PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL-LEVEL PROGRAM DECISION-MAKING: A CASE STUDY

by

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B.A., Hamilton College, 1965
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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION in the Department of Educational Administration

We accept this dissertation as conforming to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
December, 1974
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Department of Educational Administration
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Vancouver 8, Canada

Date March 12, 1975
This study describes and analyzes a case through which it is possible to explore and evaluate the idea of PSLPD: Participation in School-level Program Decision-making. PSLPD was selected for study because it represented the convergence of three trends in recent educational thought: the call for wider participation in decision-making; the emphasis on the individual school as a decision-making unit; and the advocacy of rational program development. The case studied was one in which a major attempt was made to institute participation by teachers, students, and parents in school-level program decision-making, as one goal of an experimental secondary school.

The study was initiated with two conceptual frameworks in mind, based on surveys of related literature. A conception of program development was formulated in which the process was visualized as one of ends, means, and evaluation decision-making. A conception of the decision-making process was formulated based on the notion of problem-solving; and participation in decision-making was defined as involvement in one or more stages of that process.

The case study method enabled the researcher to collect and analyze data concerning several broad questions within the topic of interest:
Guiding Questions

Organizational Innovations
What were the origins, nature, and effects on PSLPD of
(a) the new staff group;
(b) the advisory council?

Decision-making Processes
What processes of decision-making occurred in the case?
Were there identifiable stages in the decision-making process?

Participation in Decision-making
What form did participation in decision-making take?
What did participation in decision-making mean?

Program Decision-making at the School Level
Was the program development process at the school level a
cyclical process of decision-making involving decisions about
ends, means, and evaluation?
Was there an identifiable area of decision-making at the
school level concerned with curriculum, instruction, and
program evaluation?
If so, how important was program decision-making at the
school level in relation to other areas of decision-making?
What were the types of problems requiring decisions at the
level of the school as a unit?

A detailed case history was prepared, including all
available information relevant to the topic of PSLPD. The
initial conceptual frameworks were then applied to the
analysis of PSLPD in the case. Finally, the value of the
initial conceptions themselves was considered by studying the case history in light of the questions posed at the outset of the research. Through this conceptual analysis of the case, it was demonstrated that changes were called for in the conceptualization of both program development and decision-making processes at the school level. The concept of participation in decision-making as involvement in one or more stages of the decision-making process was found to have some major weaknesses in its capacity for differentiating among degrees of participation. At the same time, however, it was found that the breakdown of categories of participants in decision-making in terms of basic roles in education (trustee, administrator, teacher, student, parent) was useful.

This study found numerous obstacles to the broadening of participation in decision-making. Although the innovations in the case studied were found to result in significant participation by the teaching staff in some types of decision-making, the structure of authority and responsibility in the school system was found fundamentally to constrain all categories of participants.

In the course of the analysis, an alternative conceptual approach was formulated to fill the need for a way of describing and explaining events in the case. This conceptualization was called "school development" because it attempted to emphasize the interrelationship of program development and organizational development in any realistic effort at educational change.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE CASE HISTORY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. THE STAGE IS SET</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. THE INITIATION OF INNOVATION</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PREPARATIONS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. PROGRAM PLANNING PRIOR TO YEAR ONE: THE JUNE MEETINGS</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. PROGRAM PLANNING PRIOR TO YEAR ONE: THE AUGUST MEETINGS</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. INTO YEAR ONE</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. STUDENT GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY CRITICISM, AND ORGANIZATIONAL DETAIL</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. THE ACTIVATION OF PROGRAM EVALUATION</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. THE ADVISORY COUNCIL'S IDENTITY CRISIS</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. ATTEMPTS TO REASSURE THE COMMUNITY</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. CATCHING UP ON STAFF COMMUNICATIONS</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. PLANNING FOR THE LAST PART OF YEAR ONE</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. MORE PARENTAL QUESTIONING AND MORE ASSURANCES</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. THE STAFF'S PLANNING WEEK IN APRIL</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. THE PROBLEM OF &quot;NON-PERFORMING&quot; STUDENTS: A CRISIS IN STAFF PHILOSOPHY</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. THE END OF YEAR ONE: RESEARCH AND EVALUATION DOCUMENTS</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. INTO YEAR TWO</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. THE DEATH OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. ANOTHER ATTEMPT AT ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. A STUDENT NEWSPAPER</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. SOME VIEWS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY, INDIVIDUALIZATION OF INSTRUCTION, AND THE CONTRACT APPROACH</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. SOME VIEWS ON THE CHARACTER OF THE U. TOWN PROGRAM</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. THE CASE HISTORY IN REVIEW</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANALYSES OF THE CASE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL-LEVEL PROGRAM DECISIONS</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE CASE</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. INTERVIEW INSTRUMENTS</td>
<td>416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. PARTICIPANTS' OPINIONS OF HOW SCHOOL-LEVEL PROGRAM DECISIONS SHOULD BE MADE</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. REFLECTIONS ON METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*****
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Program Development</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Participation in SLPD #1</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Participation in SLPD #2</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Participation in SLPD #3</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Participation in SLPD #4</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Participation in SLPDs #1 through 4</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Facsimile of Card Used in Interviews</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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I also wish to acknowledge the high degree of interest, help, and commitment to research which I found among the many persons in the school, school district, and community I studied. Their desire to promote knowledge for the benefit of all, and their willingness to expose themselves toward that end, were remarkable and praiseworthy.

Last, but not least, I wish to thank family and friends for consistently giving me emotional support during difficult phases of this study without ever making that support contingent upon the study's successful completion. From that experience, I learned much.

*******
Wider participation in decision-making has been advocated by several educational thinkers in recent years. In particular, there has been a call for involvement of teachers, students, and parents in the development of the programs of individual schools. Emphasis has been placed on the desirability of locating more authority and responsibility at the level of the school as a decision-making unit. The individual school is thought to be a natural unit for decision-making, because it is considered neither too small to control a variety of resources nor too large to respond flexibly to the educational needs of particular communities (Bowers et al., 1970; Housego, 1971). Emphasis has also been placed on the desirability of rationalizing the programs of schools through conscious evaluation of objectives and methods (Goodlad et al., 1970).

Taken together, these three trends in educational thought—the call for wider participation in decision-making, the emphasis on the individual school as a decision-making unit, and the advocacy of rational program development—define the topic with which this study is concerned: "Participation in School-level Program Decision-making" (PSLPD).
Two of the most important aspects of any educational organization are its curriculum and its instruction. The importance of curriculum and instruction in education is parallel to the importance of objectives and the means to their attainment in any organization. Every facet of an organization has something to do with the attainment of its objectives, but some functions are more directly related to achievement of objectives than others. In education, such functions as financing, provision of facilities and equipment, or recruitment of personnel, can be usefully distinguished from curriculum and instruction.

The process of developing curriculum and instruction has been conceptualized fundamentally as an ends-means decision process ever since the publication of Tyler's *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* (1950). Tyler offered the persuasive rationale that decisions about learning experiences should be based on prior decisions as to the objectives of instruction, and that teaching and learning programs should be evaluated according to criteria defined by objectives. Curriculum thinkers have debated the exact place in the curriculum development process of such considerations as the physical, emotional, and intellectual needs of students; the expectations of society; the structure of subject matter; and psychologies and philosophies of education (Taba, 1962; Goodlad, 1969). There has also been debate over what "curriculum," "instruction," "program," and other basic terms refer to. Mauritz Johnson (1967) has argued that "curriculum"
could most usefully be defined as a structured series of intended learning outcomes, and "instruction" as the methods for achieving intended learning outcomes. T. Aoki (1970) has distinguished between the planning and implementation phases of instruction: the former he calls "instructional planning," the latter "instruction." Housego (1972), building upon the concepts of Johnson and Aoki, has suggested that the term "program development" be used to mark out a cyclical process of change in curriculum and instruction based on evaluation; but no single approach to the problem of definitions has been accepted by the field of curriculum study.

The social structure of decision-making in the area of curriculum and instruction has been analyzed by Goodlad and Richter (1969) through the concept of hierarchies. Hierarchy can be seen in the substance of program decisions as well as in the social structure of education. For example, the intended learning outcome "To communicate effectively in a group" implies other curricular decisions: at a more specific level it implies intended learnings such as "To follow the course of a discussion," "To speak clearly," "To consider the viewpoints of others"; at a more general level, "To be a contributing member of society." It seems reasonable to suppose, therefore, that there is some correspondence between the levels of generality in the substance of program decisions and the levels in the hierarchy of social organization in
education. In the view of Goodlad and Richter, there are three main levels in both hierarchies: the societal, the institutional, and the instructional. At the societal level, controlling agencies and their sanctioning bodies (such as school boards and those who elect or appoint boards) select educational aims, or broad purposes for educational systems. At the institutional level, professional staffs select general educational objectives and learning opportunities, which give the instructor more guidance than he could obtain from educational aims and at the same time assure the controlling agency that instructional level choices are consistent with broad purposes. At the instructional level, teachers of particular students select specific educational objectives and instructional methods.

Griffin (1970) tested the Goodlad-Richter conceptual system. Through a questionnaire using decision items keyed to levels of decision-making, Griffin found that, while societal and instructional level decisions were made by the expected persons, institutional level decisions were either not made clearly at any level of the organization or were made at the instructional level. McBeath (1969) surveyed perceptions of levels of program decision-making in Saskatchewan. He found that school personnel of all types perceived most program decisions to be made at the provincial and district levels but preferred most program decisions to be made at the school and classroom levels.
Decentralization of decision-making to the school level has been advocated in recent educational literature. Goodlad, Klein and Associates (1970) urged such a move as a means to the "reconstruction of schooling:"

Clearly, such a charge calls for decentralizing much authority for educational decision-making to the local school under the leadership of principal and teachers in collaboration with children and parents. In effect, we are saying that the same principles of individualization which should guide instruction in the classroom must guide reconstruction of the local school. Each school must be granted freedom far in excess of what prevails now to pursue its destiny in the light of local needs and significant data--these data being primarily the characteristics of the students and their conditions of daily life.

Housego (1972) has called for "school-level program development" through decentralization of decision-making and rationalization of the program development process. Housego's proposal defined program development as a four-phase process of decision-making and sought definitions of the roles of administrators and teachers in each phase.

Research specifically concerned with the structure of roles in school-level program decision-making is lacking. Some research has been done on closely related topics. Much of the literature is in the form of articles rather than research.

Miklos (1970) has reviewed existing research on teachers' perceived and preferred degrees of participation. Ryan and Hickox (1972) have found both teachers and administrators to
favor high teacher involvement in decision-making, with teachers particularly in favor of involvement in those decisions which affect what goes on in the classroom.

Wilson (1972) has done "A Participant Observational Study of an Attempt to Institute Student Participation in Decision-making in an Experimental High School." Wilson's work was one important contribution to a U.S. National Conference on Decision-making in Alternative Secondary Schools held at the Center for New Schools (1972). The conference brought together representatives from more than a dozen alternative high schools to discuss common problems in the broadening of participation in school-level decision-making. Student and staff attitudes about decision-making were seen as important ingredients of the problems. Students were often concerned primarily with gaining freedom in their personal lives rather than in the curriculum; students generally did not want to participate in developing programs, only in identifying problems for staff attention; students were suspicious of all formal governing structures. Teachers, meanwhile, were often so concerned about avoiding authoritarianism that they failed to use the competence and authority which they derived from experience; teachers tended to increase their power informally and unconsciously, because of their reluctance to live with the authority implications of their role. The most general conclusion coming out of the conference was that alternative schools had made the false
assumption that desired changes would occur through "natural organic growth" when old structures were removed.

Parent and student participation in school-level decision-making has been addressed by the literature of local control of education. Bowers, Housego and Dyke (1970) brought together a number of scholars for a symposium on the subject. In the symposium, Lipset argued that a new consensus was forming in favor of local control because liberals, who have usually favored central control in the interests of equal opportunity, have become disillusioned with central governments and joined conservatives in criticizing bureaucracy. Courtney replied that there is a conflict of ideas within liberalism: freedom and individuality versus standards of quality in education. Andrews argued that centralization and decentralization are means to larger ends rather than ideologies in themselves, and that the choice of one or the other form of educational control depends primarily upon the circumstances affecting a country's achievement of its goals.

One type of organizational structure for community participation in school decision-making has been proposed by MacKinnon (1960): the creation of governing units consisting of one large school or a set of small schools, each unit with its own board of trustees. Another type of structure is the community advisory council. Advisory committees are commonly required in the United States in agricultural and technical education (Dillon, 1970; Howard, 1970; Swalec, 1972).
Blumenberg (1971) has described the advisory council as a false miracle drug used in education as a substitute for structural change; a mechanism which can, however, improve community relations if the inherent limits of its function are not misunderstood.

The study presented here is an investigation of a case in which a major attempt was made to institute participation by teachers, students, and parents in school-level program decision-making, as one goal of an experimental secondary school. There were four basic problem areas with which the study was concerned. It was hoped that study of the case would contribute somewhat to answering questions in each of the four areas.

Organizational Innovations: The primary mechanisms of the attempt to broaden participation in school-level program decision-making (PSLPD) in the case were (a) the appointment of a new teaching staff with a shared educational philosophy and a charge to innovate, and (b) the creation of a community advisory council. I sought to discover the origin, nature, and effect on PSLPD of these two structural innovations.

At the same time, I sought to define the concept of teacher-student-parent participation in school-level program decision-making. To accomplish the latter purpose, I was attentive to three problem areas arising out of the concept of PSLPD.
Decision-making Processes: What processes of decision-making occurred in the case? Were there identifiable stages in the decision-making process? I tried looking at the case through one particular conceptual analysis of the decision-making process based on the notion of problem-solving:

1. Generation of alternative problems;
2. Consideration of relative importance of problems;
3. Selection of problem;
4. Generation of alternative solutions;
5. Consideration of relative merits of solutions;
6. Selection of solution;

A decision outcome can be thought of as a solution to a problem. The process of decision-making can be viewed as that of selecting a problem to address, selecting a solution to the problem, and implementing the solution. Each selection is preceded by the generation of alternatives. Between the generation of alternatives and the selection from among them, the relative merits of proposed alternatives are considered. If more than one person is involved in the process, the consideration of alternatives may include attempts by some parties to influence others.

Participation in Decision-making: What form did participation in decision-making take? What did participation in decision-making mean? I approached the study with one way of defining participation in decision-making—as involvement in one or more stages of the decision-making process. (See Fig. 1). By using the grid defined by categories of
participants and stages of decision-making, I set out to study the structure of roles in decision-making in the case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DECISION-MAKING PROCESS</th>
<th>1 Gen. of Alter. Problems</th>
<th>2 Cons. of Rel. Imp. of Prob.</th>
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<th>4 Gen. of Alter. Sol'ns.</th>
<th>5 Cons. of Rel. Merits of Sol.</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trustees</td>
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<td>Students</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for Describing Participation in Decision-making.
Program Decision-making at the School Level: Was the program development process at the school level a cyclical process of decision-making involving decisions about ends, means, and evaluation? Was there an identifiable area of decision-making at the school level concerned with curriculum, instruction, and program evaluation? If so, how important was program decision-making at the school level in relation to other areas of decision-making? What were the types of problems requiring decisions at the level of the school as a unit? I initiated the study using a conceptual analysis of program decision-making as a developmental process embracing ends, means, and evaluation, consistent with the mainstream of curricular literature. I tried to apply the recent definitions of curriculum and instruction deployed by Johnson and Aoki, and the definition of program development built by Housego. (See Fig. 2).

![Diagram of Program Development]

Figure 2. Program Development
The case study method made it possible for me to collect and analyze data concerning the several broad questions included in the topic of interest. Case studies have been utilized profitably in sociological and educational inquiry when basic concepts and assumptions have been in need of empirical examination. The case study approach provides descriptive material on the basis of which concepts existing in the literature can be evaluated. A case study makes conceptual development possible because it places the researcher in contact with the complexities of a concrete example. The method, of course, has the built-in limitation that its findings must be further tested in other cases and through other research methods before they can be generally accepted.

In the present study, data were collected in several ways—through observation, interviews, and documents. I was a non-participant observer in the case for a period of about one year. During that time, one of my major activities was observation of staff and advisory council meetings and recording of pertinent discussions and events. At the same time, I interviewed participants both formally and informally. The documents which I gathered included school board records, letters, agendas and minutes of meetings, newsletters, participants' notes, etc.

I found it useful to organize my materials chronologically, as I worked to piece together a consistent picture of the case within the area of interest. Eventually, I
discovered that a useful way of presenting the descriptive findings was as a chronological narrative, rather than breaking the case into topical parts, because so many of the important threads were interwoven. The resulting descriptive case history constitutes the bulk of the dissertation (Chapters 2 through 24). Equally important, however, are the analyses of the case following the descriptive material. The analyses are presented in two parts. In Chapter 25, the conceptual frameworks described in this introduction are applied to the case, demonstrating the ways in which those frameworks could be used. In Chapter 26, evaluation of the initial conceptions of the study and development of alternative conceptions are undertaken. The conceptual conclusions of the study are presented in the context of a summary of the dissertation in Chapter 27.

*******
LIST OF CHARACTERS
in alphabetical order
(Identities fictitious)

Dr. Allworth, an assistant superintendent in the Sallcrest school district

Mrs. Anderson, a teacher of home economics at U. Town Secondary School

Mr. Berends, director of communications for the Sallcrest school district

Mrs. Brougham, a parent and unsuccessful candidate for the U. Town advisory council

Mr. Chiba, a teacher of industrial education at U. Town Secondary School

Mr. Crema, a former U. Town Secondary School teacher

Mr. Cyprus, principal of U. Town Elementary School

Mrs. Danter, secretary at U. Town Secondary School

Miss Deering, a teacher of humanities at U. Town Secondary School

Miss Dillman, a student teacher at U. Town Secondary School

Mr. Elvin, an evaluation official of the Sallcrest school district

Mrs. Fayter, a teacher of business education at U. Town Secondary School

Mr. Friberg, a former U. Town Secondary School teacher

Mrs. Furness, a teacher of humanities at U. Town Secondary School

Mr. Gray, an architect for the Sallcrest school district

Mrs. Griffiths, a teacher of physical education at U. Town Secondary School

Dr. Gruner, a trustee of the Sallcrest school district
Mr. Haffner, a teacher of humanities and physical education at U. Town Secondary School

Mrs. Hagen, a parent and member of the U. Town advisory council

Mr. Happ, a teacher of math at U. Town Secondary School

Mr. Hardy, a teacher of humanities at U. Town Secondary School

Mr. Hurlburt, a former U. Town Secondary School teacher

Jack, a student and president of the student council at U. Town Secondary School

James, a student and editor of the student newspaper

Dr. Koller, former chairman of the U. Town school board

Mr. Lauridsen, a teacher of science at U. Town Secondary School

Mrs. Light, a trustee of the Sailcrest school district and liaison to the U. Town advisory council

Mr. McDonald, a parent and first chairman of the U. Town advisory council

Margaret, a student and member of the U. Town advisory council

Mrs. Marion, a teacher of humanities at U. Town Secondary School

Mark, a student and member of the U. Town advisory council

Mr. Mattson, a teacher of humanities at U. Town Secondary School

Mr. Mayall, a special education consultant for the Sailcrest school district

Dr. Meyer, a director of instruction in the Sailcrest school district

Mr. O'Doherty, a parent and member of the U. Town advisory council

Mrs. Pearson, a research assistant for the Sailcrest school district evaluation department

Mrs. Rackham, a parent
Ray, a student and member of the U. Town advisory council

Robert, a student and member of the U. Town advisory council

Mr. Samuelson, finance official of the Sailcrest school district

Mr. Sander, principal of U. Town Secondary School

Mr. Schwenning, a special education consultant for the Sailcrest school district

Mr. Scott, a teacher of French and other second languages at U. Town Secondary School

Mr. Shelton, a teacher of science at U. Town Secondary School

Dr. Wilkinson, superintendent of the Sailcrest school district

Dr. Worrall, a parent and second chairman of the U. Town advisory council

*******
A half century ago, a university was established by the province of Westmont and endowed with a tract of land at the edge of a major city, Sallcrest. On these endowment lands, there grew, in conjunction with the new university, a village known as University Town. It was, for many years, quite separated from the city of Sallcrest.

As the university and the city expanded, the separate character of U. Town was only partly affected. There remained a wide barrier of undeveloped endowment land protecting U. Town from the city which grew up to its gates. However, even the parts of Sallcrest adjoining the endowment lands were like U. Town in their social composition. The area was a prized residential section, the inhabitants of which included many wealthy academics and business executives.

U. Town had its own school district for many years, and the residents of the district were very proud of their control over their schools. The former chairman of the U. Town school board, Dr. Koller, described the school district's governance this way:

There was an independent school board at that time, operating just the two schools. We had the same jurisdiction over the schools as other boards in the province had.

The school board was elected at an annual general meeting. U. Town was an unincorporated territory (endowment lands). The school board was the only legally constituted body in the
endowment lands. At the annual meeting of the school community, nominations were made by a nominating committee and from the floor, and board members elected on the spot by the electors.

The beauty of the system was that the board was close to the community and had the fiscal means to translate community wishes into actions.

The schools of the U. Town district were academic institutions which prepared their young people for university. The program evidently did not change much over the years.

Mr. Happ, a teacher at the secondary school for many years, told me:

...There was no general program in the school. There was no provision for slow learners. Quite a number left for private schools with lower standards. This was strictly an academic school, with a very rigid curriculum.

Dr. Koller also spoke to this point:

...At some time prior to 1965 (before I was involved), the school board decided in this district to provide only the academic stream in the high school. Having made that decision, the school board had to evolve a mechanism for providing for non-academic students, so they paid Sailorest to enrol them; but due to the university-faculty and business-executive composition of the community, there were very few students who took this option.

Mrs. Rackham, a lifelong resident of the U. Town area, said:

The program was carried on as it had been when I was at the school thirty years ago. The school offered the same curriculum for years. A few good teachers were able to innovate because the conditions for it were good. Parents with bright youngsters were very satisfied with the school.
Ray, a student who attended the secondary school before the innovations were initiated, said:

All the teachers had been there at least ten years. The chemistry teacher, Mr. Hurlburt, was in an amazing rut. You could take his notes from 1948 and use them in 1970.

The U. Town district provided very good working conditions for teachers, and many of its teachers became entrenched.

Dr. Koller:

This district, because it had only two schools, had the means for keeping the classes small by providing additional teachers' salaries on its own. Teachers found this one of the most attractive features of the district. So we were able to attract a rather competent staff. They weren't all competent. We had the problem of not being able to get rid of the incompetent ones because of the small size of the district; we couldn't move them around to get them to resign.

Mr. Friberg, a former secondary school teacher, gave this description of teaching conditions:

I was the librarian and head of the English department of the school. . . . The U. Town school board worked hard to ensure an excellent pupil-teacher ratio and good facilities. In the first five years I was there, the pupil-teacher ratio went down each year. At the time of amalgamation the enrolment was about 250. I taught two Literature 12 classes averaging 15 or 16 pupils per class, so I could teach in seminar fashion. I had two-thirds to three-quarters time in the library.

Mr. Crema, another former staff member, said:

U. Town was an academic school. One could do very satisfying work with the students. There was a very low pupil-teacher ratio, and an excellent salary scale.

Teachers in the high school apparently went their own ways. There was little interference from administration in
the classroom, and at the same time virtually no school-level program. Some school-level program decisions were made by the board, with the advice of the principals and a teacher-board liaison committee. Dr. Koller:

In my time, examples of school-level program decisions would be those concerning arts options, counselling options, second-language options, library options, and band. Since the number of teachers in the district was strictly limited, there was a continuing need for program policy decisions. These decisions were made by the board. The mechanisms of decision-making were threefold: (1) school-board initiated; (2) recommendations from staff, through the principals and superintendent; (3) petitions from the community. There was no dialogue between the school board and students about curriculum; students were only concerned about things like parking facilities.

. . . The teaching staff had a considerable role in decision-making. They met with the principals, and the principals with us. The board also created a teacher-board liaison committee so that teachers could influence board decisions directly; examples of teacher-board topics would be Sabbatical opportunities and library facilities.

Mrs. Marion, a teacher who, like Mr. Happ, was on the staff before the introduction of innovation and remains at the school now, described pre-innovation program decision-making as follows:

Decisions were made by the local board; the secretary-treasurer had his office in the secondary school. There was a liaison committee of staff and trustees, which discussed general policies. . . .

Curriculum content was entirely decided by the department of education (provincial). There was a good deal of room for experimentation within that, in my areas, social studies and English. I individualized instruction myself as much as I

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1Remember that by “school level” I refer to the individual school as a whole.
wanted. The teachers very much went their own ways; it was a very noticeable feature of the school. Even within the department, we never met, never changed subjects, never helped each other. There was the odd effort to get together for particular problems, but they usually failed. Staff meetings were characterized by a communication problem; people didn't say what they were thinking.

Mr. Happ saw it this way:

... In the individual subjects,... we had carte blanche--those of us senior in the hierarchy. In 1968 to 1969, for example, I initiated an individualized pacing program; and I used different math books for certain kids.

The decisions that were made came from the front office--discipline, bells, timetable, and so on. Most of the staff were not interested in participating in decisions; they were only interested in their own academic fields. The decisions made at staff meetings were trivia. ... Most of us had very little effect on the program of the school as a whole. Some teachers left because of that.

Mr. Friberg, one of the former teachers interviewed, said:

One of the things I liked about the school was that there was very little paternalism on the part of the administration. The principal sometimes made decisions we didn't like, but usually we got along well. Any experimentation you wanted to do was strictly up to you, the teacher. Most program decisions were made within subjects. We didn't meet as a staff very often, partly because it was a small school and we saw each other frequently in the staff room. Staff meetings were called by the principal every one to three months.

Mr. Crema, another former teacher interviewed, gave this description:

There was no school-level program decision-making; we were pretty autonomous as subject teachers. Decisions about the program were totally at the classroom level. I can't think
of a single example of a school-level decision, except concerning things other than curriculum; but then, I can't think of any need for school-level program decisions either. . . . There were no problems at all in securing supplies for teaching, for example. As far as inter-subject harmony, there was never any problem. It was such a small staff; you saw everyone all the time. The program, of course, was limited because of the size of the school.

The principal, Mr. Sander, said:

Myself and the vice-principal had a larger say than now; but the staff had a say. We discussed proposals with staff and students. For example, independent study was brought to the staff, as a way of making up for the lack of alternatives in the program; and the staff was involved in deciding upon it and implementing it. . . . The program was pretty well laid down by the department of education, though. The teacher's time was almost all booked up. . . .

U. Town, then, was a rather autonomous school district in a university community, with a stable academic program and an individualistic staff. Two drastic changes have been imposed on this picture in recent years.

In 1969, the provincial government decided to reorganize the U. Town school district by amalgamating it with Sailcrest. Dr. Koller:

. . . As more and more university housing was built, the district's taxpayers had to pay more and more to maintain its educational standards. It finally got to the point where the children in the schools who were from tax base were only fifty per cent of the enrolment. The university was tax exempt, and refused to contribute. The district got funds from the province for the university children, according to the regular formula, but the district taxpayers had to support the extra staffing costs for the whole system--those that were above the provincial allocation. So when the university children became fifty per cent of the enrolment, the district taxpayers
were paying double for the same standard they had traditionally provided.

We probably would have had to amalgamate voluntarily, but it would have been better than the way it was done. As it was, the two giants—the university and the provincial government—virtually "shafted" us, a few months after the provincial election of August, 1969. . . . In December, 1969, the U. Town district was forced to amalgamate with Sailcrest by a provincial order-in-council, after the district had been assured by the minister of education earlier that this would not happen. My connection with the schools ended on December 31, 1969, when the amalgamation took effect. They asked us to work through the Christmas holidays to ease the transition, which we refused to do; we resigned immediately. They wouldn't even wait until the end of the school year to effect the change in district organization.

Mrs. Rackham:

There was no parent role in the amalgamation decision. It was made behind the scenes in the department of education. . . . The residents in the area had no choice.

The school system with which U. Town was amalgamated was quite different from the small, university district. U. Town Secondary School became the smallest among eighteen high schools in a district serving the entire city of Sailcrest; in effect, an academic prep school in a diverse urban system. The Sailcrest school trustees tended to encourage innovation on the part of their administrators and teachers. The source of the innovations to come at U. Town Secondary, like other innovations in the Sailcrest district, was traced for me by Mr. Berends, the Sailcrest board's communications director, to the earlier election of a majority of liberal-minded trustees by the Sailcrest voters. Innovative policies were being developed at the board level in Sailcrest at the time that the U. Town district was amalgamated with its policies
favoring, among other things, individualization of instruction, professional freedom and responsibility for teachers, curricular flexibility, alternative programs, development of statements of school objectives, and greater decentralization of decision-making to the school level.

Chapter Summary

Until December 31, 1969, the U. Town community exercised control over its schools through its own school board. There appears, however, to have been little or no development of the program of the secondary school as a whole, and thus little opportunity for participation in school-level program decision-making. The school-level program decisions that did occur were usually made by the local board, with some influence by administrators, teachers, and parents. The program was defined by provincial requirements, although there was some flexibility. Experimentation did occur in some classrooms; individualized pacing and alternative curriculum materials were employed by some teachers. Staff meetings were apparently infrequent. School-level organizational decisions were made by the principal.

It was against such a background that U. Town amalgamated with the Sailcrest school district by order of the provincial government. The amalgamation placed U. Town within the control of a change-oriented administration; several specific innovative policies which were to affect U. Town Secondary could be seen "in the wind" when U. Town joined the larger district.
CHAPTER 3

THE INITIATION OF INNOVATION

During the school year 1969 to 1970, at the same time that the U. Town district was amalgamated with Sailcrest, a study of differentiated staffing concepts was undertaken at the level of the Sailcrest school board office. Out of that study came a report and proposal to the Sailcrest trustees' education committee on September 17, 1970. Dr. Allworth, assistant superintendent, reported that Dr. Meyer, a director of instruction, and representatives from the secondary teachers' and administrators' associations "had been studying a variety of projects with a view to changing the organizational structure in secondary schools." They had attended workshops on differentiated staffing. Dr. Meyer told the education committee that

...they preferred to call this program "change of instructional pattern" which involved teachers looking at their instructional role in a different way; making them more professional and capable of using other personnel, staff resources and various types of equipment; involving them in decision-making.

Dr. Meyer said that they proposed to create a project in "modified instructional patterns" in some Sailcrest secondary school, starting in September, 1971. They wanted to select a

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2 "Differentiated staffing" refers to any of a number of ways of redefining teaching roles such that different teachers have different degrees of responsibility, e.g., master teacher, teacher, teaching assistant, etc.
school by December so that there would be time for "necessary staff adjustments." They proposed to "hold a three-week workshop next summer for all staff who will be involved in the project. . . ."

This proposal was approved by the committee.

Between September, 1970, and January, 1971, the idea of designating University Town Secondary as the school for this project was formed and developed. On January 22, 1971, a specific proposal to this effect was made in the form of a memo from Dr. Allworth to Dr. Wilkinson, superintendent. By this time, the plan included many more innovations: an emphasis on individualization of instruction and student responsibility for learning; curriculum enrichment; utilization of community resources in the program; flexible scheduling; a parent-student advisory committee; and educational workshops or seminars for parents and students.

The choice of U. Town for this project was explained on the basis of the "conducive setting" it offered for experimentation—the small size of the school and staff, the availability of excellent resources in the community and university, the students' "orientation to study and scholarship," and the parents' "high interest and support for the school." The principal was reported to be enthusiastically interested in the proposal.

Three days prior to the Allworth-Wilkinson memo, meetings had been held with the staff of U. Town Secondary
and with the community, Dr. Allworth reported. The staff had been told of the plan, the reasons for it, and given assurances about transfer status. The community had given support to the proposal by "general consensus."

On January 27, the proposed reorganization of U. Town Secondary was approved by the board's education committee.

On February 8, the recommendation of the education committee was approved by the board as a whole.

On February 12, the decision was described to the U. Town parents in a letter from the principal.

The purpose is to provide broader learning opportunities and to involve teachers, parents and students in deciding what these opportunities should be and how best to achieve them.

It is our intention to enrich the curriculum; increase the use of the excellent resources of talent and facilities available in our community; and individualize instruction in ways that will help students develop self-direction and assume responsibility for their own learning. . . .

Parents were told that "the role of the teacher will be quite different." Plans for restaffing and for summer planning meetings were described. Finally, parents were informed that "we plan to hold a seminar for parents and students to discuss their involvement in the making of decisions regarding the program."

The February 12 letter to parents assured them that the changes would not "detract from the excellent academic tradition that has been established at University Town School through the years" and that "these are established practices elsewhere and hence in no way are the changes experimental."
Looking back on the decision to reorganize U. Town Secondary, a number of participants gave me descriptions of the way in which the decision was made.

Dr. Gruner, a Sailcrest trustee:

As I understand it, there had been pressure from various trustees to loosen up the high school a bit. We had taken over this small, over-staffed (by our budgetary standards) school. It was looked on by the senior officials as a good place to experiment. They came up with the idea, brought it to the trustees, who were enthusiastic enough about it to go along. Then they went to the teachers. Finally, the community was involved. . . .The initiative for the change was from the board officials, but of course they wouldn't have come to us with it if we had not encouraged this type of thing. . . .(The emphasis on student responsibility and individualization of instruction) was the type of innovation the trustees wanted. We certainly wouldn't have been in favor of any innovation, regardless of its nature. . . .I'm not aware of any participation by community members in the initiation of the change.

Dr. Allworth described it this way:

We inherited that small school district through a "shotgun marriage" imposed by the province. We had this tight unit of limited enrolment. After one year with it, it seemed an ideal place to try an experiment because of the small size and proximity to the university. It was a senior administrative decision; but it was consistent with the emphasis on decentralization of decision-making, because it was simply an extension of things we'd been trying to do elsewhere in the system. A forerunner of the U. Town innovation was the "Self-programming" (at two other schools); it emphasized the same things on a smaller scale.

In making this decision we brought it to the education study group—which includes representatives from the secondary teachers' association and administrators—and got their support for doing it. It started from here. The community resisted it almost unequivocally from the beginning. We spent a lot of time making pitches out there; we
had to convince the community. The teachers were given the choice of moving to another school in the system with equivalent rank and salary, or applying for the new U. Town staff; there were only three besides the principal who applied to stay, and we took all three of them on in the new organization. We weren't opposed to the traditional approaches of the previous U. Town faculty; this was a misunderstanding that some teachers and local citizens had. In fact, we have several schools which run along similar lines. The U. Town school size, its proximity to rich physical and human resources were the prime factors in attempting a new program emphasis at this school.

Dr. Meyer said:

Initially, the notion took form down here around Christmas, 1970. In the year prior to that we did a study of differentiated staffing; there was a joint committee, we came up with a proposal on differentiated staffing. The feeling of the committee was that we shouldn't initiate differentiated staffing without changing a whole school program. We threw out the idea to all of the secondary schools, but there were no takers, only a few interested. We wanted high consensus on a school staff.

So by Christmas, 1970, we had decided we'd need to change the complexion of a school completely. U. Town seemed the most logical school. There was discussion among the directors with Dr. Allworth, and I was given the task of thinking more about the U. Town possibility and drawing up schema for that particular situation. . . .I, myself, only entered the U. Town picture when the innovations were initiated, and I was asked to be the connection between U. Town and the board office.

A year after the reorganization decision, in an address to school administrators in another district, Dr. Meyer said:

The change in the school was conceived by the central office as a complete program reorganization. The idea was to establish a school program that could incorporate as many of the new notions
about school organization, staff utilization, and teaching/learning as was possible—the "black box" area.

Mr. Friberg and Mr. Crema, the former U. Town teachers whom I interviewed, also gave descriptions of the reorganization decision. Mr. Friberg:

After amalgamation, I had two extra classes, and my time in the library was sharply reduced. I talked to Mr. Sander about it, and got the intimation that the school would be reorganized in the spring. We (the teachers) inferred that U. Town would become an academic school with an experimental tone. At that time I sat on the provincial English curriculum committee, and I expected that courses such as the ones we were developing would be implemented at U. Town.

In late January, we were called into a staff meeting with Allworth and Meyer. Allworth explained that the school would become an experiment in different kinds of staffing. He listed some alternatives, and one member of staff asked if this meant differentiated staffing. Allworth said not necessarily. They were going to call for teaching applications from persons interested in "exciting experiments in education," and the applicants were to state what kinds of experiments they were interested in. Then he went on to explain that the present staff members could apply on equal terms with other applicants, or transfer to positions of approximately equivalent type elsewhere in the system. I asked if this was established board policy; Allworth said yes. I asked what consultation with the parents was planned; Allworth said there would be meetings to explain the new program, but the decision had already been made. It still wasn't clear what the new pattern would be.

At the parents' meeting, the question of academic standards was raised. The answer was not direct or definitive. Some parents were quite unhappy; they asked if they were going to have any say. Allworth

Dr. Meyer apparently was using this term in a general way to connote experimentation.
said no, the decision had already been made, and the parents would have to live with it.

The staff was given a fixed date by which to re-apply for their jobs. I decided to leave. I went on educational leave, but if I hadn't gone on leave I still would have left U. Town because I did not consider the changes being introduced to be educationally desirable.

In retrospect, I can see that it may have been necessary to change the school once the district was amalgamated, but the manner in which it was changed was questionable. Ironically, the staff and community were shunted aside in instituting the innovations.

I, and I suspect many of the staff, have come to feel (in retrospect) that a change was necessary and that although the methods of change and outcomes did not, and may not still, impress us as being sound, yet they probably evolved out of a sense of the necessity of change.

Mr. Crema told me this:

Even though I was staff chairman at the time, I knew nothing about the decision to reorganize the school. There was a meeting called at which Dr. Allworth said things would be changed and we, the teachers, could re-apply for our positions if we wished. Every staff member was extremely upset. It was done in a very inconsiderate manner. I went to them at the behest of the staff. We didn't know much about the planned program change, but we objected to the way it was being introduced. A letter was also sent to the school board by the Sailcrest secondary teachers' association, admonishing them; the great fear was what they could do to other schools if they could do this to U. Town. The principal of the school was in an untenable position. We requested a meeting with the trustees... and everybody on staff expressed their remorse. One got the feeling that even the trustees were regretful; they were very sympathetic to us; but it seemed that the decision had been made—fait accompli. At the time of the district amalgamation, the same board officials had said there would be no change in the school for at least five years, to reassure the community.

Mrs. Marion, one of the teachers who stayed on at the school, described the reaction to the reorganization decision:
Allworth and Meyer announced to the staff that they would be replaced or could re-apply for appointment. It came like a bombshell. Many of the older staff were very resentful, and many in the community thought the teachers were being railroaded. There was a movement opposing it. . . . The manner of forcing the change didn't bother me particularly, because there was such a need for change, and it was probably better to make it sudden.

Dr. Worrall, a parent who later became a member of the U. Town advisory council, related this view:

At the time the original decision was made to change the school, the parents began to hear rumors of a "free school." They were very concerned that there might be a complete lack of organizational structure. Sander (the principal) called a couple of meetings to discuss it. Allworth. . . .and several other officials came and raised the question of there being some kind of body for liaison with the parents and students; out of that came the advisory council; but we were never really told who made the decisions, just that it was going to be a great advantage to U. Town to be a testing ground for educational innovations. They stressed individualization of the rates of learning, and enrichment of the curriculum. However, the parents were still concerned about the slow learners—would they be closely observed? I remember Sander saying some students couldn't cope with the new system and might prefer to move to another school. It was left that way. The parents didn't understand it. It would have been better to get the parents involved much more in the beginning. . . .

Mrs. Rackham was one of the parents who expressed support for the reorganization when it was initiated:

There was some discussion in the form of meetings held to discuss the projected change with parents. The school board had already made up its mind. . . . I had talked to Dr. Allworth and expressed interest in change, prior to this. . . . There ensued a fight between liberal and conservative factions in U. Town. I was taken aback by the amount of opposition among my neighbors to the idea of change, and I retreated a bit. Many of the opponents were professors who held traditional views about education; but as far as I know there was really no participation of the community in the decision to reorganize the high school.
A student said:

The decision was made by the Sailcrest school board. The students and even the teachers didn't have a say in it. It was just thrust on us and we had to adapt to it. In a separated community like U. Town, that's maybe the way it has to be. It surely isn't going to come from within.

Chapter Summary

The decision to reorganize U. Town Secondary was the outcome of a process in which study of change possibilities in one area of school organization—differentiated staffing—was gradually transformed into a global innovation plan. The locus of this development was the board and district administration level, with involvement of school-level personnel only through district professional association representatives. The study of differentiated staffing concepts led to the idea of "modified instructional patterns" (including teacher involvement in decision-making), without reference to a particular school. Specific plans were proposed to "adjust" teaching personnel assignments and to hold staff planning sessions in the summer, prior to the opening of such a school. After the relevant board committee approved that idea, a search was conducted for a school to fit it. Simultaneously, the change plan was expanded to include an emphasis on student responsibility for learning, individualization of instruction, curriculum enrichment, use of community resources in the program, and flexible scheduling. In this last stage of reorganization planning, the idea of creating a community advisory council was included, and last-minute meetings were
held with the U. Town parents, students, and teachers. The reorganization decision was made final by the Sailcrest board of trustees. In describing the decision to the old U. Town staff, the officials apparently downplayed the extent of prior program decision-making included in the basic reorganization decision by presenting it as rather less constraining than it really was.

The history and character of the U. Town school district had a direct bearing on the selection of U. Town Secondary as a site for innovation—not through the participation of local people in the reorganization decision, but through the reasoning processes of the central administrators. In particular, the decision to create a community advisory council at U. Town was likely the result of the officials' desire to placate a community recently angered over the forced amalgamation of its school district with a much larger one. In addition, the officials perceived the small size of the U. Town Secondary School and its setting in a university community as "conducive" to experimentation—particularly to the type of innovation in which students are given unusual degrees of freedom and responsibility. Related to this consideration was the view, held by a liberal segment of the U. Town community, that the secondary school was too outdated and rigid in its program to prepare students effectively for university.

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CHAPTER 4

PREPARATIONS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The Appointment of the New Staff

The notice distributed by the Sailcrest school board office calling for applications for teaching positions at U. Town Secondary described the school as a "project school" designed to "bring together many of the newly established practices in education." Prospective teachers were advised that there would be participation of teachers, parents, and students in decisions about the program; that the teacher's role would be "quite different;" that the school would provide individualization of instruction and "help students develop self-direction and assume greater responsibility for their own learning." Further, the notice informed interested teachers that there would be "enrichment of the curriculum through subject integration and use of the excellent resources of talent and facilities available in the community." It was noted that applicants would have to be willing to do some planning and in-service work during out-of-school time, including a three-week summer workshop.

Recalling the staff selection process, Dr. Meyer said:

The criteria given the new staff were just that they be flexible, use their imaginations. They were selected for their ability to project into a situation of that kind.
Mr. Happ, one of the teachers who re-applied, recalled that:

...The administrators said they had no pre-conception of the new program. I asked them about that specifically at the time, and they said they had no idea, they were just going to hire the most talented people.

Mrs. Marion, another teacher who re-applied, said:

The new staff appointments were announced late in the school year, around Easter or after, which minimized the period of intense ill-feeling in the staff. I didn't even know until the appointments were announced who else from the old staff was interested in staying.

The "Curriculum Workshops" for the Community

Two "curriculum workshops" were held in February to March, 1971. The letter of invitation and programme for the second workshop indicate that there were presentations by professionals followed by group discussions. The topic of this second workshop was "Patterns of Organization to meet needs of the Curriculum" ("semestering," "modular scheduling," "self-programme in a semester system"). Dr. Meyer explained to me that department heads from Sailcrest secondary schools were used as resource people for these meetings, and he showed me some overhead projection materials used; he said that "department heads from the district suggested individualization and subject integration as themes for presentations to parents." Trustee Gruner recalled it this way:

The community was involved in a series of meetings, which went fairly well, although there was some opposition. Community members turned out in full force, asked important questions, and seemed supportive of the idea as a whole.
Mr. McDonald, a parent who subsequently became a member of the advisory body, said:

We were given a framework in a series of concept meetings, where the school explained the new ideas. It was a gentle form of indoctrination.

The Formation of the Advisory Council

On March 25, the day following the second community workshop, an invitation was issued to the parents "to attend a meeting for the purpose of discussing the organization of an advisory council to be made up of parents, teachers, and students." The invitation stated that "the advisory council will have an important role to play in the school organization next year." At the meeting, held on March 30, a list of suggestions was distributed concerning the "areas in which an advisory council could serve" and the composition of the council. The areas suggested were: "inventory of resources of the community to enrich the curriculum" (volunteer aides, tutoring, organization of field trips, speakers); "assessment of the total school programme" as "feedback" to the staff; "initiation and organizing of extra-curricular programmes outside of regular school hours;" and "information channel between the parents, students and the school board." The suggested composition of the council was "'x' number" from each of three groups--staff, students, and parents--plus the principal and a liaison trustee of the Sailcrest school board.
Mrs. Rackham told me later:

Meetings were held with parents in the spring of 1971 to discuss the idea of the advisory council, as a means of involving the parents. The officials said they didn't know how the group would function; it was up to the parents, teachers, and students to set goals, procedures, and so on.

The minutes of the meeting indicate that the parents decided to call for nominations and volunteers, publish "thumbnail sketches" of candidates, and elect four parents by mail ballot, for a one-year term. It was also decided that the advisory council would be composed of four representatives each from the parent, student, and teacher groups, and the principal and liaison trustee. Mr. O'Doherty (who was to become a member of the council) and Dr. Koller (the former chairman of the local board) spoke unsuccessfully for the reactivation of a parents' schools association, organizationally independent from the professionals.

On March 31, Mr. Sander reported to the parents, by letter, on the outcomes of the previous evening's meeting, and asked for the names of volunteers or nominees by April 8. He noted that the staff and student representatives would be selected by their own constituencies.

The ballots and sketches of nominees distributed in April offered a choice of six parents. The four who were subsequently elected were Dr. Worrall, Mr. O'Doherty, Mr. McDonald, and Mrs. Hagen. Dr. Worrall's position as stated in the sketches emphasized the need for:
an ongoing assessment and evaluation at all levels, both by those responsible for formulation of the curriculum and by those providing a direct read-out of its overall effectiveness, the parents and students. The advisory council as projected can and should, in addition to its other terms of reference, allow such a mechanism provided that we maintain free and open communication amongst all concerned--communication is a two-way street and is the essence of constructive change.

Mr. O'Doherty emphasized his "long standing interest and continuing loyalty to the school" and "commitment to make any contribution I am able;" he pointed to his experience as a professional architect in the design of school buildings, and his interest in the relation between architecture and "emerging techniques in the field of education." Mr. McDonald listed his experience as a transportation executive, member of a royal commission, and chairman of the National Harbours Board; he stated that:

The school programme, as outlined at the various workshop sessions, offers an opportunity of widening the horizon of a small school such as University Town by reacting beyond the staff resources available. Using the resources of the community at large should make it possible to give the students the feeling that their school environment is vital and relevant.

Mrs. Hagen emphasized her interest in participating in the solution of the "complex problems which face this district in the development of a programme for the secondary school." She called for "broad educational opportunities...greater freedom of choice in studies...a new rapport between teacher and student, and...in the student a greater sense of responsibility for his own education."
The two who were not elected were Mrs. Rackham (who was interviewed in this study) and Mrs. Brougham.

The parents were asked to return their ballots to the school by April 30. On May 3, a letter to the advisory council nominees announced the results. A 40.5 per cent ballot return was reported.

During the month of May, the new staff decided, in the course of their first meetings, to rotate their participation in the advisory council; and four students, one from each of the grades 8 to 11, were selected as council members. I learned later that these students were selected through volunteering. On May 31, a letter from the principal informed the community of the council's membership, and invited community members to "meet with the advisory council and school staff for an informal gathering and coffee" on June 16.

Contact with the Westmont University Faculty of Education

On May 18, 1971, a meeting was held with department heads of the Westmont University faculty of education. According to Mr. Sander's report, possible contributions to the U. Town program were identified in the areas of curriculum, industrial education, physical education, modern languages, reading, audio-visual, art, administration, and social studies. Several department heads who were not present at the meeting promised to meet with the U. Town staff later.
Initial Meetings of the New Staff

The new staff met as a group for the first time in May. Plans for the first meetings called for five seminars:

(1) interpersonal relations training, including role perception, small group processes, decision-making, and problem-solving;

(2) evaluation, including setting goals and objectives;

(3) modifying learners' behavior;

(4) utilization and evaluation of staff; and

(5) coordinating resources with learners' needs. The training program was:

...designed to increase teacher competence in program development and analysis, refinement of instructional procedures, assessment of students' academic and social skills, recording students' performance and behaviour, and application of reinforcement principles for motivating student performance.

Distribution of Individual Staff and Student Proposals

Following the initial staff sessions, each staff member wrote up his/her ideas about the new program, and sent them to the school to be duplicated. These materials were subsequently distributed at the program planning session in June. All students at U. Town Secondary were given the opportunity to communicate their ideas in the same manner.

Chapter Summary

In the period between the reorganization decision and the first program planning meetings, the new staff was appointed, "curriculum workshops" were held for the community, the advisory council was formed, the university's faculty of education was contacted about specific links, the members of
the new staff were brought together for the first time to become acquainted and to experience training in interpersonal relations and program development, and program proposals from individual staff members and students were gathered. It would appear that these preparations for program development were carried out in a manner consistent with the goals of the project, once those goals had been decided upon by the school board. In applying for positions, new staff members were advised of the global character of the innovations; the emphases on student responsibility for learning, curriculum enrichment, and use of community resources; the summer planning sessions and the goal of teacher-student-parent participation in decision-making. Integration of subject fields was identified for the first time as an expectation for the new program. The teacher's role was described as "quite different," just as it had been in the letter to parents announcing the reorganization. The officials apparently gave the new teachers the impression that there were no "preconceptions" about the new program. The formation of the advisory council took place in conjunction with the appointment of new staff, and appears to have been accompanied by an aura of importance.
CHAPTER 5

PROGRAM PLANNING PRIOR TO YEAR ONE:
THE JUNE MEETINGS

The new staff met at the Sailcresit school board office building throughout the week of June 14 to 18. At the first meeting on the morning of Monday, June 14, an agenda was distributed suggesting that there be discussion of "material submitted by staff members on features desired in the structure for September" and "comments from students..."; and that an agenda for the remainder of the week and for the August meetings...be discussed and set up. This should outline the broad objectives we wish to reach by June 18 and by the end of August, plus any work that is to be done during the interval.

The initial agenda also announced that there would be a report that afternoon by a visiting expert on the use of staff assistants; and that six persons would be "interviewed initially this week" for four staff assistant positions. (The interviews had been arranged for Thursday and Friday, starting at 4:00 p.m.).

On Tuesday, June 15, Dr. Allworth and Mr. Samuelson, head of the district finance department, met with the staff to discuss what funds would be available to the school. The staff pressed for money to buy specialized equipment, while the board officials stressed the tightness of the financial picture city-wide and the importance of avoiding any appearance that U. Town "had received a special deal and
was not a typical school that could be used as a pitch for other schools. Dr. Allworth said that limited funds were available, however, and asked the staff to prepare a specific list of needs.

