase, the groundwork that they had laid was carried out in different ways, as staff proceeded with the changes in the following years. Therefore, while the distribution of leadership was evident in both schools, the degree and nature of leadership involvement in the continuation phase of the change initiative varied, as the result of staff responses to
previous occurrences during the change process.

At Secondary School Site I, over the three-year period, the leadership responsibilities undertaken by the grade 9 teachers had become generally accepted and "appreciated" by most other staff. "With Vance gone," the grade 9 teachers "assumed a lot more of the responsibilities." They suggested that shortly after Vance left, they "all agreed" that since "they didn’t have a team leader anymore" they were going to be their own leaders. They said: "Let’s get on with the business. Let’s run it like Vance was here. We’ll all take a little bit of Vance’s job and that’s what we’ve done." Although the grade 9 teachers still maintained contact with their respective departments, in effect, the grade 9 teacher team was recognized as a parallel unit, with specific leadership responsibilities for the grade 9 program.

Opportunities for both formal and informal staff leadership at Secondary School Site II had also developed during the implementation period, either within the interdepartmental committees, previously established by Peter, or through the strength of the department structure, which Vernon had fostered. Unlike Secondary School Site I, where the staff generally accepted the leadership role of the grade 9 teacher team in the continuation phase, teachers on the interdepartmental teams at Secondary School Site II became "discouraged" by the overriding power of the subject departments. As one teacher explained: "Any decisions we came to, after research or whatever, would have to be okayed by the department heads." Another added: "Anything we ever tried to do always got voted down by the department heads. We spent hours on all this work and nothing came, as a result. It was very frustrating to the point where we thought forget this.” Consequently, as the department structure took the fore in leadership in the
continuation phase at Secondary School Site II, teachers were relegated to informal leadership and interaction within this structure.

**Mutual Support**

Despite the differences in organizational structures, the ongoing support of one another that developed through planning and implementation was another reason for continuation cited by the staff in both schools.

At Secondary School Site I, strong mutual support came from within the grade 9 group. As one staff member pointed out: “The ‘we’re in this together’ survival attitude of the grade 9 teachers and their willingness to persevere” were “major factors in the success of the grade 9 program.” Equally as important for continuation was the support from those teachers who did not teach the grade 9 program, as well as the school administration. “The main thinking now,” according to one of the Secondary School Site I teachers, who does not teach grade 9, is “let the grade 9 teachers run this. She adds: “We shouldn’t be telling them how to run the situations they’re in. If they need our input, we’re there.”

The mutual support at Secondary School Site II, although generally through the department structure and the school administration, was also evidenced by the amount of ongoing interaction that continued among some teachers, exclusive of department affiliation. The fact that communication “was no longer a hierarchy,” fostered “openness” in the staff, “the ability to agree or disagree with one another,” and the “understanding that you can say it and get it out” with “no grudges.” This approach enabled some staff “to support one another with their eyes open” and “to look outward, not just completely inward.” Some also believed that the “cohesiveness” that developed
“happened because of necessity” and “the need for a large support group.” Consequently, they suggested that “they became stronger outside the classroom to sort of counteract how difficult it was in there.”

The Future of the Change Initiative

The administration and teaching staff in both schools expressed general support for the continuation of school-based initiatives, such as the grade 9 program, because they have enjoyed the freedom to make changes to meet the needs of the students in the school. However, there was clearly reserved optimism about the endurance of that possibility in the wake of the current and anticipated mandated changes and budget reductions.

At Secondary School Site I, several staff alluded to the implications of these political and economic circumstances. For example, one staff member explained: “Sometimes quality can be affected by quantity because there is only so much a human being can do.” Another commented on the forecasted centralized control and decision making and “that program might have to pay the price for the economic realities and that decisions will be made for us.” Still another concluded: “Whereas we’ve had a taste of what it’s like to be able to do things, that’s going to hurt a lot.” While Secondary School Site I staff generally indicated that they were still concerned, they were also very realistic in recognizing that the “the times are different now.”

Similarly, staff at Secondary School Site II commented on the “different atmosphere” and “the fact that that the times have changed the whole way we look at things.” Compounding their concerns about continuation of the grade 9 initiative were the number of other changes that had been occurring in the school during the grade 9
pilot project. While some staff members had accepted these changes as part of the circumstances in the school, others were literally “coping” with the changes that they had undertaken. However, generally both the increased teacher workload and the reduced teacher support were attributed to “the things that were happening outside the school.” As one staff member observed: “Some people are feeling a little bogged down, not necessarily for things in the school, but just changes in education, in general. It’s the apprehension. What’s happening next?”

Due to the uncertainties of the times, there was not doubt that there was concerted anxiety, on the part of the teachers in both schools, about what might happen to the grade 9 program to which they have devoted so much time, because of anticipated external mandates and financial restrictions. Although staff in both schools expressed concern about the future of the continuation of the grade 9 change initiative, the staff in Secondary School Site II, on the whole, tended to be more disillusioned about the lack of external support in the process of continuation. This reaction, according to Berman and McLaughlin (1978), is not uncommon when financial and staffing support are substantially reduced or discontinued in a change initiative. On the other hand, the staff of Secondary School Site I had worked within their existing resources and staff allocation and therefore, was not affected to the same degree by the budget reductions.

**Outcomes of the School-Initiated Change**

In this section, the outcomes of the grade 9 change initiative are described in the form of **Attitudes and Practices** that were altered or maintained in the two secondary schools in the study.
Table 12. Behaviours, Attitudes, and Assumptions at the Two Secondary School Sites as Outcomes of the School-Initiated Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary School Site I</th>
<th>Secondary School Site II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of Leaders</strong></td>
<td><strong>Role of Leaders</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- authoritarian and facilitative</td>
<td>- authoritarian and facilitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- task and relationship orientation</td>
<td>- task and relationship orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- sharing information and decision making</td>
<td>- exclusive sharing of information and decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- distribution of leadership</td>
<td>- distribution of leadership is limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- expectations clearly articulated by the principal and understood by the staff</td>
<td>- expectations implied by the principal, rather than clearly articulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of Teachers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Role of Teachers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>with students</em></td>
<td><em>with students</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- academic and relationship orientation</td>
<td>- academic and relationship orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- meeting overall student needs</td>
<td>- meeting overall student needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- recognition of student diversity</td>
<td>- recognition of student diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- practice based on student-centred program delivery and the development of new teaching and evaluation strategies to meet student needs</td>
<td>- practice based on student-centred program delivery and the development of new teaching and evaluation strategies to meet student needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>with other teachers</em></td>
<td><em>with other teachers</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- subject knowledge and knowledge about students</td>
<td>- subject knowledge and knowledge about students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- new opportunities for growth and development beyond the classroom</td>
<td>- opportunities for growth and development mainly at the classroom and department level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- formal problem solving through departmental interaction balanced with increased informal interaction</td>
<td>- formal problem solving through departmental interaction with limited informal interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- increased communication and collaboration in the school</td>
<td>- communication and collaboration generally within departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- decreased territoriality</td>
<td>- increased territoriality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>with parents/community</em></td>
<td><em>with parents/community</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- continued responsiveness to changing community through program delivery</td>
<td>- increased responsiveness to changing community through program delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- increased interaction with parents</td>
<td>- increased interaction with parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Change</strong></td>
<td><strong>Educational Change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- near future orientation</td>
<td>- near future orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- management of the school environment through acknowledgement of school change as instrumental in improving program delivery</td>
<td>- management of the school environment through acknowledgement of school change as instrumental in improving program delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- increased flexibility and adaptability across the school</td>
<td>- newly acquired classroom flexibility and adaptability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- supportive of other school-initiated changes if they meet student needs</td>
<td>- supportive of other school-initiated changes if they meet student needs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Fullan (1991) notes, during the process of change, attitudes and practices interact in a dynamic interrelationship, as beliefs guide and are informed by the strategies and activities that are employed, and correspondingly, the effective use of strategies and activities depends on their articulation with existing and developing beliefs (Fullan, 1991). Since “change works or does not work on the basis of individual and collective responses to it” (Fullan, 1991, p.46), what is defined as the outcome depends upon the shared experiences of those involved in the process and how the results of these experiences are interpreted in the form of new norms, beliefs, and assumptions and are demonstrated in corresponding behaviours and actions (Schein, 1985). The resulting paradigms that had developed in the two secondary schools are depicted by the behaviours, attitudes, and assumptions shown in Table 12.

Attitudes

Reflecting upon their shared experiences during the school-initiated change over a four year period, comments from the school administrators and staff in both schools characterized certain attitudes that resulted from the grade 9 initiative. These results are expressed in remarks by staff at Secondary School Site I, such as: “They’re not new, but they are changing” and “The school that I came to and the school that I am at is different than it was,” and in similar statements made by Secondary School Site II staff, such as: “All of us who were involved in the changes were changed ourselves, to a certain extent.” Further information from questionnaire respondents and interview participants, presented in the following subsections, revealed not only what changed in this regard, but also how it changed, at both the classroom and the school level.
Students and Program Delivery

As one questionnaire respondent at Secondary School Site II put it: “The grade 9 initiative has given life to the grade 9 program.” Another noted: “It has provided teachers with new insights about their students and how to provide more effective program delivery to meet student needs.” This change in attitude was indicated in a variety of interview comments. For example, one teacher of grade 9 recalled: “I can remember thinking to myself that I had never taught kids like that before.” Another remarked: “We found that the calibre of the student that we came up with was not what we expected” and “that how they learned wasn’t basically what we anticipated.” Another teacher added: “With the needy kids comes a sense that you’re fulfilling some role in their life.” Consequently, several staff at Secondary School Site II commented that they “had to change so many things” to “get to the kids’ level” and that as they “rebuilt things” that they “learned how to do other things in the process.” One teacher pointed out: “You can’t be so wedded to the changes that you’ve made that you can’t change the changes.” Consequently, as another indicated: “We are always in a state of change to try to improve our position in program delivery.” Similarly, another teacher commented: “The changes are still on-going. We’re still learning. It hasn’t stopped.” Flexibility and adaptability became the norm as the teachers of grade 9 at Secondary School Site II constantly “changed the changes” and “kept doing” what they “thought were better things” for their students as they went on.

Similarly, at Secondary School Site I, the grade 9 teachers reflected on the new insights that they gained and the importance of continued flexibility and adaptability to meet student needs. It is recalled, however, that the majority of the grade 9 teachers at
Secondary School Site I came into the program on a voluntary basis and, unlike most teachers at Secondary School Site II, generally with experience with students with varying abilities and with substantial background information about the students that they would be teaching. Therefore, at the beginning, the nature and extent of their insights about dealing with a wide range of student needs differed substantially from those of the teachers at Secondary School Site II. Nevertheless, like the staff of Secondary School Site II, the Secondary School Site I staff also described their experiences with the new program as “a learning process” as they “made changes often” to address specific concerns. In particular, the grade 9 teachers at Secondary School Site I gained new understandings about the importance of “regular communication” and collaboration “to identify behaviour problems and learning difficulties” that their students were experiencing and “to address problems, as they arose, in order to make the necessary adjustments” for their students. They indicated that because they “were better aware of their kids and their abilities, their strengths and their weaknesses,” that they were also better able to make program changes, accordingly. Consequently as one teacher explained: “The majority of the population moving to grade 10 was probably better prepared than they ever had been, as a group.”

In both secondary schools, newly acquired attitudes were reflected not only by the teachers of grade 9 but also by those in other grades. At Secondary School Site I, while not all non-grade 9 teachers had necessarily agreed with the changes, once they experienced the “favourable” results for their grade 10 students, they were more willing to accept the changes. As one grade 9 teacher pointed out: “I think they realized there was some validity to this, so they bought into a little more, even if maybe they hadn’t
been sold on it initially." A similar stance was summed up in the comments of a questionnaire response: "The emphasis of the grade 9 teachers on participation, problem solving, co-operation, inventiveness, and shared experiences has had a carryover effect into the other grade levels and has stimulated the curiosity of several of us." Recognizing that attitudes toward students and program delivery "is very different now," one non-grade 9 teacher at Secondary School Site II also indicated that it was "not just in grade 9, but right through grades 9 to 12/OAC, as the result of what we did in grade 9." Likewise, another staff member at Secondary School Site II, who taught grade 9, as well as other grades, reiterated: "Now that we've found a way to make it work in grade 9, it's worked for other grades too." Similar attitudes toward the carryover of the grade 9 project at Secondary School Site II were reflected in questionnaire responses resembling the following comment: "Time spent in the grade 9 classroom was a vivid demonstration of the wide range of abilities in the student population. Subsequently, one can spot the variations more easily in the 'streamed' classes, as well."

**Interdepartmental Collaboration**

Given the size and complexity of most secondary schools, subject departments are a significant social and political organizational feature and represent a naturally occurring sphere for teacher interaction and collaborative planning (Little, 1993). Positive, supportive collegial relations comprise an acknowledged and important role in the process of change (Lieberman, 1990; Little, 1982; Rosenholtz, 1989). Accordingly, those who have studied secondary school change indicate that the department is the professional community of greatest significance to teachers in providing on-the-job support and establishing norms of practice, conceptions of task, and attitudes toward
students (Hannay, 1995; Hargreaves, Earl et al., 1990; Siskin, 1990). At the same, however, other studies suggest that "departments provide very different kinds of collegial homes for the teachers who inhabit them" (Little, 1993, p. 153) and consequently, influence how teachers experience their workplace in different ways (Bruckerhoff, 1991; Cusick, 1982; Johnson, 1990).

In this study, generally the staff in both schools represented their departments as domains for working together and discussing mutual on-the-job concerns related to students and program delivery. However, while subject affiliation and departmental membership were more powerful at Secondary School Site II, in terms of teachers’ definitions of their roles and relationships, at Secondary School Site I, the staff presented a more implicit role of their departmental membership, as it related to the goals of the entire school. In this regard, although the analysis of the findings at both secondary schools generally supported the contentions of the previously cited studies, the role of subject departments took on a very different perspective for the grade 9 teachers at Secondary School Site I, as the result of the grade 9 initiative.

Although the department structure was still recognized as the natural and predominant locus of curricular interactions of most non grade 9 teachers at Secondary School Site I, the organizational changes made to the grade 9 program had become accepted by most staff as part of this formal school organizational structure. Consequently, the grade 9 teacher team had become legitimized and, in effect, paralleled the subject departments as a unit of collaborative planning and instructional support (Little, 1990). While the grade 9 teachers still maintained contact with their respective departments, the grade 9 program provided a new forum for interdepartmental support,
leadership, and interdependence for the grade 9 teachers. To compliment this new structure, there was also a great deal of informal collaboration among grade 9 teachers, exclusive of departmental affiliation, both in the staff room and throughout the school.

At Secondary School Site II, Peter had attempted an informal organizational change prior to the initiation of the grade 9 change project, in the form of interdepartmental committees. Although this alternative overlapping configuration to the department structure took root initially during the change process, unlike the grade 9 team, it never became legitimized by the staff. As the result of the grade 9 project, the focus of the interdepartmental committees gave way to the development and delivery of grade courses, by subject, within each department. Some staff acknowledged that the "teachers, as a group," were "realizing that they have to move out of the department lines." However, the power of the department structure and the leadership invested in the department heads had overridden the previous leadership opportunities provided to teachers through the interdepartmental committee structure, as the competition for staff and other resources came to the fore.

Therefore, to the extent that this study found collaboration through the Secondary School Site II departmental structure, it was turned inward, with members of departments working together to consolidate their positions in "a survival orientation" (Little, 1993, p. 160). While this approach fostered collaboration internal to each department, it constrained collaboration across departments. Against this backdrop, however, there were considerable variations in the nature and extent of teachers' professional and personal relations with one another at Secondary School Site II. Consequently, although generally there was congeniality among most teachers, there was also an underlying
competitive reality that centered on the availability of resources, once the project was no longer considered as a pilot. "In retrospect," one staff member concluded: "We shared far less than we should have done. We just sort of went on our own way" and "we probably missed out on the sharing of ideas, which would have been beneficial."

Therefore, while the school-initiated change at Secondary School Site II improved the efficiency and effectiveness of program delivery in the classroom, it influenced organizational conditions relatively superficially. Additionally, some of the new teaching strategies enhanced the effectiveness of certain organizational strengths that were already in existence, but they did not address some of the organizational weaknesses that persisted (Cuban, 1988b). At Secondary School Site I, on the other hand, more powerful multi-pronged strategies were found that directly transformed, not only classroom delivery, but also the fundamental nature of the organization of the school (Berman & Gjelten, 1984; Cuban, 1988b). Therefore, staff commented that territoriality at Secondary School Site I was diminishing, as the result of collective efforts across the school to respond to the grade 9 change initiative. In contrast, at Secondary School Site II, territoriality appeared to be bolstered, due to the inability of staff to address collectively certain circumstances related to the grade 9 change initiative beyond the classroom or department level.

**Teacher Empowerment and Leadership**

People are motivated by needs and their attitudes are created by a history of circumstances that have served to satisfy their needs (Hamechek, 1987; Maslow, 1970; Schein, 1985). In this regard, several researchers, who have studied attitudinal changes in the career patterns of teachers, have discovered that generally personal and
professional needs of teachers tend to change with the passage of time. However, the same researchers have varying views about the way in which these attitudes are sequenced in the teacher career cycle. Some see mature teachers as more conservative, disengaged, and declining in energy and enthusiasm than their less experienced counterparts (Fessler & Christensen, 1992; Huberman, 1989; Sikes, Measor & Woods, 1985). Others regard teachers in later stages of their careers as evolving in the profession toward a sense of fulfillment and self-actualization (Benner, 1985; Nias, 1989; Steffy, 1989; Yee, 1986).

Analysis of the outcomes of the grade 9 change initiative in this study tended to support the latter research findings. In both secondary schools, the grade 9 initiative was "carried" by a significant number of experienced teaching staff aged forty-five years and up, although it was also acknowledged that the teachers at Secondary School Site II were generally more "conservative" than those at Secondary School Site I, as the result of their backgrounds and experiences. However, as the change process unfolded, many of the mature teachers in both schools revealed their interest in new opportunities for growth and development beyond the classroom. As well, teachers in both schools, although admittedly "tired," expressed their continued enthusiasm to give willingly of their time and energy to further school-based initiatives that would meet the changing needs of their students.

The organizational changes at Secondary School Site I served to further enhance staff motivation for empowerment and leadership opportunities, along with "a lot of measures to constantly reinforce people" and "to give them room to develop," so that it wasn't "always the same traditional structure that's giving advice to the person at the
bottom." One teacher indicated: "I feel comfortable giving as much support as the rest of the people on my team. I think it has made me a stronger professional. I have really grown an awful lot." Similarly, at Secondary School Site II, many staff commented that "more of a team effort has developed" and that "people have become closer because of the 'you're all in this together' attitude that has developed and you hold each other up." Further, it was suggested that teachers became "stronger outside the classroom to sort of counteract how difficult it is in there." Similar to Secondary School Site I, with communication "no longer a hierarchy" at Secondary School Site II, there was an increase in "the openness of staff to agree or disagree with one another." Although several staff at Secondary School Site II expressed frustration with their inability to contribute to school level decision making through avenues other than the departmental structure, others sought informal opportunities through interaction with other teachers in the school.

These attitudinal outcomes, as part of individual and collective staff experiences with the grade 9 initiative, were also the result of staff response to the leadership provided by the two principals in the change undertaking. Although both Patrick and Peter believed in teacher empowerment and leadership, the nature and degree to which they were able to foster this type of staff involvement varied with the response of their staff to their different leadership styles. Several staff regarded both principals as providing them with opportunities for empowerment and leadership and responded accordingly. However, at Secondary School Site I, some staff members viewed Patrick as too imposing and directive and at Secondary School Site II, some staff saw Peter as lacking in direction and focus.
Parent and Student Involvement

At both secondary schools, although the majority of questionnaire respondents suggested that support from parents and students was necessary for school-initiated change to be successful, there was a larger percentage of Secondary School Site I staff respondents who supported both parental and student involvement in the change initiative. The differences in teacher responses from the two schools reflected not only the emphasis placed upon parent and student participation by the two school administrators but also the procedures that had been put in place for their involvement during the process of the school-initiated change.

For Patrick and Peter, parent participation was considered as a significant underpinning in the school-initiated change from the beginning, and both principals established strong links with their respective parent communities, through parent associations, early in the grade 9 change undertaking. At Secondary School Site I, however, as the change process continued, parent involvement developed beyond the formalized parent association, to include input into the evaluation of the grade 9 change initiative and participation in joint planning committees across the school. The evaluation process and the joint planning committees, which included students as well as parents and teachers at Secondary School Site I, served to reinforce Patrick's emphasis on both parent and student involvement in school level decision making. The results of their involvement in a variety of school activities influenced staff attitudes about the importance of their input, as the staff experienced the results for themselves. In contrast, at Secondary School Site II, while parents continued to be involved, mainly through the Home and School Association, in providing informal input into the grade 9 program, no
formalized procedures were been developed for parent and student evaluation of the grade 9 project. As well, there were no joint planning committees in place at Secondary School Site I to provide for parent and student involvement in the school level decision making processes.

School Change

As the result of their experiences, school administrators and teaching staff at both secondary schools generally expressed a positive attitude towards the grade 9 change initiative and to school-initiated change, in general. The reasons for their attitudinal changes, although varied, were described by the learning that occurred during the grade 9 initiative.

Although one teacher at Secondary School Site II noted the change in attitude of several staff in “not always looking in the past,” it was also recognized that the change took “teachers out of their comfort zone” and “moved them into doing something that was different.” Therefore, the changes that were made to the grade 9 program were not easy for all staff. As one teacher indicated: “Not everybody is going to be able to handle the particular changes at a particular time, and if they can’t, okay, no hard feelings.”

Several interview participants referred to the conservative nature of the staff at Secondary School Site II. One staff member commented: “Before we got into this, I would have said we were a pretty conservative lot,” but “once we bought into the idea, we decided that we would go for it.” Despite extensive planning, several Secondary School Site II staff found that change “is not concrete” and “that you still have to keep adapting and you still keep changing.” They also learned that “looking for better ways does involve risks sometimes” and requires “a lot of trial and error” and the freedom to make mistakes.
Moreover, it was pointed out that “when you get excited about what you’re doing, you do it well and that excitement sustains it.” Also, Secondary School Site II staff indicated that “change makes you look at things differently” and in finding “a way to make it work” that “they had come a long way.” As well, most were receptive to other school-initiated changes, if they were in the best interests of students. However, according to Peter, “what is affecting the in-school changes now are the things that are happening outside the school.” He added that “as long as we do something within the school, the staff supports it, but the moment we start getting pressure outside the school, they’re resisting the change.” Several staff at Secondary School Site II backed up Peter’s comments in their expressed concern about the current lack of external direction and “starting things up” only to have “somebody change the rules.”

In additional comments from a school administrator’s point of view, Peter suggested that he learned that “change cannot be revolutionary, it’s got to evolve” (Miles, 1987; Miles et al., 1988). He also pointed out: “If the change is too big, it becomes too much of a challenge.” Reflecting on the number of changes that he had attempted to make in a short time period, Peter acknowledged some qualifications to his original assumptions about the importance of time and a transition process if the challenges of educational change are to be manageable and if the changes are to be lasting. Peter also referred to his new understanding about the importance of maintaining a balance between the focus of the change and the goals of the entire school. He indicated that because they had received so much public recognition for their energy in one area that they “just lost focus on publicizing the good things” that they “were doing in other areas.” He concluded: “That’s something I learned from the experience—to evaluate what you are
Several staff at Secondary School Site I referred to the “great effort, the ‘were in this together’ attitude,” and “the many hours put into the process by the grade 9 teachers and the vice principal” as significant factors in changing their attitudes toward the grade 9 initiative. Additionally, as an increasing number of teachers had experience in the grade 9 program over a four year period, more staff came to a better understanding of the nature of the program. As well, once the non-grade 9 teachers experienced the “favourable results” for their students, they provided increasing support for the new structure and the grade 9 program. Similar to Secondary School Site II, the element of risk taking was a natural outgrowth of the changes to the grade 9 program at Secondary School Site I. Several staff emphasized the importance of being “listened to” and being encouraged to “make a contribution” as significant in their pursuit of new ideas. In this regard, one Secondary School Site I staff member explained: “You’ve got support, if you’ve got an idea, whether you’re a department head, assistant head, or a teacher, the door is open.” It was indicated further that this approach “has encouraged all staff to be more open to expressing their ideas and making a contribution” to the school. As more teachers, both on the grade 9 team and throughout the school, were “recognized for their ideas,” were provided “room to develop,” and were encouraged “to evaluate, rethink, and redo,” it wasn’t always “the same traditional structure giving advice to the person at the bottom” at Secondary School Site I. Consequently the “them and us” attitude became less prevalent throughout the school, as both teachers and department heads were constantly reinforcing one another “to try new things.” This attitude was reflected in other school-initiated changes that continued to be undertaken at Secondary School Site I. Although
there were reservations, like those expressed by Secondary School Site II staff, about the implications for future school-initiated change in the wake of the changing times, Secondary School Site I staff were generally more positive about the "institutional vitality" (Wilson & Corcoran, 1990) that had developed as they continued to be engaged in attempting to get better.