That morning, Mr. Sander, the principal, told the staff that he had delayed the involvement of parents "so that staff could get to know one another and select representatives and for the return of parents from out of town." He also said that the "parents wish to know what additional areas we plan to move into." The staff discussed the meeting of the advisory council scheduled for that evening, June 15, and the larger meeting for all staff, students, and parents scheduled for the following evening, June 16. According to the minutes of the staff meeting that morning,

...the feeling was that June 15 should be used for getting ideas; June 16 to give policies in general terms and to introduce the staff. Mr. Happ felt that more specific answers should be prepared, Mr. Sander felt that details should be arranged through the council.

On the afternoon of the 15th, the staff discussed the organization of the physical plant, and how to approach the timetable problem.

At the advisory council meeting on the evening of the 15th, there were present two students, three parents, seven

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4 Where not otherwise stated, quoted passages from the period of time prior to my own observations are taken from the minutes.
teachers, and the principals of both the secondary and the elementary schools. There was discussion of the new school program and of the functions of the advisory council.

Mrs. Hagen expressed the concern she sensed in the community about "what kinds of things are going to happen."

Mr. Sander replied that they were

... envisaging three large blocks of time in the day with the staff divided into teams--working in separate domains. The core would be in the large block first thing in the morning, broken down at the discretion of the team. The other two blocks of time would be contracted for by the students and could be changed. Each staff member would act as an advisor to a group of about 25 students. Weaknesses in specific areas could thus be contracted for and strengthened. ... Core material is essential, determined by the department of education. ... The sections would be as flexible as possible within the subject areas.

Mr. Sander said that "this decision" had been made "to avoid the student missing basic core material" while at the same time enabling the school to "identify the needs of the student," "include the involvement with the university," and "to develop the type of citizen we want in terms of... growing responsibility... maturity." Dr. Worrall "expressed the view that the core time should provide a real backbone of learning and be flexible enough to make sure that the basic minimum is well covered or the necessary changes made." A student said that "some of the students were apprehensive about radical changes."

Concerning the functions of the advisory council, there was general agreement that it should facilitate communication
between the school and the community. The three parent representatives expected the school staff to provide leadership—"ideas," "guidance," and "decisions." Dr. Worrall felt that the council should "get the program across to the community of parents." Mr. O'Doherty was concerned about parents "over-reacting" before new teaching methods were "well tested and considered," although he felt that "the advisory council should play a very important role in getting feedback." Mr. Cyprus, the elementary school principal, said that "evaluation should come from the community after the ideas have been tried." Various methods of promoting communication were discussed, including "abstracts of minutes in the nature of a community letter," questionnaires, written material from the school staff, phone calls to council members from parents, and general meetings for parents and students. It was decided that methods of communicating should be discussed the next evening at the larger meeting. Dr. Worrall offered to speak concerning communications. It was also decided to hold advisory council meetings every third Tuesday during the summer.

At the staff meeting the next day, June 16, Mr. Scott said that there had been, at the council meeting, "a misunderstanding of the term 'core material' and de-emphasis on the direct student contact during 'contract' time" when "learning becomes truly individualized."
Other topics discussed by staff on the 16th included the size of teaching teams (Dr. Meyer sent a suggestion via Mr. Sander that even numbers work together better); the use of Westmont University student teachers; and the problem of attendance anticipated by Mr. Sander.

(I could find no record of the June 16 general meeting.)

On June 17, the staff discussed the problem of a timetable.

Mr. Sander expressed the need for help during the summer for structuring a formal timetable. It was decided that as many as can make it would come to U. Town Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday afternoons at 1:30. . . during the month of July so that there is something to work from--suitable or not. The two weeks at the end of August could be used for amendments of the timetable plus other basic problems.

Also on the 17th, the staff discussed the problem of preparing students for scholarship examinations while, at the same time, emphasizing "a broader human approach."

On the 18th, the last day of this first planning week, the staff again considered the questions of use of the physical plant and organization of the timetable. Teachers were asked to provide information on their needs to timetable planners.

The following Wednesday, June 23, another meeting was arranged so that the staff could discuss building alterations with Mr. Gray, school board architect; at the same time, Mr. Sander "called for final equipment figures to submit to the board." On June 25, another staff meeting was held with
Mr. Gray, at which proposals for alterations and equipment were finalized.

The Contract Decision

I asked a cross-section of participants how the decision had been made to utilize the "contract" approach to student responsibility for learning and individualization of instruction, as an example of an important school-level program decision. Interviewees almost unanimously traced the decision to the first staff planning sessions, but exact information on the process by which the decision was made was difficult to obtain. (The interviews were done a year and a half after the decision):

Teacher:

...It came up in the staff planning meetings. I don't remember who suggested it.

Teacher:

We came up with that at the end of the first planning week. ...At first it was going to be afternoons for contract time, more open than we ended up doing...It would have meant putting a great deal more responsibility on the kids. Contract time was a way in which, it was felt, individualization and student responsibility could best be implemented.

Teacher:

The decision was made at the June meetings of the new staff in 1971...We agreed contracts should be an adjunct to the student responsibility emphasis. It was suggested by those who believed in individualization. We all thought it would be a good thing. I can't recall who brought it up. Certainly it was from the staff, not administration. They never mentioned it...It didn't seem important at the outset. Contract time is just a natural
adjunct to individualization of instruction; if you're going to have an individualized program, you have to have a time set aside for contracted work--what alternative is there?

Teacher:

The contract system came out of the discussion of individualization of instruction in the early staff meetings, as an answer to how to individualize rates of progress.

Teacher:

This was decided in order to carry out the other decision (to emphasize student responsibility and individualization). We decided there would be a minimum amount of time students would be required to be in classes, and those who wanted to progress at a faster rate could contract to spend more time in any area. Also, those who had problems. It was a staff consensus thing; it was discussed and agreed on. I don't recall who suggested it.

Teacher:

In our first meetings it was voiced as an ideal some had, and as past experience by some. It was the product of a lot of reading by some of us. There was a consensus to use contracts, it didn't come out as a decision; everyone saw a way to use it in their own area, either through time or work load.

The principal said:

It was a staff decision; it was made at the meeting down at the school board (office building). Every staff member participated in the decision and agreed to it. I don't recall where the idea originated, or from whom.

Dr. Allworth said of the contract decision: "That was a local decision. It had nothing to do with the board office." Dr. Meyer's perception was: "The contract decision was made strictly by the staff. It arose from general discussion among staff." Mr. Elvin, a school board evaluation
official, said: "That was a staff decision. I don't know how it was reached. Our education department may have had some input...although I doubt it."

Parents interviewed did not know anything about how the contract decision was made:

Parent:

I don't know how it was made.

Parent:

(The contract decision) was made by the faculty of the school, or the faculty in consultation with the school board.

Parent:

I don't know how this was done. The council seems to have made no decisions.

Parent:

I don't remember how the decision about contract time was made.

Students were also in the dark about the contract decision:

Student:

I don't know how the decision was made; I guess by the teachers...Students aren't consulted or questioned about decisions concerning the program of the school as a whole. Contract time is one example. In this respect it's just like any other school. The students just carry out decisions made.

Student:

The decision was made by the staff, the new staff.

Student:

I don't know how the decision was made.
Concerning the contract decision and subsequent decisions about the contract approach, trustee Gruner said:

These were administrative and staff decisions implementing the basic reorganization decision. . . . I think it was the new school staff that generated the new program. I'm not sure when the community council was set up, whether before or after these decisions were made—probably before.

The Decision to Emphasize Student Responsibility and Individualization of Instruction

A decision prior to, and even more basic than, the contract decision was the decision to emphasize student responsibility and individualization of instruction at U. Town. Although that decision was explicitly included in the board's original decision to reorganize the school (as we have already seen), most of the teaching staff believed that they, rather than the board, were responsible for it. It seems likely that the staff selection process was crucially important in determining the nature of staff group philosophy; yet the members of the staff apparently did not have a clear knowledge of the decisions preceding their appointment.

Teacher:

It seems to me the decision to emphasize student responsibility and individualization of instruction was made at our first (staff) meetings in June, 1971, when we met for a week at the school board

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5This material is presented at this point, rather than earlier, because of the nature of the interview findings, as will be seen.
(office building). That was the basic philosophy that we all seemed to have. From there we tried to determine how we could best put that into practice. We didn't really have to discuss those emphases too much, although we did spend a lot of time discussing how to implement responsibility and individualization. . . .

Teacher:

That was by staff consensus, as a result of discussing what we wanted the school to be like. It turned out that we were all saying the same thing—to give students responsibility and individualize instruction.

Teacher:

It's hard to say who made the decision. I felt it to be in the staff as a group before we even met. In the first couple of days when we met it came out. We didn't have to do any real decision-making about it. . . . Many of our early decisions were informally arrived at through round-table discussions. We could feel the common attitudes we held; we could sense agreement. . . . Maybe it was because of the board's selection of staff—a beautiful case of homogeneous grouping; but it could have been just that when we got together we decided to be different.

Teacher:

This was decided when we first met and brainstormed. It was an outcome of looking at things we'd experienced in other schools. We thought it would be good to have kids progress at their own rates, particularly in French, Math, and other subjects where the content is standard. We wanted to see if we could get kids to take responsibility for their own learning.

Teacher:

The emphasis on student responsibility was a consensus of individual staff opinions. Our opinions were formed before coming into this project. The collaboration which followed simply confirmed the consensus. Why we all agreed on this philosophy I'm not sure. I don't think it was because of any decision by those who selected us. . . .
Mr. Scott had a somewhat different view:

Individualization of instruction was among the parameters that were in the original prospectus given to the staff by administration. I think the decision to emphasize student responsibility is derived from that by the staff as an area most reflecting individualization of instruction. There is a great difference between individualization of instruction and individualization of learning—the former has to do with the teacher, the latter with the student. Individualization of instruction was included in the original administrative conception of the program, as were differentiated staffing and a half dozen other things; they were suggestions by the board officials. Individualization of learning was not explicitly decided upon; it was a derived concept. It varies from subject to subject. Student responsibility was seen by the staff as a means of implementing individualization of instruction. Student responsibility was emphasized by the staff because of the extremes of traditional structure in the schools from whence they came. Our initial discussions started with a few simple terms of reference, which gave some notion of a program. Our question was how to do it.

The principal said:

Originally, the board said to me, replace the staff and try differentiated staffing. They didn't know what they meant. What they really meant was a different use of the budget. . . . The board didn't have any preconception about student responsibility and so on; that resulted from the teachers I picked. The board's intent was simply to change the school. . . . It wasn't so much "emphasize" student responsibility as "encourage." Our first concern was how much responsibility should be put on the grade 8s . . . . The decision was made in the first week of the staff workshops. I brought it up, and it met general agreement; but there were decisions and non-decisions. Many things were done because nobody objected to them. We fell into a lot of things that way. . . . There was no particular point when the program was defined; it just evolved. Student responsibility and individualization didn't actually become the distinguishing features of the program in any clear sense. . . .
Mr. Elvin, the board official responsible for evaluation of the U. Town program, said:

...To my knowledge, this decision was arrived at by the staff team selected for the project. They were given the mandate to develop a school permitting freedom of choice... The education department (under Dr. Allworth) was probably involved to some extent in stating the philosophy of the project to the staff.

Dr. Meyer said:

It was decided that there would have to be greater student responsibility if it was going to be a distinct type of school. Student responsibility goes along with individualization; it is necessary if there is to be a more open plan in the school.

Chapter Summary

In the first two days of the June planning sessions, it began to become apparent that problems which might roughly be termed "organizational" were of much more pressing importance than problems concerned with curriculum, instruction, or program evaluation: e.g., selection and use of staff assistants, finance, community relations, physical plant, timetable, and the organization of decision-making itself. The hand of the board office was evident in the arrangements for a speaker on the use of staff assistants and for interviews with applicants for staff assistant positions—arrangements which represented decisions as to the use of staff group planning time, and which implied a definite prior decision that there would be staff assistants employed. Similarly, the use of part of the second day of the sessions was allocated in advance by the board officials to a discussion of finance.
The principal's delay of parent involvement created a separation right from the beginning between the staff and advisory council; community representatives were not at the planning sessions, and the council met just once in the evening during the first planning week. From its first meeting, the advisory council apparently was not expected by the parent representatives to function as a decision-making body. The emphasis appears to have been on facilitating communications and explaining the new program to the community.

The principal's description of the new program to the council revealed several important decisions made by the staff: the intention to organize the staff into teams, and subject fields into domains; to divide time into blocks, some of which would be used by students to "contract for" work in addition to the "core material." The principal's emphasis was on the "core," defined by the provincial department's curriculum requirements, to reassure concerned parents (and students); in speaking of the program's goal of student responsibility for learning, the principal emphasized the development of "maturity" and de-emphasized the student freedom that would logically accompany increased student responsibility. An ideological split began to be apparent the day following the advisory council meeting, when one of the teachers objected to the principal's emphasis on "core material."

Further evidence of the importance of organizational rather than curricular-instructional problems could be seen in the topics discussed during the rest of the first week of
planning meetings: the size of teaching teams; use of student teachers; attendance; timetable; physical plant. The only curricular-instructional problem identified in the minutes for those three days was that of coping with the provincial-level scholarship examinations without violating the "human philosophy" of the project. The problems of architectural alterations and special equipment were deemed important enough to hold two additional meetings the following week. In the latter two meetings, the importance of the board office as final decision-maker was apparent.

Participants' recollections of how the contract decision was made provided some insight into the process of program decision-making in the first staff planning sessions. The most striking characteristics of the process appear to have been the extent of staff consensus achieved without much debating of alternatives; the way in which the contractual approach appears to have been assumed as a feature of the program; and the lack of participation in the decision by anyone other than the staff.

Participants' perceptions of the basic decision to emphasize student responsibility and individualization of instruction at U. Town reflected a lack of clear knowledge of the board's initial reorganization decision, and an under-estimation of the importance of the staff-selection process. The apparent ease of reaching staff consensus was attributed by most participants to similarities in the individual staff members' evaluations of schools in which they had previously taught.

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A ten-day staff workshop was held from August 23 to September 3, prior to the opening of school. One of the matters dealt with early in the workshop, at the suggestion of Dr. Meyer, was the objectives of the school. Statements were offered by various members of staff, then two teachers "...were delegated to set these general objectives in some semblance of order." Their formulation was as follows:

1. To provide opportunities for the student to:
   (a) evaluate his academic and personal goals, capabilities, and needs;
   (b) learn through individual and group processes;
   (c) recognize education as a continuing life experience.

2. To encourage understanding of and a sense of commitment to the needs of himself and others.

3. To provide learning experiences sufficiently comprehensive to meet the needs of a variety of post-secondary pursuits.

4. To involve the student body and community in decision-making and evaluating new patterns of organization and curriculum development.

5. To encourage student responsibility for learning.

One of the teachers told me later that the staff did not take the stating of objectives very seriously—that it was viewed as an exercise which could not have much use because the most important objectives of the school could not be
precisely defined and were, in any event, understood by all staff members at a "gut level."

Three days of the workshop were devoted to domain meetings for program planning. The problem of articulation of domains was discussed by the staff as a whole.

Evaluation of student achievement and of the school program were discussed. Also,

...Dr. Meyer requested that we have someone from the evaluation and planning department at the school board do a sociological study in the school. After some discussion it was decided that Dr. Meyer and a member of this evaluation department would strike a design for this evaluation and submit it to the staff by September 15. ...

"Communications with parents and students" was a topic considered at the workshop. The areas of concern within this topic were student orientation to the new program, specifically the planning of orientation week and the orientation booklet; the advisory council; and meetings of individual students and parents with staff advisors. A related concern was the role of the staff advisor and the advisory groups, which were to replace the traditional "home rooms."

Mr. Scott:

...felt that parents and students should have had some participation in the meetings that took place with the staff in June and probably the meetings in progress at the moment.

On August 31 at 3:00, the staff discussed the advisory council meeting to be held that afternoon at 4:00. A suggested agenda for the council was planned which included the
following topics: bikes; books and library; student lounge and smoking; portable and construction (building alterations); open or closed policy (attendance); and community resources.

(Other matters of concern at the staff workshop included: budgeting; the use of space in the building by domains; the need for a portable or geodesic dome; furniture and special equipment needs; enrolment; the use of staff assistants and additional staffing needs; timetable revision and the use of the unscheduled Thursday; attendance; and arrangements for the issuing of textbooks. There was also discussion of the program with Westmont U., the use of community resources, the physical education program, and counselling services.)

The advisory council meeting of August 31 was attended by a trustee (Mrs. Light), three parent representatives, three student representatives, ten teachers, the principal, and four staff assistants. Mr. Sander "reported that the teaching staff had one week of all-day sessions at the Sallcrest school board in the latter part of June and had been at the school since August 23 in planning meetings." Mr. Sander

then explained the timetable for the coming year: The timetable is set out in 20 minutes modules. This enables classes to be given in 40, 60, 80, etc. minutes time blocks. There is a timetable drawn up indicating only the basic minimum core subjects. The remainder of the timetable is blank. This is NOT a free day but rather a day for contract time, field trips, etc. A mini-course may last from 3 weeks to 9 weeks depending on the subject area. These subject areas have been left until the students have an opportunity of suggesting the courses they would be interested in.
Mr. Chiba "reported on the proposed programme for orientation week:" On Tuesday, September 7, at 9:00, students would meet with their advisory groups and be given orientation booklets and individual appointment times for interviews with their advisor the following day; after 10:00, teachers would be "located in the school throughout the day for students to discuss the programmes being offered." On Thursday and Friday, September 9 and 10, there would be further individual meetings "with subject teachers to discuss course selection and registration;" also, on Thursday at noon, an informal social activity, and on Friday afternoon, "parents are invited to come to the school to discuss problems and questions which might have arisen during the week." On Monday the 13th, plans called for "individual student/advisor meetings to enable the advisor to see each student's completed timetable;" and a staff meeting to discuss and solve any conflicts in students' timetables. On September 14 would begin the "implementing of the programme."

Parents asked questions like: "How many students were under the guidance of each advisor?" "What grades will be commencing studies at 8:00 a.m.?" "Are the grade 7s being accommodated at the elementary school?"

Mr. Sander explained the building alterations, and the problems of getting action from the school board on a portable and on equipment moving. Mrs. Light agreed to "follow up the action that is being taken on this portable by the school
board." It was "moved by Mr. McDonald, seconded by Dr. Worrall, that the request to the school board regarding the moving of equipment be heartily backed by the advisory council."

Mrs. Anderson

... asked the advisory council for advice and suggestions regarding a student lounge and smoking in the school. She reported that the staff had made no policy on these items and would like some help from the council.

Mrs. Light

reported that it was a board policy that no smoking was permitted in schools. She suggested that we could make representation to the board and request that this policy be changed in the case of this school and then this staff and advisory council could make their own decision.

The student representatives made various suggestions about a lounge, and took the position that smoking should be permitted outside the school only.

Miss Deering

reported on the attendance policy. Each student will be responsible for turning in weekly an attendance card to his advisor. On this the student will mark his absences. Subject teachers will also keep a record of attendance. ... in each of his classes. If a student is absent for 3 to 4 days in a row this will be reported to his advisor who will then notify the parent by phone. ... Miss Deering also reported that no policy had been set down by the staff regarding a student who has some free time between classes. Must they remain in school or can they go to the library at Westmont U., or some other place? Suggestions were asked for. Mrs. Hagen suggested that the whole concept of the school would be contradicted if the teachers had to police the students. After some discussion, Mr. McDonald suggested that an open policy be adopted to begin with and that if it was
found necessary to tighten up at a later date this could then be considered. Dr. Worrall and Mrs. Light both stated that the expectations of staff for students must be impressed at a very early date. Also that if a student shows at an early stage that he is not performing well that he must be shown the error of his ways immediately.

Mr. Hardy requested that old bicycles be contributed to the school for students to use to go to activities at Westmont U. Mrs. Payter requested "that the community take some active interest in the library." Mr. Sander asked that "some thought be put into the matter of setting up a file on community resources. This was tabled. . . . The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m."

Chapter Summary

In the August planning sessions, the school's objectives were stated by the staff. The manner in which this came about was of interest to my study in particular, since statements of objectives were so central to the program development model employed. The staff engaged in this activity in an uncommitted fashion, and only in compliance with the suggestion of the director of instruction responsible for the project. The teachers generated statements as a group, and then delegated to two staff members the task of putting the objectives into "some semblance of order." The five objectives which resulted reiterated in different words the project's original emphases on student responsibility for learning, individualization of instruction, community resources, and community participation in decision-making. Particular emphasis could
be seen in the objectives on the student's psychological and social development.

The staff assented to the director's suggestion to have the board office evaluate the project, subject to staff approval of evaluation designs. The staff does not appear to have questioned the basic idea of the board, rather than the school itself, making program evaluation decisions; nor is there any evidence of concern on anyone's part over the postponement of evaluation planning (and stating of objectives) to the last part of the program planning period.

As in the June planning sessions, the bulk of the problems concerning the staff during the August meetings appear to have been organizational rather than curricular-instructional. Some major areas of school-level organizational problems could be seen to carry through both of the advance planning periods: finance; physical plant; staff utilization; timetable; student attendance. Most curricular-instructional planning appears to have been done at the domain or class levels. School-level program decisions in the August meetings were concerned with the advisory role; the use of community resources; and the problems of stating school objectives and planning the program evaluation, discussed above. It began to be seen in the August session that a major school-level program would be the "articulation of domains."

The types of problems which were of concern to the staff under the heading of "Communications with Parents and
Students' reflected the separation between the teachers and the community in program planning and decision-making; only one teacher appears to have voiced concern over the lack of community participation in the planning sessions. The staff's discussion of the advisory council was sandwiched into the last hour before the council meeting.

The council meeting itself was relegated to late afternoon on a day near the end of the August planning period. The agenda for the meeting, suggested by staff, seemed to dwell on topics relatively peripheral to basic program decision-making. Mr. Sander's description to the council of the timetable illustrated once again his concern over adverse parental reaction to increased student freedoms; it also illustrated the emphasis in the council's function on disseminating and justifying to the community the professional's decisions. The same could be said of Miss Deering's report on attendance policy. The parent representatives and the liaison trustee demonstrated, in their responses to the question of students' free time between classes, that the staff's worry about community opinion was well-grounded. The triviality of the council's participation in decision-making could be seen in the discussions of the problem of getting equipment moved and the question of student smoking.

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CHAPTER 7

INTO YEAR ONE

The U. Town orientation booklet for students contained the general objectives of the school; the orientation week schedule; course information; the timetable; attendance rules; information on textbooks, locks, and lockers; a map of the school; and blank timetable forms. Courses were offered under the following subject headings: business education, home economics, humanities, industrial education, mathematics, physical education, second language, and science.

In the Sallcrest school board handbook for September, 1971, the superintendent reported:

> During the year the board of school trustees reaffirmed its policy regarding teachers' professional freedom and responsibility. . . . The board and officials also increased the amount of local autonomy and encouraged schools to make decisions in matters that can and should be decided locally.

Sallcrest education department head Allworth emphasized in the handbook that "the need now is for each staff to establish, through consensus, a statement of the objectives and the learning experiences their school is providing or should be providing to achieve these objectives." Under the board's policy to develop "alternative programs," the handbook presented University Town Secondary as "a project in student-staff-parent cooperative planning."

> . . . Emphasis is being directed towards reducing grade level structure, integrating subjects in
the curriculum, greater utilization of the facilities and human resources in the university community, and more student responsibility for learning.

When the new U. Town program was inaugurated, a number of students transferred to the school under the district's open boundary policy.

Student:

I came from another school in September, 1971. I heard this school was going to be freer, and I signed up in the summer before the new system started, along with a lot of other kids. I didn't know what "student responsibility" or "individualization" were going to mean; I just heard it was going to be a "free school."

Student:

I came here in September '71 because some other kids described it to me as a new utopia, where the learning processes had no struggle or effort involved; they emphasized the freedom students would have. I was naive enough to believe it. When we first came in, it was like a bombardment because nobody, including the teachers, knew what was going to happen in actuality, which ideas were feasible.

The staff met twice between the opening of school and the next advisory council meeting. In the course of those staff meetings, a staff assistant "was asked to make notices for parents' afternoon, regarding the contribution of parents to the school;" Mr. Hardy was delegated "general relations representative to the Sailcrest school board;" and Mr. Chiba

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6 In the first year of the project the school enrolled approximately 330 students. About one-quarter of the student body came from outside the immediate neighborhood. There were 12 full-time teachers.
accepted responsibility as "the staff representative on the students' council." Other items on the two staff agenda had to do with: visitors to the school; timetable problems; equipment for ceramics; arrangements for interviewing prospective teachers; payment for courses taken elsewhere by U. Town students (this question was referred to the advisory council); representation at the Sailcrest secondary teachers' association; obtaining information on special events at Westmont University; a field trip; staff assistant assignments; individual student problems; and attendance recording.

Advisory Council Meeting, September 14

At this meeting, there were present: Mrs. Light, the liaison trustee; four parent representatives; four student representatives; three teachers; and the principal. Mr. Sander suggested that a new arrangement regarding the chairman might be made. Moved by a student that a parent take the chair. Nominated by Dr. Worrall and seconded by Mr. Sander that Mr. McDonald take the chair. Mr. McDonald suggested that a rotating chairman would be more satisfactory. ... Mr. McDonald will take the chair up to and including the January meeting. ... Mr. Sander remained in the chair for the early part of this meeting at the request of Mr. McDonald.

... Mr. Sander moved that the advisory council invite an evaluation person as observer from the Sailcrest school board. Agreed.

... Mr. Sander asked for suggestions and/or a policy regarding public library lectures, etc. ... Should the student have the fee paid for by this school?
The question was briefly discussed. No resolution resulted, although there was no objection to such payments.

"Mr. Sander raised the question of the night school programme at U. Town Secondary." He pointed out that the statement in the brochure that the courses were drawn up

... with the cooperation of the principal and parent committee' was an error. ... Night school principals are usually paid but in this case a request from the board for a voluntary parent-principal has been made.

Mrs. Hagen suggested two names.

Mr. McDonald then took the chair. He "raised the matter of how the first week in school went." A student, Ray, said there was a need for "bringing information more quickly and effectively to the student." The students suggested use of the bulletin board and P.A. Mrs. Hagen "felt that in the orientation booklet it was missed out that a sense of belonging is needed." A student, Margaret, added that she "missed the cohesion and meeting of other grade 12s in the first week." Staff representatives said "they were aware of this important point." Mr. O'Doherty "wondered what groups there are--apart from the whole school--for students to identify with." A student, Mark, "pointed out that it was difficult for veteran students to meet new arrivals." Margaret said that "social activities will come, but will take longer this year." Ray "felt that the present situation will be beneficial in the long run." Dr. Worrall said that "this is similar to colleges, where socialization does not begin until the second or third week."
Margaret said the "hall noise is distracting." Ray "felt that this noise was just a temporary thing and that a student lounge would help." Discussion of the problem of how to provide a lounge ensued. Mr. O'Doherty suggested that the council invite the fire marshal to discuss use of furniture in the halls.

Mr. Mattson, a teacher, said that although the "free-time concept is disruptive for the time being," those parents who "seem to be urging students to fill up their entire timetable" were acting "contrary to the overall concept of the school." Mrs. Hagen "felt that the use of the expression 'free time' has been misleading. A more relevant term should be chosen."

Mark reiterated the need to "bring the students into a cohesive body and particularly to get new students feeling more at home." Mr. Mattson "stressed the importance of a lounge for this purpose" and "explained that the communications basis of the humanities program meant forming and reforming communications groups in the school." Mr. McDonald "suggested we come back to this at the next meeting and evaluate it again after a few weeks have elapsed." Mrs. Fayter said that "the achievement of identity would take a long time."

Dr. Worrall told me during an interview:

"... All of this was dumped too precipitously on the parents, without any information to the parents on how the new program was arrived at. We never had any feedback from the early staff planning meetings on the new curriculum. The
planning should have gone on for a year in advance. They told us that it was all too new to be able to say what would happen, that they had just decided upon the new programming. The parents were disillusioned because it was so ill-conceived and was modified so frequently. There were no get-togethers with parents. Much of the parent disillusionment came because of the ineffectiveness of the new program decisions—the gap between what had been promised and what was actually made available.

Mrs. Rackham said:

...It was the understanding of the parents that the council would meet during the summer intensively to help develop the program; but it didn’t function this way. It met only twice before the opening of the new school, and when the council met in the fall it was disorganized.

Dr. Koller:

...The advisory council innovation was probably intended to satisfy the community, having lost its separate board, but it was timed in such a way that the basic program decisions were already made before the council got going...

There were three more staff meetings in September, at which the main items of business were the use of staff assistants and the budget. (Dr. Allworth and Dr. Meyer attended the latter.) Other topics included: volunteer student assistance to handicapped persons; visiting educators; arrangements for interviewing a prospective staff member; driver training; furniture and equipment replacement; timetable problems; attendance forms; library materials; use of the auditorium; language lab equipment; teachers’ association; honoraria for three people helping with drama; and arrangement of a meeting with three elementary school teachers. There
was follow-up to two matters discussed in the previous advisory council meeting: the student interested in the library lecture would be given half the fee; and three bulletin boards in the school would be used for specific types of information for students. It was also announced that Mr. Elvin of the school board's planning and evaluation department had been assigned to "work with the school on evaluation," and it was decided that he would be "invited to attend the next staff meeting, September 30."

Chapter Summary

In September, 1971, the handbook of the Sailcrest school district underlined the board's policies supporting teachers' professional freedom and responsibility, local autonomy and decision-making, and program development through explicit statements of objectives and instructional plans at the school level. The district handbook presented U. Town Secondary School as a project in "student-staff-parent cooperative planning," and reaffirmed the emphases at U. Town on subject integration, community program resources, and student responsibility for learning. Meanwhile, new students enrolled at U. Town from various parts of the city under the board's open boundary policy; these students apparently came to U. Town with the expectation that it would be a "free school." Yet the orientation booklet issued to U. Town students by the staff offered a program which departed from the traditional in one area: humanities replaced the usual social studies,
English, and art. The orientation booklet also disseminated to students the staff's statement of five general objectives.

At the first regular staff meetings, the contribution of parents to the program apparently was treated as an organizational problem suitable to delegate to a staff assistant. The lines between the staff and the school board, and between the staff and the student government, were apparent in the delegating of responsibility for the staff's links with those groups to particular teachers.

Again, the types of problems addressed by the staff as a whole were primarily not curricular-instructional. The areas of timetable, physical plant and equipment, finance, staffing, and attendance continued to characterize staff meeting discussions; in addition, the area of relations with colleagues in other schools (visitors, professional association representation, meetings with U. Town Elementary staff) began to appear on staff meeting agendas. The only curricular-instructional topics discussed during staff meetings in September of year one seem to have been the details of a field trip, the obtaining of information on special events at university, and driver training.

At the September advisory council meeting, the principal raised three side issues: approval by the council of his proposal to invite an "evaluation person;" the question of payment of a student's fee for a lecture outside the school; and the recruitment of a parent volunteer to administer a
night school program. Parents and students initiated discussion on several topics more central to the development of the secondary school program, kicked off by one parent's question, "How did the first week in school go?" A need for quicker information to students from staff was identified by student representatives. (This was followed up in a staff meeting by a decision as to the use of certain bulletin boards.) An important issue raised was the lack of student group "cohesion" in the first week, apparently due to the individualization of programming and the influx of new students. Student and parent representatives supported a stance of patience with the new system on this issue. Student representatives identified the problem of noise in the halls. The need for a student lounge was introduced to the discussion. The safety of lounging in the halls was questioned by a parent representative. A teacher objected to parents' opposition to "free time."

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The advisory council meeting of October 4 was attended by four parent representatives (Mr. Hagen in place of Mrs.); four student representatives; three teachers; the principal; the liaison trustee; and Mr. Elvin from the board office. Mr. McDonald chaired.

To follow up on the previous council meeting, student representatives reported that "the division of the student population into 'old' and 'new' components had not yet been solved." Mr. O'Doherty said he had heard there was a problem, related to this, concerning student government. Mark and Ray said "student feeling on this had been brought to a head by the student council issue." Mr. Hagen "felt the questions of integration of newcomers and of student government were normal at this stage of a new program." Ray and Mark said it was "more serious than that. New students wanted plenary type meetings not student council." Mark felt the "student council is necessary to bring some organization to the student body." Mrs. Light and Margaret "presented more evidence of student concern." Mr. McDonald "wondered if the staff had been brought into the student council issue. It was pointed out that staff had attended plenary student meetings on the same basis as students." Mr. Sander "felt the present position unsatisfactory." Margaret "pointed out the need for possibly
a temporary council to take care of practical issues while in the meantime students could make up their minds what form of government they wanted. Some form of compromise is needed." Mr. McDonald said this was a "good potential subject for humanities, but it is really a problem for the students themselves." Mr. O'Doherty said there was a "need for the administration of the school to adopt a definite attitude on student government." Mrs. Light replied that the "students are trying to work out a new type of relationship with the staff." The student representatives "pointed out that the student council elections were now possibly invalid because of the changed nature of the school population. The whole question of the validity of the constitution was opened up." Dr. Worrall said that "on the basis of approximately a two-thirds to one-third split in the student population, and with the need for some structured organization, an effective student government could and should be obtained." Mr. McDonald "suggested new elections on the basis of the existing constitution." Mr. O'Doherty moved that "this council recommend that due process be followed in establishing new elections." Mark proposed that "advisory groups be used as a basis for government, with two students from each group."

Mr. Shelton (a teacher)

pointed out that when inter-house teams were picked 'new' students had been left out. Mr. Hagen asked for further details. Margaret explained the procedure which had been followed. This was generally seen by the advisory council
as being unrepresentative and had led to dissatisfaction. Margaret suggested Jack (student council president) be asked to a meeting of the advisory council. Dr. Worrall felt this might be a good way of reinstituting fair student government on Jack's initiative.

Mrs. Light proposed the "possibility of offering students a referendum on three suggested forms of student government." Mr. Sander said that "advisory council advice would not be appreciated by the student body right now." However,

Dr. Worrall supported Mrs. Light's suggestion of a referendum offering three choices of government. Mrs. Payter and Mr. Scott felt the referendum offered more decision to the students than an advisory council recommendation. The question was raised by the chairman—who would draw up suggestions for referendum choices? Mark said this would be left to existing student council officers. Mr. O'Doherty felt it was Jack's responsibility to activate the student council election procedures under the constitution and that the advisory council should give him some confidence to do this. Robert said the constitution should be suspended, and an interim committee set up to get things going, ultimately producing a new constitution. The chairman asked whether an identifiable 'new group' student spokesman and present elected officers could be brought to the advisory council meeting to discuss student government. Dr. Worrall doubted its value but was willing to go along. Mr. O'Doherty was not in favour of Mr. McDonald's suggestion. Mr. Hagen saw a very considerable learning experience in all this, and a major role possibly being played by staff. Mr. Sander repeated that talks with groups of students revealed student unwillingness to hear advisory council recommendations. Mr. O'Doherty presented an expanded motion—the advisory council recognizes the need for student government and recommends that if changes are required to the constitution they be undertaken after the constitutional elections which should be held forthwith. Seconded by Mark. Robert pointed out the new students were not constitutionally oriented, would possibly not be in favour. Mr. O'Doherty pointed out the intent of his motion was
to include active participation of new students in possibly rebuilding the constitution. Mr. O'Doherty's motion passed unanimously.

Mr. O'Doherty reported that three communications had been submitted to him by parents. Parent A had phoned on a daughter not having enough time on the timetable, and not sufficiently occupied in her 'free' time. Dr. Worrall also reported two phone calls on the same lines of criticism. Mr. McDonald had also heard of 'non-constructive' time, especially in grade 8 or 9. Dr. Worrall said there was a definite need for the advisory council to face the problem of those students who are not self-motivated and their parents' concern. Mrs. Light requested information on procedures being followed. Mr. McDonald asked Mr. Sander for information. Mr. Sander said some advisors had been busy on the phone. Some students were now turning up for the first time. Advisors were now phoning parents of students in their groups to discuss matters. Also, group advisory meetings were being held on Thursday mornings. Mark felt really appreciative of the new time allocations introduced in the new program. Margaret felt strongly in favour of the new programme and time arrangement. It allowed her to undertake much more work than was indicated on her timetable. Mr. Sander said the grade 8s are in many cases generally confused. Mr. O'Doherty wondered if clearly defined school hours might not be reinstated. Mrs. Light felt this would be a mistake and would take the project back to where it started. Robert said some students definitely appeared to be confused regarding contract time. Mark agreed. The chairman said parents might be informed by a letter from school explaining 'unassigned' time. Mr. Hagen asked whether older students could act in 'big brother' roles to younger students. Mr. Sander pointed out this was being discussed right now in humanities. Mrs. Fayter said the (staff) advisory role was taking time to work out. Dr. Worrall said parent responsibility in improving students' use of unassigned time must be stressed. Mr. Elvin said it was found in the U.S. it takes six months to adjust to a major new contractual program. Mr. O'Doherty mentioned two other parents who had phoned. Parent B was concerned about the grade 12 chemistry course, particularly government exams. Margaret pointed out that she had no desire to be taught all year on the basis of writing one exam. Parent C was reportedly against a lounge if it meant reducing 'study space'. ...
The chairman suggested that for the next meeting there be an agenda. Mr. Sander agreed to receive suggestions by phone.

The October 7 staff meeting was largely devoted to a discussion, with Mr. Elvin and Dr. Meyer, of program evaluation. (The minutes do not relate any details of this.) In the course of other business, it was decided that "a dinner meeting will be held in the near future. Mr. Haffner will canvass the staff as to what date would be most convenient. At this meeting, curriculum and teacher load will be discussed." Also, "Mr. Sander advised the staff that there had been several phone calls and letters regarding the grade 8 programme."

At the October 14 staff meeting, it was announced that "there is a dinner meeting at the faculty club, Tuesday, October 19, at 6:00 for the entire staff. The topic for discussion at this meeting will be Curriculum." (sic) There was also a discussion regarding evaluation. It was decided that a letter should be written to Mr. Elvin inviting him to a meeting on November 1 at 2:30 p.m. It was suggested that an observer be attached to the school on a regular continuing basis. This person should be someone chosen in consultation with board officials and the staff at the school. That emphasis should be placed on the education process occurring rather than on the outcomes. It was also suggested that Mr. Elvin should continue his participation with the advisory council.

I did not discover any curriculum decisions coming out of such a meeting.
Also,

Mr. Sander asked for suggestions regarding form of report card. Teachers had received copies of three different report cards and were asked for their preference. Mr. Sander will canvass the teachers today.

At the October 21 staff meeting, Mr. Sander reported on his inquiries concerning report card forms, and it was decided "that the NCR forms would be purchased." Concerning grading scales, "it was decided that an insert to the report cards be made by individual domains regarding grading scale." It was also decided that marking assistants would be hired as needed by domains until the school board budget for markers at U. Town was exhausted. Coordination of mini-courses and speakers was discussed; Mrs. Anderson volunteered to act as coordinator. Mr. Hardy "asked for a count of students interested" in various music programs; he was to meet with interested Westmont U. people. There was a discussion of a field trip for all interested students.

At the October 28 staff meeting, "there was a discussion regarding over-worked and under-worked students. Mr. Scott wondered if we should offer a structured grade 9 programme for some students." Also, an item had been placed on the agenda concerning "student contact in courses." The statement was amended to read "Are staff members satisfied with the number of students that are coming for learning--in any sense of the word"; the item was "tabled for the next meeting." It was also decided that "an open-forum meeting with
students/parents/teachers will be brought up for discussion with the advisory council on November 2. The policy regarding visitors to the advisory council meetings will also be discussed." Also, it was decided that "there will be a staff/student meeting in the auditorium on Thursday, November 4, at 9:30 rather than advisory group meetings."

Other items of business at staff meetings in October included: teachers' association; fire prevention education; a new student; book orders; counselling services; university library; tours of Westmont U.; training on office machines for staff assistants; the school annual; student insurance; United Appeal; a school dance; hiring of a typist; attendance forms; and use of carrels.

**Chapter Summary**

At the October advisory council meeting, the problem of the "division in the student population" between old and new students returned in the form of a problem in student government. The "new student" group was pressing for change in the student council format in the direction of wider participation in student decision-making; many students distrusted the idea of representation. Parent representatives on the advisory council attempted to resolve the problem by making a recommendation to the student council to hold new elections, even though the principal warned twice that the advisory council itself was basically unacceptable to the student body as a representative forum.
The advisory council also discussed issues raised by phone calls and letters from parents critical of "free time." The problem of students who are not self-motivated was raised. The principal defended the staff by describing efforts to contact parents of such students. Student representatives also defended the new program. There was disagreement among council members over the desirability of defined school hours, and confusion over contract time. The need for a newsletter was identified. Concern was expressed through a parent representative over provincial exams, and a student representative again defended the U. Town program.

Staff meetings in October dealt with a host of minor organizational problems which roughly fell into the categories identified previously. Some school-level program problems were addressed, including "over-worked and under-worked students," "student contact in courses," and the questions of grading scales (which were left up to each domain) and report card forms. Several particular aspects of the program were discussed (music programs, counselling services, a field trip, fire prevention education, use of university library). Plans were made for a dinner meeting of staff to catch up on the problem of school-level curriculum (identified earlier as the problem of domain articulation); an important aspect of this problem was viewed as the distribution of "teacher load." It also became apparent
that coordination of mini-courses was problematic. Preliminary meetings were held on the subject of program evaluation with an evaluation official and the director, and further meetings arranged for the near future; in this area, the staff pressed its concern that evaluation take into account the "processes" of education occurring in the school, not just the academic outcomes.

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A special staff meeting was held on November 1, at which Dr. Meyer and Mr. Elvin presented a set of proposals concerning the evaluation of the project during year one.

Dr. Meyer introduced Mr. Bob Hoen, a doctoral candidate in the department of administration at the University of British Columbia. Mr. Hoen wishes to do a case study of decision-making at University Town for his dissertation. The Sailcrest school board felt that the data gathered by Mr. Hoen would be a great value to the total evaluation programme for this school. This evaluation will be done under Mr. Elvin of the school board. Dr. Meyer suggested that questions be put to Mr. Hoen regarding his proposed study of the school. Question period followed. It was asked that a decision be reached shortly by the staff as to whether or not Mr. Hoen would be acceptable to proceed with his study in the school. Mr. Hoen and Dr. Meyer left the meeting.

Mr. Elvin proposed several subjects for evaluation, and "suggested that the evaluation done by his department should be of a formative rather than summative approach." The outcome of the meeting was agreement that "process would be emphasized;" that there would be "some kind of study related to some of the disciplines;" that "a neutral participant observer agreeable to both the school board and the staff would be sought;" and that there would be, in year one, "feedback" concerning the advisory council, the decision-making process, "learner oriented education," changing

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8A few days later I received a telephone call from one of the teachers informing me that the staff had decided my study could go ahead. I was invited to meet some of the staff at a cocktail party (reported later in this chapter).
student expectations, and differentiated staffing.

Mr. Elvin described for me the process by which decisions were made about the evaluation of the U. Town program in year one:

When I... was asked to work with the U. Town case, I was told by Meyer that this should be a three-year study; that they had committed themselves and had the approval of the secondary teachers' association to continue the project for a three-year period, at which time they would evaluate it and make a decision, with inputs from all who were involved. It was felt strongly that if evaluation were desirable, then we should not wait three years, we should take the formative approach and measure in some way the achievement of the objectives stated, so the staff could make changes if they were not achieving their objectives. I decided to conduct a three-phase evaluation; the first phase was year one. I looked carefully at the objectives as stated in the U. Town handbook, and met with the staff early in the first year. I was very concerned about their objectives as stated, and my first meeting with them was not an amicable one. I criticized their objectives because there was no way you could measure them. I tried to clarify their objectives with their help. They were more concerned with "process" than with anything else. Mr. Happ and Mr. Scott were most critical of my proposed approach. I left the meeting asking them to tell me what processes they meant.

A number of things seemed to need evaluation; the advisory council; the decision-making process; contracted student time; the attitudes of students toward this school; and cognitive achievement. These things came out of my interpretation of their objectives. I wrote up a phase-one evaluation proposal.

This was the way most of the evaluation decision-making proceeded. My proposals were discussed with Meyer, then discussed with the staff and amended.

The advisory council met on November 2. The meeting was well attended, although the principal was absent due to illness. There was no formal agenda.
It was pointed out... that assigned and unassigned time on students' timetables was still causing concern to parents.

The chairman pointed out that a letter was intended as an explanation to parents; this had been discussed and decided upon at a previous meeting but that this had apparently been overlooked. He referred to the minutes of the October 4 meeting.

Mr. Hagen inquired if it was still considered too soon to have a parents/student/staff general meeting. This was taken up for general discussion. It was suggested that a type of meeting was needed where a clear statement of school policy is made at the opening and some opportunity be then given to put questions to a panel of answerers. This seemed to meet with general agreement...

On behalf of the staff it was suggested that the meeting might be held under the auspices of the advisory council, so that the meeting be more in the nature of representing all three aspects, student/staff/community of the school...

A letter was read from a parent, expressing concern, among other things, about the possible loss of accreditation; similar letters led the council member to press for an earlier meeting than early December.

Mrs. Hagen pointed out that Mr. Sander's opinion might be sought on the whole matter. In the discussion of the need for the meeting, some of the students who were in attendance, pointed out that not everything expressed on behalf of parents was negative. It was known that many parents in the community were in favour in varying degrees and evidently it appeared were pleased, in varying degrees, with what was being attempted at the school.

It was proposed that a subcommittee be called by the chair to take care of arrangements for the meeting. Agreed.

The student council president was present to follow up on the discussion of student government at a previous council meeting. He explained that
... student council now had been constitutionally elected. ... Students had been solicited for suggestions for alternate forms of government; no deadline had been set for change proposals. ... The chairman suggested that the student council fix a deadline for suggestions. ... 

The chairman next asked the staff to explain how community resources were being used. One of the students pointed out that the staff had gone to great lengths to involve the students in some dimension of the school. There was general agreement, on the part of the students, that the community involvement, such as it is, had been advantageous.

Staff members described actions taken with regard to the use of Westmont University counselling department and library.

A need for dissemination of information from the advisory council to the community was felt.

It was generally thought that this would be a rather difficult undertaking. Dr. Worrall pointed out that the initial function of the advisory council was to be one of collating information rather than disseminating it. It was agreed, however, that this should be tried. The chairman suggested its inclusion in the coming parent/student/staff meeting.

Dr. Worrall once again stressed, in his own words, the very important role of parents in emphasizing to their sons and daughters their responsibilities in the new programme.

Mrs. Rackham strongly agreed with Dr. Worrall's statement and suggested that the first step in ... the advisory council getting information out to the community might be a notice of the coming proposed meeting. It was suggested that the school might undertake the arrangements of a notice, once a date had been arranged.

Later in the meeting, Mrs. Rackham "expressed desire for communication from the principal's office or at least regular
information bulletins from the school at large."

Student representatives expressed unhappiness at not being included in the staff meeting on evaluation the previous day.

...It was pointed out that there were two senses of the word 'evaluation' being used around the school. One very topical meaning of 'evaluation' is that in which the Sailcrest school board plus the staff are anxious to find means by which the entire project of University Town Secondary School might be evaluated. It was felt that perhaps the students had mistakenly thought that a meeting held on Monday of this week between the Sailcrest school board officials and the staff had been to discuss the evaluation of their work. It was pointed out that this was erroneous, that the meeting had been to discuss methods of evaluating the whole project.

Mr. Elvin then "described at length" to the council "the forms of evaluation which had been proposed for the total process going on at the school." Mr. O'Doherty suggested that the advisory council should itself consider its own role before other evaluations of it emerged. Mr. Elvin indicated that the board has a tentative proposal for evaluating the role of the council but he did not wish to reveal it at this time.

One of the teachers, Mr. Shelton, expressed student concern that 'new' students are not represented on the advisory council. Most students present concurred. It was then suggested that the students might be elected from the student body as advisory council representatives. This procedure would be separate from student council elections.

Concern about the humanities program was voiced.

The chairman and others expressed desire to hear more about the humanities program since it was arousing so much interest. ...It was suggested that the humanities staff might be
requested to attend the next meeting of the
advisory council so that the humanities
programme might be aired.

The members of the council were apparently not entirely
happy about the fact that a number of persons from the commu­
nity had come to participate in the council meeting that
evening.

It was felt that the next meeting should be held
fairly soon, and that this meeting should, on the
suggestion of the chairman, consist of a small group
of regular advisory council members.

Mr. O'Doherty moved for open meetings with smaller
committee meetings as required. The general con­
sensus was in agreement with this proposal.

The following day, Mr. Elvin, the board official respon­
sible for overseeing the evaluation of the U. Town project,
communicated, in a letter to the U. Town staff, his percep­
tions gathered from attending the two most recent staff and
advisory council meetings. A copy went to Dr. Meyer. Mr.
Elvin said that

... there is a definite lack of understanding
among all concerned groups as to the specific
role to be played by the advisory committee at
your school. This suggests to me that if the
committee is to become effective in your total
operation immediate steps must be taken to
specify clearly the responsibility of the
committee as a whole, and the specific groups
represented on the committee in particular.

Mr. Elvin noted that "There appears to be a growing resentment
on the part of parents toward the program resulting mainly
from a lack of knowledge about what is in fact going on."
Several parental concerns were identified by Mr. Elvin:

(a) There seems to be a lack of communication between school and home.

(b) Many parents do not understand how the program is operated.

(c) Parents want assurance that their children are progressing satisfactorily along acceptable paths of learning.

(d) What will happen now that the principal is ill and no one has been assigned to lead an organization?

(e) There is concern that more emphasis has been placed on matters evolving rather than having administrative decisions made that will tend to draw the operation together.

(f) There is concern that children are spending too much time out of school.

Mr. Elvin wrote further that

There is a growing resentment on the part of a large segment of the parents that the principal has abdicated some of his administrative responsibility and this has resulted in a lack of communication. There is a feeling that requests for a parents' meeting have been overlooked.

I would recommend that in order to circumvent possible problems immediate steps be taken to hold a meeting and that a firm date be established for this meeting and that the meeting be held before the end of November.

On November 5, I met some of the staff members for the first time at a cocktail party. I talked individually with four teachers. (It was primarily a small gathering of music and drama people.) Mrs. Fayter told me how "surprisingly easy" it had been to reach consensus in early staff planning sessions, although there still did not exist (at the time we were talking) a statement of philosophy. Mr. Mattson said
that there was a lot of "flak" from parents currently, and that there would be a general meeting of parents, teachers, and students in about two weeks "to try to clear the air."

Mr. Mattson described his own interest: "the creation of a chaos from which there can emerge a truly new order." Mrs. Marion mentioned that "the involvement of parents is a problem because the intellectual bent of many parents in the U. Town community causes them to want to control things they really aren't competent to."

Chapter Summary

In the first few days of November, 1971, the activation of the board's evaluation department in the U. Town case was apparent. On November 1, a special staff meeting on program evaluation was held with the evaluation official and the director. At the beginning of the meeting, I was introduced as a potential researcher into decision-making. Decisions were made as to the general types of evaluation to be conducted in the U. Town project in year one, based on proposals from the evaluation official: "some kind of study related to some of the disciplines;" "feedback" concerning the advisory council, the decision-making process, "learner oriented education," changing student expectations, and differentiated staffing. Emphasis was placed on the "formative" nature of the evaluations and on the "processes" of education. The evaluation official and the staff disagreed over the desirability of "measuring" the achievement of the school's objectives.
At the November 2 advisory council meeting, the evaluation official reported on the program evaluation plans. Student representatives expressed unhappiness over not being included in the previous day's meeting on evaluation, and were told that the meeting had not dealt with student evaluation.