The changing attitudes of the staff at Secondary School Site I, as the result of the grade 9 initiative, served to strengthen Patrick's original underlying assumptions about educational change and his beliefs about the importance of staff involvement and empowerment in the change process. His intent "to plant the seed" and to get staff thinking "horizontally," as well as "vertically," in order to "share their opinions with various groups," was accommodated through the structural changes that occurred at Secondary School Site I during the grade 9 school-initiated change. Patrick maintained that the change in the organizational structure of the school was a major factor in achieving the outcomes that the staff had accomplished. He emphasized: "They've got to see physical changes and they've got to be immediate to their needs." He also stressed the importance of staff "being in on the design" before it was formalized, and that "when you provide people with data and the opportunity to make changes, they change." While trying to get across a more progressive approach that "we are in a competitive world and we better be there," Patrick developed further insights into the reality of the variation in comfort levels of teaching staff in making substantial changes. His belief in the importance of "people watching" and "talking to them individually," in developing ownership and commitment during educational change, was also reinforced as the result of the change initiative.
Practices

Classroom and school level practices are "not predetermined or invariate but emerge through a dynamic process of social definition and strategic interaction among teachers, students, and subject matter, in the context of a school or a department" (McLaughlin, 1993, p.98). Teachers' responses to the challenges of changing practices are, therefore, a product of their conception of the task, as framed and supported by a particular school or department (Hemmings & Metz, 1990; McLaughlin, Talbert, & Phelan, 1990). While some teachers expressed frustration and exhaustion as a consequence of their efforts, many persisted, and even thrived, in the challenging contexts in which they were placed. There are several examples of the variations that occurred in practices as the result of staff responses to the grade 9 school initiative.

Student-Centred Program Delivery

In both secondary schools, the focus changed from teacher-directed instruction to student-centred learning, to enable teachers to work more effectively with their grade 9 students. As one teacher at Secondary School Site II explained: "The old Socratic lesson, it just wasn't going to work anymore with the kids that were there. Individual programs, based on where they left off the previous day, was the kind of pace that some of the students really needed." A Secondary School Site II questionnaire respondent also pointed out the extension of this practice beyond grade 9: "There has been more hands on and more variety in my lessons in grades 10 to 12/OAC." Similarly, at Secondary School Site I, a staff member noted: "We have a brand new way of doing business. We've gone to more student-centred type things. We try to get them to work together which is something new for us because it used to be so teacher-centred." While most teachers
believed that the changes were "for the kids' benefit," it was also indicated that "you've got to have things ready. You can't go by the seat of your pants." As well, another grade 9 teacher noted: "I get to see the kids through the whole year. I get to see their growth. It allowed me to get closer and a lot of bonding went on." As a result, one staff member observed: "Some saw the kids in a different light and softened in their approach to kids."

Staff at both schools also indicated that they developed a new set of classroom management techniques, as they worked with their grade 9 students. As one questionnaire respondent at Secondary School Site II pointed out: "Classroom management demands the highest priority when dealing with students of varying abilities." Comments to this effect included those from staff at Secondary School Site I: "We went into it green. We weren't as tough on the kids as we should have been. So we learned that lesson and haven't had nearly the same problems," and those from Secondary School Site II: "At the beginning we were trying to make it comfortable for the students" but "as a result of our experiences, we found that the students function better if there are structure, guidance, and rules." Similarly, a grade 9 teacher at Secondary School Site I stated: "It allows me to more firmly establish over a longer period of time the rules of the classroom and the way things should be at school."

**Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

While "a few teachers and school administrators envision more permeable boundaries between departments, more meaningful ties across subject areas, and more sensible relations between school and work" (Little, 1993, p. 161), only a limited number of studies of secondary schools have found evidence of practices in joint planning, extensive and intensive forms of collegial exchange, and experiences with
interdisciplinary curriculum among academic teachers (Little, 1993).

Similar findings were borne out in this study. Although both principals expressed a desire for more interdepartmental interaction, it was only at Secondary School Site I that joint planning and interdisciplinary practices actually became imbedded in the organizational structure as a result of the grade 9 change initiative. One Secondary School Site I department head commented that the current structure enabled the grade 9 teachers “to be part of a department and part of the rest of the staff.” A grade 9 teacher also emphasized: “You were no longer just working within a department area. You were working as an entire school and as an entire program.” Although there was some informal interchange across subject departments and interdisciplinary integration of subjects through individual teacher interaction at Secondary School Site II, the emphasis on formal curricular planning by subject remained within the respective departments. As one Secondary School Site II staff member pointed out: “While there is some integration going on, it all depends upon the subject and department personnel.” Vernon suggested that “in hindsight,” as a new vice principal, what he had tried to establish “in making each department stronger, probably hindered that, in the sense that they would probably protect their turf and program.” He suggested that had he remained at Secondary School Site II that, with experience, he may have “gotten to the realization of the importance of leadership in moving the staff out of the department structure.” Other Secondary School Site II teachers also indicated that the lack of “fit” between the subsequent vice principals and their orientation to the philosophy behind the grade 9 change project served to reinforce the departmental strength that had developed.
Expanded Leadership Opportunities

The complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainty of secondary school change presents ample grounds for dispersed teacher leadership. As Lipsitz (1988) indicates, contemporary secondary school leadership involves “making the school larger than one person” (p.149). Little (1990) adds: “The demands of effective leadership cannot be satisfied by even the most energetic and well-organized administrative team” (p.213), since the sheer magnitude of the tasks requires both breadth and depth of perspectives to accomplish the tasks at hand (Bird, 1987). Leadership opportunities for teachers can be seen as satisfying two components of a challenging career: opportunity and capacity. Leadership positions afford teachers the opportunity to use their accumulated expertise beyond the classroom, thus benefiting the school, as a whole. Teachers’ professional capacity is enlarged by increasing their ability to exert influence beyond the classroom (Bennet, 1985; Nias, 1989; Steffy, 1989; Yee, 1986).

Several questionnaire respondents in both schools confirmed the opportunities for expanded teacher leadership that existed in their respective schools. However, the results of Patrick’s emphasis on “providing them with new opportunities to go forward” was more evident for teachers at Secondary School Site I than at Secondary School Site II.

Also, with the change in the formal structural organization of Secondary School Site I, the emergence of the grade 9 teacher team provided increased opportunities for leadership of the grade 9 teachers within the school and for leaders to emanate from within the group. One grade 9 teacher explained how the change affected her: “I can’t feel more equal and I really feel that what I say is important. With my voice having the same loudness as everyone else, I’m taking ownership and I’m finding myself in informal
leadership roles.” She added: “I think it has made me a better teacher.” The grade 9 teacher team was legitimized by the staff as the recognized decision making group for what happened in the grade 9 program. Secondary School Site I staff and departments, regardless of subject affiliation, became comfortable in letting the grade 9 teachers deal with the specific grade 9 issues and provided input, as requested. Consequently, at Secondary School Site I, the acceptance of the leadership responsibilities of grade 9 teachers for the program grew. As teachers on the grade 9 team changed, those who left continued to make contributions to decisions in the school and teachers new to the team became part of the grade 9 decision making group.

At Secondary School Site II, while some teachers were recognized informally by other teachers for their leadership within their departments, in general, the department heads were still regarded as taking the formal leadership role for decision making within the school. Whether or not opportunities for informal leadership were provided within the department depended upon the expectations within the department and the different leadership styles of the department heads (Little, 1993).

**Elementary School Liaison**

As the result of the grade 9 initiative, practices changed in both secondary schools with regard to “the links with the elementary feeder schools.” As one of the teachers at Secondary School Site II commented: “You really need to take a good look at the reality of the kids that are going to be coming to you, as opposed to an idealistic view of kids.” While no formally structured communication process was developed to obtain information about the students before they entered the school, some grade 9 teachers and Guidance staff at Secondary School Site II continued to visit the grade 8 teachers and
classes in their elementary feeder schools to gather information on an informal basis. On the other hand, at Secondary School Site I, liaison procedures became established, through a more formalized procedure, to communicate with the feeder elementary schools and to obtain information about the needs of the students before they entered the school. The interface between Secondary School Site I and the elementary feeder schools was reinforced, as staff attained “some insight on dealing with problems of students with different learning levels,” and accordingly, were more readily able to “design a program” that helped “the kids to make the transition.” Some Secondary School Site I staff members even entertained the possibility of a different school organization that included grade 7 and 8 students and staff within their building. As one teacher commented: “It has a lot of merit. If they were in our school, we could learn a lot from them and they could learn from us and I think we could probably do a lot more with the kids because there wouldn’t be the duplication.”

**Teacher-Parent Communication**

Accompanying increased communication with the elementary feeder schools was a change in communication practices with the parents of grade 9 students in both secondary schools. While the nature and degree of the practices varied, staff members in both secondary schools agreed that their involvement in the grade 9 program had improved their previous methods of communicating with parents. At Secondary School Site I, the evaluation procedures related to the grade 9 program, which had occurred, and the joint planning committees, which were in place, secured parent involvement in school level decision making. At the same time, the grade 9 teacher team continued to focus their efforts on regular communication with the parents of grade 9 students who were
“experiencing difficulties in the program” or who had “major breakthroughs,” as the result of the program. At Secondary School Site II, following his arrival, Peter’s initial “door to door” contact with the grade 9 parents had a lasting impact on several teachers’ methods of communicating with parents. “It made other members of the staff feel very comfortable about calling home and before that, calling home was considered an elementary thing.” As the result of the grade 9 program, it became a common practice for staff members to “call home, not just to say that-so-and-so wasn’t in class today, but to say that this project was really well done.” As well, “lots of departments have form type letters that they send out to keep in communication with the parents of children in their departments.”

Summary

Chapter Five has explained one interpretation of the analysis of the research findings reported in the previous chapter. The influence of school leadership and school culture in a specific change initiated in the two secondary schools was examined in the form of a cross-site analysis of the behaviours, attitudes, and assumptions of those involved in the change, within the three time contexts of the initiative: the Antecedents to the School-Initiated Change, The School-Initiated Change Process, and the Outcomes of the Change. This approach provided consistency in the study, in that these time contexts, although broadened, corresponded to the classification scheme presented in Chapter 4. Analysis of the recurrent patterns, which occurred within particular time contexts or over time, both within and across the two secondary school sites, facilitated the breadth and the depth of interpretation (Patton, 1980). By describing those patterns that were discrete and those which overlapped, and by comparing their similarities and
differences, the cross-site analysis preserved the individual school site data while providing a comparative analysis across the two sites to address the research problem and purpose of the study. Since relatability rather than generalizability was emphasized in this approach, the results of the cross-site analysis in this chapter provided the basis for the conclusions and implications presented in Chapter Six.

The Antecedents to the School-Initiated Change section described the established leadership and culture prior to the school-initiated change and how the responses of school administrators and teachers to a series of events, both external to the school and within the school, influenced the staff decision to undertake the specific grade 9 school-initiated change in each school. In The School-Initiated Change Process section, school staff responses to the issues that arose during each of the initiation, implementation, and continuation phases were discussed and compared. The final section, the Outcomes of the Change, reviewed staff perceptions of the changes that occurred in attitudes and practices, as the result of their involvement in the school-initiated change.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Summation

This study has investigated the influence of school leadership and school culture in a specific school-initiated change in two secondary schools in a large urban school board. Using case study research design, the study has introduced a phenomenological approach to the empirical inquiry undertaken in investigating the research problem. In doing so, the study has captured, in detail, the perspectives of school administrators and teaching staff who were involved in the change initiative in their respective schools. It has also provided a holistic picture of the organizational structures, behaviour patterns, underlying beliefs, and meanings that had both manifest and latent influences on the administrative and teaching staff and the practices that occurred in each school setting during the entire course of the change.

Given the phenomenological mode of the empirical investigation, the findings of the study are not intended to be necessarily representative of all secondary schools and therefore are not meant to be generalizable or predictive. Rather a strength of this study is the in-depth description and interpretation of the phenomena under study that shed new light on the complexity and uniqueness of the dynamics of the influence of school leadership and school culture in secondary school-initiated change (Cronbach, 1975; Patton, 1981; Stake, 1988; Yin, 1981). In this regard, Wiles (1993) points out that although "the best that formal studies of schools can provide is to report on how an individual school is working as opposed to how schools work," that "understanding this uniqueness, acknowledging it, is the first step in beginning to promote desired change" in
other schools (p. 26). Therefore, it is hoped that revealing and discussing the realities associated with the school leadership and cultural influences in the specific school-initiated changes in this study will increase the level of awareness of educators who are contemplating similar changes within their own settings. While acknowledging that increased awareness does not necessarily lead to improved action, one is reminded of the participants who commented that the change initiative made them look at things differently and that when they got excited about what they were doing, they did it well. Although it is unlikely that such an opportunity will occur in every secondary school, one may argue, perhaps optimistically, that in the current educational environment, awareness through attempts to provide examples of the ways in which school leadership and school culture have influenced school-initiated change are preferable to unquestioning acquiescence to the status quo or uninformed resistance to new directions. Perhaps open acknowledgement of the processes and outcomes, as they have been shown in the study, will instill in educators who are dissatisfied with their current circumstances, a sense of the possible; it may even motivate a quest for renewal and subsequent actions at the school level.

Similarly, for the researcher, Fullan (1990) substantiates the focus of this case study on relatability, rather than on generalizability. He emphasizes that because "each setting has its own history, culture, and set of personalities," change and the results of change, "even when well validated in one setting, cannot and should not be transferred to other situations" (p.246). He suggests, however, that through further study on how individual schools function during change and how they got that way researchers will be in a better position to decide on the probability of the use of this knowledge. By raising
critical questions about the assumptions and the results of conventional research and methodology, it is hoped that this study will prompt further interest in phenomenological modes of inquiry into school-initiated change in other secondary schools and other related areas of study. Although it is recognized that phenomenological approaches are time and resource consuming, additional studies of this nature would serve to add depth as well as breadth to the research that is currently available and, as Fullan (1990) has pointed out, would increase the knowledge base of those seeking to use the information for purposes beyond the scope of this study.

Furthermore, since the study is interpretive and descriptive, rather than evaluative and prescriptive, its findings are not intended to provide generalized suggestions for policy, for example, teacher and leadership training, teacher and school administrator selection or secondary school structural changes. While one might wish to pursue such a course as a goal of future research, the findings of this study do not provide an adequate basis for the development of viable formalized recommendations. Therefore, as mentioned previously, it seems more appropriate to use the information obtained from this study as a springboard for future action, based upon further investigation and inquiry into similar and associated topics.

In summary, the significance of the study lies not only in its own legitimacy as it pertains to the real life context of the secondary schools being studied but also in its relatability to change initiated in other secondary schools (Elbaz, 1983; Patton, 1980; Walker, 1980). The knowledge base provided by the study serves as a vehicle for those in similar situations to relate the findings to their own experiences and to think beyond the findings of this study as they explore the possibilities and problems associated with
their particular circumstances. It also presents an agenda for further research into the area of school-initiated change in other secondary schools and site-based initiatives in other organizational settings.

Chapter Six, intended as a closing statement, includes a synopsis of the Organization of the Study that focuses on its significance in light of the research problem and the case study design to address the problem. Based on the findings and the cross-site analysis, reported in the two previous chapters, the next section, which describes the Major Findings and Conclusions, furthers the discussion on the significance of the study in relating the important conceptual points and in raising critical issues related to them. Reference is made to relevant literature along with the presentation of the major findings specific to this research to support the conclusions. The final section, Implications for Research, presents suggestions for further inquiry and investigation into school leadership and school culture in secondary school-initiated change and other topics related to site-based organizational change.

Organization of the Study

To address the research problem and questions, outlined in Chapter One, the study has developed a descriptive and interpretive account of the influence of school leadership and school culture in a specific change initiated in the two secondary schools in the study. The research was prompted by the researcher's concern about the implications of the current sociopolitical context for change in secondary schools, the researcher's interest in the social and organizational processes associated with secondary school change, and the recent work of educational theorists and researchers on school change. The framework of the study, presented in the first chapter, is rooted in the belief that planning for
meaningful change can occur at the school level and that secondary school educators should be involved in school-based change initiatives to respond to site-specific requirements. Previous research on educational change, discussed in Chapter One, has acknowledged the importance of school leadership and school culture in shaping the conditions of change in the school environment (Combs, 1988; Fullan & Miles, 1992; Leithwood, 1992; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Little, 1987). While this research has occurred mainly in elementary schools, it was pointed out that the realms of such forms of influence have been generally unexplored in secondary schools to date (Hargreaves et al., 1993; Louis & Miles, 1990; Pellicier et al., 1990). Further, due to the relative complexity of secondary schools, inherent in their historical stability and traditions and their intricate formal and informal social organization, it was recognized that the approaches that work in elementary schools may be quite different in the secondary school environment (Berman, 1986; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Hannay, 1995; Little, 1987; Louis & Miles, 1990; McLaughlin, 1990; Neufeld, Farrar & Miles, 1983). It was also found that while the research on secondary school-initiated change is lacking, the literature that is available on secondary school change, in general, has dealt mainly with the technical aspects; few have tackled the internal interactions and relationships in schools. Consequently, the collateral and inconclusive evidence about the actuality of secondary school-initiated change justified the need for further research in this area. As well, the public attention currently being given to change in secondary schools affirmed the timeliness of the study and its significance in providing new insights, expanding current understandings, and opening up areas of further inquiry about the nature of the influence of school leadership and school culture in secondary school-initiated change.
Having determined the need for and the significance of the study, Chapter One underscored the challenges associated with studying the influence of school leadership and school culture in secondary school-initiated change within this obtuse and generally unknown context. Although the research on elementary schools has provided a basis for an ideology for educational change, it was considered as too narrow and simplistic for the study of secondary school change. Therefore, a significant task for the researcher was to determine the appropriate research design for investigating this relatively unfamiliar field of study.

Given the limited research on secondary school change, in general, and on secondary school-initiated change, in particular, Chapter Two reviewed the literature on educational, organizational, and administrative approaches to change that were related to the area of study. The literature review examined the larger issues associated with the theory and practice of educational change, leadership, and culture. In addition, it addressed the more specific elements connected to school change, leadership, and culture, including learning, conflict, and power. It also described case study research design and the rationale behind the suitability of this mode of inquiry in providing a descriptive and interpretive account of the topic to be studied.

Chapter Three linked the methodology to the research problem and to the rationale for the study. To address the need for more grounded research, through case study research design a phenomenological empirical inquiry was developed to investigate the research problem and the research questions. The method used to purposively select the two secondary school sites and the interview participants from each school was described, as well as the procedure for developing the interview format and the teacher
questionnaire. The ethical considerations associated with the study were presented and the manner in which the research addressed potential ethical concerns was discussed in detail. Chapter Three also related how evidence was to be gathered from a variety of sources to answer the research questions. These sources included interviews with the school administrators and selected teachers, questionnaires completed by the teaching staff, and related school documents. As well, the chapter explained how the constant comparative method of simultaneous data collection and analysis would shape the process to manage the large amount of data collected and how triangulation of the multiple data sources would help to produce trustworthy findings and sound conclusions. The final section of Chapter Three explained the limitations of the case study and discussed its focus on relatability rather than on generalizability.

The research findings, collected from the various data sources, were reported in detail for each secondary school in Chapter Four. Although it was acknowledged that the separation of participant responses into a categorical organization scheme represented a form of data analysis, as part of the constant comparative design, the perspectives of the participants provided the focus and substance of the chapter, with minimal researcher commentary. In addressing the research questions in the study, the findings related to the influence of school leadership and school culture in the school-initiated change in this chapter contributed to the cross-site analysis described in Chapter Five.

In turn, Chapter Five presented a detailed interpretation of the research findings. It analyzed the similarities and differences in the patterns of behaviours, attitudes, and assumptions that emerged during the course of the change initiative, from its antecedents through the change process to the outcomes of the change. While providing a
comparative analysis across the two secondary schools, this approach also preserved the holistic data from each school. Included in Chapter Five were the reflections of school staff about the school-initiated change and the possibility of future change initiatives. The analysis and interpretation of the learning, insights, and understandings of those who were involved in the school-initiated change ultimately provided the basis for the conclusions and implications presented in this chapter.

**Major Findings and Conclusions**

The major findings and conclusions of the study, discussed in the following six subsections, deliver a message that is clear, consistent, promising, and challenging. They confirm the significance of this case study research in improving and expanding current knowledge and understandings about the influence of school culture and school leadership in secondary school-initiated change. Specifically, they provide insights into the unique, complex, dynamic, and reciprocal nature of this influence and reveal the importance of the interrelationships of school leadership and school culture with time, the sociopolitical context, and the organizational structure of the two secondary schools during the course of the school change initiative. Additionally, they bring to light areas for future consideration and pose critical questions for further investigation.

**The Secondary Schools as Complex and Unique Social Organizations**

*Studying the dynamics of the characteristics and processes involved in school leadership and school culture within their real life context in the school-initiated change underscored the complexity and uniqueness of each secondary school.*

Previous research on educational change, based mainly on elementary schools, has indicated the importance of school leadership and school culture in shaping the conditions of change in the school environment. In the few studies that have been
conducted in secondary schools in recent years, there is general congruence about the similarity of certain characteristics and processes associated with school leadership and school culture in secondary school change (Corcoran, 1990; Fullan, 1990; Hargreaves & Earl, 1990; Hargreaves et al., 1993; Little, 1990, 1993; Louis, 1990; Louis & Miles, 1990; McLaughlin, 1990).

There was evidence of the existence of these characteristics and processes in both secondary schools in this study, although they varied in nature and extent. In going beyond a list of characteristics and processes to investigate not only what but also how school leadership and cultural actions, values, and assumptions interacted during the course of the school-initiated change, the study has found that treating school leadership and school culture as a list of qualities and functions did not match up with the real life of the secondary schools. School leadership was a matter of the entire person or persons in the entire environment interacting in concrete ways with other persons in the immediacy and unpredictability of the circumstances. While the results reveal that the characteristics and processes associated with school leadership and school culture are not irrelevant, they substantiate the argument that leadership and culture in secondary school settings cannot be reduced to a list or a recipe, especially in the context of a secondary school that is undertaking change.

As the result of the study of the dynamics of influence of school leadership and school culture in each secondary school, the findings have revealed, not only the intricacy and complexity, but more importantly the uniqueness of the social organization of each secondary school. In doing so, the study has raised critical questions concerning current assumptions about the homogeneity and commonality of secondary schools, based on
generic descriptions and prescriptions for practice, that are extant in current literature and accepted by many practitioners and policy makers. Based on the findings, it is suggested that while there may be certain technical similarities in secondary schools, decisions about school change must consider the individual experiences, backgrounds, and relationships of the people involved in the change, since nothing really changes unless people change. Following are major findings in the study that provide support for these conclusions:

- While the change initiative in both schools was tied to a local need that focused on grade 9, the timing and implications of critical antecedent events, principal and teaching staff response to these events, and the resultant reasons for the staff decision to undertake the change were unique to each school. Consequently, the decision to undertake the pilot project in one school was based on developing a new grade 9 program to meet the needs of students in a grade 9 destreamed program that was unfamiliar to the teaching staff. In the other school, the decision to make changes to the grade 9 program was the result of staff experiences with the changing needs of the current grade 9 students in the school and their concerns about their ability to meet the needs of future grade 9 students.