In other advisory council business, the problem of "unassigned time" was still of concern to parents. Particular concern was voiced about the humanities program. A parent was even worried about possible loss of the school's accreditation. Some students present at the council meeting defended the school's new program, particularly the staff's efforts to involve students in learning and to use community resources. The need for better communications from the school to the community, and from the advisory council to the community, was again brought out. A parent representative was disappointed that a newsletter from the school called for in a previous council meeting had not materialized. The need for a general meeting was again identified.

The president of the student council was at the advisory council meeting to report that new elections for student officers had been held, and that students had been asked for suggestions as to alternate forms of student government. The advisory council chairman suggested that a deadline be set for gathering these change proposals. The representation of "new" students on the advisory council was discussed, and the
need for elections of student representatives voiced. (As far as I know, such elections never were held.) The participation of community members other than representatives in advisory council meetings (which evidently occurred to a significant extent at this meeting) was seen as a problem by some council members.

On November 3, the evaluation official wrote to the U. Town staff his perceptions of a critical situation: the advisory council's role was unclear; there was a lack of information to parents, causing parent "resentment;" the "evolving" nature of the program was associated with a lack of "administrative decisions;" parents were upset about too much time spent by students out of school; the principal was thought by many community members to have "abdicated" his responsibilities; there was a need for a general meeting within the next few weeks.

When I first met some of the teachers individually that week, their apprehension over community attitudes and their distrust of community involvement in decision-making were apparent in the comments they made to me.

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The advisory council met on November 8. The meeting was attended by three parent representatives, three student representatives, five teachers, and Dr. Meyer. It was the first meeting I attended as an observer.

Chairman McDonald suggested that the first topic of discussion be the role of the advisory council.

...In introducing the task of definition, the chairman raised the question inherent in the title of "Advisory Council," i.e., "advisory" to whom? He felt it apparent that functions of the three elements of advisory council had not been clarified, and the need for clarification was now immediate. The function of parent and student representatives on the advisory council was one of a consultative nature to the third element, namely a responsible faculty/school board executive element.

Mr. McDonald said that a consultative committee would "monitor the total environment of the school's operation;" "receive the views of parents and students;" "interact with student and staff representatives in the school's operation;" "marshall community resources;" "be advisory to the school faculty;" receive reports from the staff at each consultative council meeting;" and "disseminate information to the community from consultative council discussions."

Dr. Meyer read to the council the points made by Mr. Elvin in his recent letter. One of the parent representatives said that some parents felt they were "cheated" by electing
representatives to advise on the development of the program while the program "has been and is being developed by the staff." Another parent representative said that there were concerns over the "experimentalism" of the school and a "lack of definition of the program to parents," as well as a lack of "input data" to the committee; that he "learned more about the school from his children than from the school organization;" and that he did not know whether he was "supposed to be evaluating." Another parent representative called it "an amorphous situation." Dr. Meyer defended past events by saying that the definition of roles was "developmental." A parent representative said that Mr. Sander had "put off initiation of advisory committee meetings until after things got rolling" and, therefore, the committee had not accomplished much. Mr. Scott, a teacher, said that "there should have been advisory work in the planning of the program." A parent replied that he did not want to "interfere;" "the staff are the professionals."

Parent: There is an executive function in the school. The advisory committee can't be executive.

Parent: The school system has a legal foundation in the community through the school board, and an organizational hierarchy.

Meyer: The tradition of centralized administration is changing here and now. It isn't easy to transfer responsibility.

Parent: I would choose to move some of the school board's responsibility to the community. If not, then get rid of the advisory function and make it purely communicative.
Parent: Why don't the staff say anything about what the parents' role should be?

Teacher: Parents should advise; teachers should decide and inform.

Teacher: Parents should assist the teaching function at home.

Teacher: Parents should be informed of students' assignments.

Chairman: Should this committee be tripartite or changed to bipartite?

Parent: We should change the name to "consultative" in the latter case.

Teacher: This leaves the school without the responsibility of collective planning.

Parent: Not so. The relationship could function in planning.

Parent: You can't have a real contribution to planning from parents without some authority.

Teacher: Right. Otherwise it's merely a gesture.

The council asked Dr. Meyer whether any grant of authority to them was contemplated by the school board. The reply was

...that the Sailcrest school board did not include the delegation of any share of executive authority to the advisory council, but that the concept had been rather one of advisory council acting as a sounding board for decision and proposals of the staff/administration complex.

The discussion of role was concluded by a vote on Mr. McDonald's proposal.

The committee approved the role definition. The one dissenting vote was Mr. Scott.

It was proposed that "advisory council" be hereinafter referred to as "consultative committee."
Two of the teachers present at the meeting told me later that as far as they could see, it was Meyer's comment that clinched the advisory council's definition of itself as a non-decision-making body. This perception was corroborated by Mr. Berends, the board's communications director, who told me that Dr. Meyer claimed to have engineered the decision.

The committee then proceeded to discuss the proposed general meeting of parents, students, and staff. It was decided that "this meeting would not be held under the sponsorship of the consultative council, but would be the responsibility of the executive level." The staff representatives had a proposal concerning the topics to be included in the general meeting agenda and in an advance newsletter:

1. The role of the advisory council.

2. The role of the administrator.
   
   (a) The role of the administrator and staff in decision-making.
   
   (b) The role of the administrator as an "authoritarian" figure.

3. The role of the student's advisor and of the counselling service provided by Westmont U.

4. The role of the parent.

5. Dissemination of information.

6. Discussion of the disciplines.
   
   (a) The study of humanities.
(b) What is meant by contractual time?

(c) An outline of the requirements in subject areas at each grade level.

(d) Evaluation of student efforts. The type of report card to be used.

(e) Student response to irregular schedules. Use or misuse of 'free' time.

The staff was also arranging for a resource person from the Westmont teachers' federation to be present at the meeting to respond to parental fears about loss of accreditation.

The form of the general meeting was proposed by staff:

... a large meeting which is purely descriptive in nature at which a general introduction and overview of the material in the newsletter will be presented... followed by a breakdown into small groups by subject areas for the purpose of discussion and questions... followed by return to large group for general questions.

These staff proposals were approved by the parent and student representatives.

The humanities teachers then presented a brief to the council, "with the explanation that this was going out to all parents, and was already felt to be doing much to provide parents with a clearer understanding of the humanities position."

Finally, the committee

... expressed itself in favour of the interest shown in its meetings by students and parents, and welcomed the type of visitor observation in evidence at the November 2 meeting. The chairman pointed out, however, that such participation should
be limited to observation only, unless notice of desire to speak on specific points had been received beforehand and approved by committee.

(Very few members of the community came to meetings thereafter.)

At the staff meeting later that week, November 12, the plans for the general meeting were reported to the staff as a whole, and staff members were designated to write sections of the newsletter. By November 18, the newsletter was ready for distribution. In a covering letter from the principal, parents were informed that:

This meeting will be an opportunity for the community to hear presented a statement of current school policy, although it is anticipated that, as the program is an ongoing process, it will develop and change over the next three years with the growth of the project; but the meeting will provide an opportunity to examine some of the changing roles and approaches to learning which have evolved and which, in turn, call for altered responsibilities on the part of staff, student and parent.

Concerning the role of the consultative council, Mr. McDonald wrote in the newsletter:

The University Town Secondary School advisory council was set up last summer as a group consisting of representative students, parents and school staff. The group has met at approximately monthly intervals since then. The meetings have served as a forum for the discussion of some problems of concern. They have also given an opportunity to discuss specific aspects of the school programme and
to bring out views of that programme brought to the attention of the council by its constituent groups. They have not, however, been able to provide effectively for an overview of the academic programme or for monitoring and communication of its progress. This is, perhaps, due to the lack of definition of the function of the group at the time it was created.

The council has had an opportunity to work towards an assessment of its role in an empirical way. It has now been able to conclude that, in the absence of a clear delegation of specific authority from the school board, it can act principally as a sounding board for proposals and decisions of the staff-administration complex. In such a role, the student and parent representatives are consultative to the school, faculty and the school board. The advisory council, therefore, is in effect a consultative council and its duties should reflect this role. It is the hope of the council that its status and its possible function can be fully discussed at the November 24 meeting.

Evaluation of students was described by Mr. Mattson and Mr. Scott in the newsletter:

Evaluation is dependent on the nature of the subject fields. In some subject areas evaluation will be on the basis of attendance and participation, example, physical education. In other areas the basis of measurement will be practical skills in conjunction with theory, example, industrial education and business education. In other areas such as the humanities evaluation will be based on the total interaction of the child with other students, resource people, teachers and subject matter. Mathematics, science and languages which contain a body of cognitive learning will cut across all these forms of evaluation.
Contractual time was described by Mrs. Marion and Miss Deering:

Contractual time is the scheduling of time, over and above timetabled classes, to complete the requirements for specific courses. It provides an opportunity for students to take responsibility for their own progress, according to their ability and interest, e.g., a student who works slowly during a regular class is able to timetable extra time with the teacher concerned to complete the work; a student who works quickly can devote time to further reading and research. A teacher may require a student to contract time when the need becomes evident. The "open" time on student timetables represents the time when contracts can be scheduled.

The staff, meanwhile, had been taking action on the problem of student involvement in the program. At the November 18 staff meeting, Mrs. Griffiths reported that

...group meetings will commence this Monday with students who staff feel are not involved in the programme or their attendance is questionable... Letters have been sent out to the parents of these students and each student is to be notified.

Particular teachers were to meet with these students in grade-level groups.

Chapter Summary

On November 8, the advisory council engaged in a pivotal discussion of its own role. The chairman proposed that the parent-student role be defined as "consultative" and the faculty-school board role as "executive." One parent representative objected that parents felt cheated by being excluded from program development, and pointed out that the principal had delayed the start of the advisory council's
functioning until "after things got rolling." A teacher supported this view by stating that the community should have been involved in the early planning period. Another parent representative, however, saw the staff as the "professionals" and did not want to "interfere." Expressions of disillusionment with both the simple lack of information about the school's program and the lack of definition of the council's role were heard from a third parent representative, who called it "an amorphous situation." The director defended the situation by saying that the role definitions were "developmental" (a term he used several times in the case as a defense). A parent representative proposed that either the school board transfer some real responsibility to the community or the advisory council declare itself to be "purely communicative." Three of the teachers present seemed to think that parents should be less important than the staff in decision-making, but a teacher objected to precluding "the possibility of collective planning." The director, when asked whether the school board would grant any authority to the council, denied that any authority was intended in the conception of the council--it was to be only a "sounding board." The council finally decided to approve the chair's proposal that it reconstitute itself as a bipartite body of parent and student representatives to be known as the "consultative committee;" a teacher cast the only dissenting vote.
The council also discussed the proposed general meeting, which had become by now a need recognized by all parties. The staff had a proposal as to the topics for such a meeting: the roles of the advisory council (consultative committee), administration, the student's advisor, the counselling service, and the parent; the problem of dissemination of information; certain aspects of the program—humanities, contractual time, subject requirements by grade level, student evaluation, student use of "free" time; and the question of accreditation. Staff also proposed a format: presentations to a large meeting; small group questions and discussion by subject areas; and finally, a large meeting for general questions. This plan was approved by the consultative committee.

The humanities staff presented a written program description to the committee; the staff was planning to use it in communicating with the community generally. This "humanities bulletin" described, first, the program to date, which was said to have been concerned with "perception," including "characteristics of language" and the physiology and psychology of perception. The underlying rationale was stated as the improvement of the individual student's "awareness" in order to "enhance students' acceptance" of material to be received in the ensuing phases of the program. The humanities staff apparently thought that the community, unlike the teachers themselves, would not view the first phase of the
program as a valuable learning experience in and of itself. For the next phase, the humanities staff projected a more traditional instructional plan in which each student would select and study a particular society from the points of view of basic concepts from social science, literature, and fine arts. Parents were assured that the program would operate within the provincial curriculum requirements.

At the conclusion of its November 8 meeting, the consultative committee closed off future participation in its discussions by any non-members except by prior permission. This policy differed noticeably from the earlier idea of having some open and some closed meetings.

The newsletter prepared during the next week included, among other things, descriptions of the advisory council, its problems and recent role definition; student evaluation, which was said to depend on subject; and contract time. Contracts were said to be intended "to complete the requirements for specific courses" or for "further reading and research;" contracts were the intended use of "open" time.

At the November 18 staff meeting, I learned that group meetings by grade level would be held with students not involved in the program or not attending; that the meetings would commence within a few days; and that the parents of such students had been notified by letter.

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CHAPTER 11

ATTEMPTS TO REASSURE THE COMMUNITY

At the November 24 general meeting, Mr. McDonald opened with a presentation of the problems of defining the function of the council and communicating between the council and the community.

Mr. Sander, the principal, described the "changing role of administration." He said that traditionally all school-level decision-making was done by administrators, but there was a "felt need" at the present time in education for staff participation in decision-making. Staff councils, he said, had been introduced throughout the Sailcrest school district, and at U. Town Secondary the staff council consisted of the total staff. However, he added, "at the present time the consent of the board and department of education is still needed for important decisions, and the principal is still formally responsible for school decisions." Mr. Sander stated that in his opinion the new trends were "better in quality of decisions but decision-making takes much longer."

Dr. Worrall, a parent council representative, spoke concerning the role of the parent. He called upon the parents to be "good listeners," willing to seek "awareness of the problems of students" in "changing times;" to be "good critics," providing counselling for their sons and daughters and becoming "informed on the nature of the new school
programme;" to be "good informers," to alleviate the problem that "comment and discussion at home too often doesn't get back to the school staff;" and to exhibit "patience without complacence," giving the new staff and program an opportunity to succeed.

Teachers made presentations, as originally planned, on the role of the students' advisors, the counselling service, evaluation of students, and contractual time. Mr. Elvin, from the board office, described program evaluation plans. Persons attending the meeting were then asked to form into three discussion groups according to the colors of name tags given out before the meeting. The groups rotated among three domains of the school, in each of which there were staff and consultative council members stationed: humanities; math/science; and the miscellany domain containing French, health education, industrial education, commerce, physical education, and counselling. (My general impression of these groups was that they did not result in a very wide participation in discussion. Among those parents and students who did speak, there seemed to be many supportive of the new program and a few vocal opponents). After the group meetings, those interested were invited to return to the auditorium for coffee and informal talk. (Original plans had called for a general questioning period at the end.)

Mrs. Rackham later said this to me:

"...Most of us as the first year went on were interested; we felt that we should listen to the professionals; but the council in reporting to
us at general meetings would often sound ethereal—they couldn't explain anything to the community. The teachers were defensive; they thought the community was critical. They would not allow any general meeting to answer questions about the program. I expressed my disdain for this policy to Mr. Sander, and he said this was just the way it was going to be, that if they had such a meeting it would turn into a fist-fight between parents and teachers; but we needed a frank discussion to release tensions. Some parents became disillusioned as a result. I wasn't too worried because I favored the changes occurring in the school and I knew the school board had a plan to put into action. I knew we would have mass confusion at such a meeting.

At the December 2 staff meeting, Mr. Scott voiced what he considered to be a widely shared dissatisfaction with the general meeting. He proposed that the staff "send some communique to parents before Christmas recognizing the need for further meetings and the inadequacy of the November forum." It was his opinion that "the initiative belongs with the staff to improve communications with the community further." The staff decided to plan for "grade by grade" meetings with the community in January, and to send a letter on the subject to parents with the student reports to be issued the following week. Three grade meetings were to be held, on January 12, 19, and 26.

Also at the December 2 staff meeting, one of the staff members, Mrs. Fayter, invited the staff to her home the

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9In the period between the November general meeting and the New Year, I was hampered in my collection of data by a serious illness—in retrospect, this can be seen as a hazard of the method employed in this type of study.
following evening to address problems in the defining of the role of staff assistants and in general communications among different departments of the school. (No information in hand about that gathering.) A questionnaire from Mr. Elvin on contracted student time was distributed. The need for a committee to draft the accreditation booklet was noted.

The Contract Questionnaire Decision

I asked participants about one evaluation decision in particular—the decision to use a questionnaire on contracted student time in the first-year evaluation—to follow up on my questions about the earlier decision to utilize the contract approach.

Mr. Elvin, the board's U. Town evaluation official, said:

Once the overall (evaluation) proposal was approved by all concerned, we appointed Mrs. Pearson to work on the U. Town case as a research assistant. . . .(When Mrs. Pearson and I met regarding contractual time, we made a decision to survey the total student body. In developing the questionnaire we looked again at the handbook from U. Town, and asked the staff to give us a statement of what they meant by contracted time. We took that information and the two of us developed the questionnaire. We asked questions about amounts of contractual time, what they did with it, how they felt about it, and so on. We also wanted inputs from parents—their feelings, and their knowledge of what kids were doing with their time. So Mrs. Pearson and I decided to sample every household. We mailed a questionnaire to each household, and followed up with a letter to those who didn't respond. . . .We also gave the staff copies of the questionnaire to fill out, but we only had one return after repeated needling.

The principal said:

The Sailcrest school board decided it. Mr. Elvin brought out the mock-up in sufficient copies for
the staff and discussed it in a meeting. I objected to some of the questions, but they went ahead with it anyway; I think they felt they had to produce something. The kids didn't know what was contract time and what wasn't. Now I look at the charts and figure it's a waste of time to read it.

Teacher:

As you know, there's an ongoing evaluation of the school, and certain decisions have had to be made in Mr. Elvin's office. Contract time is a neat part of the program for an evaluator to get a hold on. It's easy to define, nice and crisp. It's much more difficult to say "We're going to evaluate individualization of instruction." It's easy to look only at "contract time."

The staff has been very, very wary of the attempt to impose a measure of behavioral outcomes without evaluating the processes.

Teacher:

I had no say in it. I don't recall how it came in. Elvin wanted some kind of "hard data," and I objected to it in the staff room. Maybe he thought contracted time was something easier to grasp for evaluation purposes. . . .

Teacher:

It was decided by the planning and evaluation department of the board that the school would be evaluated by the board. There was discussion in staff meetings with Meyer and Elvin about the general forms evaluation would take, after the year had begun. We decided some of the traditional things were inappropriate methods for this school. They came up with the contractual time questionnaire to try to satisfy our viewpoint; but the format of the questionnaire was faulty and confusing.

Teacher:

I don't know who decided it; I assume the school board evaluation people. I felt that it emphasized a part of the program that I really didn't care too much about getting information on, partly because
it wasn't too relevant in the physical education program. There were many other areas I would have rather had evaluation of—how the students were reacting to all areas of the program, the different domains; whether the students thought the physical education or humanities programs were good ones; I would like to know if the kids felt frustrated with the vagueness of the program, how much responsibility the students thought the teachers should take; what the students and parents thought of the methods of evaluating students.

I found it difficult to answer the contract questionnaire because it was vague to me.

Teacher:

It was an awful questionnaire. It came from the school board. They made the decision to use it. The kids didn't know what it meant, nor did I.

Parents and students did not have much knowledge of how the decision was made to use a questionnaire on contract time in the first-year evaluation:

Parent:

I knew nothing about that decision. It was perhaps mentioned as a fait accompli, but I'm not even sure of that. None of us were invited to take part in drafting it.

Parent:

The decision was made by the faculty of the school, or the faculty in consultation with the school board.

Parent:

There was no parent participation in the evaluation decisions.

Student:

I don't have any idea how it originated. It was a farce. Everybody made up answers, because they wanted the school to work out.
One student was an exception:

It was probably decided by Mr. Elvin; he's supposed to be evaluating the program. I don't remember what the questionnaire was like. It was a good thing, though.

Student:

I didn't hear about it until I first saw it. The school board put it out....

Student:

It was put out by some guy at the school board. If we... make our own evaluation, we'll really know what we feel. This guy is an outside opinion, but he doesn't know what's really going on. The questions were too defined. There's a lot more to the school than that questionnaire covered.

Dr. Meyer's recollection of the contract time questionnaire decision was: "That was a joint decision between us and the staff. There was some dissatisfaction with contractual time, so this was designed to help provide information." Dr. Allworth said: "I'm not sure. I wasn't directly involved in the evaluation." Trustee Gruner's view was: "The trustees only approved the idea and said 'Come back in three years and tell us how it worked.'"

On December 9, the staff meeting was informed that on December 17 and 20 the humanities teachers "will take some time to discuss their changes for the next term. Assignments will be set for the students." (The changes made in the humanities program subsequently included the addition of some relatively traditional courses on an optional basis as a response to community dissatisfaction.) It was also noted
that a request would be sent from the whole staff to Dr. Allworth for two days' cancellation of classes on December 21 and 22 in order to have time for evaluation. A staff steering committee for the accreditation booklet was formed. A problem was raised as to how to use the honour roll board in the main hall now that competition for grades was philosophically suspect.

Other items of business during regular staff meetings in November and December included: policy on placement of new students; the physical education program for the second term; mini-course coordination; school dances; the use of the unscheduled Thursday; teachers' association; building alterations; cost of an extra telephone line; formation of a staff budget committee; staff assistants; visiting teachers; funds for the art program; the school annual; library; heat in the building on weekends; furniture; honoraria; funds for math workbooks; payment of a faculty club bill; funds for books in humanities; funds for basketball uniforms.

The two evaluation days were held on December 21 and 22. The staff decided to start each day with a general staff meeting, then break into domain meetings. At the general meeting on the 21st, the humanities staff

...reported on the reorganization of the humanities programme planned for the beginning of the next term. Grade 12 will have the option of either humanities III or a programme with English emphasis. Grade 11 will have the option of either humanities III (or) a programme where the emphasis will be on social studies and English.
(A student commented later: "Humanities did some things that seemed wild to some parents, then cut them out because of parental pressure. If the teachers wanted to provide innovative programs they should learn to stand up to the parents.")

At the December 22 general staff meeting, it was noted that there would be a teachers' professional day on February 18, and the teachers' association would like to know by January 5 what type of program the school planned for professional day. A reminder was noted from Mr. Elvin to return the questionnaires on contractual time.

Other topics of discussion at the general meetings on the evaluation days included: the hiring of a part-time teacher in humanities; a timetable for room use; budget; remuneration for two students working in the media workshop during Christmas break; humanities mini-course requirements and record-keeping; noise in the halls; space for student lounging; staff assistant assignments; student dances; building alterations; and money for the ski program.

In January and February, staff meetings dealt with, among other things, plans for the professional day in February; the work of the accreditation committee; the problem of the honour roll board; arrangements for student council elections; arrangements for the grade meetings with the community; and a questionnaire to students from Mr. Elvin.

Other topics in staff meetings during that period included: teachers' federation pension; recognition for
student service; an individual student's plans to be away from school for an extended period of time; accounting of disbursements from the special instructional fund; teachers' association; visiting teachers; coordination of mini-courses; the time of opening the school doors in the mornings; ski equipment; replacement of lost equipment from the Westmont U. zoology department; and the budget committee.

Chapter Summary

At the general meeting on November 24, the principal described the "changing role of administration." He offered the view that the U. Town staff's participation in decision-making was like that of staff councils in other Sailcrest schools—except that at U. Town the staff council consisted of the whole staff. He pointed out, however, that the loci of authority and responsibility were unchanged; the principal was still responsible for decisions at the school level. A parent representative urged parents to act as patient supporters of the school, constructive critics, and good counsellors at home. Other presentations, and the rotating group discussions, were held as originally planned. The last part of the meeting, however, was changed to an informal talking period rather than a time for general questioning. The format did not result in a very wide participation in discussion of the program as a whole.

At the next staff meeting, a teacher voiced the dissatisfaction apparently shared by many participants in the general meeting, and urged the staff to accept responsibility for
further improvement of communications with the community. Plans were made for smaller meetings with parents and students in January by grade level.

I inquired into the decision to use a questionnaire on contracted student time in the first-year evaluation, to follow up on my questions about the earlier decision to utilize the contract approach. I found that this decision was made by the evaluation official and his research assistant. There was some involvement of staff in the decision, but they (and the students and parents who subsequently responded to the questionnaire) were almost unanimously dissatisfied with it as a vehicle for evaluating the program's emphasis on student responsibility and individualization of instruction—largely because, in practice, contract time was not distinct from other individualized class time, and the evaluators did not discover that. (More will be said about the implementation of the contract approach near the conclusion of this study.) Students and parents apparently had no role in the decision to use such a questionnaire nor in the drafting of it. The trustees and board officials responsible for the project (other than the evaluation official) apparently were not closely in touch with the evaluation decisions.

The humanities staff reorganized its program in December as a further concession to traditionalist pressures from the community. Relatively traditional courses in English and social studies were added to the program on an optional
basis, and a writing course requirement was added for all students remaining in the experimental humanities program. The altered program was to begin in January.

Numerous organizational problems arose in staff meeting discussions during the period November, 1971, to February, 1972. Most of these could be seen to fit the categories mentioned previously: timetable, physical plant and equipment, finance, staff utilization, and external professional relations.

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CHAPTER 12

CATCHING UP ON STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The staff met for two days on February 17 and 18, having obtained an extra day in conjunction with the professional day. The first item of business was presentations by domain staffs to the staff as a whole, and discussion of problems raised thereby.

Humanities spoke first. The team presented a statement of the domain's philosophy, general objectives, specific objectives, and program organization, and asked for comments from the staff as a whole. Some minor suggestions were offered as to clarification of the wordings; these suggestions were taken into account in a slightly revised humanities program description issued later.

The humanities staff was concerned about criticisms of a lack of direction in its seminars. Students were dissatisfied with the lack of "content" and "hung up on academic expectations," whereas the staff was trying to emphasize the communication process and to them the content of the seminars did not matter. The consensus of the staff as a whole appeared to be that the emphasis of the humanities staff should be continued and better ways sought to achieve it. Some of the other teachers on staff thought that the humanities teachers' expectations with regard to assignments were not clear enough, and wanted some written guidelines to use.
in their role as advisors. Some of the teachers in other
domains also had the feeling that individual students were
not getting enough one-to-one contact with teachers in
humanities, but the humanities staff maintained that this
was not so. Mr. Sander raised the issue of attendance in
seminars. Several staff members asserted that the solution
to the attendance problem should be to offer alternative
activities, not to require attendance. Discussion then
ensued of the feasibility of offering additional options.
Staff members considered it problematic, but not impossible.
It was then pointed out that many students had the attitude
that the availability of numerous options meant that none
of them were important. The need was recognized to devise
strategies to involve students in activities and to convince
them that the learnings coming out of the activities offered
were important. Students were described as being too much
oriented toward academic success and, therefore, dissatisfied
without the traditional type of work and grades. Humanities
staff were not sure how to handle the demand for grades but
expressed a determination to include the students in grading
decisions if grades had to be given. Asked about the con­
sequences of a radical program and no grades for a student
transferring to another school, humanities staff offered the
opinion that differences in curriculum always occur in such
cases, and that there are often big differences in the
grades a given student receives from different teachers in
a single area.
The problem of students who were not taking the required number of mini-courses was raised, and it was pointed out that a form was now being used to identify the students with this shortcoming. Humanities staff felt that it was useful experience for these students "to have to hustle in the last round of minis."

Humanities teachers were asked about program evaluation: how were they determining the degree to which objectives were being achieved? The reply was that the staff perceived changes in students, and these changes were very different among individuals. (The humanities staff was generally averse to the idea of measuring learning.)

The problem of timetable conflicts was raised. It was noted that "many kids are unhappy about not being able to take advantage of interesting offerings," and that many classes were "depleted" by the competition with more exciting mini-courses and activities. An additional problem was seen in some students' "faking mini-course conflicts in order to skip regular classes." Staff members saw a need for subject teachers and advisors to work together in persuading some students of the value of participating in classes. They saw the communicating of information between subject teachers and advisors as essential to this effort.

Mr. Mattson urged the staff to "find ways of involving students and parents in the organizing of the program." This suggestion was not, however, followed up at the moment by further discussion, and Mr. Mattson did not persist.
Much of the discussion occasioned by the humanities report was really concerned with problems of the school as a whole. The staff identified as a major problem a feeling of being "locked in by the amount of activity" the staff was already engaged in, and hence unable to "do enough planning." It was suggested that the staff might "retreat" as a group; that it might be good at the same time to "have the kids run the school and hold discussions of their (the students') views of the program."

Again, the question was raised of "how to involve the parents in the program." This led to the question: "What involvement do we want?" Mr. Sander stated that the staff "hadn't wanted to meet with the parents in the fall because of static from the community and the pressures of work." Mr. Scott replied that "this does not mean the idea is abandoned—not at all." Mr. Hardy and Miss Deering thought that communication to the parents was needed, but that was not enough; the staff needed to "get the parents into the program development." Mrs. Marion thought that "getting more information to the parents concerning the staff's intentions is a crucial first step." Mrs. Fayter said that "this was a big failing in the first term." At this point it was suggested, and agreed, that the discussion of this topic should be postponed until the conclusion of the domain reports. (The staff did not, however, return to the topic during the course of the professional day meetings.)
Mr. Scott reported on the teaching of French. He saw several problems of importance to the staff as a whole: the problem of how to evaluate students; the problem of how to get students to use the contractual time provision ("The contract time idea encourages students to feel that just showing up is accomplishing something"); the need for integrating language instruction with the humanities program; the lack of student authority to make decisions about programs, exemplified by the language requirements; and the problem of student traditionalism resisting the change to student-initiated learning—that is, the dependence of some students on teacher direction and approval.

Mr. Scott spoke of a "Grade 11 syndrome"—a group of about eight "guys who resist school" and "think that they won't be failed because of the nature of the school." He warned that they would be failed in French, and "the onus will be on them; grade 12 for them will start around Christmas next year." (The problem of the "Grade 11 syndrome" was a recurring theme in staff discussions.)

Mrs. Anderson reported on problems in teaching French at the grade 8 level. To most of them, the language seemed "meaningless," and she and Mr. Scott were "sympathetic" with their point of view. The objective of the French program at that grade level was simply to keep the students from getting "scared off." Promotion to grade 9 was
problematic without successful completion of grade 8 French, because of provincial requirements. Members of staff responded to this presentation by stating that the French teachers should be given the support of the staff as a whole to make alterations in the program and in the requirements for passing marks. It was argued that if the staff believed a traditional course should not be required, the school should ignore the requirements of the provincial department, just as in other cases of this type.

Next came the math/science domain's report. Mr. Lauridsen stated that an objective of the domain was to "humanize and individualize learning." To accomplish this objective, the program was organized around "different levels of achievement" and "different rates of work." Mr. Lauridsen said that "the choice of what to study is a crucial part of individualization—not just pace; but the provision of alternative materials is difficult." He saw "learning packages" as "one possible way to offer alternative programs, perhaps justified by the difficulty for teachers of developing new curricula."

A related problem was that "existing courses" were "designed only for university preparation, not for general education." The "best short-term solution" seemed to be "small-group work on science problems." However, a big problem in doing this was the "lack of ability on the part of some students to organize their own time to get things
done." Mr. Lauridsen saw a "need to take the disruptive kids out." At the same time, he was concerned about low attendance in many cases. The problem of the "grade 11 registers" was identified by Mr. Lauridsen; and another teacher in the domain, Mr. Shelton, said that the grade 11s constituted the biggest problem faced by the staff.

Other problems reported by Mr. Lauridsen included the obstacle to integration within the domain presented by the location of one of the teachers' facilities in a different wing of the building from the other two teachers; and the "disappointments" encountered to date in the attempt to get university people to do some "real work" for U. Town. (The involvement of Westmont U. was seen as disappointing in several areas of the school.) Mr. Happ, the math teacher, pointed out, however, that there were a number of graduate students working effectively with small groups of his students.

Mr. Happ reported that in the math program, students "set their own aspirations" at one of three levels--"university, medium achievement, or minimal achievement"--and were given assignments appropriate for that choice. An attendance record was kept, and attendance required at least three times per week, although Mr. Happ did not record contractual time attendance. (Generally speaking, Mr. Happ was the skeptic within the staff group. He had been at the school for years--the reader will recall his contributions to the investigation of the case background.)
Like the French teachers, Mr. Happ saw a problem in the grade 8 requirements in math. He thought that math seemed "irrelevant" to many students at that age, and "shouldn't be required." It seemed to him that "interested students could go directly into grade 9 math (algebra)."

Mr. Sander, who taught biology 11 in addition to administering the school, reported that there was a wide variation among his students in attendance, and that because of this he could open the course to interested students from lower grades. (Mr. Sander made it clear several times in the year that he was not happy with the irregular attendance in his classes. I gathered from informal comments that his teaching methods were relatively unchanged from previous years.)

There were also reports from Mrs. Fayter (business education and library), Mrs. Anderson (home economics), Mr. Chiba (industrial education), and Mrs. Griffiths (physical education). A general impression in all of these areas was that the philosophy of individualization was resulting in rather richly varied offerings. Student involvement did not seem to be as much of a problem in these practical areas.

Domain reports and related discussion took much more time in the two professional days than expected. The agenda had called for discussion of the recommendations of the accreditation committee concerning the statement
of the philosophy, objectives, and program of the school, and discussion of school organization in relation to philosophy and objectives. Time, however, did not permit implementation of those parts of the agenda. The staff found intensive discussion of school-wide problems to be an exhausting activity.

Near the end of the discussions, they talked about the problem of finding time for group planning work. Mr. Sander thought that the staff should pay itself out of the school budget for planning meetings during the summer. Miss Deering said that they should "force the board to commit itself." Mr. Scott proposed that they ask for "coverage for a week's planning session in April or so." Miss Deering felt that "the board doesn't treat the teaching staff as professionals; we had just two weeks to plan the whole program for the first year." She suggested that they "get Allworth or Meyer to the next staff meeting (on Thursday)." Mrs. Marion cautioned that they needed to "be clear on what we want to do with the time we request." Miss Deering asked: "How should we react if refused?" At this point, Mr. Sander left the meeting to phone Dr. Meyer for a reaction. He returned with word that the staff should make a proposal to Meyer and Allworth in writing, and Meyer would come to the March 2 staff meeting to respond. Miss Deering proposed that they ask for two weeks' planning time—"one week in town and one week out of town, as an experiment to see which is more effective."
At the close of the discussions, it was decided that the domain reports would be a very useful thing to put into writing for distribution to the community. It was agreed that each domain would do so within one week.

Attached to the agenda for professional days was the statement of the philosophy, objectives, and learning opportunities of the school as a whole, written by the accreditation committee. The statement of philosophy was as follows:

We view education as a continuous life process and the school as one facet of the process. Students require learning experiences that will enable them individually to discover and develop their potential capacity to acquire and synthesize knowledge, to understand themselves, and to be able to relate to others on both an intellectual and an interpersonal basis. In order to realize their potential, students must have the right, with appropriate guidance, to make decisions about their own educational programme and must assume responsibility for these decisions. Consistent with the view of education as a life process, of which the school is only one aspect, we believe it is essential to develop a strong, positive reciprocal relationship between the school and the community.

Following the statement of philosophy, the committee listed four objectives:

1. To encourage student responsibility and self-direction for learning.

2. To provide opportunities for the student to experience a variety of learning situations.

3. To encourage a social awareness and sensitivity to others' needs as well as his (the student's) own.

4. To broaden the concept of school so as to include the resources of the community.
The committee placed the August, 1971, statement of five general objectives in front of the proposed new statement so that the staff could consider the differences:

1. To provide opportunities for the student to:
   (a) evaluate his academic and personal goals, capabilities, and needs;
   (b) learn through individual and group processes;
   (c) recognize education as a continuing life experience.

2. To encourage understanding of and a sense of commitment to the needs of himself and others.

3. To provide learning experiences sufficiently comprehensive to meet the needs of a variety of post-secondary pursuits.

4. To involve the student body and community in decision-making and evaluating new patterns of organization and curriculum development.

5. To encourage student responsibility for learning.

The new statement of objectives and the proposed statement of philosophy, taken together, seemed to me to cover essentially the same topics as the earlier statement of objectives. There were, however, some interesting differences in wording, particularly with regard to student and parent participation in decision-making. In place of the original objective, "To involve the student body and the community in decision-making and evaluating new patterns of organization and curriculum development," the new statement of philosophy spoke of student rights and responsibilities to make decisions about "their own educational programme,"
and called for "a strong, positive reciprocal relationship between the school and the community." The new objectives pointed to the importance of "the resources of the community" in "the concept of school," while omitting the originally clear aim of community participation in school-level program decision-making (objective #4, 1971). Student participation in decision-making was retained and emphasized, but only at the level of the individual student's program.

Following each objective proposed, the accreditation committee identified learning opportunities offered to achieve the objective. Item #1 stated that to encourage student responsibility and self-direction for learning, students were given "training in communication skills;" "guidance and instruction in the use of resource materials and equipment;" "responsibility (in consultation with their advisors) for setting up their own programmes, and for scheduling themselves into contractual time;" "opportunities to pursue their interests by proposing, selecting, organizing or instructing in mini-courses and special interest aspects of regular courses;" and "maximum opportunity to learn by experimentation and exploration."

Item #2 stated that "To provide opportunities for the student to experience a variety of learning situations," the program included "small-group learning situations, such as humanities and science seminars, language practice
groups;" "large-group learning situations, such as the lecture in humanities (involving 80 or more students at a time), the large, often weekly, class in mathematics, science, language, whose object is to outline major aspects of the work;" "individual learning which involves multi-level content learning and self-pacing in all cognitive domains, the use of machines and programmes, and individually-phased testing;" "in-school programmes involving resource persons from the community at large;" "field programmes and the external use of community resources;" "a wide and varied programme of mini-courses;" "full-year courses;" "use of the directed class instructional group where appropriate;" "extensive use of media presentations;" "varied duration of meetings, both in large and small groups, dependent upon the requirements of the learning objectives;" "learning situations in which some students learn from others who have expertise in specific areas;" and "open-graded learning situations where maturational, cognitive, interest, or skill criteria are judged to be more relevant than chronological age."

The third objective, "To encourage a social awareness and a sensitivity to others' needs as well as his own," was said to be achieved "by social learning which is initiated by the students themselves rather than being imposed upon them by the administration;" "by participating in human relations discussion groups;" "by having a weekly interview
with his appointed advisor; "by striving for a maximum level of self-actualization through the development of his own academic and social goals" and "through the preparation for the use of leisure time which is provided for by a variety of mini-courses, physical education, industrial education, health education courses, etc.;" and "by encouraging trust and respect between students and teachers."

Finally, the committee stated that the school aimed "to broaden the concept of school so as to include the resources of the community" by utilizing resource people with expertise in special areas from the community as lecturers and seminar discussion leaders; "by working reciprocally with the university, so that graduate students offer their services to the school in exchange for the learning experiences which the school has to offer;" "by utilizing field trips to other institutions, to demonstrations, to lectures, to films, to rural and wilderness areas;" "by utilizing physical facilities outside the school;" "by working with a consultative committee of parents, students and teachers in which the three representative groups interact regarding the school programme;" "by insuring three-way communication among parents, students and teachers through the consultative committee, parent-teacher-student meetings, newsletters, telephone calls, interviews and reports;" "by
using data-gathering questionnaires to obtain parent and student opinion regarding the programme;" "by utilizing a committee of parents to provide clerical help, transportation of students, help with extra-curricular activities, etc.;" "by increasing awareness of parents and students to the overall objectives of the school, particularly as they reflect current educational trends;" and "by establishing a close relationship with the community elementary school where secondary students can participate in tutorial programmes."

Chapter Summary

The staff met for two full days on February 17 and 18. Each domain reported to the staff as a whole on its program and major problems, and the staff discussed those problems which were most important to all.

The humanities staff presented a statement of its philosophy, objectives, and organization. Many of the problems identified in relation to humanities were of concern to the whole staff. Some students were dissatisfied with what they considered to be a lack of academic "content," teacher direction, and graded evaluation, while the humanities staff were more interested in the communication "process." Some teachers in other domains wanted clearer guidelines from the humanities staff as to students' assignments. The principal was very concerned about attendance. Humanities staff saw a need for even more
options in the program to interest students, rather than attendance requirements. Teachers from all domains called for better communications between subject teachers and advisors to keep up the counselling of uninvolved students. Timetable problems arose from conflicts between regular classes and other activities. Brief attention was given to the lack of parent participation in program development and the need for better information to parents. There was seen to be a critical lack of time for staff group planning; it was suggested that the staff needed a "retreat."

Reporting on the French program, a teacher identified the problems of student evaluation policy; student use of contract time; the lack of integration of languages and humanities; the lack of student decision-making authority; the traditionalism of some students; and the "grade 11 syndrome"—a particular group of non-achieving, school-resisting students. A teacher discussed the problem of the grade 8 French requirement, imposed by the provincial department, which was creating unhealthy attitudes among many students.

A teacher described the science program, which he said was aimed at "humanizing and individualizing" instruction through "different levels of achievement" and "different rates of work." He spoke of the difficulty of truly individualizing the program by offering a "choice of what to study," because of the lack of sufficient "alternative
materials;" and said that learning packages were perhaps a solution to "the difficulty for teachers of developing new curricula." He saw as major problems, also, the lack of courses for general education rather than university preparation; the failure of many students to manage their own time, thereby frustrating attempts to develop independent projects; the grade 11 resistance group identified earlier; the physical separation of one of the science teachers from the others; and the disappointing degree of participation by the university in the science program.

In math, a teacher reported that the program was organized around different "levels of aspiration." He saw as a major problem the grade 8 requirements set by the provincial department. The principal, reporting as a biology teacher, emphasized the problem of attendance. In the other, more practical, areas of the program, richly varied offerings were described, and student involvement was not seen as so much of a problem.

At the end of the two days, the staff discussed its dissatisfaction with the board office's commitment to staff planning time, and decided to make a strong request for at least a full week's released time in April. It was also decided that the domain reports made verbally within the staff group would be useful in communicating to the community, and, therefore, would be written up in the near future.
There was no time for the other main topics on the agenda: the statement of the school's philosophy, objectives, and learning opportunities prepared by the accreditation committee. This material was attached to the agenda. I found it similar to the earlier statement of objectives in its basic message, except that the wording of the new statement subtly cut out the goal of parent and student participation in school-level program decision-making.

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The consultative committee met on February 23, in the week following the professional days. The meeting was attended by three parent representatives; four students; two staff members; the principal; and the board's director of communications, Mr. Berends. As the first item of business, chairman Worrall introduced Mr. Berends and brought up the need for a council newsletter. Dr. Worrall said that a newsletter "could have avoided the communication problem in the fall." Mr. Berends said that the board could print a council newsletter and send it to all U. Town parents and students. Dr. Worrall pointed out that the newsletter "could include the agenda of the next consultative council meeting to stimulate response from the community;" he proposed that "the purpose of the newsletter would be to inform parents on the discussions in the council, because many issues are contentious." Mr. O'Doherty asked who should edit the newsletter, and it was decided that Mr. Berends would take on that job himself. (Subsequently, Mr. Berends attended council meetings, took his own notes, and wrote reports for the newsletter.)

A student said that there was also a "need for more general meetings." Another student asserted that "the council is not achieving much for the students; it lacks
power and influence." Dr. Worrall replied that "students are apathetic" and that the council "could invite participation through the newsletter."

Mr. Berends then asked: "What issues are there?" He said that he had heard allusions to issues but none of them had been identified. Chairman Worrall replied that there were three topics he suggested for discussion that evening: "student apathy;" "evaluation of student achievement;" and the problem of "drop-outs."

A student said that he was "not personally achieving;" that he "lacked the desire to." Mr. Sander urged him not to "tell about your personal experience—be a representative." The student went on: "Everything rests on the humanities, because it's the thing most students can get high or low about." Dr. Worrall asked: "Is this a lag phase between systems?" The student thought that it was a "natural phase." Another student proposed that they "get student opinions directly, through a questionnaire." Yet another student thought there was a need for a student newspaper. A teacher said that it was a "good idea, but you'll get an influx of negative opinions at first." Dr. Worrall said that it appeared "we don't have enough information on student apathy to discuss it yet." He asked

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10 In the second year of the project, a student newspaper was started, and this was exactly what happened. (See Chapter 21.)
the student representatives to return to the next meeting with more information; the students agreed to do so. Mr. O'Doherty said there was a need for "some measure of apathy." Mr. Sander remarked that "I've heard about student apathy for ten years, but no comparisons are ever made between our school and others." Dr. Worrall said: "We need to get our own data before we can compare with others." (To my knowledge, very little was subsequently done in getting student opinion for the council.)

Dr. Worrall then read a letter received from a parent who was critical of changes in the evaluation of students and the role of the teacher. Mr. Sander defended by asking whether it was fair to "use the same evaluation techniques in a new system" or to "put evaluation in black-and-white terms." Mr. McDonald said that "there is a need for some assurance that the experimentation is based on good results elsewhere." Another parent said: "Parents feel that their children might be victims of a trial which will be abandoned later." Mr. Hardy replied that "teachers in humanities feel that they have had success in similar efforts (less organized as a total school) elsewhere, and that they are not trying something new." Mr. McDonald asked: "Then how can we get that across to the parents?" Dr. Worrall added: "The public doesn't understand the changes in the theory of teaching and learning that have been taking place in recent years." Mr. Berends thought it seemed "a faint echo of the
British informal approach." Mr. O'Doherty said: "We need a definition of teaching and learning in the newsletter as a basis for future discussion."

Chair raised the question of drop-outs. Mr. Sander said that "the rate is the same as in past years." Mr. Hardy said that "in the past, transfers were punitive; now with the open boundaries, transfers are useful in some cases."

It was agreed that the next meeting of the council would be on March 14, three weeks hence.

The following morning, February 24, Mr. Hardy and Mr. Haffner reported to the staff meeting on the consultative council. They said that "the role of the council is developing in a narrow way—as just an information channel to the parents." They described the council newsletter plans, and they referred to the council's discussion of evaluation: "The parent representatives are too concerned with statistics, not educational philosophy."

The staff discussed the proposal to Dr. Meyer concerning released time for planning. It was recalled that two separate weeks had been proposed at the previous staff meeting. Mrs. Fayter asked if even one full week would not be "too much, given the strain of the two-day session." Mr. Happ replied that "that was because we tried to do a week's work in two days." The staff decided to request the week of April 17 to 24 and a second week in May. Mr. Scott suggested
the second week could be used for "in-domain preparation of materials." Mrs. Fayter urged that the staff "specify what we will do in the released time."

**Humanities Team Meeting, February 25**

I attended some of the planning meetings of the humanities staff, because of the obvious interest taken by the school and community in the humanities program. Most of the humanities team meetings I observed took place over a long lunch at the university's graduate student centre.

The team was discussing the evaluation of the students' presentations of their studies of particular cultures (the plans for which we saw in the November humanities bulletin).

**Mattson:** Many of the kids are presenting encyclopedia reports and doing it in an uninteresting manner.

**Deering:** Many of the reports were well written but not well presented—they needed training in oral reporting.

**Hardy:** We were trying to make the kids into teachers, without preparing them. The kids listening to the reports weren't interested in certain topics, and the kids presenting them couldn't pick up those signals. We could have made attendance at the presentations voluntary.

**Deering:** The problem goes back to the kid selecting a topic of interest rather than one for which information was available; but attendance in areas of presentation other than their own was beneficial to the kids.

**Hardy:** The kids were more interested in reports on topics related to their own.

**Deering:** It goes back to the teachers, who give direction.
Haffner: We need to have activities for kids who don't have an interest in any of these things.

Hardy: Very few kids are not interested in anything. Positive changes are happening in certain cases.

Marion: Some kids are hard to reach—about four out of twenty.

Dillman: Why not move the kids around to the teachers with whom they can function well?

Marion: O.K., but let's organize the topics.

The team then went on to discuss plans for the next phase of the program.

Mattson: We could divide into four sections concerned with current culture and have the kids circulate during the 13 weeks. We aren't using ourselves effectively because we're all doing the same things. We should plan it out so different things can be done without conflicting. One topic could be "The Language of the Decade"... (Mr. Mattson had written down a specific proposal as to topics for different sections.)

Marion: Are you suggesting we use the cultural studies as a stepping-off point for studying the culture of here and now? It would be good to have a change of format.

Deering: We should get the kids involved in this planning—not that they should decide what to do next but they should have some influence.

Hardy: A broad program takes them all in.

Deering: But we haven't let them decide more than what culture to study. They should feel involved; it isn't enough for the staff to judge their needs.

Hardy: Too many possibilities for them is not a good idea. Why not an umbrella or guiding format?
Deering: I don't think we've given as much choice within the format as we intended.

Marion: It's interesting how they pick and choose among the mini-courses.

Mattson: We could offer a core and then discuss it with them. There is an infinite variety of interests among the kids.

The discussion shifted back to organizational problems.

Mattson: We could keep the same groups for the first four weeks, until Easter, and get the programs in each area firmed up before switching groups.

Hardy: We should consider the relationships between the groups.

Deering: Shall we keep large groups?

Mattson: Yes, large groups could have multi-media presentations which would have different values for different groups; and the kids' work could feed into the large groups. What ideas do we have for topics?

Hardy: Urban literature.

Deering: Folklore.

Haffner: Contemporary social thought with reference to economic philosophy.

Deering: Creative communication through multi-media.

Marion: Historical drama--portrayal of selected personalities with associated study of the period.

Dillman: There's a lot of action in (the provincial capital) now.

Hardy: A group in Level 3 is working on "Concerns" and a videotape.

Marion: Why not open the sections to kids' choices at the beginning?

Haffner: We could even extend it into September.

Deering: What about the grade 8s?
Marion: Same program.

Hardy: We could keep the 8s twice as long and continue into next year.

Deering: The 8s need more time on skills.

Mattson: We should articulate with the 7s in U. Town Elementary.

Deering: We could go to the elementary schools as a staff.

Mattson: We could use resource people from Level 3 to cover time for releasing the staff to visit the elementary schools, and we could take a slide presentation to the elementary schools. I'll write up and duplicate the program plans coming out of this week's meetings by Monday.

Deering: We're supposed to hand in plans, objectives, etc., for parent communication.

At another point in the meeting, one of the staff members, Mr. Haffner (whose responsibilities were shared with another domain), proposed an independent study program for a few students as their total program for the rest of the year.

Marion: We would have to reconsider our basic objectives to do this.

Deering: It raises questions about their roles in the basic program.

Marion: Many couldn't handle the responsibility.

Haffner: Not the grade 8s, but some of the 9s.

I could vaguely sense a problem with regard to Mr. Haffner's acceptance in the team. Two months later I was to learn, through observing a difficult process of decision-making in a staff meeting, that the humanities team wanted
Mr. Haffner to transfer out of the school. As far as I could tell, the reason was that they did not think he worked hard enough or was sufficiently committed to the job.

**Humanities Team Meeting, February 29**

On this date, the team raised the topic of evaluation of seminars. Reports had been obtained from group leaders (resource people from the university who helped with this aspect of the program). It was reported that "most leaders feel they should continue, although it is only a portion of the students who are coming."

Mattson: We shouldn't cancel any groups without doing so with all.

Deering: We need to look more specifically at the individual kids who aren't attending and make alternate arrangements—different groups.

Marion: It's a lot of work to do this.

Deering: Just a certain few need changing.

Marion: I guess we'll have to go through them all.

Hardy: It's not a big deal to make changes, since we've had an attendance problem all along.

Deering: Let's require those who haven't been attending to come, and permit those who have been coming to consider themselves finished.

Mattson: We could create new time slots and new groups after Easter for those not attending and if they don't come they'll have to do it next year.

Deering: The grade 12s won't have any penalty.

Marion: The kids have been waiting for punishments. Should we fulfill their expectations?
Deering: We set the requirement in the first place, so we have to be consistent.

Marion: Right; but let's not carry it over to next year. We should say in our evaluation of these kids at the end of the year that they have not developed self-reliance yet, and then think about what to do next.

Deering: Right, but there has to be some consequence of not fulfilling the seminar requirement we set.