- Active advocacy and support for the initiative were provided by the principals and vice principals in both schools, with one of the vice principals in each school playing a lead role in the beginning stages of the change process. However, in one school, the principal clearly articulated his expectations and monitored the process through input from the vice principals, teaching staff, students, and parents, whereas in the other school, the expectations of the principal were less explicit and the monitoring was generally the role of the steering committee and the vice principal through the subject department heads, with little involvement of individual teachers, students, or parents. These differences in principal actions and staff responses to their actions were reflected in the variations revealed in staff collaboration between the two schools throughout the course of the initiative.

- Although both schools developed a clear well-structured approach to the change, the nature of the approaches in involving staff was very different. In one school, the departments heads determined that as many teachers as possible would be involved in the initiation and implementation phases through their respective subject departments. In the other school, a small group of teachers and department heads generally volunteered to form an interdepartmental grade 9 teacher team to plan for the initiative, with the support of their respective subject departments. As the implementation process unfolded and some of the original grade 9 teachers on the
team moved to different assignments, other teachers in the school became new members of the team as the result of their interest in the new grade 9 program. The unique nature of the two approaches represented, in the first instance, a revolutionary method of change and, in the second instance, an evolutionary concept of change.

- The differences in the procedures established for allocation of staff and resources for the grade 9 initiative in the two schools at the beginning had an impact on the variations in the practices and attitudes of staff as the change process unfolded. In the one school, initially school level decisions about staff deployment for planning and implementation were made in the context of designated additional staff and resources, available during the first two years of the pilot project. During the third year of the project, as implementation was underway and additional funding was no longer available, staff encountered difficulties in adjusting to the reduction in staff and resources for the initiative and to the territoriality and competition over staff and resources that resulted. In contrast, in the other school, from the beginning staff made decisions about staff and resource deployment for the planning and implementation of the initiative within the existing school allocation of staff and resources. As the implementation process continued, input from staff, students and parents provided the basis for decisions about changes in staff allocation and resources and resulted in increased collaboration and support for the initiative.

- Accompanying the differences in staff experiences and responses to these experiences during the initiation and implementation phases was the variation in staff support for the continuation of the change initiative. Staff in both schools described similar benefits for their students, both in grade 9 and beyond, and for themselves, as the result of their experiences. However, in one school, teaching staff were generally more cautious in approaching further change, preferring to maintain the changes that they had achieved for the time being, whereas in the other school, the staff were more open to pursuing further changes if they would meet the changing needs of their students.

The Importance of Staff Perspectives in Understanding the School-Initiated Change

Investigating the school-initiated change from the perspectives of the educators who have actually experienced it, revealed their individual and collective realities and the meanings that they attached to school leadership and school culture in the specific change in their respective secondary schools.

As pointed out previously, the literature on secondary school change has generally been informed by a limited and inadequate research base and, to date, studies of secondary school-initiated change are lacking. To expand the current knowledge base,
this inquiry has taken into account the perspectives of the educators who were involved in the specific secondary school change initiative by giving systematic attention to both individual and collective responses. The revelation of the behaviours, values, and assumptions, through the comments and stories of the school administrators and the teachers, has offered important insights into the organizational culture and leadership in their respective schools during periods of stability, transition, and turmoil. The detailed account of the participant responses has lent credibility to the findings by revealing with greater sensitivity and confidence the similarities and differences in the two secondary school environments and the internal and external dynamics that contributed to the versatility or stability of certain aspects of school leadership and school culture during the course of the school-initiated change. Consequently, the study has identified the potential that may exist if the perspectives of secondary school educators are taken into consideration in future research on school change endeavours. Evidence for these conclusions is supported by the following major findings:

- The principals in both schools expressed keen interest in learning more about the perspectives of their staff concerning the change initiative that had been undertaken in their respective schools. Based on a written proposal prepared by the researcher, which outlined the parameters and details of the study, the principals provided full support for the research and full co-operation during the course of the study.

- In both schools, the majority of the staff was over forty years of age, with a variety of educational experiences and varied backgrounds. Involving them in the development and refinement of the interview questions and the teacher questionnaire respected their opinions, based on their experiences and backgrounds, helped to focus the information to be obtained, and stimulated the interest of several staff members in the research.

- Carefully constructed criteria for the selection of staff to be interviewed, determined co-operatively by the researcher, the thesis supervisor and the principals, resulted in interview participants who were knowledgeable about the initiative, articulated individual and collective issues, concerns, and successes associated with the initiative,
and contributed different perspectives about the school-initiated change. Providing the interview participants with verbatim transcripts of their interviews for review and feedback afforded them additional opportunities for validation of the information recorded by the researcher.

- While the interviews served as the main source of data, information obtained from the larger teacher population through the questionnaire refuted or verified the statements and opinions of the interview participants, and provided additional insights into and understandings about the school-initiated change.

- Through intensive in-depth investigation, which involved staff in the process and which held to a carefully formulated ethic to develop trust and confidence in the researcher and her intentions, the research revealed not merely the discernible characteristics of the phenomena under study, but also the deeper knowledge, skills, values and beliefs and the interrelationships among them within each school and its environment during the course of the change initiative.

In raising awareness of the importance of involving school staff in school change research, the study has posed critical questions about the findings of some conventional studies of secondary school change and their assumptions about the general reluctance of "seasoned" secondary school administrators and teachers to become involved in school change (Huberman, 1989; Louis, 1994). According to the findings of this study, several mid-career and even late-career school administrators and teachers did take the initiative to become actively involved in the grade 9 change and, in doing so, they increased their own capacity for change as well as that of others within the school. It was also discovered that when educators, regardless of their years of experience, found meaning in the changes to be initiated, that they became enthusiastic, energized, and dedicated to the changes. Based upon their ability to draw upon their years of experience, many of the mature educators in the study tended to be very discerning about the potential effects of the proposed changes on their students. At the same time, several experienced teachers were also interested in new opportunities to expand their own horizons both within and
beyond the classroom. Although previous research suggests that this may not be the case in all secondary schools, based on these findings, it is worthwhile investigating the growth curve of mid and late-career secondary school educators in other school-initiated change endeavours.

Secondary School Leadership as Diffuse and Integral to the School Culture

Examining school leadership in the school initiated change revealed its multitude of meanings and purposes, as perceived by the staff of both secondary schools. Through reciprocal interaction during the course of the initiative, the function of leadership changed as the culture changed, as one influenced the other, as well as the directions and outcomes of the change.

The literature that is available on secondary school change emphasizes the importance of strong school leadership. While many of these studies generally have focused on the principal as being the key to change, Lipsitz (1988) points out that effective secondary school leadership involves “making the school larger than one person” (p. 149). Similarly, a few other studies of secondary school leadership, although acknowledging the primary leadership role of the principal in school change, have recognized the influential leadership role that vice principals, department heads, and other teaching staff can and do play through both the formalized structure and the social organization of secondary schools (Brown, 1994; Hargreaves et al., 1993; Little, 1990; Louis, 1991; Wilson & Corcoran, 1988). While there is general consensus in these studies about the significance of various forms of school leadership in secondary school change, little research exists on the “formative processes...of leadership” (Pellicier et al., 1990, p. 52) that actually occur when change is undertaken in secondary schools.

The findings of the investigation of these formative processes in the school-initiated changes in the study have confirmed the multifaceted nature of school leadership
in the two secondary schools. Specifically, the study has revealed how leadership in the school-initiated change was not simple and straightforward and how the functions of leadership in the schools changed in response to the changing culture of the schools during the course of the initiatives. It has also shown how leadership in the two schools, while complex and multidimensional, was essentially about relationships and the processes of mutual influence during the change initiative. What distinguished leadership from other kinds of relationships in the change initiative was the influence of the school leaders on the collaboration that occurred within the context of shared goals. It was found that while individual beliefs and assumptions of school administrators and school staff did, in part, explain their behaviours during the change initiative, it was through individual and collective actions, based on shared beliefs and assumptions that they exerted significant influence on one another and on the directions of the change; in turn, school administrators and school staff were influenced by one another and by the change as they developed new behaviours, shared beliefs, and assumptions. These conclusions are supported by the following major findings:

- While the reasons for undertaking the change initiative were different in the two schools, in both instances, staff looked to the principals and vice principals to provide advocacy and support for the grade 9 change endeavour.

- A vice principal in each school took the lead role in establishing the framework for the initiative and getting the staff involved.

- Once planning and preparation were underway, the vice principals gave way to the department heads and teaching staff, who assumed leadership roles in shaping the changes that emerged as the change process unfolded. Although there were differences in the approaches to change in the two schools, how the department heads and the teachers responded to the actions of the principals, the vice principals, and one another during the course of the change, in turn, furthered or inhibited the assumptions and actions of the principals and the vice principals and expanded or restrained teacher leadership opportunities in the school. Consequently, during the
course of the change initiative in one school, staff supported expanded teacher leadership within the grade 9 team and within the school. In the other school, however, the opportunity for teacher leadership was generally restricted to the classroom and to the department setting.

These variations in the nature and extent of teacher leadership in the two schools may lead one to draw conclusions about their comparative effectiveness in the respective change initiatives. However, caution is advised in making suppositions on this basis, as one is reminded of the teacher participants in both schools who commented on the value of the leadership opportunities that they experienced in the change undertaking and, as a result, that they were changed to some extent themselves. These comments reinforce the importance of teacher leadership opportunities in secondary school change initiatives; however, they also suggest that their importance to teachers may be related more to how these opportunities build teacher capacity for change rather than to what they are.

As a corollary, these findings have raised a critical question about what the focus of teacher leadership in school-initiated change should be in relation to the curriculum, the instructional role of teachers, and the benefits for students. This question is related to the observations of Lortie (1975) and McLaughlin (1990) that teachers generally are more concerned with matters that directly affect their classrooms and their students than those that affect the school, as a whole, and to the concerns of Corcoran (1990) that while increased teacher influence in school level decision making has received strong endorsement from many quarters, evidence of the benefits for students is fragmentary.

The findings of this study, which are in concert with those of Lortie (1975) and McLaughlin (1990), indicate that the focus of most teachers during the course of the grade 9 initiative was on the changes that they were able to make in program delivery to
improve their ability to meet the needs of their students. In addition, this study substantiates the concerns of Corcoran (1990), in finding that although some teachers indicated the “favourable” results for the grade 9 students in that “they were better prepared for grade 10 than they had ever been, as a group,” there was no evidence to provide a correlation between teacher leadership beyond the classroom and improved student performance. It is suggested, therefore, that expanded teacher leadership that is focused on making decisions about meeting the needs of students, whether at the classroom, department, or school level, although clearly a significant component of school change, is only part of the gestalt in establishing a more responsive and flexible school environment that improves student learning. As this study found, there are clearly many other contextual features that mediate leadership and cultural influences on student learning, including school history and traditions, the backgrounds and experiences of school staff, leadership expectations, cultural norms, student composition, and community expectations that must be considered in the study of secondary school change initiatives.

Furthermore, in raising awareness of the complexity of school leadership and how integral it was to the culture of the two secondary schools, this study has posed an important question about conventional research approaches that focus on the principal as an entity, separate from the distinctive interrelationships within the unique culture and context of each secondary school.

**Context and the Dynamics of Influence of School Leadership and School Culture**

*The unique sociopolitical context of each secondary school played an important role in understanding the similarities and differences in the dynamics of influence of school leadership and school culture throughout the change initiative.*
Both secondary schools were at the centre of change in this study. However, as Sirotnek (1987) points out: “To say that something is at the centre implies a good deal around it” (p.2). In this sense, the schools could not be isolated from their sociopolitical context and their prevailing conditions and circumstances that included both their internal and external environments. The antecedents to the change, the change process, and the outcomes of the change, detailed in the previous two chapters, were all intertwined around the variable lenses through which individuals and groups of individuals perceived their environments, as the result of past experiences and those which occurred during the change initiative. The history of the schools and their communities, the composition of the student population, and the backgrounds and experiences of the school administrators and the school staff all factored into the readiness of the school staff to undertake the change initiative, the determination of what could be changed, the types of interventions that were used to effect the change, and the outcomes that resulted.