Marion: Should we, for another year, avoid setting requirements?

Deering: That would be not making commitments and following them, like the kids do.

Hardy: We should make commitments and be willing to be wrong.

Mattson: We do need seminars.

Marion: Yes, but some kids aren't benefitting, so are they to be required?

Deering: The same problem as always: providing alternatives.

Marion: Should we require some participation in one of several alternatives?

Deering: We could have independent study as an alternative. We should discuss this with the kids to determine the problem and solutions.

Marion: Let's phone the group leaders and say we want the seminars to continue for the time being.

The team took a break from the discussion to get some food. On returning, Mrs. Marion suggested that there was a need to "formulate recommendations for next year soon."

Deering: Writing courses...

Marion: We need to reorganize to avoid the problem of checking on participation.

Deering: Periods should be an hour instead of forty minutes.
Marion: For larger concerns, there is the question of staffing. Timetable mechanics could be worked out later.

Deering: Before that, we need to decide about seminars and other activities to see what the staffing needs are.

Marion: We could get parents and other resource persons as seminar leaders.

Deering: Do we keep seminars as a must?

Marion: I'm not sure; I doubt it, but I don't know what would be the alternative.

Deering: We could have the option of Westmont University counsellors' groups.

Marion: Or packaged instructional materials.

Deering: So we offer choices to fulfill requirements.

Marion: Perhaps we could require each kid to do one of each thing.

Deering: We could divide the year into three periods. It would have to be a contract sort of arrangement.

Marion: If we do this we'll need more time with individual kids.

Deering: We could estimate time amounts now for next year.

Mattson: Somebody has to coordinate; and there are problems with last-minute cancellations of mini-courses.

Deering: And the kids not showing up for mini-courses. The forms the kids are now being asked to fill out may help.

Mattson: What do we do about the non-attendance at mini-courses? It's the same old problem of whether to have requirements and whether to enforce them.

Marion: Suppose we had grade 12 subjects, levels of humanities, and other activities, such as coordinating mini-courses, or drama, art—each teacher could do one grade 12, one level, and one coordination job.
Hardy: It's better to have one type of responsibility at a time, with the groups of kids spread out instead of big groups all at once.

Marion: Like classes.

Hardy: We could still work together through exchanges of teachers. It's not new, but it's workable. The logistics of grouping and timing would depend on the teacher.

Marion: If we did that, what staffing would we need?

Mattson: But we shouldn't offer traditional courses--seriously.

Hardy: From the kids' point of view, it's a reality they have to face--scholarship exams. We don't want to lose the kids.

Mattson: We should offer both.

Deering: We're responsible to offer traditional courses.

Dillman: The kids would have to go to another school for their whole program.

Hardy: Let's work out the alternate offerings.

Mattson: But the offerings each require significant use of teachers and resources full-time. We can't do all this. We would have to get extra teachers to do the traditional courses. We need one teacher full-time in the humanities lab to coordinate it and make it work.

Marion: Let's look at what would make the program work, as far as staffing needs, and ask for it.

Hardy: We want one more teacher anyway.

Marion: I don't think even two more is enough. Let's look at the total projected program.

Hardy: We want no cutbacks in the program--we have to get more teachers.

Time for the meeting ran out.
On March 2, the staff discussed policy on the provincial department of education's grade 12 final exams. Mr. Mattson asked whether they should be required. The consensus was that the exams should be at the discretion of the teacher. Mr. Sander said that departmental final exams were "usually used only if there is a question about passing the student; but this year the objection can be raised that the traditional course was not offered." Mr. Hardy thought that "humanities could justify requiring departmental exams in some cases; the offerings aren't totally different from the traditional courses." Mr. Sander suggested "telling some students that if they don't measure up they will be required to write a local final exam, and will be able to appeal through the departmental exam." Mr. Mattson said Mr. Sander's idea "still doesn't solve the problem of discrepancy between exam and course offering." Mr. Sander returned: "It is solved if the school sets a final to determine whether to recommend particular students to write provincial exams."

Mr. Sander then raised the subject of provincial scholarship exams. He said that it was traditional at the school to "clear those students who intend to write scholarship exams to hammer at scholarship subjects after a certain date." Mr. Hardy said that was "not necessarily a good policy; we should integrate this need with the program." Mr. Scott cited an example of a student who was not ready for a foreign language scholarship exam but wanted to write
it anyway; he said that "if we release this student for scholarship study, it raises serious questions about the philosophy of the program." Mr. Happ thought that "the old procedure is probably not consistent with the new program, but we could be flexible and handle each case differently." Mr. Sander said: "The kids will shut down and study for scholarship exams anyway," to which Mr. Happ replied, "O.K., but no change in the program is called for." Mr. Sander said: "There has been talk of making a group arrangement for scholarship preparation." Mr. Happ objected, "We can't let the program shut down." A suggestion was then made that the staff have a meeting with the grade 12s to discuss the question. Mr. Happ thought that too much "depends on the subject." Mr. Sander proposed that the staff "tell the grade 12s to consider the scholarship study to be starting now." Mr. Happ and Mr. Scott complained that Mr. Sander had the "wrong emphasis." Mr. Sander replied: "The kids will raise the question." Miss Deering and Mr. Happ said it did depend on the subject, and that "we could offer extra courses in some cases." Mr. Lauridsen pointed out that this "might create a timetable problem again." Mr. Scott said, "We should limit the options and then let the kids decide."

It was decided to have a meeting with the students interested in scholarships on Monday at lunchtime. It was expected that there would be about 25 such students.
A Westmont University newsletter listing recommended secondary school courses for various university programs was distributed, and staff members were asked to give them "to grade 12 students in advisory meetings."

At the bottom of the meeting agenda was this reminder: "Reports from domains were due Friday, February 25. Please get them in immediately!"

Humanities Team Meeting, March 3

The logistics of the next week needed to be settled; it was the last week before the initiation of the next phase of the program. The presentations of the cultural studies needed to be finished. Marking of the written reports was a pressing problem because of an upcoming deadline for reports to parents. Clarification of the schedule for the next phase might be a problem with some students; it was suggested that plan books might be helpful for them.

An overall plan had been agreed upon for the last part of the school year. There would be five areas of study springing from the cultural studies: urban literature; history; folklore and myths; media; and economics. Each student would work in one area for six weeks, then change to one other area as of May 1. For each student, one of the areas chosen was to have a "socials emphasis," the other an "English emphasis."

Mr. Hardy offered to prepare a general program description and rationale for the planned school newsletter to parents.
The topic of future staffing needs and work loads was reintroduced.

Marion: We need reasoning for deciding how many more staff are needed. Should we have all full-time staff, so that all can be in on our decision-making?

Deering: We could still have part-time staff; they don't need to be present at all meetings.

Marion: We need more than five staff full-time.

Mattson: For one, the lab is a full-time job, including coordination.

Deering: The regular staff should be able to do this--the only reason it's difficult now is the lack of sufficient staff.

Mattson: We need to integrate science/math and humanities to be able to challenge the curriculum.

Deering: We need to work with languages and other areas too. We need to set priorities to make decisions on a school-wide basis.

Marion: That seems right--I'm not sure what alternatives to consider.

Deering: Also, the complete organization of humanities needs to be considered.

Mattson: We need the new staff members in on this basic planning.

Deering: Why are we continuing the seminars, for example, if they haven't been successful?

Marion: That would require lengthy evaluation.

Deering: We need to figure staffing needs on the basis of priorities.

Mattson: Not having had enough time for working with individual kids, or recharging, or being sick.

Deering: Are we being effective with the present program? How can we know?
Mattson: Yes, we are, because the kids are interested in the school. This is observable.

Marion: I feel that some of the kids' behaviors are in spite of the staff. How can we know what is bringing about observed effects?

Mattson: All the things in the program are related to these effects.

Marion: The personalities of staff are related to the effects. We've been running around ineffectively too much.

Mattson: That is us setting examples for kids—anti-school, active, flexible, hard-working. Kids are responding because of seeing the staff working hard. The cluster of opposition that used to exist is gone.

Deering: Do you mean that the present organization should remain?

Mattson: No, but it's a good beginning.

Marion: You mean we should extend our present work?

Mattson: Yes, and we are doing this in effect now. The specific timetable and organization doesn't mean much.

Deering: It does in terms of efficiency.

Mattson: Yes, but efficiency isn't the most important thing. If we have time to re-energize (with enough staff), it doesn't matter what structure we have. Time is the most important part of the structure—not the timetable, but time to do what we want to do. Two more staff would barely do this.

Deering: But if the structure is the same as now, there is no way to do planning and evaluation work. More staffing would still not give time away from the kids.

Mattson: But with more staff we could do some work at home or elsewhere.

Deering: If there were such time, it would get filled up with conferences, etc.
We need time for all these things. More staff must be helpful. Suppose we each looked at what we do in a typical week—then we would see what we need.

We're each taken up by numerous communications with kids all day, but that's desirable.

If we didn't have as much responsibility for group instruction in content, we could be true resource people.

That would be a real departure.

Suppose we each took one normal teaching responsibility and planned that the rest of our time would be for individual guidance.

Yes. That's the answer. We're not enough different from the traditional school in which preparation is one-seventh of the time.

Let's reverse the ratio—1/7 for regular teaching, 6/7 for preparation and individual work. Advisories take a lot of time and are desirable.

That needs to be improved; we haven't even started developing it. We need individual opportunities and group sessions.

If we have sufficient time, then let's use it flexibly. Allot, say, two afternoons per week for advisories. Say 4 hours per week for advisories, 4 for individuals, several for staff meetings (4?), and planning-preparation (4?)—total 16 hours. That leaves 9 hours. I see, for example, history kids 3 hours per week. We should think in terms of another 4 hours per week for each of two courses.

Chapter Summary

At the consultative committee meeting on February 23, the board's communications director offered to publish and distribute a newsletter. It was decided that he would also edit the new "Consultative Committee Newsletter." Parent representatives held high hopes that the newsletter would
help bridge the school-community communications gap. Student representatives, however, voiced criticism of the committee's weakness, and called for further general meetings and a student newspaper. Chairman raised three topics for discussion. "Student apathy" was discussed but put off to a later meeting because, ironically, the committee decided it did not have enough information on the topic. Concerning "evaluation of students," the chair aired parental criticisms of changing methods, and asked staff to provide assurances to those worried about experimentalism. The chair lent support to this stance by saying that most parents did not understand accepted new theories of teaching. The discussion returned once again to the need for better information to parents. The third topic was "drop-outs." The principal said simply that the rate was no different from previous years.

The following day, February 24, two teachers reported to the staff that the committee was developing in a very narrow way, as merely an information channel, and that the parents were too concerned with statistical evaluation.

On February 25, the humanities staff discussed the students' reports on their culture studies, and began to make plans for the final phase of the school year. It was decided to divide the program into sections, one per teacher, while keeping the large group meetings also. There was some discussion of the kids' involvement in
program planning. One teacher thought the students had not been given enough choice to date, but another teacher disagreed, offering the opinion that too much choice confused the kids. By the next week, the humanities staff had decided upon five areas of study for the last phase: urban literature, history, folklore and myths, media, and economics. Each student would work in two of these areas during the last twelve weeks.

In other meetings during this week, the humanities staff engaged in rough planning for year two. They discussed the inter-related problems of program organization, staffing and work loads, timetable, and attendance. There was some disagreement over whether the program (and the teachers' responsibilities) should be organized more traditionally. They confronted a paradox in needing to decide on the basic structure of the program in order to decide on staffing needs, yet wanting new staff to be in on the basic program decisions. The discussion touched upon the need for school-wide program planning.

Humanities staff also discussed the seminar groups in their program; group leaders thought the seminars were valuable but were concerned about low attendance. The humanities staff discussed inconclusively what to do about kids who do not attend even after being told (as they were in the New Year's reorganization) that attendance at seminars was a requirement. It was decided to continue the seminars "for the time being."
At the March 2 staff meeting, the principal raised the subject of provincial grade 12 final exams. He said they were usually used only if there was a question about passing a student, but suggested that, since this year the program did not always offer the traditional course on which the provincial final is based, the staff use its own final in questionable cases, and permit students to appeal through the provincial final. Provincial scholarship exams were also raised by the principal for discussion. He informed the staff that in the past the school had let scholarship candidates "shut down" their regular programs, after a certain date, to prepare. Some staff members objected that this would be too inconsistent with the school's present philosophy. It was decided to meet with the students affected to determine the best course of action.

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CHAPTER 14
MORE PARENTAL QUESTIONING AND MORE ASSURANCES

On March 9, Mr. Scott raised the issue of what to do with the honour roll board in the main hall of the school. He said that "a committee of students is against the awarding of honours for individual student achievement." Mr. Scott also said that this question offered the opportunity to "involve the students in the governing of the school." He said "suggestions are needed from other students and teachers." Mrs. Griffiths reported that "some students feel the board could be used for activity information." Mr. Lauridsen said that other students thought "the procedure for selecting honour students should be changed, not the purpose of the board." Mr. Shelton felt that "students are opposed, but lack alternatives." Mr. Scott replied that "students will generate ideas and vote at their meeting this morning; staff opinion is needed as a policy in the case of a student decision completely for or against." Mr. Scott justified the need for staff policy "not because of the honour board but because it has to do with the student's role in decision-making. Is the student decision accepted if the staff disagrees with it?" Mr. Happ objected, "One small group of non-academic students is pushing this issue. Is
it democratic to let them initiate this and to let their wish prevail because of student apathy?" Mr. Sander suggested that the topic be postponed because Dr. Meyer had arrived at the meeting to talk about the staff planning session. Mr. Happ said the problem "shouldn't have to wait." Mr. Scott urged that the staff "should at least decide to create some joint body for staff-student decision-making." Mrs. Fayter agreed, and pointed out that "no such body exists." She felt that "this is an important matter in many ways." Mrs. Griffiths asked: "Why not have the consultative committee handle it?" Mr. Hardy thought that "we should have the students decide; but all the students and staff should vote on it." Mr. Scott said "the consultative committee could be a sounding board, but after the decision." Mr. Sander proposed that the consultative committee be asked for opinions before the decision. Mr. Scott said, "We have a definite proposal from Mr. Hardy. Is it acceptable to the staff?" General agreement was heard. Mr. Sander asked, "Are we going to tell the students that it will be voted on?" Mr. Hardy said, "Yes, it's time the staff take a stand on decision-making; otherwise the staff breeds apathy." Mr. Sander replied, "So you propose the staff decide how to proceed?" Mr. Hardy said, "Yes, but the student council can O.K. it." Mr. Happ asked, "How about the parents? This issue cuts into the large question of academic standards. Some of
them may see this as the throwing out of the last remnant of traditional standards." Mrs. Furness suggested, "The parents could be involved just like the students." Mr. Scott: "But should we allow the parents to think that the elimination of grades means the lowering of academic standards?" Miss Dillman asked: "Why shouldn't academic contributions to the school be recognized as much as other contributions? What's wrong with it?" Mr. Happ replied, "It's too hard to know which student is best." Mr. Sander then successfully urged that "we talk about the planning time now since Dr. Allworth and Dr. Meyer are waiting."

The staff asked Dr. Allworth to provide coverage for teaching responsibilities for two weeks, using district consultants (a procedure which they knew had been followed in one previous case in Sailcrest when a school had to make a transition from an old building to a new open area building). Dr. Allworth said that he "couldn't repeat that at U. Town."

Allworth: Ideally, we would have 15 people doing this all the time in the district. We'd like to give you some time, but it will have to be something less grand.

Scott: Have there been any other requests before, leading to specific plans?

Allworth: No.

Hardy: Let's put the shoe on the other foot. We don't have the time to do the things this project is for. We don't get with the kids enough because
of trying to jam in meetings. But if we don't get next year straightened out this year...

Allworth: How about one week of released time and one of your own time, say in the summer? We can't be too favoritive to you or we'll have antagonism in the district; but if the staff were giving equal time...

Happ: It sounds like you're saying that we don't give our own time as it is.

Allworth: No, just that it isn't visible to other schools.

Hardy: August isn't good; it's too late.

Allworth: How could the school be organized during the released week?

Hardy: We couldn't keep it humming with just the staff assistants.

Allworth: What would you want the consultants to do--teach? consult? keep the lid on?

Hardy: Teach.

Allworth: Whom would you want?

Hardy: The music consultants, art consultants...

Allworth: We can't use central office personnel for a whole week for just one school.

Meyer: (The other instance) was different.

Hardy: Perhaps the coordinators could locate extra people rather than doing it themselves.

Meyer: Do you see this as a structured week in the school? Other people couldn't step into your shoes.

Hardy: Not necessarily...

Meyer: But you're not going to be there to fall back on. They would have to do their own thing.
Who's going to be in charge? What should the people do? How many? Does the school have to be operated full-scale? We need more specific information on the minimum needs before we can decide. We could possibly get department heads from other schools.

Why not solicit interested department heads whose work could be covered by their own staffs?

That's a good idea. We need to know exactly how many, and what tasks.

We can do that. All we need is cooperation. Some of the central staff could be tapped for short periods.

We could send a circular to the schools but we need specific information on tasks for them. If we had the information by next Wednesday, we could discuss it with the education department.

Just what information?

Can't tell you exactly. We just have to know how the program would operate and what's needed. You should discuss this with the parents and students. We have to keep the community informed these days; but this could provide a good in-service experience for some other teachers.

After Dr. Allworth and Dr. Meyer left, Mr. Sanders asked, "How shall we get this information on coverage needs together?" It was decided that each domain staff would meet to make plans.

In the course of the March 9 meeting, Mr. Scott raised the problem of students who have "learning problems for which the school doesn't seem to have an answer." He suggested that they "should perhaps attend a different school" and said that the staff might "get advice from the central administration." While Dr. Allworth and Dr. Meyer
were present, Mr. Scott asked them about it. Dr. Meyer said that he "could look into the possibilities of learning assistance centers." Mr. Sander said that the school had "been trying to get alternatives, but obstacles are always encountered." Dr. Allworth said, "We can handle it if it's well documented."

Consultative Committee Meeting, March 14

Chairman Worrall offered thanks to Mr. Berends on the first issue of the committee newsletter, and proposed for discussion that evening the topics "content of courses" and "methods of evaluating student achievement." He said that information on these topics needed to be communicated to parents. He stressed that parents wanted to know "whether numerical evaluation can or will be available in some way."

Sander: Letter grades have to be provided by the end of the year.

Miss Deering then distributed copies of an evaluation policy statement recently prepared by the humanities team. She asked: "What does a letter grade mean? There never really were comparable standards across classes and schools. The staff is committed to the individualization of evaluation."

Worrall: But there has to be an evaluation in relation to other students at some point because society demands it. It should be in the background for future reference.
Sander: For the next two or three years, grade 12s who want to write provincial exams have to be given numerical percentage grades; those who wish to write scholarship exams have to be given a letter grade. If the parent questions the letter grade at the end of the year, though, the school has a problem.

Deering: The terms, "good," "satisfactory," etc., are equal to letter grades, roughly.

Worrall: But are you referring to the individual's progress in relation to himself?

Deering: Yes.

Worrall: How do you answer the questions of outside agencies?

Sander: They tend not to ask for rank in class now; they ask for rank in percentage categories—top 10 per cent, 20 per cent, etc., or they ask what kind of class the student is in.

McDonald: You shouldn't use so much jargon in this evaluation policy statement.

Another teacher commented, "Usually teachers will call the parent if there is any real problem."

Berends: Can we say so in the newsletter?

Sander: No, not absolutely. It leaves no hedge.

Berends: Could both a letter grade and a descriptive evaluation be given?

Deering: It's not desirable for the slow kids to be told, in effect, that they are slow.

Sander: When the next reports come out at the end of March, would you like to see letter grades for every subject? Would you feel deprived of information if non-rated subjects were summarized in letter-grade form at the end of the year?

McDonald: No, because I feel letter grades are subjective anyway.
Worrall: I would be concerned if I heard "satisfactory progress" regarding the individual all year, and then a "D" at the end.

Marion: It is possible to communicate both types of evaluation with parents verbally.

Berends: At one time, letter grades were thrown out by lay authorities in Sailcrest because it was felt that they mean nothing about quality of achievement relative to other school systems.

Worrall: I suppose it's good enough to communicate verbally.

Sander: But it's the recorded letter grade that matters when a child transfers. Verbal communication then becomes double talk. . . A smart kid in this system can pretend he's stupid in September, then show great progress with ease.

Dr. Worrall then brought up the humanities program. He said he had "a call from a parent questioning the content and methods in humanities."

Worrall: We need to communicate to parents the value and nature of the humanities program. Humanities seem to be the centre of controversy. How can we reassure the traditionalist parents? To what extent is the old system present in the range of offerings of the new?

Sander: There is concern from parents that teachers aren't marking papers any more. It's not true, of course.

Deering: Students are now able to select what interests them. A "novels" mini-course, and a course on English fundamentals, are available.

Berends: Are they required?

Deering: Yes, the students all have to have a writing course of nine weeks during the year.

Worrall: Can they elect not to take other aspects of English?

Deering: Yes.
Marion: But a lot of it is covered in the humanities courses even if they don't elect the minis.

Worrall: So there is a basic core block plus. This is an important point to make to parents.

Sander: But the core isn't necessarily the same as the provincial curriculum--nor is it in any school.

Deering: We just about have a description of the humanities program ready for duplication--philosophy, objectives, and organization.

Worrall: How about the comment that learning is up to the student now? Parents have to be informed of the teachers' new role and the amount of work teachers do. Why not use the humanities to explain to parents how a group of professionals have developed a program?

Berends: But what about the accusation that the student is held responsible for his own failings?

Marion: No--you feel responsible as a teacher and try to find out what the problem is.

Worrall: That is good teaching anywhere.

Berends: It's not a "free school" approach.

Sander: The library is indicative--it was empty in October. Now it's overcrowded. We have a lot of peaks and valleys in our feelings about this change. I was conditioned to bells, for example; now I can't stand them.

Worrall: How about the idea of describing the humanities program to parents effectively? Should we devote a meeting to it? It's probably the real plus feature of the school.

Sander: Yes, and it's for all the students, not just some. Many schools have alternative humanities programs for some students. Students are learning to be self-reliant.

Berends: Are you going to follow through to see what effect the new program has on university experiences?

Marion: It would be more meaningful to wait for those who have gone through the whole four years.
Are there surly or hostile kids?

Marion: No.

Sander: There are some sad kids who don't have a place to go or haven't found themselves.

Berends: Are some doing nothing?

Sander: A few.

Deering: But even they are coming along.

Staff Meeting, March 16

Mr. Schwennning from the school board office came to respond to staff questions about alternatives for students with learning problems.

Schwennning: There is not much available until there is really a serious problem. The family doctor is the best agency. The university could be a good resource. U. Town has more capacity for social and other types of remediation than any other school in Sailcrest.

Scott: What can the family doctor do?

Schwennning: He can make the right contacts with other doctors. . . . Transfers to other schools can be effective, but really U. Town has better resources for these kids than the other schools. In fact, U. Town may have to take some problem kids from other schools.

Happ: But other schools have pre-employment programs.

Schwennning: Right, but this school is fine for kids with social and academic problems.

In other business, there was a report on the consultative committee meeting; a report on tentative plans for the planning week; and addition of some student names to a list of scholarship candidates.
(Other items discussed in February and March staff meetings included: tenure for teaching assistants; outdoor education; problems of some individual students; a survey on the extended school year concept; a financial statement of disbursements; weekend heating in the school building; funds for art supplies; a contest for a summer trip for students in grade 8; a year-long trip for grade 12 students; funds for physical education equipment; the Science I program; sign up procedure for physical education courses; the experimental fund of the school district; the substitute budget; building alterations in the humanities area; petty cash disbursements).

Consultative Committee Meeting, April 11

Chairman Worrall raised the topic of program evaluation.

Worrall: What external, objective assessments are planned? Is there to be such assessment after one year as well as three years?

Sander: Mr. Elvin and his department are processing questionnaires. The staff is meeting for a week starting tomorrow; soul-searching, planning, and evaluating will be done. Immediate grade 12 evaluation will come from departmental exams in June; some will write for scholarships.

Parent: What questionnaires?

Sander: There were two questionnaires. The first used a small sample. The second used a total sample of students and parents. Elvin and his assistant are coming to the staff meeting on Monday.

Worrall: Is the planning week looking to next year? What if performance in June is not satisfactory? Would plans made now be changeable?
Sander: Yes; it is difficult, though, to get people together in the summer.

Parent: I felt that the questionnaire didn't address the most important questions.

Worrall: The outcomes of the planning week will be of interest through the newsletter to parents.

Dr. Worrall then read a letter from a parent which raised questions about "risks in the program to students with low motivation to achieve."

Worrall: These are questions worth considering. They might be appropriate for the staff's planning discussions. When teaching in the directive sense is de-emphasized, there is a potential danger that some students will not achieve.

McDonald: Will there not always be a number of students in secondary school who will not be self-motivated at all?

Parent: Have students been told that this school is for a particular type of learning?

Sander: Yes, I have told some students exactly this. One special category that is a problem is the slow learner (by ability); they shouldn't be in this school because it is an academic school. We must realize, though, that in the traditional school the enforced achievement of unmotivated students is not real, and the differences among individual students are just glossed over.

Marion: Motivation by teachers is not neglected; it is just a different type—not through punishment, but through individual talking.

Worrall: Is there a sub-program for those who don't work on their own?

Sander: Some are locked in; they have to get slips signed by teachers and parents—about 15 or 20 students. In humanities, in January, a more traditional course was instituted. In most schools, the less structured program is the alternative offering, rather than vice-versa.
Parents

Sander: What about math--shouldn’t there be more direct teaching there?

Ray: It is occurring quite a bit there. . .

Marion: We could use more structure in math and French; but we have gotten it through individual arrangement.

Sander: Kids are helping kids a lot; it’s quite exciting.

Ray: One grade 12 student is often teaching physics to other kids.

Marion: This is happening more and more. It starts with prodding from the teachers but develops to self-initiative.

Worrall: It’s marvelous to see to one who has been educated traditionally.

Teachers: Possible there is better productivity at the end of the year when students are used to the new system.

Ray: Yes, right.

Sander: Kids were used to next-day assignments only.

Worrall: The shock of waiting till the last minute is a good learning experience.

Chiba: In shop the motivation is growing. Kids want to teach others. Papers are longer and better than required.

Worrall: Ray, what do you perceive about other students’ attitudes?

Ray: The amount of freedom of choice does encourage students to work.

Worrall: What about the unscheduled Thursdays?

Sander: We’re not happy about them; they’re too rigid. Also, the noon hour isn’t being used as intended, for attending Westmont University activities.

Hardy: Attendance at the "Civilization" series is high.
The council decided that it would be desirable to have another general meeting in May. It was decided to propose to the staff that a general meeting be held on May 2. There would then be a council meeting on May 9 to assess the general meeting.

Chapter Summary

At the March 9 staff meeting, a teacher raised the issue of what to do with the honour roll board in the main hall, which was traditionally used for praising those individual students who earned the highest grades. He pointed out that this issue involved two important questions: the philosophical implications of honouring students' academic achievements; and student participation in decision-making. He saw a need for a joint staff-student decision-making body. It was decided to have the honour roll board issue voted on by staff and students as equals. The consultative committee's opinion was not considered important, in spite of the principal's urging that the committee be consulted beforehand.

The assistant superintendent and the director of instruction attended the meeting, and bargained with the staff over the extent of coverage to provide for the proposed staff planning session. It was decided that interested department heads from other Sailcrest schools would be solicited after the U. Town staff gave the central office specific plans for the running of the school during the released time.
At another staff meeting in March, a board official spoke concerning treatment of students with learning problems, at the staff's request. He said that U. Town's resources for dealing with such problems were as good as any other school's in the district.

Other items of business in staff meetings during this period again fitted the categories of organizational problems discovered previously.

At the March 14 consultative committee meeting, the chairman again raised the topics of "course content" and "student evaluation." Again, the need for information to parents was pointed out. Parent concern over "numerical evaluation" was voiced. The principal said that such marks did have to be provided by the end of the year, even in the new program. Teachers present questioned the meaning of letter grades. The chair insisted that society demands evaluation in relation to other students "at some point." He raised the problem of year-end shock to the parent and student in a case in which a low final grade is registered after supportive individualized reports have been received during the year. Staff members argued that verbal communication to parents during the year avoided this problem.

An evaluation policy statement was distributed by the humanities teachers present. In the statement, evaluation was described as "a continuous process designed to determine the degree to which each student demonstrates positive
behavioral changes and success in the acquisition of intended learning outcomes." It was also said that "All forms of evaluation are based on individual student growth. . . ." A parent representative criticized the "jargon" in which this policy statement was couched.

The humanities program was again singled out by the committee for discussion. Assurances were given that much of the traditional content was offered within the new program; and that students were not just left on their own to learn—that teachers were busy teaching. Again, the need for communication to the parents was pointed out.

On April 11, the chairman asked about "program evaluation." The principal identified, as components of the current program evaluation, the questionnaires on contracted student time; the staff planning week commencing the next day; and the provincial exams. The chair also questioned the "risks to students with low motivation" in the new program. The principal defended by saying that the same problem existed in other schools but it was usually glossed over; that at U. Town some students were required now to have attendance slips signed; and that traditional courses had been offered in humanities since January. A teacher added to the defense the point that teachers do not neglect those kids, but rather counsel them; and that "kids help kids a lot."

The committee decided to call for another general meeting on May 2, subject to staff approval.

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CHAPTER 15

THE STAFF'S PLANNING WEEK IN APRIL

Arrangements were made for the staff to meet for five full days by bringing interested department heads from other Sailcrest schools to U. Town. The staff met in a conference room on the campus of the university from April 12 to 18. The planning week was timed so that a weekend came in the middle of it, to avoid fatigue.

Day 1

The first general topic on the agenda (which had been drawn up by a staff committee) was "timetable, staffing as it relates to timetabling, and enrolment." (Mr. Sander led off the discussion on this first day, but a different staff member chaired the meeting each day, and another recorded).

Sander: An analysis of fixed teacher time in science classes (he distributed a paper) shows that we cannot accept increased enrolment.

Hardy: (chairman) We shouldn't be concerned with enrolment, since other schools are under-enrolled; but the questions of staffing, timetabling, and attendance should be discussed separately at length.

Sander: I just want to state my opinions now and then be a listener the rest of the week.

Mr. Sander went on to say that his opinions were that "Thursdays have not been effective, nor have lunch hours;" that "the auditorium isn't being used effectively;" and that "a portable classroom would not be desirable."
(A portable had been suggested as a solution to the problem of a student lounge; the topic was to come up the following day).

Mr. Hardy then proposed focussing on the topic of enrolment, in order to dispense with it.

Hardy: Suppose we make a firm decision about holding enrolment.

Happ: Shouldn't we reduce the percentage of grade 8s in the school?

Marion: Can we make policy regarding the grade distribution within the composition of the student body?

Sander: We never discussed this question with the central office.

Chiba: There are many future grade 8s seeking to enrol here.

Hardy: We shouldn't look at the waiting list until we decide what is desirable from our viewpoint.

Lauridsen: Sailcrest school board should make it clear to the parents that there is a choice of schools.

Happ: Have we decided to limit enrolment to the present 330? Let's vote on it.

Marion: How rational was the selection of this figure?

Happ: It's based on budgeting—it goes by units of 18.5 students per teacher (or some figure).

Sander: We are an awkward size school.

Anderson: Is the ratio fixed for next year?

Shelton: It's going up by one according to the newspaper; but let's make a decision to limit enrolment to 330.

Deering: Let's not make that decision before thinking in terms of the nature of the program.
(Miss Deering was a humanities teacher who had studied curriculum development theory. Her concern was evidenced in the program descriptions written in humanities).

Happ: But we can discuss forever; we have to make some decisions.

(The staff was frequently concerned about its efficiency in reaching decisions).

Deering: But it has to be made in light of the effectiveness of the program.

Scott: There isn't any basis for increasing enrolment. Let's vote.

Hardy: I have a motion on the floor.

Shelton: Let's amend the motion to read: that the enrolment shall not exceed 18 times the student-teacher ratio.

Hardy: O.K.

The motion was carried.

Mr. Scott brought up the subject of remuneration for summer staff work.

Hardy: We're not likely to get extra money from the board. Can we handle it from our funds?

Happ: We can't pay the going rate; we don't have enough.

Scott: But we can figure what work we want to do in the summer and pay token amounts for it from our funds, although we shouldn't miss asking the board.

Deering: We are willing to work in the summer but we need to establish the principle that the board has to pay for it. The board's commitment to the project has to be tested.

Hardy: Let's send a delegation to the board. We should use our funds for operating expenses.
Deering: We need to decide what work we want to do in the summer before requesting money.

Hardy: Right. So we should discuss our various problems and then make a brief to the board.

Chiba: We shouldn't worry about the teachers' fédération.

Happ: We should spend all of our funds on materials and other program improvements—and do so by June. Then we should work for nothing in the summer if necessary.

Hardy: Let's table the problem till the end of our meetings and then decide how to approach the board.

Scott: Maybe we shouldn't even bother to bring this up again if it's pointless going to the board.

The general feeling was, however, that a strong request to the board should be made.

Hardy: What should we discuss next? timetabling? enrolment by grades? program?

Scott: Call it "timetable"—it takes in a lot of problems.

Hardy: Is it right to do that first?

Happ: When I say "timetable," I don't mean the mechanics but rather how to use time in relation to our objectives.

Hardy: Let's not look at Thursdays in particular. We shouldn't have a unique day or an extended lunch hour. We should plan on a regular 5-day basis.

It was agreed not to have a special Thursday and to restructure the noon hour.

Happ: Let's shorten the usual day, since we start so early; not that we should limit everyone.

Hardy: But "extra-curricular" activities shouldn't be viewed as something to be placed outside the regular day. We should each be able to schedule things whenever we want between, say, 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
Scott: The domains have become atomized. We should realize that we can operate each within a broad time framework. We don't need to generalize about timing.

Lauridsen: But there are things that have to be scheduled so they don't conflict.

Scott: Whatever we call it, there is a distinction to be made between essentials and extras--those that can be done at any old time and those that can't be.

Happ: I propose that in principle essentials be scheduled between 8:00 and 2:00.

Hardy: Is there agreement?

General agreement was voiced. A timetable committee was set up, and it was decided to utilize 15-minute modules.

The Decision to Retain Contract Time in Year Two

The topic of contractual time was raised.

Sander: There is a difficulty from a lack of understanding of the concept by students. It is tied up with the concepts of advisor and subject teacher.

Scott: There are different meanings in different subject areas, but isn't there general agreement that allowance of time for individualized work is desirable?

Heads nodded. (The retention of contractual time was officially stated by the staff as one of the decision outcomes of the planning week).

Hardy: Do we want to define the roles of advisor and subject teacher?

Happ: The subject teacher should be responsible.

Fayter: The advisor should assist the subject teacher.

Mrs. Anderson asked whether they should consider a semester system.
Hardy: In another school in which I taught, the semester experience was negative.

Deering: Particular courses could be semestered; there could be some freedom.

Scott: It's hard to see how.

Anderson: Long periods for shorter times are better for food courses.

Hardy: Do we need to discuss staff meeting time, or advisory time?

Happ: Are mini-courses going to be at any time and conflict with regular classes?

There was general agreement to put mini-courses after 2:00, accompanied by concern that they not be "viewed as frills." Mr. Happ suggested there was a need for a time slot for mini-courses during the day also. It was agreed to a time-table 1½ hours before lunch, one day per week, for mini-courses. Some discussion of advisory time and lunch time ensued.

Later in the planning week, the staff was given an interim report on the board's questionnaire study of contracted student time. In the report, Mrs. Pearson, research assistant to Mr. Elvin, gave a definition of contractual time "derived from the staff" through an earlier questionnaire:

Students at University Town Secondary School are assigned less class time per week than is normally the case in secondary school. To compensate, students are allotted contracted student time in each subject area. Contracted student time is defined as the scheduling of student time in addition to allotted class time (called time-table time) to enable the student to complete the requirements of a course. . . .
The suggested purposes of this approach are:

(1) To provide a student with the opportunity to take responsibility for his own progress.

(2) To provide a slow worker extra time with teacher assistance.

(3) To give a fast worker extra time for reading and research.

(4) To enable a teacher to assign extra time to a student if and when required.

This definition was different from the "free time" conception held by many parents. Some commented on the questionnaire that if they had had the definition earlier they would not have been so upset about the new program. (Whether this definition was truly descriptive is called into question by interview data I gathered--see Chapter 22).

The board's study found that a majority of parents and students were in favor of the approach, although a large minority was opposed. Many thought it should begin at an early age. Mrs. Pearson reported a marked positive change in students' attitudes toward the school in general and particularly toward teachers. This change in student attitude was reported to have been noticed by many parents.

The staff's decision to retain contract time, however, was made before the board's interim report was received. This was typical of the staff's attitude toward the board's evaluation department. The staff, throughout the period of this study, had a marked tendency to believe that its own perceptions were more valid than conclusions drawn from
any measurement device. The staff distrusted "statistics."

In the course of some interviews during the following school year, I asked participants about the decision to retain contractual time in the program. Conceptually, it seemed to represent the completion of a cycle of program development decisions at the school level. The reader will recall that I inquired specifically into the earlier decisions to: (1) emphasize student responsibility and individualization of instruction; (2) utilize the contract approach; and (3) use a questionnaire on contract time in the year one evaluation.

Teacher:

We didn't make a decision to retain it as such; we just didn't make a decision to discard it. We recognized there were weaknesses in the way we were handling it.

Teacher:

It came about as a formal decision as a result of discussions in staff meetings, at the lunch table, and so on. We realized there were faults but we weren't willing to concede there was no room for contract time.

Teacher:

At one of our meetings it was agreed that those who thought the contractual approach was valuable would continue to use it. I don't recall the discussion of it.

Teacher:

I don't think it was an actual decision, just a continuation of a thing that seemed to be working.
I don't even remember it as a decision. Nobody said to me, "Shall we keep contractual time?" I don't think anyone seriously doubted that it was a good thing.

Teacher:

This decision was made in the 5-day planning session. The decision would have to be put down to our feeling that contractual time was working. I don't think it was dependent on the survey. We made the decision before the survey came out.

Teacher:

That was made in last spring's session. It was decided under the heading of timetable, along with the decision to make Thursday a regular day. It was a staff decision. Indirectly, the staff was responsive to student feedback; if the overall student opinion had been negative, the staff wouldn't have retained contract time. I don't know if there was any direct involvement of students, parents, or school board people in the decision.

Teacher:

I don't remember it (the decision). Maybe it was made when I was absent one day.

Parents and students had no knowledge of how the decision was made to retain contract time.

Parent:

I don't know. I assume the decision was made because enough people who filled out the questionnaire thought it was worthwhile. Nearly every parent I talked to thought it was a waste, though; I'd see them at the Safeway (grocery store) and they'd all give me the same story: Isn't that situation at the high school wasteful--what's going on over there? So it must have been the staff and students who thought it was good.

Parent:

I wasn't even asked about it.
Parent:

The decision was made by the faculty of the school, or the faculty in consultation with the school board.

Parent:

I don't know how it was decided. It wasn't discussed at the consultative committee, as far as I can recall.

Student:

I don't know how it was made. It was a good decision, though. It makes the teacher more human.

Student:

I don't have any knowledge of how that decision was made. The teachers needed contractual time to keep up the one-to-one relationship. They kept Thursday as a normal day and then had the student sign up with the teacher.

Student:

I guess the decision was made by the teachers, maybe along with the school board.

Mr. Elvin's perception of the decision to retain contract time in the U. Town program was:

That was the result of the input to the staff as a result of the first year's experience. It was a staff decision. We didn't make a recommendation one way or the other. I don't know if they actually debated whether to continue it or not.

Dr. Meyer said: "This was decided by the staff on the basis of feedback from evaluation." Dr. Allworth said simply, "That was also a school decision."

Days 2 and 3

The next general topic on the agenda was "physical plant and resources." The issue was raised of whether to request a
portable classroom from the board for a student lounge. Mr. Sander was opposed, and the teaching staff was apparently almost unanimously in favor. It was generally agreed that, contrary to Mr. Sander's opinion, untidiness was not a good reason for opposing a student social area. One teacher commented, "People, not students, are messy."

It was also agreed that the portable should be made into a well-furnished place to encourage respect for the facility.

Fayter: The students should be in on these decisions. What do we know about the students' wishes concerning the social area?

Mattson: Could it be useful to the community as a whole?

Happ: That could be disastrous.

Marion: I would like to move that there be a portable for a student social area.

Fayter: Have the consultative committee discussed this? The students' council?

Happ: There isn't any doubt that they support the idea.

Anderson: Could we get letters in support as part of our brief to the board?

Marion: Would the cost of the portable be borne by the board? There could be student involvement in raising funds for furnishings.

A vote was taken. All of the teachers voted in favor of Mrs. Marion's motion; Mr. Sander voted against.

Scott: Communication to the consultative committee and student council is now needed.

Anderson: I move that a letter be sought from the consultative committee endorsing the request for a portable.
The vote in favor was unanimous, with Mr. Sander abstaining.

Lauridsen: The students should be approached soon—before going to the board.

Happ: We can bring it up in advisory group discussions next week.

Scott: Let's wait till later to discuss the details of fund-raising with the students.

The science staff wanted to make a proposal. They wanted to move Mr. Shelton's teaching equipment to the other wing of the building, next to the other science teachers, in exchange for a classroom presently used by humanities. (The problem of physical separation had been identified in the professional day meetings in February). Mr. Sander was opposed to the idea.

Sander: Mr. Shelton has special equipment in the present room that he won't have in the other wing. It would cost at least $15,000 to move it all.

Chiba: Would the board's freeze on renovation include this?

Happ: If Mr. Shelton feels it's important to move in spite of the loss of equipment, he should be permitted to do so, so long as it doesn't cost too much and the area he leaves can be used by humanities. Those tables are solidly fixed in place.

Hardy: Couldn't he move as a trial for the rest of the year?

Happ: That would be pretty difficult.

The science staff conferred briefly, then said that they needed to know whether the humanities and language staffs could use Mr. Shelton's present room.
Mattson: It could be an electronics media room for all domains.

Lauridsen: But that would be at the cost of a regular room for humanities.

Furness: We don't have enough regular rooms now.

Lauridsen: The main purpose is to integrate the sciences.

Deering: Why do you need to be next door to each other?

Happ: Because of the need to supervise the use of equipment.

Scott: But can humanities use Mr. Shelton's room?

It was generally agreed that its use would be limited to lab-type work, not seminars, and that this would not be desirable for the humanities program.

Chiba: Perhaps you need to adjust your programs to fit the facilities, as in shop.

There was an impasse. Science staff caucused briefly, then Mr. Shelton suggested that they "should perhaps shelve the issue for now until science staff can discuss it further."

Scott: Let's get a decision on whether humanities can use it.

The humanities staff discussed it among themselves. After much hesitation, they said that they "could use it, and feel that the total benefits for the school might be greater if sciences make the move." Sciences staff said they would consider the matter further. (The move was not made).

(During day 2, there was also discussion of some minor physical plant problems: the location of the student store,
the use of the auditorium area, the location of bike racks, the need for more garbage containers).

(Some discussion of budgetary problems also occurred on each of the first two days).

The next general topic on the agenda was "staffing." (Discussion of this topic overlapped Day 2 and Day 3). Mrs. Griffiths brought up a need for a male physical education teacher for the boys. Humanities wanted two additional teachers, and were willing to do without any staff assistants. It was agreed that this could best be discussed as part of the general staffing question. There was some discussion of staff assistants. The question was then asked, How many teachers and staff assistants should there be in the total picture? It was figured that if physical education and humanities got what they wanted, the total staff would be half a unit over the maximum allowed by the provincial formula. There would hence be no possibility of a special instructional budget created from staffing funds, as in year one. Mr. Hardy asked: "Should we consider the overall program before making a decision on staffing?" Mr. Happ argued that since the school would still have the regular operating budget, an increase in staff would not undermine the budget for the program. The discussion was hindered by the staff's lack of understanding of the relevant aspects of the district and provincial budgets. Decisions were postponed.
Mrs. Marion interjected a message from the consultative committee that they would like staff agreement to a general meeting on May 2 focussing on the humanities program. Mr. Berends needed a decision in order to put out the newsletter.

Marion: We don't want to do it, but perhaps we should.

Happ: It would be useful if it is on the program's future.

Hardy: I move that we have such a meeting on May 9. The dates of the general meeting and council meeting should be reversed.

(This motion was carried, and the decision was made known through the newsletter published soon thereafter).

Scott: I move we make a strong suggestion to the consultative committee that the tone of the general meeting be positive and forward-looking, including discussion of the revised provincial curriculum, with questions received in writing in advance, and that individual discussion of pupil progress not be included.

There was agreement to this proposal. It was decided that Mrs. Marion and Mr. Sander would organize the meeting and direct the questions received.

Day 4

A question was raised as to what courses students would choose next year.

Hardy: Let's get the kids' expressions of interest first.

Sander: But they'll just choose from among those presently offered.

Scott: I would like to make a motion that we ask the kids to express their course interests on the basis of those currently offered and make additional suggestions; that this be done within two weeks.
Hardy: Although the information would be valuable, we put the wrong foot forward when we do it on the basis of what currently is offered. We should first ask for their suggestions without our referring to the current program.

Happ: Is that honest? Aren't we going to have required curricula and university entrance constraints?

Hardy: But the kids should participate in the creation of the constraints, if there are going to be constraints.

Scott: It is important to involve the students at some point, but not in the first step; it's not feasible. The staff should propose alternatives from among which kids can select.

Hardy: But why not sit down with the kids' suggestions?

Happ: I think you're being unrealistic.

Scott: I agree.

Lauridsen: It would be more effective to offer ideas as a staff first, because the kids won't know what they want.

Shelton: Does that rule out the kids' rejecting the staff proposals and substituting their own?

It was generally felt that this would not be ruled out.

Sander: So many want university entrance. We have to structure our offerings in that light.

Hardy: We can do both. Why not get the kids' ideas and feed them back to them to get knowledge of important interests?

A vote was taken on Mr. Scott's motion. There was essentially a lack of conviction in either direction. Most voted for the motion, but Mr. Hardy and Mr. Mattson voted against, and there were several abstentions.
A student told me:

. . . I've brought up to three or four teachers the idea of student evaluation of courses—the teacher and the students sitting down and talking about the course; but they just laughed it off. . . .

The staff discussed screening students for admission to the school.

Chiba: Can we justify excluding some now enrolled?

Lauridsen: Yes, because some are acting to the detriment of the program as a whole.

Deering: The criteria would have to be very specific to justify this.

Griffiths: It's hard to be clearly objective about it.

Anderson: One criterion is that if we are not a vocational school, there are certain students who clearly should go elsewhere.

Deering: This relates to evaluation. Many students aren't sure what kind of school this is. I feel that some of the kids who lack academic ability benefit from being at U. Town.

Scott: We must avoid setting criteria that we ourselves aren't sure the operational meaning of.

Fayter: The kids have to be considered individually.

Anderson: Let's not be concerned only with behavior-problem kids. What about well-behaved kids who just don't have the ability?

Griffiths: Is academic qualification for university our goal?

Scott: Most parents see it that way.

Marion: Isn't a general objective to prepare students for a variety of post-secondary pursuits?

Lauridsen: We can't do everything.

Sander: The open enrolment concept hasn't been implemented enough yet--there isn't yet enough real differentiation among Sailcrest secondary schools.
Scott: We have a seller's market. We don't need big principles. We can just shape the student body according to some simple criteria.

Griffiths: Are we an academic school?

Happ: (chair) There evidently isn't agreement on the objectives of the school. Should we discuss these now?

Lauridsen: My impression was that we aren't strictly a university prep school. Yet we seem better suited to serve some kids than others (not on an academic/non-academic dimension).

Hardy: We could look at it from individual needs, and determine which school is best for each student in question.

Griffiths: Most parents expect academic preparation.

Scott: The staff can make such decisions too.

Chiba: Some kids who are interested in vocational training can't be provided for here.

The staff discussed for some time the problem of lack of agreement on the student's goals among parent, student, and teacher; and of knowing who should have what influence on such decisions.

Happ: What should we tell a parent who wants to know how to succeed in this school?

Scott: That the student must be willing to accept lots of responsibility.

Other teachers said that the school should know the applicant's "reasons for wishing to attend;" his "field of interest," his "post-secondary goals" and "background relative to aspirations." They suggested expecting an "innovative attitude" and a "cooperative attitude." Mr. Scott said they shouldn't "confuse outcomes with pre-requisites."
The question was raised: "How do we define 'responsibility'?" Mr. Scott proposed it mean "to take initiatory steps in learning; to solve logistical problems in learning; and to take advantage of the teacher as a learning resource."

He said that it should not mean to do everything on your own. Mr. Lauridsen added: "Some parents think the teacher does not do anything. We must correct this misimpression too."

Mr. Hardy and Mr. Shelton volunteered to form a committee to interview students applying for admission.

Day 5

The last main topic on the agenda was "communications."

Mr. Scott raised the problem of student involvement.

Scott: I am concerned with the lack of student involvement in the making of decisions about school operations—decisions which directly affect students. Some machinery should be set up to ensure democratic joint decision-making by staff and students. To date, only the consultative committee exists as a mechanism. We could have half hour weekly meetings of a representative body and large assemblies to communicate decisions made to the student body.

Deering: We would need rotating membership.

Lauridsen: Would this be in addition to advisory groups?

Scott: Yes.

Fayter: Most of the issues come up in advisory meetings. Could representative students attend the last half hour of staff meetings, so that it could carry over to advisories?

Anderson: It would scare kids off if it were the whole staff.

Fayter: We could rotate the staff which remain to discuss with students.
Scott: Rotation isn't too effective. We should have a stable body as an experiment. It's not happening in any other schools, so we don't know what will happen.

Deering: It should be informal—perhaps in the portable. I would also like to see student representatives in staff committees of all types.

Scott: Right. We need a serious experiment in student decision-making. Student government is traditionally not taken seriously. We've seen the consultative committee go through an evolution in which it has denied the principle on which it was founded, and settled into quite a different function.

Fayter: Could discussion go forward with students with a view to identifying ideas concerning machinery?

Deering: We should make a firm recommendation as a staff.

Scott: We have machinery for discussing the idea: the advisory groups.

Hardy: Couldn't we make a decision now so that whoever seeks student points of view doesn't have to re-canvass the staff?

Fayter: I move that as the teachers are in accord with the need for staff-student involvement in decision-making, and as part of the staff meeting time seems to be available, Mr. Scott sound out the students.

Scott: That's further than I expected the staff to commit themselves today, but fine by me.

Lauridsen: It's good to come back from this week of meetings with something that immediately looks different to the students.

Chiba: How about involving the students in the timetable committee?

Deering: Let's discuss that after resolving the first motion. Let's add Mr. Scott's specific mechanism ideas to the motion.

Scott: There's a main part to the motion, then a specific suggestion.
Deering: So it is suggested that a student-staff representative group be established.

Sander: We should perhaps combine this function with that of the representative assembly of students. My concern would be that there might be some grey area between the two.

Deering: It could be handled by Mr. Scott's committee.

A vote was taken. All were in favor except Mr. Sander and Mr. Happ.

Happ: I am abstaining because of the lack of clarity in the definition of function of the new and old bodies.

Scott: We haven't suggested a change in student government but an addition of staff-student cooperation in school decision-making.

Deering: (chair) Let's set a time when Mr. Scott will report back.

Scott: A week from Thursday.

Mrs. Fayter raised the topic of advisory groups. She wondered "when and under what circumstances should we communicate about student attendance or non-achievement." She suggested "a good memo system."

Scott: It's only a problem in the beginning of the school year.

Hardy: We have the mechanism for it--the pink memos.

Fayter: Right. They just need to be used more.

Deering: Should we recommend use of memos to communicate?

Scott: We need more positive memos.

Happ: Attendance at the beginning of the year is a big communications problem because sometimes the teacher doesn't know he's supposed to have the kid.

Sander: Should we change or keep multi-age advisory groups?
Happ: No common ground was apparent to me as it was. We should try homogeneous grouping in advisories.

Scott: If students buy joint decision-making, we could have this as a topic to try it.

Happ: I recommend that the advisory groups be reconstituted homogeneously by age and that the kids consider this as a joint decision.

This plan was agreed upon.

Mrs. Marion told me during an interview:

The advisory system in which a particular teacher guides each kid, is even more basic to the program than the contract system; it results in humanizing the teacher-student relationship. . . .

The student president told me during the second year of the project:

A major problem is the advisory thing. We were told last year that the advisor is to help you with problems on an individual basis; but they don't do that. Most of them just check attendance, and things like that. The advisor I had last year didn't even bother to see me regularly and . . . didn't really care. The one I have this year is only a little better. Four or five of the teachers put themselves out for advisees; the rest don't. This problem is another example of something that should be discussed with the students.

Dr. Meyer attended part of the last meeting day at the request of the staff. There were a number of topics which they wanted to talk to him about. One was the district's offer of "total budgeting" authority to the individual schools. Dr. Meyer was asked what advantage there was to it.

Meyer: It gives more flexibility in the nature of items ordered--you're not stuck with the standard list.
Happ: Would we have to take care of our own accounting?

Meyer: It hasn't been decided exactly, but surely yes in the experimental phase.

Lauridsen: Would we have the advantage of price cuts?

Meyer: Yes, if you ordered through the purchasing department.

Sander: But not if it weren't ordered at the time of the department's bulk ordering.

Scott: Would there be extra office help?

Meyer: No.

Dr. Meyer was asked about the finance formula for the coming year.

Meyer: We won't know till next week's board meeting.

Deering: Are funds assured for three years for this experiment?

Meyer: The only possibility would be a slight reduction in funds. I will have the details for your staff meeting Thursday, a week.

What were the plans of the board officials for final evaluation of the project?

Meyer: The trustees are hands-off, waiting for evaluation data. They are less anxious about U. Town than about many other projects. The officials are supportive.

Mr. Hardy asked about enrolment.

Meyer: You can't be expected to increase. New alternative programs will be set up in schools in the east side of the city.

Hardy: How about the west side?

Meyer: Two schools are innovative.

Hardy: Can other schools get this information? It's needed to advise kids.
Meyer: Good point.

Mrs. Anderson said that the staff wanted an official endorsement of the U. Town project.

Meyer: You're being left alone—that's an endorsement.

Hardy: Is there an outside body going to do an evaluation?

Meyer: We're keeping it in the department of evaluation. We're keeping others out. We see it as a formative period.

Mr. Scott asked about screening of students: "Do we have the right to screen according to our criteria?"

Meyer: In principle, yes, but it depends on the criteria.

Hardy: If schools are closing their enrolment, what happens to open boundaries?

Meyer: They should be open till April 30 but may be full now. Mr. Mayall (a board official) can help with individual placement.

It was pointed out that there was a problem with the filling of purchasing orders.

Meyer: You should phone the purchasing department to put the pressure on.

Dr. Meyer was asked about remuneration for summer staff work.

Meyer: There could only be an honorarium.

Deering: So we aren't special in that we get remuneration for extra time we have to put in.

Meyer: This was in the ideal budget, but it had to be chopped.

Dr. Meyer raised the topic of program evaluation: "You should have some objective measurement of the achievement of
objectives." The staff objected that this "can't be done by standardized exams."

Scott: It seems like intellectual achievement is the assumed goal; yet we've been emphasizing other areas. We lack evaluation devices, and don't have suggestions from the board office. Exam data are irrelevant.

Mr. Lauridsen asked Dr. Meyer about conflicts between provincial course requirements and school policy decisions.

Mr. Scott asked: "Can we, for example, tell the kids that they don't have to take French 8?"

Meyer: But what will they have as a second-language experience? It doesn't have to be a fixed time, traditional instruction. It could be exploratory.

Scott: How do you reconcile compulsion and exploration? We should remove the French 8 requirement. It's a failure, especially for the boys.

Meyer: It could come later in the student's career, justified by the trend to ungrading; but then you have to deal with the parents. A tie-in with U. Town Elementary would help.

Lauridsen: So in general you don't see the provincial policies in program as binding.

Meyer: Right. Schools have lots of autonomy.

After Dr. Meyer left the meeting, Mr. Sander asked for a decision on "total budgeting." Mr. Happ moved that they keep the old arrangement. The motion was carried.

Mr. Scott brought up the topic of attendance. "How has the student record-keeping worked?"

Chiba: As good as in other schools.

Happ: Why play games, even if we're cooperating with the kids in it?
Chiba: Mostly they're honest.

Deering: What is our policy on attendance? We need to resolve disagreements among the staff.

Scott: It is linked to other objectives of the school, but it needs to be dealt with explicitly.

Marion: If a kid feels the school is not meeting his needs, what good is requiring attendance?

Scott: We have not yet really included the student in program decisions.

Happ: Isn't it our present policy that attendance at particular courses is watched by teachers?

Hardy: We're all concerned about attendance, but vary in the nature of our concern.

Happ: Should I be upset about non-attendance or not? It's a philosophical question.

Scott: We can view attendance checking as positive or as developmental.

Marion: Could it be handled on an individualized basis?

Scott: Let's handle it by area but have a policy that some record be kept in each area. I'll make that a motion.

Lauridsen: Will there be some attempt to communicate to advisors?

Hardy: Make it a separate recommendation.

Mr. Scott's motion was carried.

"Communications with parents" was the next topic addressed.

Sander: The number of phone calls to parents could be a statistic to use in a report.

Deering: The newsletter appeals greatly to parents.

Lauridsen: It seems to be an accurate reporting of problems.
Deering: Why were there only two parents and one student attending the consultative committee meeting? Can it be effective? It seems like they discuss the concerns of one or two parents who write letters in. How can the committee be improved?

Scott: Let's arrange to develop our contribution at another time. It's too big a topic right now. Let's just make a statement about our desire that the committee continue developing.

This was agreed to.

It was noted that the statements from domains describing the program for parents, which were to have been written up following the professional day meetings in February, were still not done. The staff decided to "finish preparing these," and put them into "some kind of booklet." It was expected that the booklet would also facilitate communications among the staffs of different domains.

The final topic discussed was evaluation of students.

Marion: Is the form used for reporting this year O.K.?

Chiba: It's adequate for a variety of types of reporting.

Lauridsen: Is it a report to the student or the parent? If the parent, mail them home.

Scott: Reporting has been confused with evaluation. Reporting to parents is required by law. If we want to report to the students, we need an explicit policy to that effect.

Deering: Let's make the distinction on record as a staff; and let's resolve to mail reports to parents.

Happ: They could be inserted with the newsletter. How often? All at the same time?

It was generally thought that there should be three per year.
Marion: Rather than the present system, it would be better to have reports as needed—often more than three per year.

Lauridsen: Could we set three dates in the year as deadlines by which a report will have gone out?

It was agreed to make reports at whatever times are most useful in each case; to assess each student a mailing fee; to assure a report on each student in each subject by December 1, March 1, and term end; not to require parent signatures; and to leave the format of the report up to the teacher.

Chapter Summary

The staff's planning week in April was largely taken up by problems of the types which I have called "organizational" rather than curricular-instructional. It was decided, for example, to limit enrolment to the current level; the enrolment decision was made hastily, over the objections of one teacher that decisions about the program should come first. Some timetable decisions were made; there would be no unscheduled day; no extended noon hour; and "extras" would be scheduled after 2:00 p.m., "essentials" between 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. (The distinction between essentials and extras was made only after some debate, in which the desire to avoid such differentiation was evident). Concerning the physical plant, the staff discussed the need for a portable for a student lounge; it was decided, over the principal's opposition, to make a brief to the school board for a portable and
to seek the support of the consultative committee for it. A discussion of the physical separation of one science teacher from the others in his domain led to the delicate question of the relative importance of two domains' needs; sensitivity was displayed on both sides. Questions about staffing were discussed, but decisions deferred for lack of information on district and provincial budgeting. An attendance policy was formed: to keep some record of attendance in every area of the program. The director visited the staff and was asked about finance, enrolment, screening of students, purchase orders, and remuneration for summer work.

The topic of student admissions led to that of criteria for admissions decisions, which, in turn, led to some basic school-level program problems: the criteria for student success in the school; the question of whether U. Town was an academic school; and the problem of the meaning of "student responsibility." A school-level program problem discussed indecisively was that of how to get students' ideas on courses for year two. Concerning student evaluation, it was decided to create a system of flexible timing for reports to parents. The director was asked about project evaluation, and he told the staff that the board was less worried about U. Town than about many other schools.

The staff addressed some problems related to participation in school-level program decision-making. The director
was queried about the program decision-making authority of the staff in relation to the provincial department; he said there was a great deal of room for staff autonomy. Student involvement in decision-making was promoted through approval of a teacher's idea to form a staff-student committee, although the principal and another teacher thought it was wrong to create yet another body for participation in decision-making. A simple statement of support for the consultative committee was issued; no substantial discussion of the committee occurred. The consultative committee's request for a general meeting was approved, but the date was changed, and the staff urged a controlled format focusing on the future of the program as a whole, not past failures or individual students' problems. The descriptions of the programs of each domain, which were to have been written up for distribution to the community in February, were still not ready; the staff decided to finish them in the near future.

One of the school-level program decisions made during the planning week was to retain contractual time in the 1972 to 1973 program. The staff was given an interim report on the board's questionnaire study of contract time; the study found that a majority of parents and students were in favor of the approach. The decision to retain contract time was, however, made before receiving the interim report. I interviewed participants concerning this decision, to
follow up on my study of earlier decisions about the contract method. I found that many staff members did not recall it as an explicit decision; those who did, said that contract time was retained because it seemed to be working. (This was contradicted by interview data I obtained on the implementation of contract time, reported in Chapter 22). Parents and students were found to have no knowledge of how the decision was made. Board officials assumed that the decision was made by the staff on the basis of feedback from evaluation.

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CHAPTER 16

THE PROBLEM OF "NON-PERFORMING" STUDENTS:
A CRISIS IN STAFF PHILOSOPHY

Consultative Committee
Meeting, May 2

Chairman Worrall stated that there was some need for the committee to plan for the general meeting. He noted that the staff "wanted the dates (of the general meeting and consultative committee meeting) switched, and it seemed reasonable."

Sander: There have been two types of format tried previously: (1) general formal presentation followed by discussions—which didn't give enough time for the latter; (2) discussions only—which also creates problems.

Mrs. Light: We should discuss next year's school program (liaison and we should have plenty of time for trustee) discussion.

Worrall: Specific questions or general?

Light: Not particular children's problems.

This was generally agreed.

Mrs. O'Doherty: We should state that this meeting is not for that.

McDonald: We should evaluate this past year. And there should be information on humanities.

Worrall: This is on its way, isn't it?

Deering: We hope to have a handout ready by the May 9 meeting. Also, a handbook for next year will be available by June; it will be more detailed than last fall's.

Someone asked about enrolment for the coming year.

Sander: There are only about 7 students leaving. There's a long waiting list.
Ray: How do you decide who will be admitted?
(Student)

Sander: The criteria have been defined.

Chairman Worrall asked the meeting to return to the subject of program evaluation as a component of the plans for the general meeting.

Sander: It's difficult to give data since the board people won't complete their work till the summer.

Parent: How do you feel about this year, Mr. Sander?

Sander: We seem to have accomplished some good things.

O'Doherty: What about the lack of knowing where a student is?

Sander: We can't do too much about it.

Light: Absenteeism and truancy is the highest in some highly structured schools.

Student: If a student wants to skip, he can, regardless of rules.

O'Doherty: But you should at least know that the child is missing unjustifiably.

Parent: That wastes a lot of the teachers' time.

Sander: There's no excuse for the parent not being notified in cases of gross truancy.

Student: Some form of attendance is taken in every U. Town class.

Student: The informal relationship between the students and teachers is great.

Sander: There has been growth in student responsibility. Given freedom, students tended to goof off for some time, then to realize what they needed to do.

McDonald: So we have gone quite far into evaluation. This could be done in the general meeting. We could perhaps have a panel of students.

Worrall: It would have to be carefully managed or else it could degenerate.
Mattson: Could we use a videotape?
Sander: My concern would be the opposite; it would tend to be too pro-school; it's difficult to get an anti-school student to participate.
Worrall: But if you could do so it would say a lot for the school.
Student: There are students who are opposed to the program even though they are doing well.
McDonald: Let's try the videotape.
Mattson: We'll have to get onto it quickly.

Details were discussed. Plans were reported in the committee newsletter on May 4. Mr. Sander would first talk about the past and future of the program. The humanities teachers would then give a report. Thirdly, groups would view a videotaped student panel discussion and then engage in discussing questions which it raised.

Staff Meeting, May 4

Mr. Hardy and Mr. Shelton, who were working on the screening of students, raised the subject of "non-performers and enrolment."

Hardy: Projected enrolment figures show that present enrolment already exceeds projections in most grades. This raises delicate questions about admissions policies.
Chiba: Criteria for admission should be applicable to present students.
Dillman: Non-performers benefit from being accepted as human beings.
Happ: But they take up space that others could use.
Scott: An important decision needs to be made here: If we want to be a therapeutic institution, performance can't be a criterion of admission; but we aren't decisive about whether we are a therapeutic school.

Lauridsen: It seems a shame to sock a kid with achievement requirements when he's just beginning to enjoy school.

Hardy: We can't be entirely selective--some kids should be admitted or kept who aren't achieving, unless they're really disrupting others.

Sander: The parents should be involved in this. Information should be given to parents.

Scott: We shouldn't use a neighborhood boundary criterion; this would keep the slackers in the school from this neighborhood.

Marion: We have to be consistent in policy, whatever it is.

Hardy: I'm opposed to a non-performance list; it couldn't be satisfactorily defined and fair.

Happ: So let's establish a definition. Are we an academic school? There was no support voiced for this idea.

Happ: Are we therapeutic?

Shelton: Why not use the criteria determined at the five-day session, and each advisor notify parents in cases where the criteria are not satisfied. I'll make that a motion.

Chiba: But we will be setting ourselves up as gods. We should add to the motion the proviso that we will keep non-achievers who are benefitting in other ways, so long as the parent knows what the situation is.

Hardy: This raises questions about admission of new students. We have to be consistent.

Marion: Since we've already agreed to limit enrolment, we have to have a policy for selection.

Hardy: What will be the outcome of these advisor calls to parents? It's very sticky.
Scott: It's difficult to support the claim that other schools will be better for some students. We would need specific knowledge of other programs.

There was discussion of Mr. Shelton's motion leading to a rewording: "Use the criteria established at the five-day session as a basis for counselling parents concerning whether students should remain in the school." It was not made clear what would happen after the counselling. Dr. Meyer had entered the meeting in the course of this discussion, to discuss some other matters. He said that they would have to be careful about the rights of students who were either already attending the school or resided in the neighborhood; those categories "have some right to attend" compared to new applicants from elsewhere in the city. It was noted by Mr. Sander that the procedure proposed would not reduce the numbers presently enrolled in the school except by voluntary withdrawals after counselling. Mr. Shelton's amended motion carried unanimously.

A parent said, during an interview:

A grave doubt I have has to do with kids who are unable to take responsibility for their own learning in certain areas. There isn't any mechanism for them. For example, many of the kids have had to get tutors in math. The teach-yourself method in some of the core areas doesn't work for some kids. The parents are in effect being told to provide the alternative themselves when the school isn't effective. With a tutor, my son raised his math grades significantly in a short time; so it wasn't him, it was the school.
General Meeting, May 9

My impressions as an observer were that Mr. Sander talked too long and left little time for meaningful presentations by the humanities staff as planned; then the planned small-group discussions turned into individual parent-teacher conferences (which had been specifically forbidden); and the videotaped student panel discussion was viewed by only a few parents on one set (the other sets were not available).

Staff Meeting, May 11

The problem of non-performing students and enrolment continued to be of intense concern. On this date, the staff meeting was reconvened at lunch time, in addition to the regular time, to deal with it.

Hardy: Enrolment is already at the limit. The screening committee is working without reason.

Happ: We should remove students who aren't interested in order to accommodate prospective students who are.

Scott: It's contrary to the school philosophy to kick students out.

A motion that enrolment be increased was defeated.

Griffiths: Is counselling the limit of the school's action?

Sander: Those who live within boundaries do have more attendance rights than other students.

Hardy: The board's open boundary policy is misleading. We should decide our policy.
Happ: If we agree that enrolment stays the same and good applicants from outside boundaries should be admitted, then we have to accept the principle that students can be asked to leave.

No one was able to fault Mr. Happ's logic.

Shelton: I move that students who don't benefit from the program will be transferred to another school.

Mr. Hardy seconded the motion, and it carried.

Marion: How do we do it?

Scott: The criteria are very difficult to define and apply. Many problem students have some positive reports.

Griffiths: I move that we ignore residence as a criterion of enrolment.

Hardy: It would have to be the same for currently enrolled students and new applicants.

Danter: That is contrary to the criteria set and passed on to the new grade 8s during planning week.

Lauridsen: And it's not feasible to screen 500 students.

Hardy: Can't we agree to the principle and apply it through counselling?

There was general agreement with this idea.

Deering: Let's go through the process of identifying problem kids and counselling them that they will be asked to leave in, say, October, if they don't improve. We need to be collectively aware of the identities of kids deemed unsatisfactory.

Danter: You'll need to write to the kids on the waiting list and tell them they won't be admitted for September.

Scott: That's implied as a decision here.

Nods of agreement.
It was decided that each advisor would bring to the staff as a whole the names of candidates for counselling; the staff would review these names; and the students selected would then be counselled.

Mr. Sander commented, during an interview:

. . . There are really two or more schools operating here, depending on subject. . . . We're dichotomous about student responsibility. Some teachers don't really want it. Some take a laissez-faire approach--the kid either has responsibility or he doesn't. Still others encourage responsibility, but it's not a total staff commitment. . . . That's why you can't operate on a majority decision basis. For everything we do on staff, there's at least one person who doesn't believe in it.

Mr. Happ told me:

. . . There isn't complete agreement on staff, of course. There are two camps--one thinks students should be firmly dealt with when they fail to perform, the other is more tolerant.

Among other May 11 staff meeting items, Mrs. Marion and Miss Deering, who were working on plans and materials for student orientation in September, asked the staff to "furnish information" on "outlines and content of courses" and "any other data" by May 16. (Deadlines apparently did not allow much time to implement the decision to obtain student ideas about courses.)

Staff Meeting, June 1

It was recognized that there was a problem of conflict between board policy to give priority to students in the local neighborhood and staff desire to apply criteria to
all applicants regardless of residence.

Scott: This again brings out the fundamental conflict between the decision-making authority of the central administration and the school.

It was decided that Mr. Hardy would see Dr. Meyer to find out whether the staff could in fact make its own decision about student admissions.

There was a reminder to submit the names of non-performing students, as decided on May 11.

Staff Meeting, June 8

Mr. Hardy reported on his talk with Dr. Meyer:

A direct policy is difficult to get but we appear to be obligated to accept students within the (neighborhood) district. New students may not necessarily meet our criteria but the parents should be advised of our criteria for entrance during counselling.

Mr. Hardy said that since there were twelve or thirteen applicants residing in the local neighborhood, he recommended the staff increase the enrolment ceiling to the next staffing level in order to get an additional full-time teacher. This proposal was accepted.

Mr. Sander identified the problem of student admissions during an interview:

A major problem is the basic philosophy of the Sailcrest school board that there are eighteen secondary schools and they'd like as much variety in them as possible, so that with open enrolment students will be encouraged to choose the school best suited to them. This hasn't happened yet, so it's been a problem for us, in that we have a certain number of students who would do better in a different program but the other program isn't available. We ourselves have a waiting list of 150. The
other schools feel why should they take our problem kids and leave us the cream of the crop. Yet this is an academic school.

It was reported that the "orientation booklet material has all been received and it is hoped to go to press by the end of June."

Concerning the accreditation booklet, the committee reported that

Dr. Meyer has made some suggestions for changes in the book; the committee and interested staff members plan to meet for further discussion on differences. The book should reach the department of education by the end of June.

The topic of "parent-teacher liaison" was brought up.

Miss Dillman made a recommendation that parent visits to the school on a regular basis be arranged. It was recommended that the orientation handbook committee and Miss Deering draw up more precise plans.

Other staff meeting topics during May and June included: teachers' association; supervision of departmental exams; budget; drama festival; procedure for administering a board evaluation device to students; awards ceremonies; use of auditorium and gym during lunch hour; an invitation to meet with U. Town Elementary teachers; timetable information for the orientation booklet; a carnival; ballots for "best citizen;" sports day; building and grounds; collection of student fees in September; bike racks; student teachers; textbook collection; shelves for the library; appointment of new teachers; staff luncheon; job description for a staff assistant; honoraria for summer work; and tables in auditorium.
Staff-Student Meeting, June 13

Mr. Scott circulated among the staff a plan for a meeting with interested students "in connection with the formation of a staff-student group." He asked six teachers from different areas of the school to attend, and offered "some ideas which have come up in informal discussion and which might be used as agenda items." These included: "the desirability of such a group in the school programme;" "its method of representation;" "its role in relation to (a) the general assembly, (b) the staff meeting, (c) advisory groups." Mr. Scott also suggested "practical tasks" for the initial meeting: specifically, decisions about student fees payment; generation of "student ideas for the 2-day orientation period;" and decisions about "student participation on committees at present comprising teachers only."

Mr. Scott told me later that the meeting was indecisive and unenthusiastic because it came so near the end of the school year.

Chapter Summary

On May 2, the consultative committee made plans for the general meeting to be held one week later. The principal was to talk about the past and future of the program; the humanities staff was to give a report; and there were to be small group discussions following the viewing of a videotaped student panel discussion.
When the general meeting was held, the principal's talk left little time for the humanities presentation; the group discussions turned into individual parent-teacher conferences after all; and the videotaped panel discussion was viewed only by a few parents on one set (the other sets were not available).

A major topic at staff meetings in May and June was "non-performers and enrolment." The screening committee raised the problem of whether to apply admissions criteria to students already enrolled, and the related problem of whether to screen students from the immediate neighborhood in the same way as those from other parts of the city. Underlying both of these problems was the fundamental question of whether the school should serve students who do not achieve; as one teacher put it, whether U. Town was an "academic" school or a "therapeutic" institution. The staff was not able to resolve these questions entirely. On May 4, it was decided to "use the criteria established at the five-day planning session as a basis for counselling parents concerning whether students should remain in the school." On May 11, the staff made a difficult decision to transfer non-performing students out of the school after counselling and warning. It was decided to identify, through a collective staff process, those individual students who were failing in more than one area of the school, then to counsel and warn them that they might
have to transfer out of the school in the fall. (The staff did not, however, get around to doing this before the end of year one.)

The staff's desire to treat admissions applications from the U. Town neighborhood the same as applications from elsewhere in Sailcrest raised the problem of possible conflict with the school board's authority; one of the teachers was delegated to see the director about it. The result of this talk with the director was that the staff capitulated to the traditional rights of applicants from the school's neighborhood, and decided to increase enrolment to the next staffing level.

A staff-student meeting concerning the formation of a joint committee was called by one of the teachers on June 13, but the meeting was indecisive and unenthusiastic, apparently because it came so late in the year.

Other staff meeting topics in the May to June period again fell roughly into the categories of organizational problems identified earlier.

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CHAPTER 17

THE END OF YEAR ONE:
RESEARCH AND EVALUATION DOCUMENTS

Accreditation Booklet

The provincial department of education required the school to submit an accreditation booklet during year one of the experimental project, not because of the experimentation but because it was a regular procedure every five years. The booklet has a standardized format; the school is required to answer certain questions. The completing of the booklet by the staff constitutes an internal evaluation of the school which can be examined externally if the department so chooses. Some of the contents of the U. Town accreditation booklet were of interest to this study.

The booklet described the relationship between the U. Town school and community. It was noted that the U. Town community was increasingly urban and residential, with a population of 3,200 and an area of 5½ square miles. The open boundary policy of the Sailcrest school district was mentioned. The school population was reported to have increased thirty per cent over the last five years, largely because of an increase in the university's graduate student residences (fact pointed out by Dr. Koller, the former U. Town board chairman). A ten per cent increase was projected over the next five years. No sizeable ethnic or religious groups were
reported in the community. The socio-economic status of the majority of residents was reported to be high (a "high cost residential area with many professional and business men"). The booklet stated that the academic programme was "stressed in the school;" that it was "the only complete programme offered." It was reported that one-third of the school population resided outside the immediate community, and that the programme had been "modified to suite the intake of some students who wish a program which is less academic." The community attitude was said to be "generally positive toward education;" and "both positive and negative toward change in education." Teachers, however, were "not held in high regard due to the socio-economic nature of the community," according to the booklet. The consultative committee was said to provide community "consultation with respect to curriculum." The agencies and facilities of the university were reported to be "used regularly by the school;" and the school gym and play field to be used regularly by the community. Community involvement in school decisions was reported to occur through the consultative committee ("meets monthly to discuss school policies and to act as a sounding board for the school and community"); through general meetings "where policies are discussed;" and through questionnaires and opinion surveys administered by the Sallcrest school board evaluation department."
The school's philosophy and objectives were stated. There appeared a statement signed by the district superintendent that the philosophy was developed a year earlier by the principal and staff, and that it provided the basis for the growth of the program; further, that the parents and students had been involved in reviewing the objectives.

Relations between staff and administration were described. Good points in the relationship were said to be its closeness and the "lateralization of responsibility for administrative functions and for the total programme." Needs were identified for "clearer definitions of roles;" "greater inter-disciplinary integration;" and "more adequate inter-staff communication." An item which had been entered, then deleted, was: "more practical support by coordinators and officials for innovations which they have initiated."

Program strengths were said to be "student participation in course programming;" "the broad scope of courses;" "student involvement in a variety of creative activities;" "growth of self-motivation in many students as demonstrated by increased utilization of unscheduled time;" "the flexibility of the programme;" and "the process of continual evaluation." Program weaknesses were identified as "the need for greater integration of disciplines" and "the lack of involvement of some students in unscheduled time."

In Dr. Meyer's files I found a line-by-line critique of the U. Town accreditation booklet.
Evaluation Department Report on
Interview Findings, June 13

The board's evaluation department interviewed a random sample of parents and students during the spring of year one. Also interviewed were the teachers from other schools who filled in for the U. Town staff during the planning week. Mr. Elvin told me:

We felt we needed to go into more depth in obtaining parent and student opinions, so we took a random sampling of parents and students and conducted interviews. In the interviews we explored many things about the school; contracted time was only part of it.

The "highlights" of the findings were reported in a one-page memo on June 13.

...The most important point is the amount of positive remarks we heard. Definitely, there are people who are unhappy with things at the school, but the overall reaction is good.

The parents whose children are leaving University Town this year expressed two basic ideas:

a) That the program is not suitable for all students. They suggested the use of some type of screening of students.

b) That they had encountered difficulties, when they tried to find out about or get solutions for the problems their children were having. These parents implied that the communication channels between the school and the parents definitely need to be improved.

The parents whose children will remain at University Town next year are split—some very enthusiastic and some with reservations. They, too, believe that University Town is not suitable for all students...
A parent told me:

The first year of implementation was one of re-educating the traditionalists in the U. Town community; those who expected teachers to direct students and use standard textbooks and so on. There was a group of university professors leading the conservatives. I felt this attitude gradually disappearing in the first year, although there was definitely still some of it at the end of the year.

Another parent told me:

...In the beginning, the parents were very concerned about (contract time)... It boiled down over the first six months; those parents who opposed the new program took their children elsewhere; the others who accepted the new ideas are sitting tight for a while...

A particularly startling finding was reported by the evaluation department with regard to the consultative committee. The interviewers found that

...the parents are unaware of the actual purpose of the advisory council. When asked, most of them thought we were referring to the large, group meetings held once or twice per year.

(Apparently, most of the parents did not read the committee newsletter, which to me seemed quite clear and comprehensive in its reporting of consultative committee discussions, once it got started.)

Concerning student opinion, the memo said:

The students, with one exception, were completely in favour of this approach. They feel that the strengths of the system lie in the freedom given to students and the relaxed, friendly relationships with teachers. They have found no real weaknesses and offered no substantial changes in the arrangements for next year. Most of them feel that they are learning at least as much as if they were in a traditional school.
Finally, it was reported that "the reaction of the replacement teachers was favourable, too. Each said that he had seen students not working, but thought the majority were doing satisfactorily."

Interim Report on Decision-making, June 27

At the end of year one, I reported my own impressions to the staff, at their request:

The following comments are made in response to a request by some members of the teaching staff. It should be borne in mind that although I have been in touch with the U. Town situation long enough to form some definite impressions, my main effort in the 1971-72 school year has been necessarily directed toward satisfying the university's requirements for the study proposal; most of the carrying out of the study is yet to be done. This year my data-gathering activities have been quite limited.

It should also be kept in mind that among the many innovations being attempted at U. Town, my attention has been focussed on the effort to involve teachers, students, and parents in the making of decisions which affect the program of the school as a whole.

The teaching staff as a group seem to be very much involved in decision-making. Various types of decisions which would traditionally be made by the school principal are reserved for the staff as a whole. In regular weekly meetings, the staff pursues the very difficult task of reaching agreement on courses of action. The difficulty of this effort does not seem to come from basic conflicts of value positions or personalities; on the contrary, the staff is a remarkably cohesive group and seems to have a common educational philosophy. Rather, the challenge of decision-making is, for the U. Town staff, that of applying its values to specific problem situations. The process of decision-making in the staff appears to be one in which members suggest alternative courses of action, offer supporting rationales based on the common values of
the group, and ultimately select an alternative which is acceptable to the majority. Sometimes it does not prove possible to find an alternative which truly satisfies the staff as a whole, and in such cases action is usually deferred. There appears to be so strong a commitment to democratic decision-making among the staff that the maintenance of the desired group process can on occasion take precedence over the reaching of a decision outcome. The staff appears to believe that if a near-consensus cannot be achieved, there is no point in forcing action. This is not to say that decisions are never reached, for often they are; the staff members seem to have quite a capacity for sensing each other's feelings and seeking common ground. There is, however, a real limit to the ability of any group of people to be decisive when operating democratically.

The involvement of students and parents in the making of decisions affecting the whole school appears to have developed very little. The primary mechanism for such involvement was intended to be the advisory council, made up of representatives of the parents, the students, and the teachers. Early in the school year, however, the council chose to define its own role as a very limited one, and changed its name to consultative committee. The committee saw itself as one which should not have any authority in decision-making but rather should consist of parent and student representatives whom the teaching staff should consult. The reasons for this definition of function are not entirely clear to me; they will perhaps be clearer after I have been able to carry the study further. Dialogue in consultative meetings, and in teacher-parent relations generally, seemed to be characterized by polite but insistent critical questioning on the part of parents and defensive response on the part of teachers. Parents often felt that insufficient information about the new school program had been provided. The staff at first seemed to feel that parents were hopelessly hostile to the new program. This situation appeared to improve somewhat during the course of the year through the agency of the students. The students' increasingly positive attitudes toward the new school program were communicated to many parents. Toward the end of the school year, also, communications to parents and students developed in the form of consultative committee newsletters and literature describing
the school program; and some tentative moves were made by the staff to find new ways of directly involving students in school policy-making.

In sum, it seemed to me that in the first year of the U. Town project, the effort to broaden participation in the making of decisions affecting the whole school had largely succeeded in involving teachers but progressed very little in involving parents or students.

It cannot be over-emphasized that the foregoing are only one observer's impressions, not researched findings. Any or all of these impressions may be altered as my study proceeds. This interim report will have been of some use if it simply stimulates discussion.

The Board's Year-One Evaluation Report, July, 1972

The board's evaluation department published a booklet containing most of the U. Town studies done in year one: some of the material from the accreditation booklet; findings from questionnaires on changing student expectations, and contractual time; interviews; measurements of students' attitude changes using a "semantic differential" instrument; results from standardized achievement tests administered by the board office for program evaluation purposes; and department of education exam results.

Very positive findings were reported in student attitude changes. Generally positive findings were reported from the standardized achievement tests. Departmental exam results indicated achievement similar to the previous year. The report skirted around the topic of participation in decision-making.
Mr. Elvin told me:

One thing we wanted to gather (this was before Mrs. Pearson came into the study) was a comparison of student attitudes toward schooling as compared to their attitudes before they started in the new U. Town program. So we made an early decision that we would use a semantic differential. We administered it early (in the first week of school) hoping the students' attitudes wouldn't be contaminated. The idea was to get their views on the previous year's schooling. Then we administered it again late in the year.

Another thing they wanted was student opinion on whether their expectations had been met. So we surveyed the student body and fed the results to the staff. Hopefully, it was of some help.

Chapter Summary

Several evaluative documents appeared at the end of the first year of the U. Town project. One was the accreditation booklet prepared by the school staff in accordance with the normal procedures of the provincial department of education. Some of the contents of the accreditation booklet were of particular interest to my study. Under the heading "School and Community," some sociological characteristics of the U. Town community were given, and note made of the academic emphasis of the school's program. Community participation in school decision-making was said to occur through the consultative committee, general meetings, and surveys by the board's evaluation department. The booklet exaggerated the nature of this participation in decision-making. Likewise, a description of the "philosophy and objectives" of the school misrepresented the extent of community involvement in its formulation, and pretended that the school's statement of philosophy had been the starting point of program development.
A second document was the evaluation department's report on the findings of interviews with parents, students, and substitute teachers. The overall opinion of the U. Town program was reported as positive, with a definite minority critical. Parents' criticisms were said to center around the unsuitability of the program for all students, and the insufficient communications between the school and community. It was discovered that the consultative committee was virtually unknown among U. Town parents. Students were reported to have very positive opinions of the program, especially with respect to student freedoms and the informality of relations with teachers.

A third document appearing at this time was my own interim report of impressions concerning participation in school-level program decision-making, prepared at the request of some staff members. I said that I saw the staff very much involved in decision-making and democratic group processes, but saw little broadening of participation in decision-making by parents or students. I saw some signs of possible improvement of community participation in the consultative committee newsletter (apparently a mistaken view) and the staff-student committee being formed.

Fourthly, the board's year one evaluation report, issued in July, 1972, contained a variety of materials. In addition to most of the studies already described, this document reported on changing student expectations and attitudes
(findings very positive); standardized achievement tests
(findings generally positive); and departmental exam
results (indicating achievement similar to the previous
year). The year one report skirted around the topic of
participation in decision-making.

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The U. Town Orientation Handbook, September, 1972

The year two orientation booklet for students contained the philosophy of the school; the program for orientation days; a description of "student responsibilities;" a list of faculty and staff; course requirements; course information; timetables; and descriptions of the student assembly, consultative committee, and "parent involvement."

The section on "student responsibilities" stated the importance of regular attendance and presented the plan for attendance recording; described the frequency and form of reporting to parents; listed three criteria for success; and explained the structure of advisory groups and individual advisory meetings. The criteria for success were:

1. Acceptance of responsibility for undertaking learning tasks, using resources, arranging timetable, attending instruction, and considering others.

2. Demonstration of ability to work individually and to willingly share experiences.

3. Indication of an attitude which is receptive to new ideas.

The list of faculty showed that with one exception the year one staff members were back at the school and there were two new teachers, one in humanities and one in physical education/math.
Course requirements and scholarship requirements were basically structured by provincial regulations. Grade 8 requirements in French and math, which had been discussed as a problem in year one staff planning sessions, were unchanged.

The student assembly was explained:

As of last year, the constitution at University Town was changed from a council set-up, to that of an assembly involving the whole student body. It has been too often said that the affairs of all were being run by a select few, and it was generally felt that the assembly provided a better opportunity for all to voice their views.

The support of two-thirds of those present at an assembly is needed before any matter of importance can be brought into effect. Assemblies are held at least once a month; however, additional meetings can be held if merited. . . .

Whether or not the assembly continues to be a success depends on the involvement of every student, for without their support, it cannot function to its fullest extent.

The consultative committee was described as follows:

The consultative committee, University Town Secondary School, was initiated in 1971 as an advisory committee to the principal and faculty. It is composed of students, faculty and parents.

Its purpose is to serve as a forum for study and discussion of problem areas, modifications, ongoing local assessment and etc., arising in conjunction with the growth and development of the new school program. Collection and assessment of objective and subjective data provide a basis for discussion and recommendations to faculty, student body and parents, either informally or in format of the recently developed newsletter.

The committee meets monthly. All parents are welcome to attend these meetings.
"Parent involvement" was the last item. Parents were encouraged to volunteer to teach mini-courses. Plans for regular parent visits to the school were identified. Parents were told to contact their children's advisors about "problems, progress, etc."

Staff Meeting, September 7

At the first staff meeting in year two, Mr. Scott reintroduced the need for a "staff-student forum." During the summer, the board had supplied a double portable for the school. Mr. Scott proposed that the development of that facility become a context for staff-student joint decision-making. He reported that student leaders had already compiled a list of students interested in participating. It was agreed that the whole staff would meet with all interested students the following week.

Mr. Shelton asked about the consultative committee:

"Is it dead? The students seem to think so."

Chiba: It seemed to serve the purpose of releasing tensions for a small number of parents; but it wasn't a consultative committee.

Hardy: It started to die when it became clear that it wouldn't be what it had been hoped to be.

Mr. Scott also raised an issue related to staff authority within the provincial education structure. The staff had been displeased in year one with the requirement to keep attendance records in a provincial standardized form. Mr. Scott suggested the possibility of the staff's not doing so in year two. It
was decided that Mrs. Fayter would investigate the question with Dr. Meyer.

Circulars were distributed from the provincial department listing changes in curriculum requirements and examinations.

Mr. Scott pointed out that the staff "should decide soon how to use our extra money" (unspent special funds from year one). A finance committee was formed. Mr. Scott suggested that "a student representative might be appropriate" on the finance committee.

Mr. Happ urged that all changes in timetables "be channeled through the timetable committee or there will be chaos as last year." Mrs. Marion spoke about coordination of mini-courses.

Staff-Student Meeting, September 12

The staff met at 11:00 a.m. to discuss the use of the portable. The students were invited to join the meeting at 11:30 after the staff discussed its own positions on the matter. Mr. Scott, who chaired, started off the staff-only part of the meeting by identifying topics needing discussion: furnishings; finance; uses; responsibilities.

Chiba: Some students are interested in doing the furnishing work using shop equipment. Donations of furniture from the community might be possible but it would be better for the students to take responsibility for it.

Fayter: What is already decided about the use of the portable?
Scott: Only that one half of it might be used for a common room and the other half for conferences.

Hardy: The students assume that half will be for a lounge, so what need is there to discuss it?

It was generally felt that there was a clear need for the teachers to have the other half.

Marion: Can we discuss control and responsibility?

Scott: No, unless you want to bring it up with the students. Are we agreed that the whole portable should be for non-classroom use?

Hardy: We need the lounge and a staff-work area; whether they should be in the portable or in the building proper is debatable. Let's leave the rest of the discussion to the staff-student meeting.

Scott: Who should chair that?

Sander: You.

Hardy: By remaining silent on the use of the portable, we are making a decision to use it as a lounge, since that is the students' expectation.

The staff seemed to feel that there was no purpose for the staff-only part of the meeting. The students were asked to come in.

Scott: We, the staff, have had some discussion but we don't have strong views on the use of the lounge half of the portable. Have the students discussed it?

The students indicated that they had not.

Scott: Well, how are we going to develop the lounge?

Student: What are the workmen going to do?

Student: We need the sort of place where students can just relax. We can get old furniture cheap.

Scott: Shall we have projects to raise funds?
Student: Student interest for that is hard to get.
Student: Why not have a school store to raise money?

Interest in this idea was evident among the students.
Student: How about a cafeteria run by students?
Hardy: You people haven't really discussed it as a group?

The students said that was correct.
Student: There's no need to earn the money if there is a sum available.
Hardy: But unless you involve students in putting it together it won't be taken care of.
Student: Another problem would be groups within the student body using it and others avoiding them.

The dialogue was hesitant.
Hardy: We have really held off so you would take the initiative, so don't wait for us to tell you.
Student: It's simple what we want; but I don't want to spend the whole year setting it up.
Student: We could start it simple and add to it as we go.
Student: Let's use some of the $1,000 (unspent student government funds) to get it started, then add to it by student contribution of things made in industrial education and home economics.
Scott: That's the right note to strike. The staff is concerned above all with student involvement. How can we encourage full involvement?
Student: We could put up notices and spread the word.
Student: Some of the students didn't even know about this meeting.
Student teacher: Why not have a money-making film festival attracting Westmont U. students?
Student: There are a lot of problems with something like that. You can lose money.
Scott: To sum up, we are in favor of some positive involvement of students.

Student: We don't need to try to involve students in making money, but rather in the work of preparing the lounge.

Scott: O.K., so we need a committee of staff and students to push it forward—say 5 staff and 5 students.

Student: Could those interested in interior design work on it first? We could combine it with the humanities program.

Student: But don't restrict it to particular mini-courses.

Student: We should have interested students participate extra-curriculantly. Let's take it to the student assembly.

Scott: Could we have a meeting soon in the portable?

Student: How about an open day for looking at it?

Scott: O.K., we'll try for this Friday and ask the workmen. We'll be in touch about that and our next staff-student meeting.

Staff Meeting, September 14

At the staff meeting that week, Mr. Scott suggested that rotating membership in a small committee (such as 6 students, 6 staff per month) would be better than all staff and the same vocal group of students continually; the students want that too.

Mr. Scott also reported that a letter had been drafted to Dr. Meyer concerning the search for an alternative to the provincial attendance registers.

Mr. Happ, speaking for the finance committee, brought out the problem of getting authority to use money as desired. He criticized the board office for being unwilling to issue funds to the school rather than just paying bills submitted.
Staff Meeting, September 21

A week later, Mr. Scott reported to staff that the workmen were taking longer than expected on the portable, and the staff-student group was waiting to start its work.

Mr. Scott also reported that there was no answer yet from Dr. Meyer about attendance registers.

Mr. Scott brought up the possibility of a drug education program using Time-Life materials which he had seen. He asked whether they should send for them on an approval basis. The staff decided that this was a good idea.

Mr. Sander suggested that the school staff should inform and counsel those individual students in grade 12 who scored particularly low on the standardized achievement tests used by the board's evaluation department the previous year. Mr. Lauridsen said that this should be policy for grade 11 students as well.

A list was distributed of the provincial "graduation requirements for students presently in grade 12 (old program)."

Staff Meeting, September 28

Dr. Meyer attended this staff meeting. He explained the board's plans for evaluation of the U. Town program in year two. First he noted that "last year's evaluation seemed very positive and was well received by the trustees." The plans for the second year included "standardized achievement tests, the same as in year one:" a "study of the use of volunteers and
paraprofessionals; measurement of student attitudes by the School Sentiment Index (a semantic differential instrument), as in year one; an "assessment of the adaptability of grade 8 students to the program;" and an "evaluation of methods used to deal with students having problems adjusting to the school."

Scotti: An omission is the definition of grades. Lines are becoming blurred. There is a need for pre-testing to know where the kid was at the beginning of the year, and not just statistically.

Meyer: Good, but remember you were dubious about statistical methods and traditional tests last year; yet the results were high for U. Town.

Scotti: But often there is an exclusive emphasis on the old statistical methods. We're in a developmental stage in dealing with students not fitting into the program. All that such a study could show would be the lack of services and facilities in the school and system.

Happi: That School Sentiment Index was ridiculous. It created adverse feelings.

Meyer: It's used widely, but if you object to it . . .

Lauridsen: The length of it alone was detested.

Meyer: If you have observed it having harmful effects, it shouldn't be used.

Anderson: They resented being asked if they "hated" things right off the bat.

Meyer: We can use a different instrument, but certainly you'd want to study attitudes.

Sander: Could the advisors solicit opinions from students for Mr. Elvin?

Meyer: Well, the kids will say no. They'll see it as a test.

Lauridsen: Perhaps an alternative to the semantic differential could be suggested by Mr. Elvin.
Deering: Have we gotten the final evaluation from last year?
Sander: It hasn't been issued to us yet.
Meyer: Oh—I'll see you get copies right away.
Sander: The wording of the student questionnaires was in need of improvement.
Meyer: We'll sit down with you to improve it this year.
Scott: Achievement tests should be used in more than just a few subjects.
Fayter: The Sentiment Index might have been better received if the kids had some prior warning and explanation.
Scott: Will the study of the use of community resources include the university?
Meyer: Yes.
Scott: There has been good involvement in language courses at Westmont U.

Mr. Scott then raised the question of provincial attendance registers.

Meyer: I can't see not using them. It's legally required. There may be a change within a year now provincially. Our board is going to the provincial capital to see the minister of education in person. Other schools have the same gripe.

Happ: What would happen if we didn't send it in?
Meyer: If there were a case in court, we'd be in trouble.
Sander: Actually the principal is responsible.
Happ: We make decisions as a group and we would insist that is how the responsibility lies.
Meyer: It's true that the principal is still responsible in the School Act.

After Dr. Meyer left, Mr. Scott and Mr. Happ discussed what had happened, in an informal aside:
Scott: The subject of who has what authority is finally being touched on.

Happ: It seems like Dr. Meyer accepts the view that if we take responsibility as a group we can make our authority stick.

Mr. Scott reported that "the workmen still haven't finished working on the portable."

Mr. Sander urged that students not attending classes be reported to parents without delay. It was decided to collate reports (the timing of which was now individualized) once per week in the office before mailing.

Mr. Hardy brought up a problem about the authority of teachers to use the school building at night. The janitor insisted that the teachers get a permit and take responsibility for the building because of union regulations. It was decided to apply for a permit covering the use of any classroom any night.

Staff Meeting, October 5

Mr. Sander reported that the consultative committee was going to meet next Tuesday for the first time in this school year, and the staff "needs to set up its representation for 72-73."

Scott: Rotation is good in principle, but it's an imposition on some staff and it might be more effective to have continuing members.

Griffiths: There has been a lack of continuity.

Marion: Our lack of interest stems from the emptiness of the consultative committee's role.
Deering: Those most interested should go.

Scott: But there should be regular representation. Let's face it: the committee is a farce. It went down the drain in the first two months last year. When you have an understanding that there will be a decision-making function for such a body, then an official from the board comes along and says "no, we didn't intend to have the council be executive in function. . . ." (Mr. Scott was noticeably disgusted.)

Lauridsen: I was excited about when it first started, then had to give up.

Scott: The participating parents who weren't representatives were told to stay out except by invitation.

Sander: If you want to change the body, do something through the upcoming representative election. You can't change it here. The function of the advisory council was set by the board as a non-decision-making one.

Scott: Wait a minute. I asked Dr. Meyer about it way back, and he said he saw it as a decision-making body.

Sander: My feeling is that we can't give real responsibility for the school to a group of parents, because we are still responsible legally. If the consultative committee makes a decision we can't go along with, what then?

Mrs. Marion reported on the work of a teacher-parent committee planning visits to the school by parents on a regular basis. She said the committee proposed "twenty parents be invited monthly to observe--no questions of staff at such visits." Since "this would possibly include one-half of the parents in a year," Mrs. Marion asked whether they should "make it twice a month." It was decided that the committee should "go ahead on a monthly basis and see if it is really insufficient to the demand."
Mr. Scott reported that the workmen were still not finished in the portable. A student group was working on plans for furnishings.

A student teacher spoke up about students' feelings, as he saw them. He warned that the students were "not confident in their president;" that they were "afraid the furnishings in the portable will be ripped off;" and that "more generally, there is a communication gap between staff and students."

**Chapter Summary**

At the first staff meeting in year two, a teacher raised the topic of staff-student decision-making. The school board had provided a double portable for U. Town, and he saw development of the facility as a context for broadening student participation in decision-making. The staff planned a meeting with interested students for the following week.

At that meeting, the staff (convening separately before the students were invited in) decided to use one half of the portable for a student lounge and the other half for a staff work area. The students, when they came into the meeting, expressed a desire to get the lounge in use as quickly and easily as possible; they saw no reason to have fund-raising drives or lengthy construction efforts; they wanted to use money already available to the student government and furnish the lounge with cheap used items. The staff's overriding concern was student involvement in the work of raising money and making the lounge a well-furnished and respected facility.
No decisions were arrived at. A teacher proposed that the problem be handled by a new staff-student representative committee. In the ensuing weeks into October, the development of the portable and of the staff-student committee were held up by waiting for the school board's workmen to finish installing the portable.

Another topic raised at the first staff meeting in September, 1972, was the consultative committee. A teacher asked if it was "dead," and said the students seemed to think so. The opinion was voiced that the committee had started to die when its function was defined in a non-decision-making way. A month later, when the principal asked the staff to decide about its representation at the consultative committee's first year-two meeting, disgust with the body was evident among the staff.

Authority relations with the provincial department of education were questioned by some staff members at the outset of year two. The context of the challenge was the provincial attendance registers, which the staff did not find useful to its program. The director was questioned about it; he was opposed to the idea of the staff's refusing to keep the registers, because the School Act held the principal responsible for them.

On September 28, the director presented to the staff the board's plans for evaluating the U. Town project in year two. He said that the evaluation in year one had been quite positive. For year two, there were proposed: standardized
achievement tests; a study of the use of paraprofessionals and volunteers; another measurement of student attitudes through the semantic differential instrument; a study of grade 8 students' adaptability to the program; and a study of the school's handling of students having difficulty adjusting to the program. Staff members objected to the emphasis they again perceived on statistics; to the lack of facilities in the district for problem kids; to the antagonisms created by the semantic differential; and to the way the year one questionnaires were designed. One of the teachers pointed out that the staff still had not received its copies of the year one evaluation report.

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CHAPTER 19

THE DEATH OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Consultative Committee Meeting,
October 10

Worrall: There is a need for a policy at this point on election of committee representatives. There is also possibly a need for restructuring the committee to make it more effective.

Dr. Worrall referred to a letter from trustee Light which called for a change in the committee.

Sander: The procedure for election could be by mail as last year; it could be mailed with the newsletter.

McDonald: We had volunteers as well as nominees before.

Sander: This can get sticky.

O'Doherty: The original meeting was marked by an attempt to get power back to local hands.

Mrs. Griffiths: The staff feels that the committee is useless because the board took away authority. Just to communicate we can do without a committee.

Sander: None of the school committees have decision-making power. They can't hold financial authority. The committee could serve a useful purpose; we just haven't let the parents know about it.

O'Doherty: I can't agree. I've wondered often about resigning. The biggest decision we made last year was to send some student with $12 to the art gallery. I intended to get out, but maybe we should do something about it. It might be more honest to simply say so, rather than pass it along to a new body of members. Then perhaps the board will see that it's a matter of giving authority, otherwise there's no point.

Worrall: If we got to the point of revising school programs, we wouldn't have the structure for it. It would be meaningless because somebody else would make the decision. We have clarified some things for ourselves, but not for other parents.
Ray: For students it hasn't served any purpose at all.

McDonald: It had some function for a transition period, but unless the board will grant real authority, all we have is a miniature parent-teacher organization, and a very small one at that.