The cross-site analysis in the preceding chapter identified how certain patterns of school leadership and school culture overlapped and flowed from one time frame to another. The focus on student needs, the pride of teachers in their work and accomplishments, the nature and extent of staff involvement, the accompanying administrative and staff support, and the relationship with the community all permeated the underlying assumptions, beliefs, and practices related to the school-initiated change in both schools during the entire initiative. At the same time, the perspectives and priorities of the school administrators and the teaching staff were mediated by a variety of structural conditions and social interactions, inherent in the two schools, which accounted, in part, for the similarities and differences in the ways in which these similar
patterns unfolded. For example, in one secondary school the change in the organizational structure of the grade 9 program effected changes in practices and attitudes in the entire school. In the early years of the initiative in this school, a small number of grade 9 teachers assumed a strong advocacy role for the program; later on, as other teachers became involved in the grade 9 program, they began to understand its purpose and nature, and as students moved from the grade 9 program, more teachers in the school became aware of the results of the program for the students. In the same school, the collegial nature of the staff was reflected in the amount of informal social interaction that occurred beyond the departmental level. The staff room, which was conveniently located on the main floor beside the principal’s office, was a common meeting place for the discussion of a variety of work-related and social topics. At the other secondary school, although the organizational structure for the grade 9 program was not changed, nearly every staff member was involved in teaching a grade 9 class. This approach fostered staff enthusiasm and increased mutual support both within and beyond departments in the early years of the initiative. Later on, as other factors, such changes in vice principals and teaching staff and decreased funding and staffing for the project took effect, there was a return to department territoriality and increased competition for reduced resources. Further, the remote location of the staff room, on the bottom floor, did not offer a convenient meeting area for staff in relation to the first floor principal’s office and most of the teaching areas and department facilities on the other floors of the school.

The emergence of other distinct patterns, within particular stages of the change initiative, introduced additional variations in each school during the course of the change. For example, while certain leadership and cultural influences, such as those associated
with the readiness for the school-initiated change, the decision to undertake the change, and the support and hindrances in each of the initiation, implementation, and continuation phases of the change initiative were specific to the particular contextual circumstances of that time period, they were also interconnected and instrumental in determining the outcomes of the change. As a result, the patterns revealed in the outcomes reflected not only some of the original practices, beliefs, and assumptions of the staff in each school but also newly acquired practices, beliefs, and assumptions that developed during the change initiative. Within this context, the analysis of both the overlapping and distinct patterns has identified the following major findings specific to the two secondary schools in this case study:

- The timing and the implications of the threat of school closure and the entry of the school administrators in both schools, prior to the change, had an impact on the readiness of the school staff to undertake the change initiative.

- The backgrounds and experiences of the school administrators, their beliefs about school change, and their perceptions and insights about themselves and the culture of their schools provided a foundation for their actions throughout the change. Similarly, the backgrounds and experiences of the teaching staff, their beliefs about school change, and their perceptions and insight about themselves, the culture of the school, and the school administrators formed the basis for their response to the actions of the school administrators during the course of the change.

- Similar assumptions, however, did not necessarily result in similar practices or similar outcomes. Assumptions of the school administrators and the staff were mediated by a variety of contextual conditions that influenced how they acted and, in turn, how their actions were interpreted and responded to by others in the school. These contextual conditions included the history and traditions of the school; the structure of the building and the location of the staff room, the principal’s office and the teaching and department areas; the backgrounds and experiences of the staff; the norms that had been established for decision making; the changes in the staff complement; the cohesiveness of the administrative team; the organizational structure of the school; the composition of the student population; and the makeup of the community.

- Although there was not unanimous agreement with the change proposal initially in either school, providing all staff in both schools with the opportunity to participate in
the decision to undertake the grade 9 change initiative increased the level of support during the planning stages.

- Key leadership and active initiation were important in the planning and mobilization of the school-initiated change. The principals and a vice principal in both schools played key roles in advocating the change and establishing frameworks or structures to enable staff to undertake the change.

- Thereafter, the nature and extent of staff involvement and the distribution of leadership varied with the specific initiative. In one school, a core group of teaching staff assumed leadership and responsibility for the changes in the grade 9 program. In the other school, the majority of the teachers were involved in the change undertaking, under the direction of their respective department heads.

- Similarly, the internal and external support and resources utilized by the staff and the methods by which they obtained them were specific to the change undertaken in each school. For example, in one school additional funding and resources were provided by the Ministry as the result of their involvement in the pilot project. This funding enabled staff members to visit other innovative schools and to participate in a special education additional qualifications course and provided additional teachers during the initial years of the project and additional planning time for teachers to develop a new curriculum for the grade 9 program. System curriculum staff were also designated time to assist teachers in their course development and in-service. At the other school, the grade 9 initiative was undertaken within the resources currently available to the school. This circumstance required the co-operation of the school budget committee in designating funding to enable staff members to visit other innovative schools and the school staff deployment committee in designating additional teachers for the new grade 9 program. In general, planning for the initiative occurred before and after school and teacher in-service was provided by school staff, with assistance from system curriculum staff, as required.

- Resistance or reticence to change, on the part of individuals or groups, was perceived by most staff as a natural occurrence in undertaking something new. Concerns about the change that surfaced at the onset were generally due to differing perceptions about the validity of the school-initiated change, based on the lack of available information to substantiate the change. Whether these concerns were reduced or alleviated depended on the approach taken by the school administrators to address the issues, the initiative of the concerned staff to investigate the change further, and the actions of the staff members who supported the change.

- The major concerns expressed by the teachers of grade 9 during implementation generally were related to their frustration and uncertainty about meeting student needs and problems in orienting new staff about the change, its purpose and procedures.
• Ongoing support and recognition from colleagues and school administration provided an important source of encouragement and reinforcement, especially during times of turmoil and uncertainty in the implementation phase.

• By experiencing the benefits of the change for their students, both the grade 9 teachers and those beyond grade 9 gained new insights and understandings about the change initiative that helped alleviate many of the implementation concerns and supported the change into its continuation in each secondary school.

• Communication about the grade 9 initiative was ongoing within each school, although communication with the larger community varied with the initiative. For example, in the school that was involved in the pilot project, there was a great deal of media publicity and there were many visitations from staff of other secondary schools from across the province. In the other school, there was little media coverage and visitations from other staff of other secondary schools were minimal. In both schools, during the change undertakings, there were few inquiries about the change initiatives from the staff of the other secondary schools in the same system.

• Staff consistency, at both the school administrator and teaching levels, was cited in both schools as important in maintaining common perspectives and understandings about the change initiative, its purpose and process. Where school administrators remained consistent, they developed a strong administrative team. Where there was a consistent approach to the orientation of new staff there was more likelihood of continuity in philosophy and methods of operation.

• The pride of the teachers in their work and accomplishments, which was reflected throughout the change initiative, resided primarily in their ability to meet the needs of their students. This was evident in the decision made by the teachers to undertake the change, in the time and commitment that they dedicated to the planning process, in their perseverance and persistence in overcoming the problems they encountered in the implementation of the initiative, and in the outcomes that they reported.

• Regular alterations to their original plans, based on informal evaluations during their daily interactions with their students, became a necessary and accepted practice of the teachers during the course of the change initiative. As the result of their experiences and actions, they developed their capacity for change and understood the importance of ongoing learning in improving program delivery.

• There is also evidence to suggest the importance of building a formal evaluation procedure into the implementation process that includes teachers, students, and parents. In the secondary school where this occurred and where staff, student, and parental concerns were taken into consideration, several issues that arose during the first year of implementation were addressed or alleviated. This facilitated a smoother implementation and transition into continuation through wider acceptance and support of the change initiative within the context of the whole school. In the school where
this did not occur, the gap between the focus of the grade 9 initiative and the goals of the school widened, as many staff got caught up in the changes and lost sight of the relationship between the initiative and the other goals of the school.

- Flexibility and adaptability developed throughout the school-initiated change process, often through necessity. Although this was a new concept for many, those who were involved in the initiative gained respect for its importance in order to meet the changing needs of their grade 9 students.

- Many mature staff, several with over twenty years of experience, undertook the school-initiated change in both schools. They dedicated their expertise, time, and commitment to meet the challenges associated with the school-initiated change. In several cases, they actively sought new opportunities for growth and development both within and beyond their classrooms.

- Although both school administrators fostered school/community relationships from the beginning, the importance of this relationship was recognized by teaching staff in varying ways and at different stages of the change initiative in the two schools. While the teachers at one school had developed a communication link with parents prior to the change, at the other school this had generally been considered as an “elementary” school approach prior to the change initiative. Nevertheless, teachers in both schools improved their previous methods of communication with parents as the result of the grade 9 initiative. At one secondary school, parent involvement developed beyond the formalized parent association to include input into the evaluation of the grade 9 program and participation on joint planning committees in the school. Linkage with the elementary feeder schools was also an outgrowth of the grade 9 change initiative in both secondary schools to obtain information about the needs of the students before they entered the secondary schools.

- As the result of their experiences in the changes, the staff in both schools expressed general support for the continuation of future school-based initiatives. At the same time, they recognized the tenuous nature of that possibility in light of the current political and economic climate.

Time and its Relation to the Influence of School Leadership and School Culture

Time was a fundamental dimension in defining the possibilities and constraints associated with the school-initiated change. The investigation of the influence of school leadership and school culture from antecedents to outcomes revealed not only what interactions occurred but also when and how they took place and the manner in which they influenced one another to achieve the outcomes that resulted.

According to Hargreaves (1997): “If change is to be meaningful, it requires time for gestation and deep roots” (p. v). In recalling the experiences of the school staff in this
study, one is reminded of similar comments made by the one of the study participants: "Change cannot be revolutionary, it’s got to evolve." What has generally been lacking in the previous research on secondary school change is a full picture of the change that describes the change from its antecedents to its outcomes. This study has raised concerns about the approach to the study of school change in segments of time, as opposed to the study of change in its entirety, if one is to understand the characteristics and processes of change and how they interrelate to develop the capacity of schools to sustain change (Fullan, 1990). Assuming the importance of enduring change, and given the parameters of previous research, a strength of this case study lies in its portrayal of an in depth holistic picture of the dynamics of the leadership and culture that influenced the change initiatives, not only within various time frames but also over an extended time period, from the past to the present (Patton, 1980). Related to this, is another important question about the timelines often associated with school change initiatives where the decision to introduce change has been followed swiftly by a full blown implementation stage, with expectations for results shortly thereafter (Fullan, 1990). The results of this study have underscored the need for caution in taking this approach, if the desired change is to reach the continuation stage, with staff acceptance and commitment because the change had been proven to be meaningful and effective. Following are the major findings that provide support for these conclusions:

- Over time, practices, beliefs, and assumptions of staff in each school were formed, interwoven with shared history and experiences. Generally, in the initial stages, beliefs and assumptions preceded practices. As the change process got underway, practices that proved to be effective often led to new beliefs and assumptions which, in turn, reinforced the new practices.
Not everyone was ready to undertake the change at the same time, generally through lack of confidence or lack of commitment to the validity of the proposed changes. Over time, as the result of further investigation or assurances through results, those who had been reticent or resistant generally participated in or accepted the changes. In some instances, those who were still unconvinced sought assignments in other schools. In other cases, they retired.

Staff in both schools cited the importance of time for planning and preparation in order to understand the purpose of the innovation and to discuss the proposed new strategies with one another. The staff in the schools in the study had effectively one school year to plan and prepare for the respective school-initiated changes.

Time was also valued by school staff for practicing and evaluating new approaches to determine their effectiveness. Implementation, which occurred over a two-year period in each school, enabled school staff to try out new methods and to make the necessary changes to meet student needs. This time-period also enabled staff to support one another, as they experienced the frustrations and successes associated with the implementation of the change.

Through staff involvement and mutual support, in working through their individual and collective issues during the change process, ownership, skill, mastery, and commitment were more accurately portrayed as building throughout the change process, rather than something that existed in the early stages.

Organizational Structure and Its Meaning in the School-Initiated Change

The organizational structure established the formal patterns of association and defined the ways in which the system of authority, decision-making, and work were organized in each school. The interactions involving leadership and culture in each secondary school influenced and were influenced by the organizational structure during the school-initiated change.