Worrall: Right—the parents who have real concerns go to the staff, not the consultative committee. There was some promise at first, but it rapidly waned.

Griffiths: How did it originate?

McDonald: The board initiated it, but soon withdrew meaning from it.

O'Doherty: We should also say that we're not disillusioned with the vision, but the board should reconsider how to implement it.

Worrall: We served as a sounding board for the staff, but never could make any final decisions, in any area, let alone finance. No one ever insisted that the committee have strong terms of reference.

Scott: (who got to the meeting late): Let's not waffle. Put forward concrete proposals as to how a body of this type could work. What was the original idea?

McDonald: To participate in developing the program.

Scott: We missed the boat when we accepted Dr. Meyer's decision that there was no decision-making authority. So the task for the committee now is to define what such a body should be.

Worrall: The only way to gain political strength is to declare our intention to disband unless there is a change in the terms of reference. Identify some concrete issues, take positions, and tell the board what we want.

Scott: There never were any written terms—we should create a structure, not restructure. We haven't asserted our democratic rights to be a functioning committee. I asked Dr. Meyer in 1971 what he foresaw and he said, "See how it develops."

O'Doherty: It takes a lot of time, not two hours once a month.

Scott: But we could be wrong to turn our backs on an idea that has gained acceptance in the whole province of Alberta.
O'Doherty: It's easy to say. . . .
Scott: Where's your sense of challenge?
O'Doherty: How would we do it?
Scott: We are at a closer point to the school than the board. We can take definite stands.
McDonald: The concept of community involvement in school decisions is like motherhood. Everybody is for it but what power can we see for such a body as this in shaping the curricular, social, and financial nature of the school? Show me how.
Scott: But you are going to let the board decide. Let's not accept their authority. Let's take the reins. Consider the student lounge which we're getting ready to furnish. We need all sorts of help.
Worrall: How representative is this body? How can we disseminate our actions? The problem of representation is critical.
O'Doherty: I suggest a schools association be refounded among the parents with an executive and full membership. It still leaves the problem of what the association could do.
Scott: We haven't tried it. Let's say what we want and demand it.
O'Doherty: This puts a principal in a tough spot.
Scott: But we have lateral responsibility as well as vertical.
O'Doherty: There still exists a hierarchy which conflicts with the staff values.
Scott: Would it be a move in the right direction to expand the body?
Sander: You can always call regular general meetings.
Scott: The student assembly is an embryo of something good. Couldn't we have a student-staff-parent body?
Ray: Totally open?
Scott: Right.
Worrall: But the students have to feel that they have equal influence with the parents; and what effect would it have on the board?

Sander: The board would at least know our position.

Worrall: Suppose we as a consultative committee said we want this or that change in the curriculum—something big—what would happen?

Sander: The board wouldn't go along with it if it violated provincial requirements or was illegal in some other way.

Worrall: I don't think the structure allows me to even begin to move into program decision-making.

Scott: Then you should go to the community and get their opinions on what definition they want. I believe that Dr. Meyer and the board are looking for direction as much as they're giving it. Education is a market-place of ideas, not authority or power.

O'Doherty: We can't begin to do that without our own (secretarial) staff.

Worrall: What do the students think?

Ray: It's a failure so far.

McDonald: What reaction would you get from the student assembly if you asked for effective representatives?

Ray: They would be suspicious.

Worrall: The student attitude is that each should speak for himself.

Student: Many are also apathetic.

Sander: What motions do we have?

Worrall: Mrs. O'Doherty's—regarding the reforming of a parent association and a restructured consultative committee; but how do we get responsible representation?

Ray: Let's have regular open meetings in the daytime.

McDonald: Parents couldn't come.
O'Doherty: You have to have representation to be effective.

McDonald: The trouble is the students reject the idea of representation.

Griffiths: Why not have the assembly discuss the issues to come up in each consultative committee meeting?

Scott: But can the staff be represented, or the parents—really represented?

Worrall: You can't get effective outcomes from wide open meetings.

Ray: The students don't know each other well enough to trust a representative.

Scott: Let's at least try to confront reality through open meetings.

Worrall: You'll have to have very regular meetings. You're back to the PTA but with students.

Scott: That's a significant difference.

Worrall: We should call for a general meeting to decide what sort of body to have.

McDonald: And what they want the body to do.

Worrall: And the students should be urged to participate in the meeting fully.

O'Doherty: Such a meeting would be taken up by organizational questions, not the question of function. An open meeting can't cope with that.

Worrall: I don't think any committee can define its own terms of reference, but maybe I'm wrong.

Sander: Could we call a meeting and propose two different ideas? The student assembly would have to deal with it beforehand. Why not put the proposals on paper and send them out prior to the meeting?

Scott: For example, whether this committee should continue or be replaced by an open forum.

Worrall: Whether the three groups want open meetings or representatives.
McDonald: Decision for what? We could get them excited if we said we would have financial authority or curricular authority, but it would be vetoed from above.

Scott: First, we should determine the process for dealing with issues.

Worrall: We should ask the board how far we can go.

O'Doherty: To go back to the beginning, we should state the need for power in any body.

McDonald: We should have separate meetings of parents, students, and staff to get group decisions; then see.

Worrall: So we set about having three separate meetings.

Scott: I'm not sure separate meetings would work. Why not go to the joint meeting? Students should be in on any decisions.

Student: Separate meetings are O.K.

It was decided that the students would meet Thursday morning that week, October 12, and the parents on Thursday evening the following week, October 19. When the newsletter went out, however, the date of the parents' meeting had been postponed to October 26.

Mr. Happ commented during an interview:

The biggest weakness (of the school) has been the lack of participation of parents, which was supposed to be one of the main characteristics of this project. There are plenty of parents I know who would have been strong as members of the consultative committee, but they didn't get on it.

Student Assembly,
October 12

I observed this student assembly and one other the following week. The assembly was attended by only a fraction of the student body. They sat on tables and chairs in a large
circle. The student leaders seemed to have difficulty keeping the assembly's attention; there were numerous side discussions and pauses. Hay explained the consultative committee problem and the alternatives, and gave the students a week to think it over. There appeared to be a lack of interest or knowledge on the part of the student body concerning the consultative committee.

The students' lounge committee presented a recommendation concerning a carpet to purchase for the portable. There was dissatisfaction in the assembly over the price and quality of the carpet. Some students said that the committee had not looked into all of the possibilities. The recommendation was turned down by a vote of the assembly.

Staff Meeting, October 12

Mr. Lauridsen repeated Mr. Sander's earlier urging that the staff use the flexible reporting system to inform parents of attendance problems. Mr. Scott objected that "the only problem so far is a certain group of poor attenders." Mr. Scott proposed that "each advisor circulate a list of kids with attendance problems so we can report on them collectively." Mr. Lauridsen thought it important to "check through every subject." The staff decided to have "advisors funnel names through Mr. Lauridsen" to begin to identify the attendance problem group. Mr. Scott added that "we need to define 'involvement in studying' sometime; the lack of definition is a fundamental problem."
Mr. Shelton raised what he perceived to be a problem in the relations between staff assistants and teachers. He suggested that there should be some rotation of the responsibility for coordinating the staff assistants' work and maintaining communications between staff and assistants, a role which had been performed by Mrs. Fayter. Embarrassment was evident among the staff at the raising of this proposal. Hesitation in clearly identifying the problem seemed to characterize the discussion. It was decided that a meeting of interested teachers and staff assistants would be held informally over lunch that day.

Staff Meeting, October 19

Mr. Scott reported that a group of students had met with some officials of the Sailcrest school board regarding purchasing of materials for the student lounge, and had "a good reception." The students "had two complete plans to propose." An offer was received to have a school board carpenter "advise the kids on request." End lots of paint and other materials might be donated, and a carpet might be available at a discount. The students were to vote on their alternative plans in student assembly that morning. Mr. Scott also reported that three staff-student meetings had been held, regularly on Wednesday at noon.

Mr. Scott reported on the drug education material from Time-Life. He said that the film had "been viewed several times by students and staff, with mixed reactions."
supplementary materials "would have minimal use." A decision was needed on purchasing. Mr. Scott moved that the school purchase the film (cost $94); the motion was approved by vote, in an unenthusiastic manner.

A question was raised as to the disposition of money received from a university for supervising student teachers. The humanities staff suggested that it go into the general fund. Mr. Lauridsen said that "we shouldn't always be putting our own money into school revenues which the board should provide." Mr. Scott moved the creation of a special fund with this and similar income, so that "the staff could control it." This was agreed to unanimously.

**Student Assembly, October 19**

The student leaders urged students to come out to a proposed committee meeting of U. Town students concerned with evaluating a "student charter" being drawn up in the Sailcrest district. This committee was said to be important in "maintaining a student voice" in the consultative committee or its replacement structure.

The two plans for the student lounge were presented. Questions were asked by a few students who were obviously critical of the work of the lounge committee. A vote was taken, as a result of which approval was given to one of the plans presented.
Staff-Student Meeting, 
October 25

This meeting was held in Mr. Scott's room. It was attended by a small group of students and one teacher in addition to Mr. Scott, Mr. Hardy. Mr. Scott led the discussion in a very informal way. The students seemed interested in, but hesitant about, developing student participation in decision-making, which Mr. Scott urged them to do. They were disillusioned about the student assembly because of "the problem of structure"—communication and decision-making did not seem to them to be effective in the assembly, yet delegation of authority was undesirable. Mr. Scott prodded them to stick with it and to provide stronger leadership. The consultative committee was a mystery to most of the student leaders, let alone the student body. Ray, the only student who attended consultative committee meetings consistently, had drawn up a list of about ten students interested in participating in the committee, and he agreed, at Mr. Scott's suggestion, to try to explain the committee to a student assembly. Several of the students said they would like to participate in staff meetings.

Action on the student lounge was still held up by the workmen.

A student told me:

Now there's still enough initiative for staff and students to cooperatively do something about the school's failure. This would never happen in
other schools. . . Some students think they should get responsibility for things which the staff now decides, but nobody knows how to make it work. . . .

Staff Meeting,
October 26

Mr. Scott reported "a request from some interested students for permission to attend staff meetings and participate." He added, "It's a serious step. We should perhaps invite them and let them participate in discussions of specific issues such as the portable."

Marion: How did the question come up?

Scott: Right out of the blue.

Student teacher: The student president should be told that he would be expected to come with an attitude of constructive participation.

Deering: It should be invitational, not regular.

Scott: O.K. There are also 9 or 10 students interested in participating in the consultative committee.

Sander: How were these students identified?

Scott: The student body was canvassed.

Sander: O.K.

A student told me: "I never really liked the idea of secret little staff meetings. Close-knit things go against the whole philosophy of the school."

Mr. Lauridsen distributed a list of students who presented "achievement and attendance problems." Staff discussed the list, name by name, and decided in each case whether the individual student presented such problems in enough areas of the program to warrant special counselling.
The humanities staff distributed a form designed to gather student requests for future mini-courses.

The parent meeting to be held that night was briefly discussed. It was decided that it would not be appropriate for teachers to attend the meeting, since the consultative committee had specified separate meetings of the three groups--teachers, parents, students--to determine desires concerning community participation.

Mr. Scott asked the staff to respond to a request from students for a financial grant for the lounge. The staff decided they would make such a grant after they were persuaded that the students had done their best to plan their needs.

Other topics discussed in staff meetings in September to October, 1972, included: teachers' association; staff assistants; timetable; student helpers in the office; playhouse tickets; enrolment; entrance requirements; the "writing" mini-course; curling league; room vacancy timetable; keeping track of audio-visual equipment; workshop visitors; student exchanges with United Kingdom and with Japan; the Sailcrest student charter; music instrument storage; scuba diving subsidy; social evening with elementary teachers; and purchase of electronic calculators and tape recorders.

Chapter Summary

At the first consultative committee meeting of year two, on October 10, a teacher initiated a soul-searching discussion
of the committee's lack of authority, and questioned the value of selecting new representatives. The principal offered the opinion that the committee could serve a useful purpose without having decision-making power. Parent and student representatives disagreed with Mr. Sander. The committee talked about its own history, particularly the "waning" of its original "promise." A teacher tried to lead the committee toward asserting itself as a decision-making body, but the parent representatives were doubtful. The same teacher then proposed an open forum in place of the committee, but again the parents doubted that they could "even begin to move into program decision-making." It was decided to hold separate meetings of the three constituent groups to find out what sort of body, if any, was desired in the area of community participation in decision-making.

Student assemblies which I observed at about this time appeared to be quite disorganized. The new staff-student committee was also meeting now, every week; I observed that one of the teachers led the discussion in a very informal way. The student leaders were disillusioned about the assembly; the teacher urged them to provide more direction to it. Some of the students expressed an interest in participating in staff meetings. The teacher took this request to the staff, and it was decided to invite a limited number of students to discuss specific topics. The development of the student lounge and related student participation were
still retarded at this time by the prolonged labors of the school board's workmen in the portable. In the meantime, the students' lounge committee worked on two plans, one of which was selected by vote of the student assembly. There were some student leaders interested in working with the consultative committee, but few of them knew anything about the committee.

Two examples of student participation in school-level program decision-making did occur in this period. A set of materials concerning drugs were previewed by both staff and interested students, at a teacher's suggestion; the staff then made a decision to purchase the film included in the package. Student suggestions for future mini-courses were solicited through a form designed for that purpose.

In October, on a teacher's initiative, the staff resumed the process of collectively identifying problem students, which had been intended following a decision the previous spring.

Other topics in staff meetings in September to October, 1972, again fell into the categories of organizational problems established earlier in this history.

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ANOTHER ATTEMPT AT ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION

Parents' General Meeting,
October 26

This meeting was well attended; I estimated about 100 parents were present. A few students came. Mr. Sander introduced the purpose briefly, then Dr. Worrall described the consultative committee's history and problems.

Worrall: The consultative committee was constituted eighteen months ago as an advisory council composed of three groups. At the meeting forming the council no concrete guidelines were given. The school went into a new program and it was presented to the community as an attempt to experiment or innovate. We, as a council, were asked to provide a forum for identifying community concerns. This evening we want to reconsider what you, the parents, want in the way of a representative body. The problems are:

1. Is it necessary to have an organized forum?

2. What should be the terms of reference of a body, if there is to be one?

3. The need for new elections of representatives.

The name of the advisory council was altered to "consultative committee." There was originally felt to be a pertinent input that parents and students would make. That is perhaps not seen now. We originally wanted to have a real role in curriculum development, and were disconcerted with the change in function. . . . It's not a new curriculum now. There is a real need for reconsideration of the form (of community participation). . . . Communications have been consistently poor. We didn't get any real response from the community to our communiques. . . . There were some changes in the school as a result of our recommendations--only a few. Attendance by committee
members was even poor. . . . The evolution of student government is promising now. . . .

If we need a forum, what should it be—advisory or consultative only? I, myself, think it should be advisory. We should have a role in channeling communications. What should be the specific terms of reference? If we set up something and the participation of students and teachers is poor, or the board doesn't want to give it teeth, what should we do? I think the meetings should be frequent and deal with important issues.

One alternative might be to delegate parents' authority to representatives, with established channels for communication to you.

Dr. Worrall used an overhead projection to outline a committee with three members from each of the three groups, the functions of which would be "to consider matters referred to it by constituent groups" and "to advise the faculty as expeditiously as possible." He proposed some "procedural" improvements: that a secretary make a "written record of all meetings;" that "a report with recommendations be forwarded to the principal;" that the committee be authorized to "request resources from the school board in order to fulfill its assigned tasks" and to "obtain such assistance as necessary to fulfill its duties (secretarial and other)." Worrall concluded by saying:

Or you may feel that the new program has become established satisfactorily and we don't need a committee. So back to the original question.

He then asked for opinions from the parent body.

Parent: What concrete issues have come up, and what has the committee done?
Worrall: Nothing. The real issues got relegated somewhere else. We spent about one-third of our time discussing the student lounge—and didn't have terms of reference given to deal with that.

Parent: How could we ensure that the issues you'd like to deal with will be in your jurisdiction?

Worrall: You can't; but you can say you want it. The final decision is the faculty's of course, but we can get out there and make our voice heard; but you can't do so if the parents don't make their opinions known. There were many times when we didn't receive any calls from parents.

Parent: It's difficult to see what you are really saying here. Is it that there weren't any important issues, or that the committee had ideas and nobody would take them? I don't see the difference between an advisory council and a consultative committee.

Worrall: I'm saying that it's difficult to work in a vacuum, without terms of reference.

Parent: All good educational institutions give the teachers autonomy and have faith in them.

Worrall: Just what my first point was—there may be no need for a forum.

Parent: I never knew what sort of channel there was to receive my views.

Parent: There is a lack of communication. Parents don't know anything except from their kids.

Worrall: Yes, but is there a need for a forum or other structure?

Parent: There's always a need.

Parent: There is a need for a mechanism whenever there is a communication problem.

Parent: If you mean a parents' association, there is a need; but the advisory council—whom is it advisory to? We're in danger of setting up unnecessary machinery. Most good schools have some kind of parents' association; but a tripartite body—are they a unit? And what are
they for? I don't really understand what you mean by "advisory." I don't think the board's and the principal's legal responsibilities should be usurped. Most of us take our comments to the teacher personally.

Worrall: Are you saying there shouldn't be a tripartite body but a parent body?

Parent: Yes.

Parent: Does Mr. Sander feel a tripartite body is useful?

Sander: Yes, certainly. The committee wouldn't agree, because they wanted to do more, but compared to parent associations I have worked with, they (the committee) have done wonders. The format needs re-thinking, though.

Worrall: What do the students think?

Student: If we want a body it has to have power. There's no point in cutting some group out, because they're all part of one system; and all parties have to contribute.

Ray: The main problem is student apathy.

Worrall: I will limit the discussion to one more point, then call for some votes.

Parent: It should have advisory abilities. Otherwise, it has no function. The teachers feel they can take advice, so we shouldn't deny them that.

Worrall: Let's vote now on whether to have a forum.

Parent: The difference between an advisory and consultative council is impossible because of financial authority. I move the committee be disbanded.

The motion was seconded. A parent called for Dr. Worrall to repeat the motion, and he did so.

Parent: How could the body have power?

Parent: The idea of a tripartite division and an organization is a fine thing, extraordinary. The question of power—do the constituents know how to communicate? It's not a matter of financial authority. The committee shouldn't be lost.
Parent: I agree. We shouldn't disband a group that has potential.

Parent: This is one of the few places where parents participate at all. Any meeting structure is good.

Parent: This is unreal. Eighteen months ago we were unsure what would happen. By now we should have clear information on what the council has been doing. We don't have it.

O'Doherty: (consultative committee parent representative): Dr. Worrall has accurately described the problem of what the committee has done. We need a clear decision first on whether to have a forum of any type—whether we have the commitment.

Parent: I think the committee should be disbanded because they haven't done anything.

Parent: Is it possible to have a school association with all groups as members, rather than an advisory body?

A vote was taken on the motion, which was amended to read: "That the tripartite forum be abandoned." This motion was defeated by a vote of 36 to 34, with many abstentions.

Worrall: So, what terms of reference?

Parent: I propose a school association with members from all groups to which an executive reports—rather than to constituent groups.

Parent: I oppose that—it will degenerate into a PTA. A year and a half ago the superintendent's office gave support to the notion of a real role for an advisory council. The term "advisory" should be underlined in red ink.

Parent: A point of information: It cannot be a policy-making group in any case, right?

Worrall: Right.

O'Doherty: I favor the notion of a school association.

Worrall: The motion for a school association is on the floor.
The vote was taken, and the motion carried almost unanimously.

Worrall: The terms of reference—should the consultative committee draw up recommendations?

Parent: I move that the present consultative committee draw up one or more formats and present them to another general meeting, and proceed with some nomination procedure.

Parent: We must have open nominations.

Parent: Let's also have a report on the school program.

Mrs. Light: Perhaps Mr. Berends could see that the parents (liaison get copies of the school board's year one trustee) evaluation.

Toward the end of January, 1973, a parent told me: "We never even had any report back (from the program evaluation). We could get the community organized behind the school if there were just some communication from the school. . . ."

Staff Meeting, November 2

Five students were present during part of this meeting, for the first time. Upon their entrance, Mr. Scott made an issue over why there were five when four had been invited. Although the other teachers did not seem to think the question was very important, Mr. Scott pressed it. None of the students offered to leave. When the meeting continued, it was with the clear understanding that there were limits on the students' welcome. Mr. Scott's behavior on this occasion seemed directly contradictory to his other actions related to student participation. I wondered if Mr. Scott was afraid the staff perceived him as too much the students' advocate.
The topic which the students had been invited to discuss was the student lounge. The students explained the furnishing plan, and there was some discussion of it based on staff questions. The suggestion was made that the students "proceed step by step." The staff expressed willingness to help with the construction and decoration work when the time came.

The student president commented to me:

...I said one time I wanted to attend a staff meeting. They just invited me to come and talk about one problem, the student lounge. Then they went on with their other trivial things, without me.

Another student said:

...When the decision to reorganize the school was being made, the students who had ideas, when they saw they had much more freedom, they got idealistic; but they didn't see we were running up against someone like Mr. Sander. Because of this, lots of things we were offering weren't accepted. For example, we have a student lounge now, but after a year of prodding by the students, student responsibility didn't go far enough.

A parent said:

...I have doubts about the staff attitude that students should be adults but shouldn't be treated as adults. Their overall attitude is not to treat the kids as individuals. My son and his friends are very disturbed with the way they are treated by Mr. Sander. They feel strongly about being kept out of the staff room, and not being allowed to put notices on the staff bulletins, and things like that. The staff doesn't really listen to the kids who really care. It's an indignity to tell them to be independent but they have to do things as they're told.
An item had been placed on the agenda about the upcoming consultative committee meeting. Staff and students were asked to select representatives to attend the meeting, which would be held on November 7. The staff agenda stated: "The purpose of the meeting is to carry out the wishes expressed at the parents' meeting to have an advisory committee and a school association." Mr. Scott asked the students what the parents had decided. One of the students replied that she was "not sure; it seemed like there was no change." No one seemed to question the parents' right to decide how to proceed; neither the students, nor the teachers appeared to know or care much about the matter.

Prior to the students' entrance into the staff meeting, the staff worked on the problem of identifying, collectively, the students who were failing to attend or to make an effort. They proceeded through Mr. Lauridsen's lists, adding and subtracting names. Uncertainty as to exactly what criteria were being used continued to trouble the staff group.

Miss Deering reminded the staff to return the completed mini-course request forms from students.

The agenda asked staff to return the "grade 8 survey sheets for Mr. Elvin's office" by tomorrow. Mr. Happ and Mr. Scott urged that the staff "refuse to do it; they should have to do it themselves." A motion to that effect was made, and carried by vote.
Four or five teachers, led by Mr. Happ, said that they would not keep the provincial attendance registers. Some others said they intended to use a simplified form. A staff assistant asked what simplified form they would like to have made up, and suggested a particular alternative. (It had been decided that staff assistants would participate in staff meetings on a rotating basis.) Mr. Hardy said that he would make up his own form. Mr. Scott said that "eventually we'll have to set up a policy on attendance registers to have a united front in the conflict with the provincial department."

The agenda informed staff that $108 had been allotted to the school to hire marking assistants. Discussion brought out the fact that "we can't get the money itself from the board; it has to go to the markers directly."

**Consultative Committee Meeting, November 7**

This meeting was attended by three parent representatives: Ray and several other students; Mr. Sander and Mrs. Griffiths from the staff; Mr. Berends (the board's communications director and editor of the newsletter) and Dr. Meyer; and the principal and two teachers from the U. Town Elementary School.

Chairman Worrall reviewed the parents' general meeting. He identified the outcome as a decision to create a "parents' association" with a "consultative executive." He said that they were "somehow to preserve the tripartiteness." There
was a need to set up a "modus operandi and a slate of officers."

Mr. Sander introduced the three people from the elementary school and said that they were "invited in connection with the possibility of a single community committee." (Mr. Sander told me later that this was done on his initiative.) Mr. Cyprus, the elementary principal, said that he was "strongly in favor of the community school idea, and would like to promote the idea of both schools combining in community participation, and including persons who are not necessarily parents." (One of the parents told me that Mr. Cyprus was "very good at involving the mothers in the program").

The committee then discussed what sort of organization the parents' meeting had wanted.

Sander: The parents' meeting wanted an executive similar to the consultative committee but responsible for calling parents together and involving them in large groups.

O'Doherty: It seemed that they wanted students in the association too.

Worrall: Yes. That came in at the end.

Cyprus: Is there any interest here in a joint body (with the elementary school)?

McDonald: What is the common interest from the parents' point of view?

Griffiths: It could be the means to orienting the parents to program issues rather than particular students.

McDonald: I doubt it.

O'Doherty: There is a common interest.
Worrall: I think we should determine as a community how we want our schools to differ from others.

Griffiths: I'd like to get over this discussion of how the machinery should function and get back into the real educational issues.

Ray: Right. Students have had this experience, and decided to ignore the organizational problems and get down to the problem.

Student: But this is different. There is a need for talking about how to set this up. One real question we should be in on as students and parents is what happens to the project after the three years.

Berends: Should this group do its own evaluation?

Student: Yes, better than someone from the board coming in for a day.

Griffiths: That's the kind of thing I'd like to see us discussing.

Meyer: Remember that Mr. Elvin's office is doing a formative evaluation and feeding this information back to the school.

Worrall: That's fine but we've been told specifically not to get into evaluation. It seems that we've evolved four terms of reference here. . . .

O'Doherty: We didn't really have any function before and it's still nebulous.

Ray: The humanities program was changed because of parental pressure—we should discuss that. We're trying to get people to react through the new newspaper too.

Worrall: So we need to decide how many to have on the executive and how to elect them.

O'Doherty: The consultative function was to be secondary, wasn't it, to the function of running the association?

Worrall: As I understand it, the new body would call forum meetings.
There was a long, inconclusive discussion of the functions of the new association. It was decided to present a slate of parents for election to the "consultative executive" of the association—new persons, identified by recalling who had spoken up at the parents' general meeting. A tendency to consider it a parents' association continued through the discussion. A decision was made to include the elementary school in the scope of the association.

Chapter Summary

At the parents' general meeting on October 26, the chairman described the failure of the consultative committee, recommended a strengthened body, and then put the question up to the parents assembled. After some discussion, a motion was made to abandon the idea of a tripartite forum. This motion was defeated by a vote of 36 to 34, with many abstentions. A proposal was then made from the floor to create a "school association" with members from all three groups and an elected executive. This was approved by an almost unanimous vote. The consultative committee was asked to meet one more time to draw up proposals for specific formats and executive nominations.

The staff discussed the parents' meeting briefly on November 2; there was confusion over its outcome. The staff agenda asked the teachers to select representatives for the "advisory committee and school association." The teachers asked some students, who were present at the staff meeting
and who had attended the parents' meeting, what had happened. The students said they were unsure. Neither the staff nor the students seemed to question the parents' right to make decisions about the new organization, even though the consultative committee had asked all three groups to express their wishes.

When the consultative committee met on November 7, the chair described the outcome of the parents' general meeting as a decision to create a "parents' association" with a "consultative executive." The principal had invited some persons from the U. Town Elementary School staff to the meeting, and proposed that they be included in a single community school committee. There was disagreement over what the parents' general meeting had decided. There was also dissatisfaction expressed by teachers and students over the continued discussion of organizational "machinery" rather than "real educational issues." Before the meeting broke up, a slate of parents was nominated for the new executive, and it was decided to include the elementary school in the scope of the new association.

The staff meeting of November 2 was the first at which students were present by invitation; the topic they were invited to discuss was the student lounge. In the staff-only part of that meeting, the teachers continued the process of identifying problem students; difficulty was encountered.
over the criteria being used. There was also discussion of resistance to higher authority in two contexts: the provincial attendance registers, and the administering of questionnaires from the evaluation department.

*****
A STUDENT NEWSPAPER

A group of students started a newspaper, called *Inside the Factory*, in November, 1972, at about the time I finished my observations. In the first issue, the editor, James, wrote:

If you're mad about something, anything, let's hear what you've got to say. . . . There is absolutely no censorship of articles, providing they do not attack anyone on a personal level. . . .

Another student wrote:

I feel that the "Factory" can be used as an ideal method of communication within and even outside of our school. . . . I can see the paper, I want the paper to be used to inform the fellow humans of activities happening in the school; as a literary distributor; but mainly as a source through which people can speak their minds, ask questions, etc.... . . I'd really like to see this paper become a real addition to our school and open up communication channels. . . .

The second issue of the paper carried, among other items, four articles of interest to my study. Two were written by editor James:

"Motherhood"

As the editor of the newspaper, I found out something which I thought was thrown out with the new system last year. When I went to the office to ask if printing facilities of the school were available to the newspaper, I was asked who my sponsor was. I was shocked. In a little over six months I'll be out in the world and all its so-called troubles. But up until then I will have to be a little child always being checked by my school mother or
sponsor. In a system of student "trust" the idea of having a sponsor is not only revolting but in direct opposition of the entire idea. I don't mind if the sponsor is just a name plate for the school board but somehow I have the feeling sponsors are more than that. Do the teachers feel we need to be checked? Because if not, why do they enforce this motherhood role on themselves?

"Student-Teacher Committee"

Since starting this newspaper, I have learned a lot about the students and the teachers, mainly the students and their problems. A lot of students have voiced disappointments in the system. Last year seemed the real experimental year and this year seemed a tightening up year. I have heard many complaints about this surface tightening and it isn't till one is confronted by it till you realize what's happening. A small list of some of the new system's shortcomings are listed below.

* Handling of marks
* Increase in exams in the humanities
* Teacher sponsorship of student clubs
* Increased strictness in the "reading" section of the library
* Increased strictness everywhere

The newspaper will carry all articles but I fear this will only cause publicity and no change. Therefore, I am trying to form a student-staff committee in which we can talk face to face on these and more issues that have and will be raised. I and a lot of students feel this school has the potential to be the best in Westmont, but at the same time, it could slip back into the past. Are we a school of friends or a school of enemies, teachers versus students? . . . .

One of the articles of interest to me was written by Ray, the student who participated in the consultative committee most consistently.

"Metamorphosis"

Things in this school are, in almost unnoticeable ways, slipping here and there back into the realm of structure, fear and discipline. This is my own
opinion; maybe you don't feel the same way; maybe it's my imagination. I can't help thinking though, that the true potential of our school, the people in it and the "new system" is not being fulfilled as well as it might. This year more structure has been introduced in various areas, including humanities and different mini-courses. I can feel the restricting bands closing in once again.

Subconsciously, and in some cases consciously, "the teachers" (lumping them into one group, which I shouldn't do) feel vaguely superior to the mass of students; that is, we are not yet treated like real equals. "They" have their private little meetings--NO STUDENTS ALLOWED--yet our student assemblies are open to everyone. I can't find any way to justify this imbalance.

Because of this real lack of understanding between not only teacher and student but also student and student and teacher and teacher, there is a basic unity still missing in our school. God knows, we are ten times better off than the oppressed students in other schools, but a real learning experience--giving, taking and sharing--still does not exist here. Maybe it never can exist within not only the confines of walls but those restrictions set up by the Sailcrest school board and the government. I'm really not yet sure. . . .

The fourth article of interest was unsigned.

"Fluffy's Valedictory Address"

What are we doing here tonight? Supposedly we're here to honour our graduates--all the hard work we've put in and the significant knowledge we've accumulated over the last twelve years. But what we're really doing is carrying out a ritual which attempts to glorify and justify an institution which many of us know to be pretty much of a failure. Many of us will go on to university, but only a small portion will get to finish. The rest of us have little more chance of finding a decent job than those of us who could not hack school and dropped out a year ago.
Some of you here are thinking that I am putting down the very idea of getting an education. But I'm not—I am saying that an education is crucial—and that is why there is so much cause for dissatisfaction with the education this graduating class just had shoved down its collective throat. But even now I'm not putting down what I found here. In this school system, many gifted teachers are to be found, dedicated and anxious to help us learn. But...they are bogged down with petty paperwork—attendance records, staff meetings, referendums—everything but teaching.

People complain that students are too impatient and demanding. But when we ask important questions about drugs, for example, do they send us a doctor? No: They send us a cop with a badge and a gun, and he implies that— one puff on a joint and we're hooked on heroin for life. If that were true, half the class graduating tonight would be junkies. We're all taught how to drive a car, but we're not taught how to avoid being cheated by dishonest advertising, banks, and finance companies. We ask questions about how to stop or avoid pregnancy, but teachers are not allowed to tell us much more than, "Take a cold shower." If they do, they are subject to punishment by the hypocrites of the school board who still think babies come from storks.

We are constantly told that we must be responsible, yet we need to sign a slip every week for attendance.

After going through five years of school many of us are asking one big question: Why does the school, which is supposedly here to serve our needs, so consistently ignore those needs? Could it be that we are too impatient? Obviously not—Nothing much has changed in the last few years. Is it a problem of money? No—that is just the convenient excuse: For example, it would cost less to hire a qualified drug counselor than it did to hire one of our unqualified pencil-pushing, file-filling administrators in the school board. So...it isn't impatience, and it isn't a matter of money. Maybe it's the parents' fault, as some teachers and administrators insist. But, as far as I know, the parents still pay the bills, and they still do what they can to encourage and help their kids get an education, and yet they seem to have no more
influence on how the schools are run than their children! Well? Who are the schools serving, and what are they producing for the future? I have to admit—one thing that the school does is that it provides a terrific baby sitting service that keeps kids off the streets for twelve years! Second, it produces mass boredom and apathy—and what could be more effective for killing new ideas? Next, the school maintains things as they are (the status quo). By rewarding students for being quiet, obedient, dependent children while all the time telling them they are being prepared for responsibility and adulthood!

Another thing people say that we young people always complain, that we criticize and tear things apart without offering any better methods for change. But many of us at school did try to change things; and we ran into the same disorganization among ourselves, and the same resistance and excuses from the school as did the classes before us. We really didn't know what to do. Now, looking back, I think we are ready to offer some suggestions for those soon coming into the system. It will be your school, don't feel afraid of asking questions about why things happen as they do. It is your life that the school will be dealing with; don't feel guilty for trying to have some say in how it goes. Every hour you spend in a classroom, the clock keeps ticking away. Don't let your life be wasted!

When you do find a teacher who really wants to help you and answer your questions (and will) fight for his right to answer them. Find out WHO is keeping you down! It is not other students—they, too, want and need the same things you do. When you see the administration coming down on one student, back that student. And when it is time to stick your neck out, don't be afraid to do so. The power in the school should be and can be in your hands, IF you take it.

I can well imagine what some of you are thinking. "Listen to these ungrateful snots. Who do they think they are, complaining just because there are things wrong with the educational system?" May I tell you who we are? We are not ungrateful snots. We are not criminals. We are not bomb-throwers. We are not insane. And we are not your enemies. We are your children, and when we become angry and cry out, it is because we feel pain. How can you ignore us?!
Chapter Summary

The student newspaper in November, 1972, revealed some bitter dissatisfaction with the school, specifically with staff sponsorship of student activities; the handling of marks; exams in humanities; increased strictness and discipline; increased "structure" in the program; closed staff meetings; teachers' non-teaching activities; a lack of answers to important questions, irrelevant curriculum, and ignoring of students' real needs; attendance records; a lack of community influence on the school; and resistance to student participation in the school's development.

Although these articles could be said to be unrepresentative, their appearance had definite significance in a project school with major goals of community participation in decision-making and student responsibility for learning.

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CHAPTER 22

SOME VIEWS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY, INDIVIDUALIZATION OF
INSTRUCTION, AND THE CONTRACT APPROACH

Although study of the implementation of program itself
was not a central purpose of my research, I gathered, in
the course of interviews conducted in the period, November,
1972, to January, 1973, a variety of perceptions from parti­
cipants as to the extent and manner of the implementation of
those school-level program decisions in which I had taken a
particular interest. Questions about participation in the
implementation phase of the decision process naturally led
interviewees into describing relevant aspects of the program
in practice. As one of the parents put it:

... The value of these decisions lies in carrying
them out, not just making them. I see this (the
school-level program decisions) as the framework
within which important implementative decisions
have been made. ... It allows good teachers to
make decisions. ... What do the large terms mean?

Student Responsibility

Teacher:

The bulk of the student body is more aware
of their responsibility and prepared to carry
it out as a result of the new program. Some
don't, or can't. ... The younger kids now have
their schedules filled up with commitments
dictated to them, although it's done on an
individual basis. ...

Teacher:

Student responsibility to me means that the
students come to realize that they are responsible
for how much they get out of the program--getting
them to do things because they want to do it, not because we want them to--learning to discipline themselves. . . .

I think it's sort of failing, in a way. . . . largely because of parents. They want to take the responsibility for the kids; they're not patient enough; they don't let the kids flounder . . . . We've gone back to some things like disciplining kids, and making them fill out timetables. . . . The basic emphasis in the program (on student responsibility) has been implemented by allowing students a great deal of choice and responsibility for decisions--for example, kids have to choose between a mini-course they want and a physical education course at the same time. A large part of the responsibility is given to the student in that they are given a minimum amount of work but they are responsible for spending more time if they have trouble or want to. A lot of the kids have failed to realize that these are only minimum requirements. . . .

Teacher:

Student responsibility has been implemented in that a large percentage of the kids are responding to the program, have accepted the responsibility of managing their own work load, have learned to budget their time, have accepted mature attitudes toward the building and toward each other. . . .

Teacher:

Student responsibility here means responsibility for attendance, for one thing, although that was truer last year than this year. Students are more responsible for what they do beyond class time than in a straight school. Policing duties, such as keeping eating areas clean, or student use of the building, are left more up to the students than in regular schools. The responsibility is almost always with guidance, however; for example, the timetable is arranged by the student himself but teachers check it and take attendance in each class, and the office monitors graduation requirements. It's not so much a matter of turning things over to students as having them involved in initiating things. . . . It's not really very different from the way I had things before in another school, but then my classroom wasn't like the others. . . .
Some of the teachers' comments about the implementation of student responsibility pertained to particular areas of the school:

Marion (humanities):

We...have experiences with student responsibility in the mapping out of work goals individually. The kids often have unrealistic goals. And the kids take part in evaluating themselves and the group processes. They have a part in planning what we do. . . .

Deering (humanities):

Student responsibility means instead of telling the student what to do at all times, we give him alternatives and opportunities to seek out ways and means of doing things on his own, with the teachers giving some guidance; and once he decided to do a certain project he is committed to do it.

Chiba (industrial education):

Student responsibility meant, in my area, the ability to apply by themselves information I supply—not spoon-feeding them; the realization that they could only accomplish the work I had given them through some management of their own time; the division of time and effort among commitments on their part.

Students' views gathered on the implementation of student responsibility were as follows:

Student:

(Student responsibility) has been partially implemented, but not really. More so than in any other Sailcrest school. In the French program you decide which rate you want to work at, what you want to get out of it. Math is individualized to a certain degree, but it doesn't implement student responsibility. Chemistry has student responsibility; you aren't bugged by anyone if you don't work. . . . Individual student decisions on what they'd like to take are the main way (student responsibility) is
accomplished. Students wouldn't be allowed to do that in another school. But it depends completely on what subjects you take, particularly what teachers, whether the courses themselves emphasize responsibility. . . .

Student:

. . . There are certain curriculum requirements, but the difference is that if you reject something you're not pressured as much. . . .

Student:

. . . Some kids haven't used the (responsibility), but for those who do go for it, it has been effective. Not that many kids sway from the standard curriculum. They're all heading for a transcript at the end of grade 12. . . .

One of the parents said:

Student responsibility means responsibility for two things: one's own learning and responsibility to the school. Responsibility to self was emphasized more, but even there I sense a drawing back in the school program now—a return to a greater orthodoxy. For example, the unscheduled Thursday is structured again this year. The long lunch hour, which was designed to enable students to participate in activities at university, is back to the regular lunch hour. And there have been modifications in humanities.

Another parent said:

This year, (1972 to 1973), will be the crunch year to see if the school keeps its innocence, or spark. In the first year, the staff projected to the kids a real, viable alternative. Now the staff seems to be running down in enthusiasm. . . . The staff has to keep in mind the goal of producing kids who can solve complex problems with some ingenuity and self-reliance.

Dr. Meyer said:

The implementation of student responsibility has been developmental; they're not there, but moving toward it with a fair amount of insight.
Individualization of Instruction

Principal:

Individualization of instruction depends on the subject. It's easy to do in math or science, where you have levels of achievement. In humanities, individualization comes down to a choice of courses or activities rather than real individualization of instruction. . . . Individualization isn't really being done anywhere, because you need the materials for it. . . .

Teacher:

Individualization is accomplished through the timetabling process, in which each kid can select his courses; through some student decision-making within courses; through mini-courses; through the system of testing in some subjects. . . . The individualization decision has definitely been implemented in those fields where kids proceed at their own rates. But the courses themselves are from the department of education; they're not individualized in that respect. Ninety plus per cent of the student population is academic, university-oriented. . . .

Teacher:

Individualization is implemented through the basic class time. . . . (It) means offering enough choice and variety in the program so that each individual student can find things that interest him; also, it means working at different rates. . . .

Some teachers gave descriptions of the individualization of instruction in their own sections of the school:

Happi (math):

There is no question that individualization has been implemented in math, and they are doing well at it. It does, however, point up those who are having a great deal of difficulty. In the old system, those who don't do well are more hidden. Certainly they are getting more math comprehension now.
Marion (humanities):

...In teaching the section on social forces (one of 6 sections the kids can choose from), I offer them a choice of 12 or more revolutions to study the history of. Then we bring their work together...We emphasize participation and interaction with other kids. But within each section we have a lot of individualization...

Deering (humanities):

...Individualization (means) that students aren't all required to do the same things. We didn't follow this in humanities last year; giving 150 kids the same exam isn't exactly what I call individualization. This year we've individualized by giving choices among six sections, so they decide what to get involved in...

Chiba (industrial education):

...Individualization meant instead of large group lessons I chose to use individual demonstrations and personal attention. Therefore, my timetable is set up in such a way that large group lectures are impossible, since there are always a number of kids working at their own rates...Individualization has been implemented in my area to the degree I hoped it would...

Two students gave me their views of individualization:

Student:

...Individualization is when the student can go at his own rate; the teacher gets to know the student's problems in a subject and doesn't expect the student to be at the same level as everyone else. The teacher is the one who makes a program individualized. In math, for example, the teacher puts pressure on the student to achieve up to the standard level, but in chemistry he doesn't...

Student:

There's a certain amount of curricular flexibility--a choice of topics in humanities, for example...
Contracts

Sander:

(The decision to utilize contracts) has been carried out but not to the extent first envisioned. Part of the problem is time; and there's the problem of communications between teachers and students who don't speak up. We tend to lose the little kid who doesn't keep his appointments. It's very difficult to get a hold of a student in this school. We lost a lot of little kids in, for example, science, last year; the two teachers each thought the other had them. Imagine what would happen in a large school. These are the kids who don't have student responsibility. I brought this problem up in our staff (planning) week, but it's still happening. Contract time is good for flexibility but when you reduce staff to get more budget, you run into the problem of not having enough time to go around. You might have to be willing to accept the loss of some kids in this type of program. For those who have responsibility, contract time is working well. . . .

Scott (French):

I would define contracts as the undertaking by students of a certain amount of work to be done in a certain amount of time, along with some agreement about how it will be evaluated. It is done somewhat differently in different areas of the school; but I don't think it is discussed as a "contract." We have used "contract" purely in terms of the way time is sliced up. We had core time or minimal time, and then in addition contract time. Contracting has meant spending a minimum amount of time in a certain subject and in addition to that contracting for more. There is a sense of choice in contract time. It's a long way from "contracts" though. Yet it's not just a label for individualized learning, because the core time is individualized too. The term is a poor one.

Happ (math):

(The contract decision) is meaningless now; it's gone—not because it was turfed out, but because the kids start the year now with scheduled time. They learned that they needed it, and they've filled the timetable completely up with regular commitments. . . . The contract decision was trivial. It's an individual
thing which people interpret in their own ways. It's a bit of a gimmick, and it gets far too much emphasis. It didn't form an integral part of the program. . . . The biggest school-level program decision I can notice is something that isn't clearly defined—it's the taking away of some of the responsibility we originally hoped the kids would take. Contract time was a symptom. We've done away with the unscheduled Thursday, which was the main bastion of student responsibility, because nobody attended. That was a major decision and a regression from the point of view of the idealists. It was a decision arrived at by default. . . .

Marion (humanities):

Some of the kids haven't seen (contracts) as a solution to a problem with (any) one of their subjects; others have seen it. In humanities last year we attempted to use it on an individualized basis, but it failed because of organizational problems—supervision, record-keeping. So now we don't use it as in French or science. We set up conferences individually for particular problems; or we have joint conferences with the advisor. . . .

Deering (humanities):

(The contract decision) has been implemented in science and math, and industrial education, but not in humanities, because the type of work the kids are doing takes them to different locations and there isn't a need to go into a particular room at a particular time. The teachers are available as needed. Contract time is used sometimes in writing, for specific problems.

Griffiths (physical education):

The contract decision meant time in the day when students would go to a certain instructor and get individual help. The concept now means pretty much the same, but it doesn't really exist in anything very much, except in math and science, I think. I don't think there is contract time in many areas. . . . Contract time is still very vague to the kids and to me too.
Chiba (industrial education):

Last year there was a higher percentage of contract time. It was too much responsibility to place on the kids, and too tiring for the teacher. So we elected to schedule more time this year, yet retain the concept of contractual periods to keep instruction individualized. In my area, contract is a name for time. In other areas, it may mean a specific work commitment. I've never viewed it as anything but a time allotment.

Furness (humanities):

I make relatively little use of (contracts) myself. I have individual meetings with kids in both subject classes and advisory groups, but it's not a contract situation like in typing or math. ... It's not so different from the way I taught before (in another school), except that now I have more time to give to individual conferences. . . .

Student views of the implementation of the contractual approach were:

Student:

Contract time has been implemented, but it's not a method of individualizing or emphasizing student responsibility. It's just like another class time—you go and a certain number of other people go. But only a few people do it, not very many; it depends on the subject. I expected contract time to be more personal when I first heard of it. . . . Contractual time hasn't even been mentioned this year, except in one course.

Student:

Contracts originally meant you sign up for a certain amount of time. It doesn't really exist any more. It failed because people exploited or abused it last year. There is contractual time in French. You could call math contractual; you go to only the number of classes you need; but you still have regimented periods. . . . In certain classes it's a roundabout way of telling you you need more time for studying.
The kids didn't utilize contracts; they took advantage of it. . . .The contractual thing was just to get on a personal basis with teachers. It was a way of solving the problem of the big class syndrome—seeing students as parts of a machine. It was a method of individualizing instruction, and finding out the problems a person had. . . .The contract decision meant nothing to me at first. I didn't understand it. After a while I realized that you've got to go to someone for advice; everyone needed to be a counselor. . . .but because the kids didn't utilize it, a lot of us lost confidence in it. . . .The kids are still not taking full advantage of it. It's discouraging. The teachers are bogged down with the idea of 9:30 to 10:00, etc. The days are changed, only it's still the same. There must be another alternative. . . .It's all kind of stagnant at the moment.

What (contracts) means is that instead of filing into the classroom and getting taught the same lesson with your classmates, you work at your own pace or by yourself; but. . . .a lot of kids don't use it; they move at the standard rate.

Most of the kids wasted their contract time in the first year; they couldn't relate to the possibilities in the program for personal relationships with teachers. Contract time was the biggest grant of responsibility to the kids and the most abused. The staff advisors, too, didn't take hold of their relationship to the kids; they didn't take advantage of opportunities to develop it. If they can't do it in a small school, how can it work in a large one? I wouldn't be surprised if 80 per cent of the kids don't know what contract time is. . . .

The contract idea meant a pact between the individual student and the teacher to do things on his own as related to his curriculum. Implementation has been developmental. They learned from their
problems in the first year that it needed to be more structured—more work was needed to train students in the skills to carry out contracts. Written contracts might have been more advantageous than verbal ones, initially, but some form of contract time is necessary in that kind of situation.

Chapter Summary

Data on the implementation of student responsibility, individualization of instruction, and the contract approach were gathered as a by-product of my interviews on decision processes.

Teachers described student responsibility as partially implemented, and gave specific examples of it: choice of courses; scheduling of work beyond the minimum; management of work loads; budgeting of time; attendance; use of building; setting work goals; evaluation decision-making; choice of activities within courses; application of information to study projects. Teachers cited some limitations to student responsibility: dictation of commitments to younger students; requirements to fill out timetables for staff approval in some cases; increased discipline. One teacher pointed out that nothing about the implementation of student responsibility at U. Town was unique, and that it was usually accompanied by teacher guidance.

Students also saw the implementation of student responsibility as partial; they thought it compared favorably to other Sailcrest schools. Specific examples of student responsibility given by students were: choice of rate of work
in some subjects; choice of courses; not being "bugged" or "pressured" for choosing not to do something (in some courses). One student pointed out that the implementation of student responsibility varied from teacher to teacher very much. Another student said that some kids did not take as much responsibility as was available, and that most students did not "sway from the standard curriculum anyway."

Two parents who gave perceptions of the implementation of student responsibility thought that it was lessening in year two. One saw a "return to greater orthodoxy" in the elimination of the unscheduled Thursday and the long lunch hour for university activities, and the modifications in the humanities program. Another parent thought that the first year of the project had demonstrated a "real, viable alternative," but in the second year the staff seemed to be "running down in enthusiasm."

The director described the implementation of student responsibility as "developmental."

Individualization of instruction was also described by teachers as partially implemented. Examples given were: levels of achievement in some courses; choice of courses; choice of activities in some courses; timetabling; testing in some courses; mini-courses; rates of work in some courses; choice of sections within some courses; choice of topics within sections; individual demonstrations. Students who discussed individualization of instruction with me cited:
rates of work; choice of topics; teachers getting to know
individual students' problems. Students again pointed out
much variation among teachers.

The reader will note that the operational meanings given
to student responsibility and individualization of instruction
tended to be very similar. Both seemed to boil down to some
student choice in courses, sections, activities, use of time,
and levels and rates of work. As some teachers and students
remarked, however, the extent of these student choices was
definitely limited. Complete individualization and student
responsibility was not found in any area of the program.
Moreover, most students apparently chose to follow the standard
academic curriculum in hopes of admission to university.

A startling picture of the implementation of the contract
approach was given by participants. Apparently, it no longer
existed in almost any area of the school. It appears that the
decision to retain contract time in the year two program was
made simply as a means of justifying to the outside world the
continued allotment of blocks of time to individual conferences
rather than classes. In very few cases was this time con­
tracted for; the teacher typically was just available for
students to consult individually. In many areas of the program
this arrangement seems to have resulted in a new type of
"class," in which a number of students working at their own
rates interacted with a teacher individually during certain
time periods. In some subjects, this was little different
from what regularly scheduled classes were like. Interestingly, many members of the staff seemed to be under the impression (at least at the time I did the interviews) that the contract method was still used in areas of the program other than their own. The abandonment of the contract approach seems to have come about because many students did not use it and many teachers found it too difficult to organize. Almost from the beginning of the new program, most staff apparently viewed contracting merely as a method of allocating time blocks rather than a method of developing the programs of individual students; and eventually, even the idea of "contract time" proved unworkable.

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SOME VIEWS ON THE CHARACTER OF THE U. TOWN PROGRAM

It is difficult to say what does characterize the program of U. Town Secondary School as a whole. Mr. Sander suggested to me that the net effect of the changes in the school could be viewed as a "humanizing" of the relationships between teachers and students:

... All these decisions are relatively unimportant compared to one thing that has happened in this school—-that is, a humanistic approach. It's our biggest plus, yet we didn't set out to do it. It's especially unusual in an academic school. ... 