"The school workplace is a physical setting, a formal organization, and a social environment in which teachers construct a sense of practice, professional efficacy, and professional community" (McLaughlin, 1993, p.99). How schools are organized determines how staff are grouped together or kept apart and provides a foundation for the creation of particular subcultures within the larger school organization (Hargreaves et al, 1993). Subject departments have endured over time in most secondary schools, as part of the recognized and accepted structure and culture.
Both schools in the study exhibited this conventional organizational structure initially. The impetus to make changes to the structure or to maintain the status quo was determined, in part, by the assumptions, beliefs, and practices associated with the history of the schools, the backgrounds and experiences of the school administrators and teaching staff, and the series of external and internal events that occurred either prior to the undertaking or during the initiative. The other major determining part related to the meanings that school staff attached to the departmental structure and to their ability to accommodate student needs within that structure. It is recalled how the decision to change the organizational structure of the grade 9 program in one secondary school was made by the staff early in the change initiative, based on their previous experiences with their students and their knowledge of their student population, whereas in the other secondary school, it was as the result of their experiences with the new grade 9 students during the change process that the staff reached a similar conclusion about the need for structural changes. It is also noted that from the beginning of the change process, the grade 9 interdisciplinary team, established at the one school, put the grade 9 students, rather than the subjects, at the centre of their collective efforts. At the other secondary school, where curriculum development by subject was the initial focus and where grade 9 teachers taught other grades, as well, attention to the grade 9 students was generally more fragmented and dispersed as they attempted to balance competing interests of subjects and students.

Previous studies have suggested the importance of overcoming structural barriers in secondary schools, in developing a more school-wide basis for planning and decision making, as opposed to competition and a narrow focus (Corcoran, 1990; Little, 1993).
This study has revealed how the differences in the organizational structures in the two schools expanded or inhibited opportunities for teacher leadership and collegial exchange across the school during the change initiatives. It has also shown how the patterns of associations and expectations established by the organizational structures influenced the dynamics of territoriality and competition over resources.

The findings provide evidence for the benefits of increased interdisciplinary teacher participation in decision making as it relates to student needs and the importance of collaboration in obtaining resources to support teachers in meeting these needs. Although it would be presumptuous to propose interdisciplinary teacher teams beyond grade 9, based on this investigation, it is suggested that the viability of alternative configurations to the current subject departments be investigated. Contingent to this suggestion is the critical question about how this should occur in secondary schools, given the expectations of the larger community, the unique nature of each school context, the expressed need for on-the-job support for teachers, and the potential effects on the students in the classroom.

Therefore, while the findings of this study reinforce the need to review the organizational structure of secondary schools when undertaking school change, it is recommended that school administrators and teaching staff be given the opportunity to take a major part in the decisions about how this occurs, in relation to what works best for them, their students, and their community. The following major findings of the study provide rationale for these conclusions:

- While both school principals envisioned more permeable boundaries between departments and more meaningful ties across subject areas from the beginning, the readiness of the teaching staff to make changes to the formal organizational structure
was determined largely by their experiences with their students and their ability to meet student needs within the existing structure.

- Vice principals in each school played key leadership roles in each school in reinforcing the organizational structure during the change process. At the school where the new grade 9 teacher team was initiated, one of the vice principals developed a timetable to support the organizational changes and dedicated significant time and support to the grade 9 teachers during the beginning stages of the change initiative. At the other school, one of the vice principals worked directly with the department heads, encouraging them to assume stronger leadership roles within the school.

- The grade 9 teacher team, which was established at one school, paralleled the subject department structure in the school organization. In providing a forum for interdepartmental support, leadership, and interdependence, the grade 9 teacher team facilitated cross-subject curriculum planning and delivery that took place for the grade 9 program. To the extent that the teachers worked together in planning and implementing the grade 9 change at the other secondary school, where no structural changes were initiated, it was primarily within subject departments, with some individual informal sharing of ideas with other staff members across departments.

- The legitimacy of the grade 9 teacher team, as an integral part of the formal organizational structure in the one secondary school, occurred after the first year of implementation of the initiative, once other teaching staff experienced the favourable results for their students beyond grade 9. Consequently, both the teachers on the grade 9 team and those who received the grade 9 students developed new understandings and gained respect for the importance of the team. The status of the grade 9 team was further reinforced as more teachers became involved in teaching the grade 9 program during its implementation.

- Teachers in both secondary schools welcomed opportunities for expanded teacher leadership. The activities of the grade 9 teacher team, in the one school, enhanced their motivation for decision making and provided additional opportunities for leadership within and beyond the grade 9 team throughout the change initiative. In the other school, the informal interdepartmental committees, established initially, also provided increased opportunities for teacher leadership during the beginning stages of the change. However, as the change process unfolded and issues of staffing and resources became imminent, the informal interdepartmental configuration gave way to the established departmental structure and the department heads as the recognized leaders and decision makers in the school.

- Conflicts that occurred during the course of the change, either within the grade 9 teacher team in the one school or within the departments in the other school, were acknowledged within both of the smaller groups and were minimized through attempts to problem solve within the groups. In conflicts that occurred beyond these
groups, at the school level, the teachers on the grade 9 teacher team in the one school played a strong and consistent advocacy role for the grade 9 program across the school; in the other school, the departments heads were looked to by the teachers for their advocacy of the grade 9 program, with the variance in department head support for the initiative resulting in inconsistencies in the degree of advocacy that was provided for the initiative.

- Through fundamental structural changes in the one school and the involvement of several teachers with the grade 9 program, either directly or indirectly over time, less territoriality and more openness in formal communication developed. In the other school, although several teachers were more directly involved in planning and delivering the grade 9 program, with the organizational structure unchanged, the subject departments remained the focal point for the change; consequently, while the departments generally fostered internal collaboration within each department, at the same time they constrained formal communication across departments.

**Implications for Research**

This study has not only become part of a larger and unfolding discourse about the future of secondary school-initiated change but has also presented an agenda for further inquiry and action that is broader and deeper than the two secondary schools that participated in the study. Based on the major findings and conclusions, several implications for future research on this topic and related areas of study are suggested.

Although this study has provided a detailed description and interpretation of the influence of school leadership and school culture in the specific changes initiated in the two secondary schools, it has been conducted from the perspectives of the secondary school administrators and teaching staff who were involved in the study. Given the time and resources, another approach would be to investigate the perspectives of students, parents, and community members, as well, to determine their views on the influence of school leadership and school culture in school change initiatives. While this would be a large undertaking, such a study would broaden the knowledge base to include all those involved in or affected by school change.
Alternatively, any one of the issues raised in the study, for example, the influence of school leadership and school culture within various departments in school-initiated change, the influence of school leadership and school culture in a new school organizational structure, or the influence of mid to late-career staff in school-initiated change could be researched in greater depth. It would be possible, and indeed valuable, to narrow one of the specific areas discussed in the study, and investigate it thoroughly.

Another approach might be to replicate this study, in the form of a sequel, by researching similar phenomena in other secondary schools. Since this study has addressed two secondary schools in the same large urban public school board, one could conceivably use this method of investigation in rural or suburban secondary schools, in smaller or larger school boards, in separate or private schools, or in other educational institutions. A comparison might prove interesting, although one should remain necessarily cautious of evaluating schools on this basis.

Educators' professional and personal worlds extend beyond the school. While this study has touched upon the backgrounds and experiences of the staff members who participated in the research, to provide insights into their frames of reference about the school change initiatives, it is acknowledged that the contexts of each individual participants are much more intricate than the scope of this study. Therefore, it is recognized that inquiries into individual and collective biographies could offer further insights into the intricacies of school leadership and school cultural influences in educational change.

The conceptual and practical issues involving leadership and cultural influences on site-based change initiatives need not be confined to the field of educational research.
A phenomenological mode of inquiry, such as that used in the current study, may be applied to other organizations and institutions, since education, as part of the larger social context, both affects and is affected by the issues of leadership and culture in other parts of society.
REFERENCES


WRITTEN PROPOSAL TO PRINCIPALS


Principal,
_______ Secondary School,
__________, Ontario.

Dear _______,

This letter is a follow-up to our earlier discussions about the participation of your school in a research project, which relates to school-initiated change in secondary schools. As you know, I am undertaking this study as a doctoral student in Educational Administration at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. The reason for my investigation of this topic is based upon my interest in change initiated at the school level, where principals and teachers take ownership in the change process from the beginning, in order to meet school-specific needs and requirements.

During the past few years, you and your staff have been involved in a school-initiated change, specifically the delivery of grade 9 program in a unique way. Not only has this change involved grade 9 teachers, but also has included all staff to some degree. In my view, as a researcher, your reputation for school-initiated change both locally and provincially warrants further study to understand how the process has unfolded in your school.

The research that is currently available on effective school change suggests the influence of school leadership and school culture on the change process, however, most of the data is based on elementary schools that have been involved in mandated school change. To date, the research on school change in secondary schools is scant, particularly as it relates to school-initiated change and the leadership and cultural influences that affect the change process. Consequently, the proposed research will be investigative and exploratory in nature due to the lack of empirical data on the subject. As a result, this study may be helpful, not only to you and your staff in your future plans, but also may add to the sparse theory base and may assist other practitioners and policy makers in understanding how school-initiated change actually occurs in practice in secondary schools.

The purpose of the research is to investigate from the perspectives of you and your staff how the school-initiated change process has unfolded from initiation through implementation and into continuation and the influence that school leadership practices and school culture have had on the change process. The research will be descriptive and interpretative in nature. In no way is it an evaluation of the principal, the staff or the school, but rather a means to determine how you and the staff perceive the change process as it has actually occurred in your school.
Please note that the information collected by the researcher will be for the exclusive purpose of the research project as part of the doctoral program. All data collected in written form will be shredded following the completion of the report and tape recorded information will be deleted. With respect to confidentiality, the protection of identity of all respondents is guaranteed. Neither school nor individuals will be identified in any verbal or written reports on the research.

Following are the details for data collection in the proposed study:

**Phase I: October, 1995: Teacher Questionnaire**

All teaching staff in your school will be requested to complete a brief questionnaire (15-20 minutes) to identify their views of the current practices in the school as they relate to individual and group participation in goal setting, decision making, informal school leadership, information sharing and staff development.

The questionnaire format will be designed to gather overall school data from the teaching staff on the current state of affairs in the school. Teacher respondents will not be identified by name but sociodemographic data related to current teaching position by subject(s), level(s) and grade(s), and previous subject(s), level(s) and grade(s) taught, as well as total years of teaching experience, number of years at the school, gender and age will be collected in the questionnaire in order to determine general categories of response.

**Phase II: November/December, 1995: School Administrators and Teacher Interviews**

Interviews are to be conducted with the school administrators and a sample of 8 teachers in the school who have been involved in the change process since its inception in order to understand, from their perspectives, how the change has occurred and the influence that school leadership and school culture has had on the process.

It is expected that the interviews will range in length 50 to 60 minutes with interviews being audiotaped and transcribed for follow up review by the interviewees for accuracy of content. Prior to the interviews, written permission will be obtained from each person being interviewed with the clear understanding of the purpose of the project, his/her rights of participant confidentiality and withdrawal during the process, the method of recording, the process of deleting interview information and any other written notes following the completion of the report and the process of reporting the final data. Arrangements for interviews will be made at a convenient time and location for the interviewees.
Phase I & II: Document Review: October - December, 1995

There may be some school documents that will be helpful in providing useful information for the research. These may include, but not be restricted to school plans, school newsletters, timetables, handbooks, organizational charts and parent correspondence. Your assistance in providing this information will be much appreciated during the research process.

Sharing of Information

Analysis of the data collection will take place between October, 1995 and May, 1996. In order to involve you and your staff in the process, I would be pleased to present the preliminary findings at any time after May, 1996 or, if you wish, the final report, upon completion of the thesis.

Based upon the above information, I am requesting your written consent to participate in the research project and to support staff participation in the project.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Bond,
OISE Ed. D. student

I have read and understood the terms of the research proposal as they relate to ______ Secondary School and agree to participate in and support staff participation in the research project as described:

________________________________________  ______________________________
Date                                      Signature of Principal
APPENDIX B

LETTER OF CONSENT
LETTER OF CONSENT

DOCTORAL THESIS STUDY ON THE INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL CULTURE IN SECONDARY SCHOOL-INITIATED CHANGE

It has been explained to me that Elizabeth Bond is conducting this study as part of the doctoral program requirements at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto.

The purpose of this study is to develop a descriptive account of the influence of school leadership and school culture in school-initiated change in secondary schools.

I understand that the information I will provide is confidential and that the real names of individuals and schools and the school board will not be used in the written thesis; pseudonyms will be used instead. Therefore, any contribution to this project will remain confidential within the context of the final thesis. I understand that at the completion of the doctoral thesis, my tape-recorded interview will be erased.