One of the students pointed to the same feature, but qualified it:

... The relationship between students and teachers is what it's all about. ... It makes the teacher more human. ... A little while ago, for example, I had a talk with Mr. Scott about a problem. We discussed the philosophy of the school, and it was a good discussion, I thought. With Mr. Happ, on the other hand, it would be a little less like that. I'm not sure I could do that with Mr. Happ. You're talking with Mr. Happ, the teacher, while with Mr. Scott you can go into your personal feelings. ... I enjoy school much more. There's less changing personality between home and school—keeping up two images.

Another student thought that the informality of teacher-student relationships was fading as time went on:

People are starting to assume roles again. Last year friendships existed between teachers and students because of the lack of organization; they were both involved in the problems. Now the
lines are more defined, the relationships are becoming more distinct. I'm not sure what the explanation is. A lot of the staff seem disillusioned. They have shunned friendships with students. There's a difference between talking about scholastic things and social things.

A parent contradicted the view of the U. Town program as "humanistic:"

...The kids are disappointed in their advisors. Actually, the number of kids who have a close relationship with the staff might be the same as in any school—a certain group who seek it out....

Several of the teachers viewed "flexibility" as the essential characteristic of the new program. Mr. Chiba commented:

The distinguishing characteristic of this school is the flexibility of the staff toward each other's needs and toward the program. For example, when I had arranged a hockey game with another school on school time, the other coach showed up with just a few kids and said the others couldn't come because they weren't permitted to miss class, and those who had been allowed to come would have to make up the time after school. Our kids have accepted responsibility for the progress of their work when they choose to miss a class. I'm not interested in having a captive audience of warm bodies. In other schools, the teachers take it as a personal affront if a kid doesn't show up for a class. I see myself as a resource person, not a dictator of facts. But this again wasn't something we had to decide....

Miss Deering said:

...Student responsibility and individualization is the central characteristic of the program; but the first thing is to be aware of the needs of the students through our program. That's why we arrived at the emphasis on student responsibility. So the decision to make the curriculum meet the needs of students was really the central program decision. For example, the establishment of a humanities program rather than the usual separate
subjects; or the use of alternative texts in math. We felt that the kids' needs are not met in most schools. . . .

Mrs. Furness thought that the curricular flexibility of the humanities program could be viewed as the distinguishing feature of the school:

. . . Having a humanities domain and teaching team was a major decision that set the school apart from other schools. This is where the school differs from others in curriculum. It is only in humanities where we make basic changes in course content; the other areas are simply enriched. We're more free to use alternative curricula because there are more things we can include and call it "humanities." There are still basic requirements but we're not as bound by the subject matter for college preparation purposes. The integration of subject fields gives us scope.

Some of the students' comments about the implementation of student responsibility, individualization of instruction, and the contract approach, reported earlier, support the idea that the new program was characterized by "flexibility." The value of describing the program as "flexible" seems to lie in the term's implication that changes occurred in the degree to which the curriculum and staff adjusted to students' needs, but that the changes were not revolutionary. The reader may recall trustee Gruner's remark that "there had been pressure from various trustees to loosen up the high school a bit."

Student:

In the French program you decide which rate you want to work at, what you want to get out of it. Math is individualized to a certain degree. . . . Chemistry has student responsibility; you aren't bugged by anyone if you don't work. . . . Individual
student decisions on what they'd like to take are the main way (student responsibility) is accomplished. ... Individualization is when ... the teacher gets to know the student's problems in a subject and doesn't expect the student to be at the same level as everyone else. ... 

Student:

... There are certain curriculum requirements, but the difference is that if you reject something you're not pressured as much. ... There's a certain amount of curricular flexibility—a choice of topics in humanities, for example. ... 

Student:

... Instead of filing into the classroom and getting taught the same lesson with your classmates, you work at your own pace or by yourself. ... 

Even the flexibility of the new program was, however, called into question by some of the students' comments, as we have seen.

Student:

... The teacher is the one who makes a program individualized. In math, for example, the teacher puts pressure on the student to achieve up to the standard level, but in chemistry he doesn't. ... 

Student:

... You go to only the number of classes you need; but you still have regimented periods. ... 

Student:

It's discouraging. The teachers are bogged down with the idea of 9:30 to 10:00, etc. The days are changed, only it's still the same. There must be another alternative. ... It's all kind of stagnant at the moment.

U. Town Secondary remains fundamentally an academic institution preparing adolescents from an upper socio-economic
neighborhood for university. The changes in the program can be viewed as attempts to update that function.

Student:

...The decision (to emphasize student responsibility) meant bringing reality into the schools. Up to grade 12, students had been spoon-fed, then had to fend for themselves. The drop-out rate from U. Town graduates at university was two-thirds. By giving responsibility to the students you bring in the reality earlier. 

Dr. Worrall:

...I expected student responsibility to develop in the manner I knew from university teaching—as I understood it, the idea was to take this into the secondary school.

A student wondered about the future of the project:

...I don't know what they're heading for. ... whether U. Town is an experimental school or a trend or whatever. I don't see what implications it has. It seems like kind of a gift from the board, and they can take it away at any time.

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CHAPTER 24

THE CASE HISTORY IN REVIEW

The stage was set for the case by the provincial government's decision to amalgamate the U. Town school district with the Sallcrest district. U. Town prior to amalgamation was a very small, wealthy district in a university community; its schools were academically oriented. With some exceptions, development of the program of the secondary school as a unit was lacking, and there was hence little opportunity for participation in school-level program decision-making. The Sallcrest district, into which U. Town was thrust, was change-oriented in its policies, favoring school-level program development and decision-making.

The initiation of innovation at U. Town Secondary School came about through a process of planning at the board office level. A study of "differentiated staffing" was gradually expanded into a proposal for a complete reorganization in an unspecified Sallcrest secondary school. The history and character of U. Town had a direct bearing on its selection for such a project. Another important factor appears to have been the administrators' desire to undertake innovation almost for its own sake, a desire which can be seen in the global nature of the proposed changes, the vagueness of the plans, the assumption that desired changes would "evolve," and the irony of imposing on the community an innovation intended
to broaden participation in decision-making. Several important school-level program decisions were included in the basic reorganization decision: an emphasis on student responsibility for learning and individualization of instruction, curriculum enrichment, use of community resources, and flexible scheduling.

Following the Sailcrest trustees' approval of the school's reorganization, preparations for program development were carried out: a new staff was selected; a community advisory council was formed; specific contacts with the university were made; the new staff was brought together for initial meetings and training in program development; and program proposals from individual teachers and students were gathered.

The staff met for a week in June, and again for a week in August, to plan the new program. In the June meetings, it became apparent that organizational problems were more pressing than curricular-instructional problems at the level of the school as a whole. This continued to be true throughout the history of the case. School-level organizational problems were concerned with staff utilization; finance; timetabling; physical plant and equipment; relations with the local community, the district office, professional associations, and visiting colleagues; student admissions, groupings, and attendance; and the structure of decision-making itself.
One major school-level program decision coming out of the June planning session was the decision to use the "contract" approach to emphasizing student responsibility and individualization of instruction. Through interviews with a variety of participants, I found that this decision was reached by consensus of the staff, with little thought given to alternative approaches and no participation in the decision-making process by any other group. Interviews also revealed that the staff lacked understanding of the board's basic reorganization decision and underestimated the importance of the staff-selection process. Most staff members believed that they themselves made the fundamental decision to emphasize student responsibility and individualization of instruction in the U. Town program.

From the beginning of the program planning period, the advisory council was separated from the staff's decision-making process. The school principal delayed the involvement of the council until after the most important decisions were made, and very few members of the community or teaching staff objected at the time. The council met only once in conjunction with the June planning sessions, and once more during the August planning week. At the June meeting of the advisory council, the principal was obviously concerned about parent reaction to change in the school. He emphasized to the council that the new program would include "core material." In that emphasis could be seen the beginnings of a split between the principal and the staff.
In the August staff meetings, curricular-instructional planning and decision-making proceeded at the departmental and class levels, but there was a lack of comprehensive school-wide program planning. The school's objectives were stated by the staff at the suggestion of the director of instruction, the board official most directly responsible for the project. The staff also accepted the board's authority for evaluation of the project. There was apparently no concern over the lateness of plans related to the project's objectives or program evaluation.

Only one teacher, a new staff member who was to become the school's leader in promoting student and parent participation in decision-making, expressed concern about the lack of community participation in these sessions. The August advisory council meeting was tacked on near the end of the week. Peripheral topics were discussed; the agenda was set by the staff. The principal's concern with parent reaction to change was again evident. The emphasis in the council's function seemed to be on disseminating and justifying the professionals' decisions. Parents were worried about students having "free time."

As the school moved into year one, the handbook of the Sailcrest district proclaimed policies supporting the kinds of changes being tried at U. Town. New students came to the school from other parts of the city with the impression that U. Town would be a "free school." The orientation booklet
for U. Town students offered, however, a program different from the traditional only in humanities.

At the advisory council meeting in September, several side issues were raised by the principal. More important topics were raised by parents and students: information channels to students; student group cohesion; the problem of noise in the halls and the need for a student lounge; and "free time."

Some of the early problems encountered at U. Town became apparent in the October advisory council meeting. Division in the student population between "old" and "new" students led to a problem in student government; the advisory council intervened to suggest new elections of student officers. There was further parental criticism of "free time," particularly the problem of "students who are not self-motivated." Students defended the new program against parents' attacks. There was confusion over "contract time." A need for a school-community newsletter was felt.

Problems of organizational detail apparently consumed staff meetings in the early part of year one, although some school-level program problems were addressed. Meetings were held with the director of instruction and the board official responsible for evaluation of the U. Town program; in these meetings, the staff stressed its concern with the "processes" of education rather than academic outcomes. A further meeting was necessitated by the difficulty of reaching
agreement between the evaluation official and the staff on this matter.

At a special staff meeting with the evaluation official and the director on November 1, decisions were made about the general types of program evaluation in year one, based on proposals from the evaluation official. Emphasis was placed on the "formative" nature of the evaluation, and on the "processes" of learning. A dispute over "measurement" of the achievement of objectives was unresolved.

At the November 2 advisory council meeting, parent concern was voiced over "unassigned time" and the humanities program; and a need was again felt for better communication between school and community, specifically for a general meeting. The board's evaluation of the U. Town program was activated partly by what the evaluation official perceived as an increasingly critical situation in community relations; he warned the staff about it in a letter on November 3. Teachers' apprehensions were apparent to me in their comments in informal conversation when I met them for the first time that week.

The advisory council faced up to its identity crisis at a special meeting on November 8. The council adopted a proposal by the chairman that it define its own role as "consultative" and the faculty/school board role as "executive." There was some objection by a parent and a teacher to the exclusion of the community from program decision-making. The director's denial that a decision-making role had been intended for the council, however, clinched the question.
At this same meeting, plans were laid for a general meeting to be held later in November; the content and format of the meeting were proposed by staff. A bulletin was distributed by the humanities team describing the program in that area; reassurances to parents threaded through the bulletin. A newsletter was planned to precede the general meeting.

At about this time, the staff decided to hold weekly meetings with groups of students in each grade who were not sufficiently involved in the program.

Continued attempts to reassure the community were made in the ensuing months. The November 24 general meeting did not result in very much participation in discussion of the new program; this was partly because the original plans for the meeting, which called for a general questioning period at the end, were altered. After this meeting, the staff recognized the inadequacy and made plans for further meetings with groups of parents and students in January by grade level, to discuss the program. In December, the humanities staff reorganized its program to include some traditional course offerings as a concession to community pressure.

A questionnaire on contracted student time was administered during this period by the department of evaluation. In my interviews, I asked about the decision to use this questionnaire, as an example of a school-level program
decision, to follow up on my study of the earlier decision to use the contract approach. I found that the contract questionnaire decision was made by the evaluation official and his research assistant; there was a lack of participation by anyone other than the evaluation department in the decision. Participants in the case were almost unanimously critical of the questionnaire.

In a two-day session in February, the staff group tried to catch up on its own communications, through a discussion of the programs and problems in each domain. The humanities staff presented a statement of its philosophy, objectives, and organization. Many problems identified by humanities were of concern to all teachers: the traditionalism of some parents and students, as against the teachers' emphasis on "processes" of learning; attendance; timetable conflicts; the need for more parent participation in program development and better information from the school to parents; the need for more staff group planning time. French teachers discussed the problems of student evaluation; contract time; integration of languages and humanities; the lack of student decision-making authority; student traditionalism; the "grade 11 resisters;" and the grade 8 provincial curriculum requirements. Science reported a program organized around levels of achievement and rates of work toward the goal of "humanizing and individualizing" the program. Problems identified in the science area included the lack of materials to truly
Individualize instruction; the lack of general courses; the failure of many students to manage their time well; the grade 11 resistance group; the physical separation of one science teacher from the others; and the lack of university participation. The math teacher explained his program, built around "levels of aspiration." He also complained about the grade 8 curriculum requirements. The other more practical areas of the program reported a rich variety of offerings and not so much of a problem with student involvement.

The staff expressed dissatisfaction with the board's commitment to staff planning time, and decided to request a week or more released time in April. It was also decided to write up the domain reports, which they had just given each other, for distribution to the community. There was no time in this two-day session for another topic on the agenda: the revised statement of school philosophy and objectives drawn up by the staff accreditation committee. The most interesting thing about that document to me was that it cut out student and parent participation in school-level program decision-making as a school goal.

As the staff planned for the last part of year one, a problem it faced was to formulate policy on the provincial final exams and scholarship exams without violating the philosophy of the new program.
The consultative committee saw as problems needing discussion at its February meeting "evaluation of students," "student apathy," and "dropouts." It was arranged with the board's director of communications to publish a newsletter following each committee meeting.

More parental questioning was met by more assurances from the school staff at consultative committee meetings in March and April. Parents expressed concern about "course content," "student evaluation," "risks to students with low motivation," and "program evaluation." The staff issued a policy statement on student evaluation. The humanities team offered further justifications.

The staff succeeded in getting one full week in April for planning sessions; interested department heads from other Sailcrest secondary schools substituted for them. The April planning week, like the other staff meetings, was taken up primarily by organizational problems, albeit more long-range. A basic program problem did arise out of a discussion of student admissions policies: the staff struggled with the question of the criteria for success at U. Town; the question of whether the school was "academic;" and the problem of the meaning of "student responsibility."

A school-level program decision made at the April planning session was the decision to retain contractual time in the 1972 to 1973 program. As with earlier decisions about the contract approach, I interviewed participants as to how
this decision was made. The decision to retain contract
time was made before the staff received an interim report
on the board's questionnaire study, delivered by a research
assistant during the planning week. Parents and students
were not involved in the decision. Board officials assumed
that the decision was based on the evaluation department's
study.

There was some discussion in the planning week of
involving students in course planning, but the staff was
indecisive about how to proceed. It was decided to give
staff approval to a teacher's proposal for the forming of
a staff-student representative committee. The consultative
committee was not discussed much. The staff reluctantly
approved a request from the committee for another general
meeting in May. Staff resolved to complete the program
descriptions for the community which were supposed to have
been done in February.

At the general meeting in May, the principal's opening
talk left little time for a planned humanities presentation;
the planned group discussions turned into individual parent-
teacher conferences; and a videotaped student panel dis-
cussion was viewed only by a few parents.

As year one drew to a close, the staff had to face a
crisis in the implementation of its philosophy brought about
by the persistent problem of "non-performing" students. The
problem was brought to a head by questions surrounding the
screening of students applying for admission to the school. The staff reached a difficult decision to transfer non-performers out of the school after counselling and warning them; it was decided to identify these students through a collective staff process. The staff also decided that its criteria for admissions should be applied equally to applicants from the immediate U. Town neighborhood and those from other parts of Sailcrest; this decision resulted in a conflict with the opinion of the director, and was finally reversed.

Several U. Town research and evaluation documents were issued at the end of year one. The accreditation booklet, written by a staff committee in accordance with a requirement of the provincial department of education, included some statements pertinent to my study. It described some of the sociological characteristics of the school's community, and the academic emphasis in the program. The booklet exaggerated community participation in decision-making. It also misrepresented the extent of community involvement in the formulation of the school's philosophy and objectives, and the role of the statement of philosophy in program development.

The board's evaluation department report on interviews, held with students, parents, and substitute teachers, said that the overall opinion expressed by interviewees toward the new program was positive. Two main criticisms were
reported that the program was unsuitable for all students; and that communications with the community were poor. It was found that the consultative committee was almost completely unknown among U. Town parents. Students were reported to be highly supportive of the school.

I released an interim report on PSLPD at the staff's request. The basic impression I reported was that the staff seemed to be involved in democratic decision-making but there seemed to be little participation in decision-making by parents or students.

The board's year one evaluation report, published in July, contained a variety of materials. In addition to most of the studies already described, this document reported on changing student expectations and attitudes (findings very positive); standardized achievement tests (findings generally positive); and departmental exam results (indicating achievement similar to the previous year). The year one report skirted around the topic of participation in decision-making.

Soon after the U. Town project entered year two, the director came to a staff meeting to present the board's plans for further "formative" evaluation of the program: standardized achievement tests; a study of the use of para-professionals and volunteers; another measurement of student attitudes; a study of grade 8 students' adaptability to the program; and a study of the school's handling of students having difficulty adjusting to the program. Staff members
objected to the emphasis they again perceived on statistics; to the lack of facilities in the district for problem kids; to antagonisms created by the "semantic differential" instrument for measuring attitudes; and to the way the year one contractual time questionnaires were designed. One of the teachers pointed out that the staff still had not received its copies of the year one evaluation report.

At the first staff meeting in year two, a teacher raised the topic of staff-student decision-making. The school board had provided a portable classroom for U. Town, and he saw development of a student lounge in that facility as a context for broadening student participation in decision-making. A staff-student committee was formed, but the development of both the committee and the lounge was repeatedly delayed by waiting for the board's workmen to finish installing the portable.

In September of year two the staff discussed whether the consultative committee was "dead." The opinion was voiced that the committee had started to die when its function was defined in a non-decision-making way.

At the first consultative committee meeting in year two, on October 10, a teacher initiated a soul-searching discussion of the committee's lack of authority. Another teacher tried to lead the committee toward asserting itself, but the parent representatives were doubtful that they could "even begin to move into program decision-making." It was
decided to hold meetings of the constituent groups to chart the future course of community participation in school decision-making.

The new staff-student committee began meeting weekly, informally led by a teacher. The lounge work was still delayed, but the committee formed two design plans, one of which was selected by a vote of the student assembly.

The parents, in their general meeting on October 26, decided to make another attempt at organizational innovation, by creating a "school association" with members from all three groups and an elected executive. There was confusion among staff and interested students about the outcome of the parents' meeting. Neither the staff nor the students seemed to question the parents' right to make decisions about the new organization, even though the consultative committee had asked all three groups to express their wishes.

The consultative committee met one more time at the request of the parents' meeting, to draw up proposals for specific formats and executive nominations. The committee itself seemed to be confused as to the nature of the new organization; there was a tendency at the committee meeting to refer to it as a "parents' association" with a "consultative executive." Teachers and students at this meeting expressed exasperation at the continued discussion of organizational machinery instead of educational issues.
In the first months of year two, the staff began to challenge higher authority in some areas. One context for this was the attendance registers required by the provincial department of education, which the staff found very unsuitable to its program. The director and the principal expressed opposition to the idea of the staff's refusing to keep the registers, because the School Act held the principal responsible for them.

A student newspaper, started at about the time I finished my observations at U. Town, revealed some bitter dissatisfaction with the school, particularly with what the newspaper's writers perceived as a return to traditional structures in the program, an ignoring of students' needs, and a lack of student influence in decision-making. Although these articles could be said to be unrepresentative, their appearance had definite significance in a project school with major goals of community participation in decision-making and student responsibility for learning.

In the course of my interviews on decision processes, I gathered some participants' views on the implementation of student responsibility, individualization of instruction, and the contract approach. I found that student responsibility and individualization at U. Town boiled down to limited student choice in courses, sections, activities, use of time, and levels and rates of work. Most students
apparently chose to follow the standard academic curriculum anyway. The contract approach actually ceased to exist in most areas of the program; many students did not use it, and many teachers found it too difficult to organize. The typical outcome of the contract approach at U. Town seemed to be a new type of "class," in which a number of students working at their own rates interacted with a teacher individually during certain time periods. In very few cases was this time or work contracted for; the teacher was just available when needed. In some subjects this was little different from what regularly scheduled, individualized classes were like.

In the final analysis, I found, the character of the new U. Town program, like the old program, was academic, preparing students for university. The changes in the program could be viewed as attempts to update that function by making the school more "flexible" and "humanistic" at a time when that was what preparation for university seemed to call for.

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One of the central themes in the development of the U. Town program at the level of the school as a whole was the emphasis on student responsibility for learning and individualization of instruction. In this study, the major decisions concerning that theme were focussed upon for the purpose of analyzing PSLPD. Data were also gathered, albeit less comprehensively, concerning participation in other school-level program decisions (SLPDs).

The first decision in the focal SLPD sequence was the decision to emphasize student responsibility and individualization of instruction (SR & II) at U. Town. Subsequent to that decision, it was decided to employ the "contract" method of achieving SR & II, in which individual students agree with individual teachers on what they will aim to accomplish, how they will go about it, and how it will be evaluated. Thirdly, it was decided to use a questionnaire on contracted student time in the first-year evaluation of the school. Finally, a decision was made in the spring of the first year to retain the contractual approach in year two. These four decisions were chosen for particular analysis because they represented a cycle of program development decision-making.
This decision was made by the Sailcrest trustees in February, 1971, as part of the initial decision to reorganize the school. The role of the trustees consisted of approval of a proposal made to them by the senior administrators of the district. That proposal was generated primarily out of the board officials' desire to create an experimental secondary school somewhere in the district, coupled with their perception of U. Town as the most conducive setting for experimentation because of its small size, proximity to the university, and academic orientation. The reorganization of U. Town as a project school was seen as a solution to the problem of finding a suitable school for such experimentation, but also to the problem of satisfying the desire of the U. Town community for recovery of some of the control over its schools which it had enjoyed for many years prior to its forced amalgamation with the Sailcrest district. In addition, there was the problem that the U. Town Secondary School's program and staff were considered by some Sailcrest trustees and U. Town community members to be antiquated; the program of the school served only students preparing for university in traditional fashion. Taken together, these problems were voiced by several categories of participants—trustees, administrators, students, parents, and those former teachers who were still
to be found in the new school organization. However, it was the central administrators who decided to address the problems, and it was they who generated the solutions. In considering the merits of the U. Town reorganization, the board officials sought opinions from the U. Town parent and student groups and the representatives of the district's professional associations. However, there is much evidence to indicate that the board officials did not give much of a hearing to dissident opinion. The participation of the community in the decision appears to have been merely that of being informed of the imminence of the decision and urged to accept it. The pre-innovation staff of the school was informed of the decision and given orders to transfer out or re-apply for appointment. The implementation of SLPD #1, as we have seen in this study, was only partial and occurred in unexpected ways. All told, the implementation involved administrators, teachers, students, and parents.

Participation in SLPD #1 is summarized by the Xs in Figure 3.

SLPD #2: The Decision to Employ the Contract Approach

Data concerning this decision were hard to obtain, but those which were available indicate that it was made by the newly appointed staff group in the spring of 1971. It is uncertain who proposed the idea; either someone on staff or
a board official. There does not appear to have been very much discussion or debate of the matter; staff members interviewed thought it was taken for granted that the contractual approach was a good solution to the problem of individualizing instruction and encouraging student responsibility for learning. No participant interviewed could recall alternative approaches having been considered. The implementation of the contract approach was quite different from that intended by the original decision to use the method; insofar as it was implemented, participants in implementation were teachers, students, and administrators. (See Fig. 4.)

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<th>PARTICIPANTS</th>
<th>1 Gen. of Alter. Problems</th>
<th>2 Cons. of Rel. Imp. of Prob.</th>
<th>3 Selec. of Problem</th>
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Figure 3. Participation in SLPD #1.
### Figure 4. Participation in SLPD #2.

#### SLPD #3: The Decision to Use a Questionnaire on Contracted Student Time in the First-Year Evaluation

This decision was made in the fall of 1971 by the board official responsible for the U. Town program evaluation. It was proposed as part of the solution to the problem of evaluating the contractual approach. The proposal was generated by that official and his research assistant, and the merits of the proposal were considered by the school staff, whose opinions were sought by the official prior to the decision. It was the evaluation official who decided that the contractual approach needed to be evaluated. Alternative evaluation
problems were generated by the staff and the evaluation official, and their relative importance considered in a meeting of the official with the staff. The implementation of the decision involved administrators, teachers, students, and parents. (See Fig. 5.)

SLPD #4: The Decision to Retain the Contract Approach in Year Two

This decision was made by the staff in the spring of 1972. It was proposed by one member of the staff in the week-long planning session that the contractual approach be retained as a solution to the continuing need for a means of building individualization into the program. Very little discussion was engaged in. It appeared to be taken for granted by the staff that the contract approach was good. There is no evidence that any group other than the school staff participated in any stage of this decision. Although the board office's evaluation of the contractual approach was presented to the staff in the spring planning session, the staff decision to retain the contractual approach was made prior to receiving that information. Hence, the evaluation was not looked upon as a useful source of information by the staff. The implementation of the decision in year two was evidently fragmentary, as we have seen in a previous chapter. Participants in the implementation, to the extent that it occurred, were teachers, students, and administrators. (See Fig. 6.)
### DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

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<th>1 Gen. of Alter. Problems</th>
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Figure 5. Participation in SLPD #3.

Taken together, the four SLPDs analyzed most intensively reveal a picture of PSLPD in which administrators and teachers shared the bulk of the process leading up to the selection of solutions, while the selection of solutions itself was distributed among trustees, administrators, and teachers. Implementation of SLPDs has been seen to involve primarily administrators, teachers, and students. The participation of trustees was nil in all but SLPD #1, but in that decision, trustees participated in the generation of alternative problems, the consideration of the merits of alternative solutions, and were the group that selected the solution to be implemented.
Except for involvement in implementation, the role of students in these four SLPDs was limited to the first decision analyzed, in which case students took part in the generation of alternative problems and consideration of alternative solutions in a small way. The participation of parents in the four SLPDs was limited to the same decision categories that describe student participation. Finally, in one decision, a research assistant participated in the proposing of solutions.

(Participation in SLPDs #1 through 4 is tabulated in Figure 7.)

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<th>DECISION-MAKING PROCESS</th>
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Figure 6. Participation in SLPD #4.
The general conclusion one would draw from these analyses is that PSLPD broadened to include the teacher group but not the student or parent groups. This conclusion can be further tested by analyzing the other SLPDs discovered in the case.

**February, 1971:**

(a) Decision to enrich the curriculum of the school.  
(b) Decision to integrate subject fields and use teaching teams.  
(c) Decision to utilize community resources in the program.

These were the other major program components of the original reorganization decision, which also included the decision to emphasize student responsibility and individualization of instruction, analyzed above. The pattern of

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**DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

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**Figure 7. Participation in SLPDs #1 through 4. (Number of Instances of Participation)**
participation in the making of these decisions was the same as that of SLPD #1. They were included in the basic reorganization decision as elements of the experimental program. The board officials who proposed the project saw it as a total program innovation attempt, including a variety of innovations current in education.

Spring, 1971:

(d) Decision to offer "mini-courses" as a means of enriching the curriculum and utilizing community resources.
(e) Decision to organize the school into "domains."

These decisions were, like SLPD #2, basic decisions made by the new staff to implement the program policies contained in the initial reorganization. The pattern of participation in their making was the same as SLPD #2, except that the implementation of the mini-course decision involved parents and the implementation of the domain decision might be said not to involve students.

August, 1971:

(f) First statement of the general objectives of the school.

This statement was formulated by the staff. It was suggested by a board official that there was a need to state the general objectives. The staff did not see it as a very important activity; they felt they had a common set of goals which could not be completely put into words and preferred to spend their time working out problems in the
organization of the program. They generated items for a statement of objectives, which were written on a blackboard and were subsequently formed into a list of five objectives by a committee of two teachers, whose work was approved by the full staff. The question of the extent of implementation of these objectives is, of course, not addressed here; it is, however, evident that their implementation involved administrators, teachers, students, and parents.

November, 1971:

(g) Selection of the types of project evaluation for the 1971 to 1972 school year.

The decision to use a questionnaire on contracted student time was analyzed above. There were other parts to the evaluation of the program in the first year: surveys of attitudes and opinions, measurements of academic achievement, and the study of decision-making to which this research was seen as a contribution. These parts of the evaluation were decided upon in a manner similar to SLPD #3.

February, 1972:

(h) Statement of the philosophy of the school and revision of the general objectives.

These statements were made as an outcome of the work of the staff committee on accreditation. The provincial government's department of education required the school to submit a booklet on the basis of which its accreditation would be evaluated; this was a routine procedure, and there was a standard format for the booklet. One of the
requirements was a statement of philosophy and objectives. The committee prepared a proposed set of statement which was considered and approved by the whole staff. This was then reviewed by a board official prior to being sent to the provincial department, and a meeting was held between that official and the staff committee.

March, 1972:

(i) Policy on evaluation of students.

April, 1972:

(j) Policy on criteria of student success.

May, 1972:

(k) Policy on handling of unsuccessful students.

These policy decisions were made by the staff. They were outcomes of the staff's attempts to cope with the problem of the implications of the school's philosophy for student evaluation, the problem of what kind of school U. Town was (whether only academic), and the problem of what to do with students who did not benefit from the school's emphasis on student responsibility for learning. The decisions were made through staff group processes.

The eleven additional decisions analyzed above, which exhaust the category of important SLPDs discovered, support the picture of PSLPD inferred from the analysis of the four SLPDs concerned with student responsibility, individualization, and the contract approach. On the basis of these data, we can see that the PSLPD outcome of the U. Town
innovations, at least in year one, was to broaden participation to include teachers to a substantial extent in all stages of school-level program decision-making, while students and parents were not brought into such decision-making in any significant way.

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CHAPTER 26

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE CASE

So far I have described in detail the U. Town case, and I have analyzed PSLPD in the case using the conceptual frameworks presented in the study's introduction. Now, I must ask what significance the case has for the conceptualization of decision-making, participation in decision-making, and program development at the school level. Clearly, the presentation of the case history has implied major needs for conceptual revisions without saying exactly what conceptual changes are indicated. In the material which follows, I have worked through the case history, applying throughout the questions posed in the introduction:

Guiding Questions

Organizational Innovations
What were the origins, nature, and effects on PSLPD of
(a) the new staff group;
(b) the advisory council?

Decision-making Processes
What processes of decision-making occurred in the case?
Were the identifiable stages in the decision-making process?

Participation in Decision-making
What form did participation in decision-making take?
What did participation in decision-making mean?
Program Decision-making at the School Level

Was the program development process at the school level a cyclical process of decision-making involving decisions about ends, means, and evaluation?

Was there an identifiable area of decision-making at the school level concerned with curriculum, instruction, and program evaluation?

If so, how important was program decision-making at the school level in relation to other areas of decision-making?

What were the types of problems requiring decisions at the level of the school as a unit?

This analysis involves examination of the questions themselves as well as their application to the case. In some areas, the case requires a total re-thinking of the concepts with which the study was initiated. In other areas, the conceptual bases for the questions guiding the study prove sound, and the analysis centres on relatively minor alterations.

The conceptual analysis is written in the form of a commentary which follows the case history. It attempts to develop a new conceptual approach to the topic of the dissertation which relates to one another the findings in the case in the areas of decision-making, participation in decision-making, and program development at the school level. Following this form of analysis, the major conceptual findings are summarized in the study's conclusion.
In setting the stage for the case, I could see that it would be very difficult to measure any changes in the extent of local participation in decision-making which might occur as a result of innovations. Since the innovations would be undertaken within the framework of the Sailcrest district, I would have to consider outcomes against either the structure of decision-making prior to district amalgamation or the structure of decision-making in the period intervening between amalgamation and innovation. If one considers the "before" state to be the structure of decision-making in the originally separate U. Town district, then in at least some respects it becomes unlikely that the innovations could accomplish even as much decentralization as existed for the U. Town community prior to amalgamation. In terms of organizational structure, what could be more decentralized than a separate board of trustees? In a sense, the U. Town district prior to amalgamation had the kind of local control advocated by the most fervent writers of the decentralization movement. If, on the other hand, one considers the "before" state to be the structure of decision-making during the period when U. Town was part of the Sailcrest district but not yet a site for innovation, then the question of the effects of the innovations will be more open. In either case, however, one would expect that the problem would be resolved by applying the conceptual frameworks of the study, since the description and
measurement of actual structures of decision-making should consist in identifying which categories of participants were involved in each stage of the decision-making process at each point in time. It would be conceivable even for there to be more local participation in decision-making at U. Town when the schools were under the aegis of the Sailcrest board and administration without the benefit of any special innovations, if one is using an analytical framework in which it is not the formal structure of authority but rather the actual roles of various participants in the process of making particular decisions that are studied.

It was, however, in attempting to use the conceptual frameworks with which my study was initially designed to describe the "before" states that I began to see difficulties inherent not only in the case itself but also in the conceptualizations. It did not seem to be possible in investigating the early history of the case to break the data down into stages of decision-making defined by the problem-solving conceptualization. The closest most of my informants seemed to be able to come to talking about participation in decision-making prior to the innovations in those terms was to speak of those who made decisions and those who influenced the decision-makers--in other words, a two-stage process rather than a process of seven or more stages; but since there was the complicating problem of interviewees' recalling events so removed in
time, one could not jump to any conclusions about the value of the study's concept of the decision-making process, nor did the information available on that early period suggest any better framework. On balance, I had to be content with the descriptive data obtained, and withhold judgment on the definition of the decision-making process.

Because of the study's deliberate focus on a particular type and level of decision—program decisions at the level of the school as a unit—the difficulty of describing the "before" states for purposes of comparison with innovation outcomes was eased. That is, it became apparent from the available descriptive data that little or no development of the program of the secondary school as a whole occurred in the years prior to the innovations, neither immediately before nor immediately after district amalgamation.

A major factor in the school's reorganization appears to have been the administrators' urge to innovate. One might say that it has become a norm among educational administrators to innovate; a message received from professional literature and conferences. The apparent desirability of innovation almost for its own sake is reflected in the global character of the U. Town innovations—the "black box" approach. So global were the changes proposed that goals and methods became vague. The U. Town case fits, in this respect, the pattern of change efforts pointed out at the recent U.S. National Conference on
Decision-making in Alternative High Schools—the assumption that changes will "evolve" if old organizational structures are simply removed.

A measure of the strength of the administrators' urge to innovate is apparent in the irony of the innovation's initiation from the central office without much consultation in the local community, even though a major stated goal of the project was the broadening of participation in decision-making. It seems to have been assumed that participation in decision-making could be developed later, after imposing the initial reorganization decision. Moreover, the desire to innovate appears to have been strong enough to cause the board officials leading the change to gloss over community resistance in describing the situation to their superiors, the superintendent and trustees.

The administrators' urge to innovate was only one of the significant points for my study which I saw in the events surrounding the initiation of the U. Town innovations. The manner in which the U. Town innovations were initiated raised questions concerning my conceptualization of the program development process. The ends-means-evaluation model of program development simply did not fit with the series of decisions defining the initial reorganization of U. Town Secondary School. The Sailcrest district administrators and trustees did not seem to be concerned with setting curricular objectives and selecting instructional means to achieving
such objectives. Moreover, what seemed to be most important to the decision-makers in this instance was not the curriculum and instruction characterizing the project but the total organization of the innovations, only a part of which was the "program" in the sense defined by Johnson, Aoki, and Housego. A major question which this early finding raised was whether to explain the discrepancy between the observed behavior and the conceptual model as an inadequacy of the model or as an inadequacy in the actors' understanding and use of curriculum literature. It occurred to me that a "way out" of the problem conceptually might be to clarify the limitations of the model by saying that it is only a prescriptive framework for developing one aspect of the school--curriculum and instruction, not organization.

Hence, if an observed group of school developers did not utilize the ends-means model of program development, it might only mean that they did not have the "right" training;\(^{11}\) and the importance of organizational (as distinguished from curricular-instructional) considerations to those developers might only demonstrate the boundaries of the model. After all, these were district administrators, and one might say it was only natural for their concerns to

\(^{11}\)Professor Lee Brissey refers to this as the "technological" explanation.
be with organizational matters; the curricular-instructional development of U. Town Secondary could very well be yet to come, and perhaps more properly carried out by the teaching staff and local community with the assistance of curriculum development specialists.

Yet, this line of reasoning disturbed me. The initiators of the innovations, the trustees and district administrators of Sailcrest, were the powerful educational leaders of a major city. In their wisdom, and taking into consideration all of the factors which they saw as important, those leaders had made a set of decisions about a secondary school. The decisions defining the reorganization of U. Town Secondary most certainly "covered" the areas of school development which would constitute the material of a curriculum development study at the district level. As forward-looking school administrators, the board officials were unquestionably cognizant of, and were indeed ostensibly attempting to implement, ideas about program development which were in vogue in the current professional literature and which were based on the twenty-year-old principles of curriculum development originated by Tyler. These school district leaders had, nevertheless, proceeded in practice to initiate development of a school from a very different conceptual perspective than that found in the literature. It was as if the district decision-makers had said, "Look, we want to be progressive, and we want to try the kind of
program development we have heard so much about recently, but we know from our own experience that it does not work quite that way; the model does not tell the real story."

What were the "realities" of program development that concerned the initial decision-makers? How could I conceptualize the process in which they engaged in practice? I found the difficulty of examining the realities of the case in a way worsened by the existence of a prior model. The model seemed to define the problem of conceptualization as a problem of accounting for two significant phenomena:

(1) Program decisions were stated in such a way that they embraced, without clearly distinguishing between, ends and means. (2) Decisions about matters other than the "program" were both paramount in importance and seemingly inseparable from decisions concerned with curriculum and instruction. These were very serious criticisms of the Johnson-Aoki-Housego model, since the distinction between ends and means and the focus on "program" decision-making were at the heart of that model and most preceding conceptualizations of curriculum development. What I needed was a conceptual means of organizing the events in the case I was studying which would as nearly as possible reflect what was "out there." I had to entertain the possibility that such a conceptualization would depart from the assumptions of the ends-means program development model.
Consider closely the principal events in the process whereby it was decided to initiate the U. Town innovations:

1. A study of **differentiated staffing** concepts by a group of district administrators and teachers' association representatives. One might say that the origin of the changes at U. Town was the interest of the district leaders in an idea drawn from professional literature and contacts. The first step in the process was a conceptual step which occurred above or apart from the context of any particular school. The district study group's interest in the idea of differentiated staffing might be said to have been motivated by a combination of intellectual curiosity and respect for the opinions of professional writers and colleagues elsewhere in their sphere of communication.

2. Development of the local change concept of "modified instructional patterns." After making a general study of differentiated staffing through literature and a visit to another district, the Sailcrest district leadership formulated its own concept of a type of change which it would like to try in some school in the district. The rough plan for "modified instructional patterns" presented to the Sailcrest board for approval included certain emphases—on teachers' concepts of their own roles, utilization of resources and equipment in new ways, and teacher involvement in decision-making—drawn from the general study of differentiated staffing ideas. Still the primary interest was in the
development of new role structures among teaching personnel rather than in curriculum.

3. Specific organizational plans for adjustment of teaching personnel assignments and staff planning sessions. The officials sought the board's approval for taking measures of an extraordinary nature to set up a project school somewhere in the district. The administrators' concern was focussed on the organizational problems of instituting an organizational change, not on the "program" of the new school. As the idea for the changes was gradually specified into an action proposal, the leadership putting forward the proposal was also concerned with obtaining specific authority for the plans from its overseers, the trustees. Hence, an element of the development process which would seem to be inseparable from the types of decisions made was the social process of decision-making, the relationships among the participants in the development. In this instance, in a context of formal school organization, the officials were being politically wise to seek a specific grant of authority from their board of trustees at an early stage.

In these first three steps, then, we can see that the process of development involved study, application, and specification to the Sailcrest situation of an organizational idea; and that the substance or content of the plans developed was dependent upon the social or political structure of the relationships among the participants.
PARTICIPANTS

(1) Authors and leading thinkers in the profession.

(2) School district study group.

(3) Authority

Respect

SUBSTANCE OF PLAN

Idea of differentiated staffing.

Local concept of "modified instructional patterns."

Organizational plans for a project school.

Board of trustees.

4. Search for an appropriate school for the project and expansion of the change plan. The district administrators, following the trustees' approval of their early planning, simultaneously worked on further specification of the idea to a particular school and elaboration of the plan's curricular and instructional content; they proposed to emphasize in the new school program student responsibility for learning, individualization of instruction, curriculum enrichment, use of community resources, and flexible scheduling. Thus we can see that some of the types of concerns usually considered to be in the domain of curriculum or program development entered the decision-making process after the initial organizational idea had been partially developed. At the same time, however, it is apparent that these program concerns were not conceived in ends-means fashion, and that the making of decisions about the program interacted with the
continued development of the new school organization. The closest we can come to using the ends-means model in analyzing these decisions is to say that perhaps student responsibility for learning can be thought of as a general objective; and individualization of instruction, use of community resources, and flexible scheduling as instructional planning decisions (means of achieving the objective). Yet, these "curricular" and "instructional" decisions were not made in ends-means sequence; they were conceived as a package of instructional ideas current in educational literature. Indeed, we can see in these initial curricular-instructional plans a process of borrowing and adapting ideas from professional literature similar to that by which the earlier plans for the organization of the project were developed. The Johnson-Aoki-Housego model of program development is not so much used as belabored in describing this process.

Part of this step in which the project plans were elaborated was the addition of the community advisory council idea. In one sense, the advisory council can be viewed as another innovative concept borrowed from the educational literature and applied to U. Town. In this vein we should note the interdependence of program development and organizational development; even as the planners seemed to begin to focus on curricular-instructional
decisions, they deemed it important to develop further their plans for the social organization of the project. The simultaneity of the development of program plans and organizational plans makes me wonder whether the distinction between the program and the organization is the most useful tool for describing the process observed. It seems as though "program" and "organization" are aspects of school development imposed upon my observations by the initial assumption of a curriculum-instruction development process. "Organizational" is what the non-program decisions and plans appear to be most readily described as being. Yet, behind this conception there seems to be a need for a fundamentally different way of looking at the school development process.

5. Meetings with the U. Town parents, students, and teachers were held shortly before the district officials presented their plans to the Sailcrest board of trustees. These meetings underlined the political concern of the officials noted earlier in their request for the board's approval of the initial change idea. The manner and timing of these meetings at U. Town seemed to indicate that it was not so much community participation in the reorganization plans that was desired by the district administrators as the appearance of consultation with those affected by the impending decision before taking
the plans to the board for final approval. So, again, we see the interdependency of program development and the structure of relationships among participants. In this instance the relevant aspect of the social structure was the district administrators' needs for authorization from the trustees and for support from the local community. (As far as the existing staff of U. Town Secondary School was concerned, the district administrators, their organizational superiors, needed only to describe the decision; the administrators' behavior demonstrated their lesser need for support from the teachers.) It was only after the district administrators presented claims of community support to the trustees that authorization could be requested to proceed with the project; and it was only after that authorization was granted that further development of the substance of the program could occur.

6. Finally, the decision to reorganize U. Town Secondary School was made formally by the Sailcrest trustees, and the decision was described to the U. Town parents by way of a letter from the school principal.

Let us put together the foregoing analysis of the specific case of the initiation of the U. Town innovations, and then attempt to conceptualize the process at a more general level.
**STEP 1**
Authors and thinkers.

**STEP 2**
School district study group.

**STEP 3**
District administrative leadership.

**STEP 4**
Authors and thinkers.

**STEP 5-6**
District administrators and staff
Local community support

**SUBSTANCE OF PLAN**

**PROCESS OF PLAN**

- Total reorganization plan.
- Idea of community advisory council.
- Idea of student responsibility, community reorganization, flexible scheduling, etc.
- Local concept of "modified instructional patterns."
- Idea of community resource, flexible scheduling, etc.

**INTERRELATIONSHIP**

- Intellectual interest
- Authority
- Respect
- Appearance of support
- Total reorganization plan.
On the basis of this early analysis in the U. Town case, we should consider thinking not in terms of a "program development" process as defined at the outset of the study but rather in terms of a school development process consisting of the borrowing, adaptation, elaboration, and specification to a particular situation of ideas drawn from professional literature and contacts, and consisting no less of the social processes determined by the structure of relationships among participants. "School development" might be thought of as a process embracing both "program development" and "organization development," but not necessarily distinguishing between the two, since the "program" and the "organization" as they have been formerly thought of seem to be arbitrarily separated aspects of a single entity--the "school."

As we move into a consideration of the next phases in the U. Town case, let us ask ourselves what this altered conception might lead us to expect. To this point we have seen a basic decision to reorganize the U. Town Secondary School along certain general lines. If the conceptual approach just developed were to continue to be useful we should expect that in essence the further development of the project would consist in the further specification to the U. Town situation of the ideas embodied in the re-organization decision; that any developments, not stemming
from the reorganization decision, would be borrowed and adapted from professional literature or contacts; and that each stage in the further development of the project would be dependent on the social context of the planning process no less than on the substantive adaptation and specification of change concepts. From the point of view of the definition of program development with which this study was initiated, we should expect that if our altered conception holds we would not see, in the subsequent development of U. Town Secondary School, a distinct process of curricular-instructional decision-making; and that the process observed would not be the ends-means variety.

Does the rough conceptualization of school development laid out in the preceding paragraphs hold up as a tool for describing the "preparations for program development" at U. Town (in Chapter 4)? It can be seen that many of the events in this period were implementations at a more specific level of the various aspects of the basic decision to reorganize U. Town Secondary School. Indeed, one of the main features of this period was the relatively high degree of consistency between the actions observed and that earlier decision. Conversely, there were only a few events noted in this period which did not directly derive from the board's decision. One was the identification of subject-field integration as a project goal in the circulars to teaching applicants. This can, however, be interpreted as
another example of the district administrators' application to U. Town of change concepts from the professional literature.

The beginnings of the implementation of the U. Town innovations highlight an aspect of my school development framework which was not emphasized earlier; the role of the local change agent in inventing ways of adapting borrowed ideas to a particular situation. The process of specification does not occur automatically; it is a creative process which involves the matching of two distinct conceptual elements: the idea and the situation. The professional author and the professional actor are both creative thinkers, the former at a more general level than the latter. The author of a change concept intended for use by the education profession as a whole is attempting to cope creatively with a situation confronting the field of education, whereas the local change agent attempts to find a solution to a particular problem. (Hence the skepticism toward professional literature expressed by many teachers and administrators who feel that only they work where "the rubber meets the road." ) Often the local adaptation of a change concept may not, however, consist in new actions but rather in a particular selection and combination of existing ideas. In Chapter 4, we have seen the administrative leadership of the Sailcrest school district and the principal of U. Town Secondary take a particular combination
of actions—not by any means the only possible selection of actions to implement the board's reorganization decision. How effective these actions may have been in matching the original change ideas with the U. Town situation is, of course, a separate question.

It is not difficult to see that in the "preparations for program development" at U. Town the decision-makers were not primarily concerned with a distinct curricular-instructional planning process. Just as in the process leading up to the decision to initiate the U. Town innovations, the leading actors in this phase viewed development of the program as an aspect of school development inseparable from development of the organization. Those activities having to do with bringing together people who were to be involved in the project predominated over those activities having to do with substantive development of curricular or instructional plans. At the same time, however, some events occurred in this period which were relatively consistent with the Johnson-Aoki-Housego conception of program development; and since we have yet to analyze the participants at the school in action, we cannot yet judge that conceptualization.

Consider each of the following events in light of the concepts of program development and school development outlined earlier in this study:
1. Appointment of the new staff. The Sailcrest district administrators were selecting particular teachers for the project who they thought would be able to implement the school reorganization decision. We have already established the lack of a "program development" character in that earlier decision; and the selection of staff in itself is clearly not a "program development" activity. Staff selection can be thought of as a next-level specification of one of the "organizational" components of the decision to initiate the U. Town innovations—and a very important part of the school development process. In the earliest stages of the case, the Sailcrest district leadership had focused on new forms of staffing and staff utilization.

2. "Curriculum workshops" for the community. The school district undertook to prepare the community for some of the educational innovations. This activity supported the concept of program development as a curricular-instructional decision-making process in the sense that it demonstrated some concern for the curriculum as a distinct entity. At this point then my earlier, and perhaps too sweeping, undercutting of the program development concept is brought up short. We should bear in mind, however, that one of these two workshops was devoted to innovations in the organization of the use of time; and that the other "curriculum" themes of the workshops did not directly deal with the objectives of the new program—
rather, they dealt with some of the broad educational ideas we have seen selected earlier by the initiators of the innovations. "Individualization" and "subject integration" are examples of an approach to the school program which was not really conceived within an ends-means framework. Moreover, it would not be unwarranted to point out that the curriculum workshops had a political purpose--the district administrators wanted to lead the local community toward acceptance of the decision to reorganize U. Town Secondary School.

3. Formation of the advisory council. Clearly, this action was part of the social organization of the school's development. It constituted the next logical step in the specification of the community participation idea to the U. Town situation, the implementation of one aspect of the trustees' decision. Consideration of program development per se did enter into the formation of the advisory council to the extent that curriculum and instruction were discussed by either the school administration or the parent nominees in proposing council functions. Those statements, however, reflected (no less than previous ones) the irrelevancy of the ends-means definition of program development and again demonstrated the interplay of "program" and "organization" in practical conceptions of school development.

4. Contact with the university's faculty of education. Here we have another instance of the school administration's
attention to the organizational aspect of the development process. In asking the faculty departments for help, the administrators were attempting to bring into the picture another set of participants without whose contribution the project could not be completely implemented as planned. One might say, though, that the types of help which the faculty of education could provide would have to do with the development of the "program."

5. Initial meetings of the new staff. The administrators organizing the project were concerned that the new staff have some training in interpersonal relations (role perception, small group processes, decision-making, problem-solving) and in program development before starting to spell out the operational procedures of the new school. It is interesting to observe the way the administration juxtaposed those two fields of study in setting up these training meetings. It is equally interesting to see that there remained a conceptual division between interpersonal relations and program development. The school district leadership did not invent any new terminology to integrate the two types of training. They were being creative in using both fields for in-service education of a particular group of teachers, but they were dependent upon the state of the literature available for their ideas. Indeed, we can see that the appearance of "program development"
training here represents a borrowing and adaptation of concepts from the professional literature just as did the application of ideas about differentiated staffing, student responsibility for learning, etc.

6. Gathering of individual program proposals from staff and students. This, the last of the steps taken before the first intensive planning meetings, can be viewed as an inventive administrative action aimed at implementing some of the spirit of democratic participation contained in the U. Town innovation "package." The collection of individuals' ideas in writing was a further specification of the concept which had been applied earlier in the creation of an advisory council. It was also another way of gathering into the project planning, at least symbolically, a large group of people who were to be affected by decisions taken: the student body. Conceptually, this step in the preparations for program development had high potential for applying the concept of local participation; practically, evident in Chapter 5, the extent to which the students' individual ideas tended to relate to individual subjects. It was apparent that some ideas had been discussed by staff at their May training meeting, ideas which were to surface again in the June planning meetings: the offering of non-scheduled time for students in addition to required studies; "contracts" between teachers and students; the organization of subject fields into "domains." However, there was very little in
these early proposals to support a conception of "program development" as an ends-means curricular-instructional decision-making process.