My participation in this project is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any time.

________________________  ________________________
Signature                     Date
APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE
OUTLINE OF INTERVIEW TOPICS

BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT
Describe briefly your background and experience.

A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL-INITIATED CHANGE
Describe the school-initiated change from your perspective and how you were involved.

INITIATION
Why was the change initiated at the school?
Who was involved? How? Why?
Was there a procedure or plan put in place? By whom? How?
Who was not involved? Why? Did they become involved later on? Why? Why not?
How was the change perceived by the staff, as a whole?
What were the impediments at this stage?
Who took leadership roles? Why? How?

IMPLEMENTATION
How long did it take from initiation to beginning implementation?
Was there a procedure or plan put in place? By whom? How? Why? Why not?
Who was involved in the implementation? Why? How?
What was the staff response during implementation?
What or who limited the implementation process?
Were the limitations overcome? How? If no, why not?
Who assumed leadership roles? Why? How?
What new opportunities arose during implementation?
How were these opportunities dealt with? By whom?
Did any changes occur in school staff, as a result?
Were evaluation strategies used to make changes during implementation? What?

CONTINUATION
Did the original change initiative change once it got to the continuation stage? Why?
How?
What accounted for the continuation of the change initiative?
Have changes occurred for staff, as a result? What? Who?
How do staff see the changes now, as compared to earlier in the process.
LEADERSHIP
Who has taken a leadership role in the change initiative? Why? How?
How has this leadership influenced the change?
What aspects of leadership helped the change process?
What aspects of leadership hindered the change process?

SCHOOL CULTURE
How did the organization of the school, the interaction of staff, the activities of the leaders, the traditions of the school, the backgrounds and experiences influence the change? When? How? Why?
What changes have occurred, as the result of the school change initiative?
How is the school different now from what it was before the change initiative?

REFLECTION AND REVIEW
What did you learn from your involvement in the change?
What should you have done differently? Why?
If you were involved in a similar change initiative now, how would you approach it? Why?
APPENDIX D

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE
December, 1995

Dear Colleague:

This questionnaire is part of a study of secondary school-initiated change and the influence of school culture and school leadership on the change process.

The purpose of the questionnaire is to ascertain staff perspectives of various aspects of the school-initiated change in your school. The questionnaire will focus on school patterns of behaviour and practices, actions taken by formal and informal leaders in the school, your perspectives on secondary school-initiated change in general, the impact that the specific changes in grade 9 program delivery have on your classroom practices, other relevant comments you may have about the grade 9 changes and demographic information about your experience and background.

Your response to each of the items presented in the questionnaire would be greatly appreciated. The estimated length of time for completion is 20 to 30 minutes. I am aware of the many demands on your time, however, I hope that you will take time to complete the questionnaire so that your responses, together with those of your colleagues, will provide valuable information, not only for your school, but also for other secondary schools, policy makers and researchers.

The findings from this study will be reported in a way that treats individuals and schools with complete anonymity and confidentiality. All raw data will be used for the purposes of the study only and will be shredded upon completion of the report.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed envelope to the school office.

Thank you for your participation.

Elizabeth Bond
Ed. D. Student
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto
STUDY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL-INITIATED CHANGE

This descriptive study of secondary school-initiated change consists of the following six sections:

A. School Culture
B. Leadership Practices
C. Statements About Secondary School-Initiated Change
D. Impact of the Grade 9 Change on Classroom Practices
E. Additional Comments About the School-Initiated Change
F. Experience and Background

The inquiry methodologies and the manner of reporting utilized by this study adhere to the Ethical Guidelines of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto.

A. Please be assured that all individual responses will be treated with complete confidentiality and that respondent anonymity is guaranteed. Neither the school board, the school nor individuals will be identified in any reports on the study.
B. Participation in the survey is voluntary.
C. Please do NOT put your name on this questionnaire.

Your co-operation in completing this questionnaire is greatly appreciated.

Please enclose the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided and return to the school office by Monday, December 18, 1995.
A. SCHOOL CULTURE

**School culture** refers to the patterns of behaviour and practices that exist in a school. This section lists some patterns of behaviour and practices that may occur in your school. Please indicate how descriptive each of the following statements is of the culture in your school:

**Circle the appropriate number.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all Descriptive</th>
<th>Very Descriptive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Most teachers take pride in their own work and accomplishments.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In general, teachers respect individual differences in one another.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Most teachers take pride in the accomplishments of the school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers generally do not have to rely solely on the &quot;grapevine&quot; as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their best source of information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Teachers have an opportunity to provide input into the goals established for the school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Most teachers have input into the school-level decisions that affect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The majority of teachers confront constructively, other teachers’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative behaviours.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Generally, there is collective and co-operative action taken in the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. School policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and changed as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>needed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Most teachers continually seek ways to improve their own teaching and learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. School improvement efforts are based on facts rather than feelings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. In general, teachers care about and strive for excellent performance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The majority of teachers avoid &quot;blame placing&quot; and concentrate on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>looking for constructive solutions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The goals established in the school are based on the needs of the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Teachers generally feel that their work is important.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Informal leadership opportunities are provided for teachers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. School administrators share the credit for successes with teachers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Opportunities are available to teachers to provide input and feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>into the review of school policies and procedures.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Most teachers are involved in school activities beyond classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Departmental and program planning is done within the context of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>common goals established collaboratively within the school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not at all Descriptive: 1
Very Descriptive: 4
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Do Not Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21. Many opportunities are provided within the school for staff growth and development.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Responsibility for decision-making is shared throughout the school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Responsibility for leadership is distributed throughout the school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Please circle the appropriate answer for each of the following:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Feedback is given and received in helpful ways by teachers:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) within my department or program area</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) in other departments or program areas</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Teacher workloads are fairly distributed:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) within my department or program area</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) throughout the school</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Teachers help each other with on-the-job problems:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) within my department or program area</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) across departments or program areas</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Teachers are kept informed on matters that directly affect them:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) by department heads</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) by other teachers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) by school administrators</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Teachers in my department or program area:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) work together effectively</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) work effectively with teachers in other departments or program areas</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) work effectively with the school administrators</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. There is effective communication between/among the following:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) teachers within my department or program area</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) my department/program area and other departments/program areas</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) my department/program area and school administrators</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Most decisions are made collaboratively:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) within my department or program area</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) within the school</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Teacher accomplishments are recognized:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) within my department or program area</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) by school administrators</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Teachers in my department or program area discuss regularly:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) new teaching strategies and new program ideas</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) mutual on-the-job concerns</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) issues about student needs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Staff development and in-service are provided:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) by teachers within my own department or program area</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) by teachers in other departments or program areas</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) by board staff</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) by staff in other schools or school boards</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

Leadership practices refer to the actions of both formal and informal leaders. This section lists some leadership practices that may occur in your school. Please indicate which statements describe the leadership practices of the principal, leaders in other positions of added responsibility (eg. v.p., dept. and asst. heads) and informal leaders on staff.

Circle one or more letter codes: P=Principal; OPR=Others in Positions of Added Responsibility, IL=Informal School Leaders; DNA=Does Not Apply.

1. Leaders set a positive example for teachers and other staff.................................P OPR IL DNA
2. Leaders are equally concerned for people, as well as results........................................P OPR IL DNA
3. Leaders share the responsibility for the things that go wrong in the school..................P OPR IL DNA
4. Leaders receive feedback willingly from teachers..................................................P OPR IL DNA
5. Leaders demonstrate regularly their commitment to what the school is trying to accomplish ....P OPR IL DNA
6. Leaders give constructive feedback to teachers....................................................P OPR IL DNA
7. Leaders make a strong effort to involve and motivate teachers...............................P OPR IL DNA
8. Leaders have expectations for excellence, quality and high performance on the part of all staff ...P OPR IL DNA
9. Leaders promote co-operation among teachers and other staff ................................P OPR IL DNA
10. Leaders show respect for individual differences of staff and concern about their needs and feelings........................................................................P OPR IL DNA
11. Leaders challenge staff to re-examine some of their assumptions about their work and to rethink how it is performed..................................................P OPR IL DNA
12. Leaders reinforce staff beliefs about their value to the school....................................P OPR IL DNA
13. Leaders help to find resources to assist teachers in their work.................................P OPR IL DNA
14. Leaders alter schedules and work arrangements to support staff planning................P OPR IL DNA
15. Leaders share decision-making with teachers.......................................................P OPR IL DNA
16. Leaders assist staff in working together toward common school goals........................P OPR IL DNA
17. Leaders take time to follow up on the jobs that have been assigned to staff................P OPR IL DNA
18. Leaders support and participate in school-initiated changes.....................................P OPR IL DNA
19. Leaders recognize the strengths of teachers and encourage them to make maximum use of their knowledge and skills.........................................................P OPR IL DNA
20. Leaders point out errors constructively.................................................................P OPR IL DNA
21. Leaders encourage teachers to develop new knowledge and skills to assist them in their work..........................................................................................P OPR IL DNA
**C. STATEMENTS ABOUT SECONDARY SCHOOL-INITIATED CHANGE**

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following general statements about secondary school-initiated change:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circle the appropriate number.</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The prime purpose of secondary school-initiated change should be to improve student learning.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. School-initiated change has more potential for successful continuation than externally mandated change.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Planning for school-initiated change should include not only HOW to implement but also WHY the change is being considered.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. All teachers should have the opportunity to be involved in planning for secondary school-initiated change.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Supportive leadership from a number of in-school persons is necessary for school-initiated change to be successful.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Orientation of teachers new to the school is essential to ensure the continuation of change in the school.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. School-initiated change should involve different staff members at different stages of the change process.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Support from parents is necessary for secondary school-initiated change to be successful.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Collaborative interaction among staff is essential to the success of school-initiated change.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Conflict is inevitable during the course of the change process.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Most of the teachers should agree with the school-initiated change before implementation begins.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Evaluation procedures should be built into the process from the beginning.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Board staff must demonstrate support throughout the process for school-initiated change to be successful.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Time should be provided both within and outside the school day for planning.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. An action plan is critical to the success of school-initiated change.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Students must demonstrate support for school-initiated change to be successful.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Teacher use of new teaching strategies and practices is necessary for school-initiated change to be successful.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D. IMPACT OF THE GRADE 9 CHANGE ON CLASSROOM PRACTICES

1. Have the changes in grade 9 program delivery initiated in the school had an impact on your practices as a classroom teacher?

   ___ Yes   ___ No

   If Yes, indicate the nature of the impact.

E. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE GRADE 9 SCHOOL-INITIATED CHANGE
F. EXPERIENCE AND BACKGROUND

Please check ___ on the appropriate line or lines.

1. How many years (including this year) have you been in the teaching profession? Check one.
   ___ 1 to 2 years
   ___ 3 to 5 years
   ___ 6 to 10 years
   ___ 11 to 19 years
   ___ 20+ years

2. How many years have you been at your present school? Check one.
   ___ 1 to 2 years
   ___ 3 to 5 years
   ___ 6 to 10 years
   ___ 11 to 19 years
   ___ 20+ years

3. Which of the following grades and levels do you teach at present?
   ___ grade 9
   ___ grade 10 ___ basic ___ general ___ advanced
   ___ grade 11 ___ basic ___ general ___ advanced
   ___ grade 12 ___ basic ___ general ___ advanced
   ___ OAC
   ___ Other (Please indicate.) ________________________

4. What is your previous teaching experience?
   ___ grade 9
   ___ grade 10 ___ basic ___ general ___ advanced
   ___ grade 11 ___ basic ___ general ___ advanced
   ___ grade 12 ___ basic ___ general ___ advanced
   ___ OAC
   ___ Vocational
   ___ Elementary Circle grades taught 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Other __________
   ___ Other (Please indicate.) ________________________

5. What is your current teaching assignment?
   ___ Business
   ___ Co-operative Education
   ___ Computer Studies
   ___ Dramatic Arts
   ___ English
   ___ ESL
   ___ Family Studies
   ___ French
   ___ History
   ___ Geography
   ___ Special Education
   ___ Technical Studies
   ___ Visual Arts
   ___ Other (Please specify) ________________________

6. What is your gender? 7. What is your age at your last birthday?
   ___ female ___ less than 30 years
   ___ male ___ 30 to 39 years
   ___ less than 30 years
   ___ 40 to 49 years
   ___ 50+ years