To summarize, I have so far been developing a conception of "school development" as

a process consisting of the borrowing, adaptation, elaboration and specification to a particular situation of ideas drawn from professional literature and contacts, and consisting no less of the social processes determined by the structure of relationships among participants.

I have said that school development

...might be thought of as a process embracing both "program development" and "organization development," but not necessarily distinguishing between the two, since the "program" and the "organization" as they have been formerly thought of seem to be arbitrarily separated aspects of a single entity—the "school."

We have seen strongly supported the expectations identified earlier:

...that in essence the further development of the project would consist in the further specification to the U. Town situation of the ideas embodied in the reorganization decision; that any developments not stemming from the reorganization decision would be borrowed and adapted from professional literature or contacts; ...that each stage in the further development of the project would be dependent on the social context of the planning process no less than on the substantive adaptation and specification of change concepts...that if our altered conception holds we would not see, in the subsequent development of U. Town Secondary School, a distinct process of curricular-instructional decision-making; and that the process observed would not be of the ends-means variety.
We have pointed out the creative or inventive role of the local change agent in applying borrowed concepts to a particular situation, especially through selecting and combining existing ideas. We have also pointed out that the events analyzed so far constitute only the earliest stages of the case, and that the concept of "program development" defined by Johnson, Aoki, and Housego still needs to be tested against observations of the "school level" participants at U. Town; until now we have seen primarily initiatory and preparatory steps directed by the administrators.

Although we have seen that most of the actions taken in the "preparations for program development" in Chapter 4 were consistent with the reorganization decision in the sense that they were derived from it, we have also seen, in this and the preceding chapter, certain behaviors of the administrators which were inconsistent with the goals of the project. These discrepancies between stated commitments and observed behaviors are in need of analysis:

1. The innovations were initiated from the central office without much consultation in the local community, even though a major stated goal of the project was the broadening of participation in decision-making.

2. The administrators initiating the project glossed over the extent of community resistance in describing the U. Town situation to their superiors, the superintendent and trustees.

3. The administrators, in describing the reorganization decision to the old U. Town staff, down-played
the extent of prior program decision-making; and the administrators gave the new teaching staff the impression that there were no preconceptions about the program.

It seems possible to explain these actions in a way which is related to the conception of school development formulated above. I have previously discussed the administrators' "urge to innovate," and inferred that it might be viewed as a message received from professional literature and conferences. At the same time, my conception of school development views that process as originating in the borrowing of ideas from professional literature and contacts. We might say, therefore, that the ultimate audience to which the district administrators were playing was the leading members of their profession outside the district and even outside the province; that the administrators wanted the U. Town project to be a successful implementation of a package of ideas current in the profession. We might further say that the district administrators did not have a fully professional relationship with the leading members of their "profession."

The administrators initiating the U. Town project seem to have considered the authors of the change concepts as "superior" to them, as possessing greater knowledge and prestige, rather than as colleagues whose ideas should be subject to open discussion. The district administrators also were organizationally subordinate to their board of
trustees, a board which had been elected on a change-oriented platform. Part of the explanation, at least, for the administrators' discrepant behaviors might be traced to their relationships with professional and organizational "superiors"—and to their dependency upon the professional literature for basic ideas about educational change. Given that sort of superordinate framework, it might not be surprising to find the administrators at times resorting to appearances or imposing upon their own subordinates in order to resolve the conflicts which they would inevitably experience between ideas and realities.

In this instance, the problematic "reality" facing the administrators would seem to have been the need for a decision about the project at a general level before further development could proceed. Since it was assumed as a result of an earlier decision that there was to be an experimental secondary school somewhere in the Sallcrest district, the central administrators probably saw no alternative to leading the project toward some firm commitment as to its location and organization. They probably considered it necessary to override opposition and to fix the broad outlines of the new program even at the cost of contradicting the spirit of the innovations. Indeed, without judging the administrators' actions, we can see that the need for decisions at various levels of generality is recognized by the conception of school development which
I have been working on, and it is a fundamental concept of organization theory which Goodlad has applied to curriculum development theory. As our analysis of the U. Town case continues, we will have further occasion to consider the implications of this basic concept for the movement to broaden participation in decision-making. Our observations of the early stages in the U. Town case would seem to imply the desirability of building into the conception of school development the expectation, to be tested against later events, that final decision-making authority will be vested in that office in the school organization which, in the case of each decision, must take responsibility for decision-making. This may seem an obvious proposition, yet it is a major structural obstacle to decentralization. The idea of participatory program development at the school level assumes that it is possible to "widen" the structure of authority and responsibility without sacrificing the capacity of the organization to reach decisions. The making of decisions is one of the important functions of formal organization; it is part of the very notion of "organizing." Hence we might say that the "discrepant" behaviors of the Sailcrest district administrators could be explained through the basic concept of a formal organization of decision-making authorities and responsibilities: they very likely considered it their responsibility to carry forward an innovative project which had the backing of their board of trustees and a
conceptual mandate from the professional literature. The reader may recall that the most frequently relevant relationships among participants in the analysis of the initiation of the innovations (Chapter 3) were "authority" and "respect." At this point, we may say that the most important type of social relationship we have found in the school development process is the superior-subordinate relationship; it has characterized both the borrowing of ideas for the U. Town project from professional leaders and the reorganization of the U. Town school. The actions of the district administrators, who have been the principal performers so far, can be plausibly explained on the basis of their subordinate relationship to the authors of change concepts in the educational literature, their subordination to the change-oriented Sailcrest board of trustees, and their organizational authority over the teachers, students, and parents in the U. Town school community. It behooves us to examine in the ensuing stages of the case whether relations of superiority and subordination determine the course of school development.

So far in my analyses I have neither used nor talked about the conceptual framework for describing participation in decision-making laid out in the introduction. The reader will recall that that framework was based on a breakdown of the decision-making process into a number of stages defined by the concept of problem-solving; and that participation
in decision-making was then defined as involvement in one or more stages of the decision-making process. Why has that framework not yet entered into the analyses? Partly, it has been absent because in the early stages of the case, the information available was not detailed enough to enable me to say exactly who was involved in which stages of decision-making. In addition, however, there have been problems in the use of the framework indicated by findings—problems which may become more evident later in the case when we look closely at decision-making groups at U. Town Secondary School. Let us consider what we know at this point about the processes by which early decisions in the case were made, and what we know about participation in the making of those decisions. This may be done by picking out particular decisions from the history of the initiation of the U. Town innovations. It should be kept in mind that since we have already brought into question the definition of "program development" with which the study was started, we may need to look not only at decisions about "curriculum" or "instruction" but also at decisions about the school as a whole.

1. Decision-making prior to the amalgamation of the U. Town district with Sailorest. From what little I found out about this era, I can only say that there were two phases of the decision-making process identified: the making of final decisions and the influencing of final decisions.
Final decisions were made, in the case of the "program" of the school as a whole, by the local board of trustees, with some influence by administrators, teachers, and parents. School-level "organizational" decisions were made by the principal; there was minimal involvement by teachers, students, or parents in the latter type of decisions. As far as the value of the conceptual framework is concerned, we can see that the data available did not permit judging its conception as a problem-solving process; but the data does suggest some "process" leading up to decisions and a definite differentiation between types of participants according to basic roles in the school organization. Moreover, it should be noted that there are no indications contradictory to the fundamental conceptual approach.

2. The decision to reorganize U. Town Secondary School.

In Chapter 25, I applied the conceptual frameworks to the extent that it was possible, looking at "program" decisions. It can be seen there that the data gathered about the U. Town reorganization decision permitted a relatively complete analysis; that it was possible to identify each stage in the process of decision-making using the initial conceptual framework, as well as the types of participants in each stage. The decision to reorganize the school, as the reader will know by now, actually consisted of a number of decisions outlining the broad dimensions of the new school's program and organization. It can be seen in the Chapter 25 analysis
that this "package" of decisions was calculated to solve several problems. Indeed, one of the questions about the conceptualization of decision-making which we should keep in mind as we proceed with this analysis is whether the framework should be revised to account for multiple problems and simultaneous solutions. Even more broadly, though, we must be attentive to whether the framework for conceptualizing participation in decision-making truly describes the most significant phenomena found. There is a crucial difference between saying that a conceptual framework is usable and saying that it is useful. Unquestionably the application of the framework to the U. Town school reorganization decision requires some stretching; the framework somehow seems too stilted. So we must be ready to examine the actual events in the case and find those terms for describing them which are most realistic. From that point of view let us look closely at the components of the U. Town reorganization decision and the steps in the process leading up to that decision. An important conclusion from such an analysis may be that the same process of "school development" which we have been formulating to describe more accurately the development of a "program" will also describe the process of decision-making and participation therein. In other words, it may be that instead of envisioning the process of decision-making as a sub-process of program development, instead
of separating the conceptualizations of the development process and the decision-making process, we should look at "school development" as a process which is a decision-making process.

It can be seen that the decision to reorganize U. Town Secondary, which included a number of component decisions, was the final step in that phase of the school development process in which the innovations were initiated. Prior to the reorganization decision, there was another decision-making step: first, the board of trustees approved the administration's exploration of the project idea. Of course, how one identifies the decisions made during the initiation of the innovations depends upon one's perspective—the selection of the idea of differentiated staffing for study by the district study group could be viewed as a decision; or the "decision" to go ahead with the tentative plans for the project could be viewed not as a decision but as a stage leading up to the ultimate reorganization decision; or the reorganization decision itself could be viewed only as an early stage in the making of decisions about the concrete operations of the school. Similarly, it can be seen that in order to view "decisions" as solutions to problems, one must determine a perspective on problems; what may be viewed as a problem by the district administrator may not be so viewed by the parent, and so on. For purposes of analysis, the way in which decisions are identified may, conversely,
determine how problems are identified. In this case we have seen decisions and will, therefore, tend to identify "problems," from the point of view of the authoritative decision-makers, the trustees, simply because they were the final decision-makers in the initiation of the innovations. From that point of view, the first "decision" was to approve the concept of "modified instructional patterns" and the administrators' plans to form a project along such lines. This decision approving the early organizational plans for the project was preceded by study of the idea of differentiated staffing and development of a local concept of "modified instructional patterns." Now we can begin to see the conceptual relationship between "school development" and "problem solving." For the question now arises: Why did the district administrators begin exploring the idea of differentiated staffing? We have speculated earlier on the importance of the administrators' respect for professional leadership, the role of communications received via professional literature and contact. We have also said that the district administrators were significantly influenced by the change orientation of their organizational superiors, the board of trustees. The board, the ultimate decision-makers in this case, perceived it as a problem that the general tone of the school district was not in line with the principles of education which most of the trustees valued. In setting the stage for the case in Chapter 2, we
have seen that at the time U. Town was amalgamated with Sailcrest, the Sailcrest board of trustees was in the process of formulating policy statements favoring

...individualization of instruction, professional freedom and responsibility for teachers, curricular flexibility, alternative programs, development of statements of school objectives, and greater decentralization of decision-making to the school level.

However, the board members themselves could not be said to have invented these terms. The trustees, elected representatives of the Sailcrest community, stood for a liberal orientation at a very general level. It seems probable that they and their constituents derived from professional educators a set of educational change concepts consistent with more general social values. We might say that the public is dependent upon the professional leadership to give specific expression, form, and substance to the educational implications of its value orientations; and that the public is led to accept, at least until tested, the educators' formulations so long as those formulations seem generally desirable. The trustees, in turn, were dependent upon their own district administration to formulate proposals as to policy and implementation which would apply educational change concepts to the local context in a manner consistent with the community's desires. Hence, school development can be viewed as a process of reducing discrepancies between desired and perceived states of the school—a process of problem-solving in which leading educators, community spokesmen, and local school
district administrators operate at different levels of
generality in defining the desired and the perceived. The
process of adapting ideas from professional literature to a
particular school situation is a process of aligning the
particular situation with a conception of the desirable school;
and the process occurs through the social mechanisms of re-
spect for professional "superiors" outside the school system
and authority within the organization. That is why, in the
U. Town case, the district administrators set out to make
certain changes; the innovations represented attempts to
solve problems perceived through the "eyes" of leading
educational thinkers.

To view school development as a problem-solving process
in this way, however, requires an important clarification.
The decision-makers in the case of the initiation of the U.
Town innovations did not explicitly define the problems with
which they were dealing, nor did they distinguish between
problems and solutions. For them it would appear that the
"problems" consisted in the discrepancies between observed
states of the local school system and desirable states
described in educational literature. The perceived and
desired states seem to have been "packages" including both
general rationales and specific structures. The problem
and the solution were one and the same: to apply valued
conceptions of education to the local school situation.
The local actors in the school development process, at
least in the U. Town case, did not engage in the work of
developing conceptions of the desirable; that function was
performed by professional authors. The school developers were students of the leading professional writers; the functions of the school district leaders in this case lay in selecting, combining, and applying ideas formed by professional leaders outside the district concerning both general principles of education and specific practices for implementing valued principles. The ideas borrowed by the district administrators were not thought of as "solutions" to "problems;" that distinction, at least so far in the case, is inferred by the analytic framework of decision-making. Since, however, the data available on the process of decision-making was, as I have said, quite limited in these early parts of the case history, we should adopt a "wait and see" attitude toward the value of the problem-solving model as a descriptive tool. To this point we can only say, in describing the process of decision-making leading up to the U. Town reorganization, that it was a process of applying borrowed ideas, with the proviso that the decision-makers were addressing problematic situations set up by discrepancies between their perceptions of the existing state of the school and the desirable states proposed by professional leaders. That way of looking at the case is supported by the available data on the U. Town reorganization decision and on the "preparations for program development" following the reorganization decision. In proposing a choice of a school for the project, and in
proposing characteristics of the new school program and organization, the district administrators were proposing solutions to the problem of how to make the earlier decision of the board to go ahead with the project idea into a concrete reality—the problem of how to change a particular situation to make it consistent with valued educational ideas. Similarly, in the period following the reorganization decision, the administrators, in appointing new staff, organizing curriculum workshops, forming the advisory council, contacting the faculty of education, bringing the new teachers together for their first meetings, and gathering individual program proposals, were attempting to cope with problems of implementing change concepts at the next level of specificity.

We can begin to test hypotheses, developed in the analysis of events initiating and preparatory to the U. Town innovations, against data concerning the actions of participants at the school level. (That is not to say that the "advance work" of the district administrators and trustees was not "school level" decision-making, for in a very important sense decisions affecting a particular school as a unit are "school level" decisions regardless of who makes them. Yet prior to this point in the case history it could be argued that the departures from the study's conceptual models of program development and decision-making were exceptions necessary to get the project off the ground.)
The tentative hypotheses formed in the preceding analysis might be reiterated as follows:

1. That "school development" is a process consisting of the borrowing, adaptation, elaboration, and specification to a particular situation of ideas drawn from professional literature and contacts, and consisting no less of the social processes determined by the structure of relationships among participants;

2. That the process of specification is a creative process of matching ideas and situations by selecting and combining existing concepts; and that this particular type of inventiveness is a major function of local change agents;

3. That a major type of social relationship in school development is the superior-subordinate relationship: the respect of local change agents for professional leaders outside the local school system and the authority of local change agents within the school organization;

4. That school development decisions are made at various levels of generality; and that decision-making authority is vested in that office in the school organization which, in the case of each decision, must take responsibility for decision-making.

Conversely, we have to this point hypothesized:

5. That in school development, "program development" as a distinct ends-means curricular-instructional decision-making process is not a central component;

6. That the "program" and the "organization" are practically inseparable aspects of the school; and that "program development" and "organization development" are arbitrarily separated fields of study in the school context.

In addition we have speculated on the descriptive utility of the concept of problem-solving in school development, hypothesizing:
7. That school development is a process of reducing discrepancies between desired and perceived states of the school—a process of problem-solving in which leading educators, community spokesmen, and local school district administrators operate at different levels of generality in defining the desired and the perceived; that the process of adapting ideas from professional literature to a particular school situation is a process of aligning the particular situation with a conception of the desirable school; and that the process occurs through the social mechanisms of respect for professional "superiors" outside the school system and authority within the organization;

8. That in school development viewed as a problem-solving process, the local actors do not develop conceptions of the desirable—a function performed by professional authors; that the function of the school district leaders lies in selecting, combining, and applying ideas formed by professional leaders outside the district; that the school district trustees represent the community's value orientation at a very general level, relying upon the professional leadership to give form to the educational implications of social values, and relying upon the school district administration to invent local implementations.

Our data concerning the June planning meetings (Chap. 5) relate importantly to the concept of "program development." We were able to see in these and subsequent staff meetings throughout the history of the case that "organizational problems were more pressing than curricular-instructional problems at the level of the school as a whole;" and we were able to infer from study of staff meeting data that school-level organizational problems were concerned with staff utilization; finance; timetabling; physical plant and equipment; relations with the local community, the district office, professional associations, and visiting colleagues; student admissions, groupings, and attendance; and the structure
of decision-making itself. These findings supported our questioning of "program development" both as an ends-means process and as a distinct aspect of school development. The findings indicated that hypotheses 5 and 6, developed as they were primarily on the basis of our knowledge of the administrators' actions in initiating the project, do hold up when we look at the decision-making activities of the teaching staff as a group. We can begin to feel confident in the notion that, at the level of the school as a decision-making unit, the important problems, regardless of who addresses them, are not those of "curriculum" and "instruction."

The information gathered about the early "program" decisions to emphasize student responsibility and individualization, and to use the "contract" approach, (Chapter 5) lend support to hypotheses 3 and 4. We found that the staff-selection process was much more important than most staff members realized in determining these basic program outlines. The authority and responsibility of the central office was paramount. While it was true that the

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12 This breakdown was identified by working with a set of cards on each one of which was placed a school-level problem or decision item. The categorization, however, is not offered as a definitive one; rather, it is a way of thinking about the types of school-level organizational problems in this case which proved relatively useful.
staff made the decision to use the "contract" approach, the almost automatic fashion in which the decision was reached was unquestionably the result of the board officials' control over selection of staff, and the prior decision to emphasize student responsibility and individualization in the U. Town program was, unbeknownst to the staff, part of the board's initial reorganization decision which governed staff selection. These findings underscored the importance of the authority of the local change leadership (district administration) in the development of the new school program, and indicated the subordination of the new staff group.

At the same time, our reflections upon the decisions made in early staff planning sessions imply some clarification of the conceptual questions surrounding the distinction between the "program" and the "organization." It is apparent that in talking about events in this section we do find it useful to speak of "program" problems and decisions at the school level as one type of school-level concern. Hence, rather than suspecting the program-organization distinction of being arbitrary, it may be more accurate to say that "program development" and "organization development" are very interdependent.

Further support for hypotheses 3 and 4 can be seen in the early separation of the advisory council from the staff's decision-making processes. The council's lack of authority and responsibility in decision-making was clear from the
beginning, and was largely brought about by the unwillingness of those in authority (in this case, the school principal) to include the council in important deliberations. The subordination of both the advisory council and the staff itself to higher authorities within the school system demonstrated at this point in the case history what had been evident during the initiation of the innovations: that relations of authority were most critical in the development of the school even though broadened participation in decision-making was a major goal of the project. The formal authority structure of the district organization operated as a block to achieving the participatory goal; yet, the same authority structure functioned to develop the new school in the early stages through the process which I have labelled "school development."

In the August staff meetings we can again see the unimportance, to both the new teaching staff and the district administration, of "program development" as a distinct ends-means decision-making process at the school level. Not only was there a lack of comprehensive school-wide program planning, but it was apparent that the district administration's concern with the statement of the school's objectives and with planning program evaluation was by no means intense. The staff's acceptance of the board officials' directives in these areas of school development reflected their own perceptions that two major conceptual
components of "program development" were really minor activities. The staff's attitude simultaneously demonstrates again the authoritative role of the board office, and the integral place of the organizational structure in the substantive development of the new school, which is a key aspect of the concept of "school development" advanced above.

As the planning sessions prior to year one progressed, it became apparent that the advisory council's separation from the decision-making process was a result not only of the administration's attitude but also of shared expectations on the part of many teachers and parents at U. Town. Most participants seemed to expect the council to become what it was becoming: a body for disseminating and explaining the decisions of the professionals. It seemed to be expected by many that the council would be a communicative body operating outside the organizational authority structure of the school system. In terms of the model of school development put forward here, we might say that many of the participants viewed such an outside role as a "reality" behind the stated goal of participatory decision-making, while a few participants struggled to realize the ideal. The gap between the stated participation objective of the project and the reality of organizational authority loomed as an important feature of the case, calling for some explanation. Why did the district administration and board initially pose
local community participation in decision-making as a project goal, if it would not be realized? We have explored earlier the peculiar characteristic of the case that the U. Town community had lost its local school board and, therefore, held a particularly strong wish to regain some authority in decision-making, a fact which the district administration recognized in setting up the terms of the U. Town project; but beyond that consideration, we can see that local decision-making was one of the innovative ideas stressed in professional literature which the district leadership wanted to apply to the U. Town situation. We might conclude that in the area of participative decision-making the school district erred in its assessment of the extent to which a respected change concept in the literature could be borrowed and adapted. In the U. Town case, it was not clear to the project leaders in the board office and in the teaching staff, even as the school moved into year one of the new program, that the advisory council would not become a true decision-making body. In the data available from advisory council meetings in September and October, 1971, we can see both the separation of the council from the mainstream of events and, at the same time, the assumption by council members that their discussions and questions could indeed have an impact on the school.

The content of staff meeting agendas in the early part of year one supports further the notion advanced above that
organizational, rather than curricular-instructional, problems predominate at the school level. In the regular weekly staff meetings we can see the concept of "school development," as borrowing, adaptation, and specification of ideas to a particular situation, taken a step further. Here we view the staff group, responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the new program, working to solve a host of very specific organizational problems occasioned by the difficulties of matching ideas and situations. We see the teachers, because of their responsibility for ironing out details, acting with considerable authority at that level of specificity.

The special staff meetings with board officials on the subject of program evaluation, held in the fall of year one, point out to us some qualifications of the "school development" concepts. The meetings remind us that program development continues to be one of the sub-topics of concern in the school development process. Our data from the evaluation meetings also demonstrate that the authority relations between the district administration and the U. Town teaching staff were not cut-and-dry: Although the board's evaluation official clearly held the initiative and the final authority for decision-making, he felt it important to seek staff support and opinions, and his revised proposals reflected some recognition of the staff's demands.
Events in the relationship between the school and the local community during the late fall and winter of year one confirmed that the problem of authority in decision-making was critical. We have seen that repeated attempts were made by the staff and the advisory council to overcome this problem: the voicing of parental criticisms of the new program in a series of regular advisory council meetings; the effort of the council to solve the problem through a definition of its own role; a general meeting; bulletins; smaller group meetings by grade level. Each of these activities was partially or wholly frustrated by the basic functional distinction between those responsible for the school's program (teachers and administrators) and those not "on the scene" and not able to exercise authority over day-to-day decisions (the parents). The greatest effect of the community's criticisms on the school program during this period was the reorganization undertaken by the humanities teachers to include some traditional course offerings, but even that decision demonstrated the staff's authority and the parents' lack of authority, since it was the staff, and not the community, who formulated the changes. We can see a general influence exerted by the community through the advisory council and informal contacts among teachers, students, and parents. The concept of influence would be perhaps a useful addition to the "school development" framework; in at least some instances it is
likely that the participation of the community in decision-making, while outside the school's authority structure, could be viewed as that of persuading the professional decision-makers to initiate changes. Thus a political component could be incorporated into the concept of school development. The dominant pattern of school-community relations, however, can be seen in the case of U. Town to have been one of blocked communications. Neither the staff nor the community representatives on the advisory council seemed to be able to summon enough commitment to community participation to effect good communications, let alone participation in decision-making. In the first half of year one, at least, a theme of the case was the problem of communications. Meanwhile, clarity was achieved in the setting of the advisory council's role definition as "consultative," and not decision-making; in that event could be seen a major recognition by the district director and most of the council members that the council could not have any real decision-making authority in spite of the original promises.

The data gathered concerning the decision of the evaluation department of the school board to use a questionnaire on contract time in the U. Town program evaluation further illustrated the authority of the district administration in the case. The lack of local participation in the decision was another indication of the difficulty of
Instituting broadened participation in school-level program development in a system as large as Sailcrest. Interestingly, neither the evaluation official nor the participants in the school seemed to expect more local participation in this decision than occurred. The realities of decentralization were not generally perceived to be as sweeping as the stated intent of the project. Criticisms of this particular questionnaire centered around its failure to include what the school participants knew to be more relevant questions; yet, few criticized the decision-making process through which the questionnaire was designed at the time. We should add, nevertheless, that this event in the case was another instance of "program development" decision-making within the conceptual outlines of the model based on curriculum literature: an evaluation device geared to collect information on the effectiveness of one instructional technique in the U. Town program in order to "feed back" to those involved in making future instructional decisions at the school level.

The two-day staff meeting in February of year one further illustrated two contentions of this developing analysis: that organizational problems are at least as important as program problems at the school level; and that participation in decision-making is restricted by the authority structure of the school organization.

In these meetings, however, we can see the need for further qualification of the first contention. The teachers
did, indeed, devote their time and attention largely to problems which would fall under the "program" umbrella, and there was even some attention to ends-means distinctions evident in the humanities team's presentation of its philosophy, objectives, and organization, and in the work of the accreditation committee on stating school philosophy and objectives. At the same time, much attention was given by the staff to school-wide organizational problems.

The fact that the February staff meetings, designed as they were to catch up on communications among departments in the school, excluded parents and students again demonstrated the gap in authorities and responsibilities between the teachers and the community. Important aspects of the staff discussions were expressions of dissatisfaction with the attitudes of some parents toward the kind of program the staff was trying to achieve, and exchanges of ideas about what the staff perceived as the problem of resistance and non-performance on the part of some groups of students. This gap between the teachers and the community was also particularly evident in the fact that the new statement of school philosophy and objectives drawn up by the staff's accreditation committee dropped community participation in SLPD as a school goal.

As the new program moved into the spring of its first year of operations, the continued regular meetings of the
"consultative committee" reflected continued community dissatisfaction with the staff's departures from traditional teaching methods. These criticisms were met with continued efforts by the staff to explain and justify the new program without altering the structure of decision-making authority which made the community's questions peripheral. It was hoped that at least the communications function of the consultative committee would be improved by the publication of a newsletter through the board office.

When the staff met for a full week in April of year one, it was again apparent that the task in which they were engaged was that of solving the organizational problems encountered in implementing the new program. The emphasis was on the long-range organization of the school. Consideration of the curriculum and instruction in the school as a whole was noticeably absent, except in a few instances. The most noteworthy "program" discussion during the week was one of philosophy; and even in that instance the context of the discussion was one of solving a procedural question. When the staff debated the criteria for success in the school, the question of whether the school was "academic," and the meaning of "student responsibility," we might say they were considering school-level curriculum in a very important sense; yet, the discussion was aimed at deciding student admissions policies.
Another "program" decision during the April planning week provided further data on PSLPD: the decision to retain contract time in the 1972 to 1973 program. The way in which this decision was made showed how exclusive was the authority of the teaching staff when it came to some school-level decisions. It also demonstrated the low level of respect for formal evaluation of the program among members of the staff.

In this and other decision-making during the planning week, the staff alone participated. Student and parent participation in decision-making was given some attention in the staff discussions toward the end of the week, but no real change in the structure of teacher-community authority relations was contemplated. Again, the tone of the problem was one of searching for some means of alleviating communications gaps while feeling that neither the students nor the parents could really see the program the way the teachers did. Communications were obviously still very ineffective. The efforts of one teacher led the staff to approve creation of a new staff-student committee.

The problem of student admissions policy, which occasioned staff discussion of school philosophy during the April planning week, arose again as an urgent problem in staff meetings as the first year of the project drew to a close. This problem can be seen as a particularly informative one in the context of this study, for several reasons. The
problem exemplifies, for one thing, the mix between organizational and curricular concerns at the school level. It also demonstrates further the importance of the school system's authority structure in the resolution of critical questions. Moreover, the substance of the problem is an important example of how the attempt to apply an educational idea like student responsibility for learning can create difficulties when it comes to specifying the idea at an operational level.

The production of several evaluation documents at the end of year one had some significance to both the concept of program development and the concept of "school development" as I have defined it. The evaluation documents also spoke to the question of participation in decision-making. The fact that evaluation work was done, and was timed to provide (at least in theory) input to decisions about the year two program, indicates that the basic concept of program development as a process of changing curricular-instructional patterns dependent upon periodic evaluation was considered useful by the various participants in the U. Town case. At the same time, however, we can see a relatively low level of commitment to evaluation-based decision-making evidenced in the staff's planning actions, in the lateness of the reports issued by the board's evaluation department, and in the image-making selectivity of some documents. It would seem that a partial belief in
the value of program evaluation was limited by participants' understanding of the realities of decision-making as a complex task requiring subjective integration of numerous perceptions in addition to those offered by controlled measurement studies. The distortions found in the evaluation reports might be explained on the basis of the unprofessional concern of the district administrators (noted earlier with reference to the ironies in the project's initiation) that the project appeared to be a successful implementation of ideas current in educational literature. The district administrators, who had the final word in such documents as the accreditation booklet and the year one evaluation report, appear to have assumed that the project should be represented to their "professional superiors" as a matching of a school situation to certain ideas like ends-means decision-making and participative decision-making, rather than as an experiment out of which could come some critical consideration of the ideas themselves. Of course, the structure of authority within which the evaluation documents were produced was itself an example of the limits to participative decision-making imposed by the organization; the accreditation booklet was drafted by a committee of teachers and reviewed by a district director before being submitted to the provincial department of education which had required the booklet to be done; interviews, surveys, and tests were carried out by the school district and the provincial
department; and even my own study proceeded independent of school participation in its design. The structure of authority in evaluation decision-making was again evident when the director met with the staff in the fall of year two.

The early part of year two brought some further developments in the area of participation in decision-making. A number of attempts were made to break down lines of authority and responsibility in the relationships between teachers and students, between teachers and parents, and between teachers and administrators, but the main effects of these attempts were confirmations of the limitations inherent in role differentiations.

In the fresh-start atmosphere of September, it seemed that real changes might occur in student participation (possibly they have since the termination of this study); yet, the new staff-student committee was noticeably separated from the staff decision-making processes, primarily a brain-child of one teacher. It was interesting to see that the context of this effort to broaden student participation in decision-making was outside the area of curriculum and instruction, and equally interesting that the progress of the effort was so dependent upon the completion of the physical facility (for the student lounge) under the authority of the district administration.
The parents' attempt to revive the notion of organized community participation in decision-making demonstrated the structural barrier of formal school authority once again. A "spinning of wheels" was all that the parents' efforts to readjust organizational formats seemed to amount to. The parents' decisions about the new "school association," which accentuated the parent group as a separate body, were not even communicated accurately to staff or students. Among the parents themselves there was no effective communication of their decisions; the consultative committee transformed the new executive into a "consultative executive." The attempt to create organizational machinery for participation in decision-making became itself an obstacle to participation.

The staff's resentment of demands placed upon them by higher authorities in the school organization began to come out at this time, but the district administrators made it clear, at least in the case of the attendance registers, that formal responsibilities had not changed—that the staff should not try to circumvent legally prescribed role definitions.

Finally, we have seen that the program itself at U. Town was, by the middle of year two, only moderately different from the traditional—more flexible, humanistic program of university preparation. To the extent that the new program had been designed to effect changes in the roles of teacher and student, one might say that the limitations on the
development of the program had the same roots as the limitations of participation in decision-making generally; differences in functions performed for society by teachers, students, parents, administrators, trustees, and others in education imply differences in authorities. Changes in the relationships among the incumbents of different roles may be conceivable and desirable in certain cases in which role differentiations have led to rigid communications barriers or exaggeration of authority distinctions, but there are essential differences in authorities and responsibilities which cannot be changed without altering the role structure.

There are two sets of questions posed at the outset of this study which have not been sufficiently answered in the analysis of the case: the questions concerning definition of the decision-making process and definition of participation in decision-making. A conceptual framework for describing those two processes was laid out in the planning of the study (see introduction). Decision-making was defined as a process of problem-solving involving logical stages of generating, considering, and selecting from among alternatives in both setting problems and reaching solutions. Participation in decision-making was conceptualized simply as involvement in one or more of the stages in decision-making, and categories of participants were defined in terms of basic roles in education. In the course of this
case description and analysis, we have seen that although we could and did apply this conceptual framework (Chapter 25), the framework did not enter usefully into the more important work of looking at what "really" happened at U. Town, because in the U. Town case the participation of more than one group in the making of particular decisions did not often occur. In other words, since our primary study objective was the examination of participation in school-level program decision-making, we were diverted from precise study of decision-making processes by the need to understand the lack of PSLPD in the case. That quest led us into two main areas of analysis: the concept of program development as a distinct ends-means process at the school level (which we ultimately replaced with a concept of "school development"); and the problem of blocks to participative decision-making inherent in the structure of organizational authorities and responsibilities. Nevertheless, it should be possible to shed some light on the concept of decision-making as a problem-solving process, and on the concept of participation in decision-making as involvement in one or more stages of that process, by looking closely at some of the data available from our observations of the one decision-making group which we have described in detail: the U. Town teaching staff. First-hand notes were taken in staff meetings during a period of time extending from February of year one to November of year two of the project.
In particular, those meetings in which topics relevant to this study were discussed at length by the staff provide us with line-by-line information on staff members' statements.

The first instance of detailed recording of staff meeting discussions available from my first-hand observations was that of the "professional days" described in Chapter 12. This two-day meeting was not intended so much as a decision-making session as an opportunity for the various departments to communicate. It is, however, apparent that on this occasion the staff considered its goal to be the identification of school-wide program problems; in other words, that the staff did assume a problem-solving orientation to group communications; and, indeed, the staff did succeed in generating a wide range of alternative problems for consideration in the course of the two days. We might say, therefore, that the first stage alone of the definition of decision-making in this study's introduction describes the primary focus of the professional days, and that the staff's determination at the conclusion of the two days to obtain released time later in the year for more extensive meetings represented their desire to carry through the problem-solving process at the school-level.

During the two weeks following the professional days, I attended several meetings of the humanities team and the full staff, which were also described in Chapter 12. In the data from humanities meetings of February 25 and 29,
it can be seen that the general concept of decision-making as problem-solving applies; but it is equally apparent that the participants were not engaged in sequential selection of problems and solutions. Rather, they seemed to jump back and forth between discussion of alternative problems and discussion of alternative solutions without clearly deciding upon problems to be addressed or solutions to be implemented. (Some previous discussion of this point has occurred in analysis of events prior to year one.) This phenomenon raises the theoretical question encountered earlier with reference to the concept of program development: should we view discrepancies between the model and observed behaviors as a weakness in the model or as a weakness in the participants' training? Although both explanations may have value, I wish to take the same position I took earlier. This study is designed to explore the value of existing conceptions and to develop concepts "from the ground up." We must assume that the participants had an instinctive understanding of the complexities of action in their own situation, and we must seek to formulate a conception of decision-making which describes and accounts for their behaviors. Lindblom's "science of muddling through" may provide an approach for doing that. In this instance, it seems useful to say that the humanities teachers may have jumped back and forth among the problem-solving stages because they knew that each of the problems they identified
was inseparable from other problems; that their real quest was for courses of action which would solve, at least partially, more than one problem at a time (without creating more problems than were solved); and that they avoided taking new actions in less than critical situations if such multiple solutions were not available.

An interesting example of a problem which the staff considered critical was the need for more extensive released time for planning (a problem which was perceived as critical to the solution of many substantive problems). In this case we can see a relatively quick and efficient decision process in which the problem-solving model is applicable. The staff's agreement that the lack of such planning time would be critical led to their selection of an approach to the district administration. In their meeting with the district administrators on the subject, alternative means of providing released time were explored, and shortly thereafter the administrative arrangements were made for the staff's planning week.

Day one of the staff's planning week was marked by several swift decisions, decisions which must be viewed against the preparatory background of the planning week. Although not observed directly by the researcher, two important processes obviously preceded the meetings: the making up of the agenda for the week, and the discussions among groups within the staff which established some
agreements on desirable actions. Thus it was that a quick formal decision was reached on day one of the planning week to limit student enrolment in the following year in a certain manner. Although there was hesitation on the parts of some staff members to rush into a decision on this subject before discussing the overall program, a small group of staff members was able to push the staff to a decision. In this instance, it was apparent that an additional factor affected the decision-making process: the staff's concern about demonstrating to the outside world that it could use the week's released time effectively; in part the staff seemed to assume that reaching decisions quickly was more imperative than discussing alternatives thoroughly. In terms of a conceptual model of decision-making, we can see that the staff here emphasized the selection of solutions to be implemented, while having gone through the preceding stages in the problem-solving model as quickly as possible. It is clear that the problem-solving model is applicable, and that in this case the staff was agreed upon the need for action. Several other decisions concerning future time allocations were reached in this way on day one: to eliminate the special Thursday; to restructure the noon hour; to timetable regular courses and other activities in a certain way. Even the decision to retain contract time in year two was made with a minimum of discussion.

Day two brought discussion of "physical plant and resources." Again, a swift decision process was observed
as the staff resolved to press the school board for a student lounge facility; it was apparent, as in some of the decisions made on the previous day, that although the process of generating, considering, and selecting problems and solutions was occurring, much of the work prior to final decision-making had gone on among staff members before the meeting. Thus the principal's opposition to the lounge proposal was easily overridden. However, in the discussion of the next topic, the science staff's proposal for trading a classroom with the humanities staff, two departments within the staff ran into conflict of interests, and the advance work of the science teachers was not sufficient to bring about a decision. In this case, a problem was presented for which the staff could find no solution; namely, the improvement of the science staff's classroom locations without worsening that of the humanities staff; and the issue was diplomatically dropped.

Two decision processes on day three were relevant to this inquiry. One was the staff's discussion of staffing. Here it was useful to see that although there was agreement on what was desired as far as the size of the staff was concerned, a decision could not be reached because of lack of information about budgets. In this case the generation and consideration of alternative solutions to a problem was dependent upon information about alternatives available in another problem area. This phenomenon is related to the
conceptual consideration discussed earlier that problems often cannot be isolated; realistic decision-making often requires searching for courses of action which will solve, at least partially, more than one problem at a time.

The other interesting decision on day three was that concerning plans for a general meeting in May. In this instance we are shown again how a decision can be reached on the basis of very little discussion. Whereas in some cases the difficulty of finding a course of action prevents arrival at a decision, in other cases it seems clear to most participants that a proposed course of action is good. In the latter type of decision-making, the model which differentiates among the generating, considering, and selecting of alternatives seems overly complicated, even though it is true that it describes the process.

On day four we saw one of the examples in the U. Town case of decision-making about decision-making. In this instance the staff was searching for a means of including students in decisions about course offerings. It could be seen that the problem-solving model was descriptive of the process, and that final decision-making, as in other instances, was made difficult by disagreement over the desirability of alternative solutions proposed. In this case a decision (selection of solution) was formally made, but the narrowness of the majority led (as we see later) to a very low level of implementation.
Later in day four we saw the very interesting case of the staff's discussion of student admissions policies and the meaning of the school's objectives. What started as an address to the problem of how to select new students ended as an address to the problem of defining the school's purpose. In this instance we see not only that the solution of one problem is inseparable from the solution of another problem, but also that the difficulty of reaching a decision concerning the more fundamental of the two problems leads to indecision with regard to the more superficial problem. We also see that the necessity of reaching some decision concerning the initial problem of screening student applicants leads to the staff's accepting all of the alternatives proposed as relevant considerations in a vague way. This brings out an important observation which applies to many of the decision processes in the U. Town case: the staff's use of the decision process seems to have been often for a purpose other than reaching a decision. The process of generating and considering alternatives in and of itself seems to have value to the group. It leads to individual implementations and to later reconsideration of the problem by the group, which may sometimes mean eventual generation and selection of a solution. Hence inability to complete the decision-making process in a given observed sequence may only mean that the process has not yet ended. It should be added that throughout all of these analyses we find the
basic problem-solving model descriptive of the stages of decision-making encountered in reality, so long as the model is not viewed rigidly.

One very relevant example of the decision process at U. Town occurred during the course of the rest of year one: the continuation of the issue of student admissions and school philosophy, an issue which soon became enmeshed with the question of how to deal with unsuccessful students already enrolled at the school. The staff was still unable to agree on the school's main purpose, but decided, after a difficult session of considering alternatives, to proceed slowly toward identifying and counselling "non-performing" students, who would eventually be forced to transfer to another school if their achievement did not improve. At the same time, the staff decided to ignore students' residence as a criterion of enrolment. In these decision processes, it could be seen that the problem-solving model was descriptive, with the proviso that several problems were always interrelated. One of the most interesting aspects of this example, though, was that after the decisions seemed to have been made, the staff's recognition of conflict with higher administrative authorities led them to alter their course of action. They could not, after all, ignore residence. As a result, it was necessary for the staff also to change their previous decision concerning enrolment limits and to change the number of staff members desired for the coming year. Hence we see more surely than ever the interrelation of problem areas and the
need for including reconsideration of problems and solutions in any concept of decision-making.

Observations in staff meetings in the fall of year two did not alter the conclusions formed in year one regarding the process of decision-making. Discussions of a number of related problems were observed: development of the student lounge facility and student participation in decision-making; the consultative committee; staff authority within the provincial education system (the issue of attendance registers); program evaluation; non-performing students; staff spending authority within the school district organization. One significant aspect of this period seemed to be the emphasis on discussion of problems in the area of participation in decision-making itself. Yet, as far as the process of decision-making about decision-making was concerned, we could see that the problem-solving model was applicable. Decisions about decision-making seemed to be particularly hard to reach (not surprisingly), the process usually being marked by disagreements over both the nature of the problems and the merits of proposed solutions; and by the ignoring, contradicting, or non-implemetning of decisions reached. In the case of the efforts made to improve student participation in decision-making, we saw the staff agree quite readily to formation of a staff-student committee, but when it came to student presence in staff meetings themselves the staff was very protective
of its own authority. In the case of the consultative committee, the staff agreed that it was failing, yet left it up to the parents to decide what to do about it and made no moves to increase its importance in decision-making. In the case of the attendance registers, the staff seemed resolved to resist using them, but splintered when it came to means of doing so. It was also interesting to see the lag in the staff's implementation of its decision collectively to identify, counsel, and transfer out of the school non-performing students; the staff's resolve in this instance was undoubtedly affected by the district administration's unwillingness to back up the teachers' earlier decision to ignore residence boundaries as a criterion of enrolment.

The concept of participation in decision-making was treated at the outset of this study simply as involvement or non-involvement by a given category of participant in one or more stages of the defined decision-making process. This approach to conceptualization had two main components: the assumption that categories of participants in decision-making could most usefully be defined in terms of the basic roles in education (trustee, administrator, teacher, student, parent); and the idea that it would be useful to define patterns of participation on a participant-process grid. Now we are in a position to ask whether those two ideas were good ones.
There seems little doubt that the breakdown of categories of participants on the basis of the role structure in education was valuable. Throughout this study we have seen that in issues involving a wide variety of participants, the participants tended to identify themselves with others in their own role position. The question of whether involvement in stages of the decision-making process is an adequate description of participation is, however, another matter. Certainly, we have seen that it is possible to plot grids of participation in decision-making using the participant-process approach, and that this approach yields one type of description of participation in decision-making. Yet, there have been times during the study of the U. Town case when that type of description did not seem to capture important aspects of participation. For one thing, the grid analysis tends to imply that the participation of a given category of participant is roughly equal to, less than, or more than the participation of another category of participant when the two categories of participants have been involved in the same, fewer, or greater numbers of stages in the decision-making process. Likewise, the grid analysis tends to imply that all of the participants who have been involved in a given stage of decision-making have participated equally. In other words, the approach to analysis taken by the initial conceptual framework does
not always accurately measure differences in degree of participation. Although this could be considered simply as a limitation of an otherwise useful approach, we have seen in some instances that very crucial information about the roles of certain participants in a decision is unnecessarily ignored in this conceptual framework. The conceptual weaknesses seem to be greatest in the last three stages of the decision-making process. "Consideration of the relative merits of solutions" often includes the exercise by one or more participants of considerable influence over others. Here there is a particular need for some way of differentiating among degrees of participation (sometimes the involvement of a given category of participant in this stage is inconsequential). "Selection of solution" often is synonymous with authoritative final decision-making, and can be viewed as the single most important phase in describing participation in decision-making. In a sense, the degree of participation in selecting solutions is the extent to which a participant has really been involved in decision-making; the prior stages can be viewed as preparations for decision-making. In many instances where detailed data about a decision are not available, we have seen that the question of who has participated becomes a question of who has been involved in the final stage and, to a lesser extent, who has been involved in the lead-up stages considered together. Thus the most important
conceptual components of participation in decision-making often are: (a) the power or authority to make final decisions, and (b) the influencing of those who exercise power or authority. Finally, the stage of implementation is crucial because in many instances those who have the responsibility for implementation exercise an after-the-fact control over decisions. Decisions are sometimes altered or negated by the behaviors of participants in this last stage, raising the question of what, in the final analysis, is the meaning or significance of the decision-making process.

These points can be made more forcefully by re-examining one of the U. Town decisions analyzed in Chapter 25, when we were applying the initial conceptual framework to the study of SLPDs. In the original decision to re-organize U. Town Secondary School, we saw that the decision was engineered by the central administration; the district officials were unquestionably the most influential group in the process. The participation of these key administrators is reflected in the analysis in Chapter 25 by the Xs which appear in almost every administrator-process box (Fig. 3). However, the relatively low degree of participation by teachers, students, and parents in this decision is not adequately reflected through the framework. Without qualifying information, the reader would assume that the school staff and local community participated fully in two
of the stages leading up to the U. Town reorganization decision. In this respect, the framework used for analysis in Chapter 25 was not only inadequate but misleading. Conversely, the framework implies roughly equal participation by all categories of personnel except trustees in the implementation of this fundamental decision. Yet, we know that the operational meanings of student responsibility, individualization of instruction, curriculum enrichment, subject integration, team teaching, and community resource use at U. Town were developed in practice primarily by the teaching staff. At the same time, it is evident that throughout this decision process, the relevant groups of participants were those defined by the basic role structure: the administrators acted as a group in leading the reorganization; the trustees acted as a group in voting to sanction the proposals; the teachers functioned as a group in implementing the reorganization.

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CHAPTER 27

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In this study, I have described and analyzed a case through which I could explore and evaluate the idea of PSLPD: Participation in School-Level Program Decision-making. PSLPD was selected for study because it represented the convergence of three trends in recent educational thought—

...the call for wider participation in decision-making, the emphasis on the individual school as a decision-making unit, and the advocacy of rational program development.

The case studied was one in which a major attempt was made to institute participation by teachers, students, and parents in school-level program decision-making, as one goal of an experimental secondary school. The study aimed to answer certain questions in four problem areas:

Guiding Questions

Organizational Innovations

What were the origins, nature, and effects on PSLPD of

(a) the new staff group

(b) the advisory council?

Decision-making Processes

What processes of decision-making occurred in the case?

Were there identifiable stages in the decision-making process?
Participation in Decision-making

What form did participation in decision-making take?

What did participation in decision-making mean?

Program Decision-making at the School Level

Was the program development process at the school level a cyclical process of decision-making involving decisions about ends, means, and evaluation?

Was there an identifiable area of decision-making at the school level concerned with curriculum, instruction, and program evaluation?

If so, how important was program decision-making at the school level in relation to other areas of decision-making?

What were the types of problems requiring decisions at the level of the school as a unit?

The study was initiated with two conceptual frameworks in mind, based on surveys of related literature. A conception of program development was formulated in which the process was visualized as one of ends, means, and evaluation decision-making. A conception of the decision-making process was formulated based on the notion of problem-solving, and participation in decision-making was defined as involvement in one or more stages of that process.

A detailed case history was prepared, including all available information relevant to the topic of PSLPD. The case history has been summarized as concisely as possible in Chapter 24. The initial conceptual frameworks were then applied to the analysis of PSLPD in the case (Chapter 25). Finally, the value of the initial conceptions themselves
was considered by studying the case history in light of the questions posed at the outset of the research. Through this conceptual analysis of the case (Chapter 26) it was demonstrated that changes were called for in the conceptualization of both program development and decision-making processes at the school level.

The concept of "program development" as defined at the beginning of the study was found to be flawed in two major respects. First, curricular-instructional decision-making tended not to be of an ends-means variety. Second, curricular-instructional decision-making was not the central decision-making concern in the development of the school. Program development was only one relatively minor type of problem at the level of the school as a decision-making unit. More important were the organizational problems, including

.. staff utilization; finance; timetabling; physical plant and equipment; relations with the local community, the district office, professional associations, and visiting colleagues; student admissions, groupings, and attendance; and the structure of decision-making itself.

Program development was found to be inseparable from organizational development at the school level.

The concept of decision-making as a problem-solving process was found to be useful, but some qualifications of the concept were indicated. It was found that often the principal decision-making group studied, the school staff,
was faced with problems which could not be isolated from each other for solution. Sometimes the staff seemed to jump back and forth between discussion of alternative problems and discussion of alternative solutions without clearly deciding upon problems to be addressed or solutions to be implemented.

In such cases it seemed that the staff's real quest was for courses of action which would solve, at least partially, more than one problem at a time (without creating more problems than were solved); and that they avoided taking new actions in less than critical situations if such multiple solutions were not available.

We might conclude from these findings that the problem-solving concept of decision-making, while essentially sound, must be viewed flexibly. Although the stages identified by the concept usually are applicable, the process must allow for sequences other than straight-line problem-solving; it must allow for such variations as reconsideration of problem alternatives after consideration of alternative solutions to a problem. I have proposed that Lindblom's "science of muddling through" may provide a useful conceptual adjunct to the problem-solving definition of decision-making with which this study was initiated.

The concept of participation in decision-making as involvement in one or more stages of the decision-making process was found to have some major weaknesses in its capacity for differentiating among degrees of participation. It was found that this approach could lead to misrepresentation of the comparative participation of different groups
in the decision-making process when groups who did not really have a significant role in a decision appeared to have been involved in as many or more stages as groups who did have important roles. These conceptual flaws were found to be critical in the last three stages of the decision-making process, when we find influence and authority exercised by some groups over others. This study has suggested that a more meaningful definition of participation in decision-making would focus on measuring influence, power, and authority exercised in the stages of considering alternative solutions, selecting solutions, and implementing solutions. At the same time, however, it was found that the breakdown of categories of participants in decision-making in terms of basic roles in education (trustee, administrator, teacher, student, parent, etc.) was useful.

This study found numerous obstacles to the broadening of participation in decision-making. Although the innovations in the case studied were found to result in significant participation by the teaching staff in some types of decision-making, the structure of authority and responsibility in the school system was found fundamentally to constrain all categories of participants. In areas where the school organization held the district administration (or even the provincial government's department of education) responsible for decisions, local persons seldom were found to have participated significantly. In the day-to-day
operation of the school, the teaching staff had some significant responsibilities and corresponding authority, but neither the parents nor the students were usually able to participate effectively in decision-making. The conclusion was formed that

...differences in functions performed for society by teachers, students, parents, administrators, trustees, and others in education imply differences in authorities. Changes in the relationships among the incumbents of different roles may be conceivable and desirable in certain cases in which role differentiations have led to rigid communications barriers or exaggeration of authority distinctions, but there are essential differences in authorities and responsibilities which cannot be changed without altering the role structure.

In the course of the analysis, an alternative conceptual approach was formulated to fill the need for a way of describing and explaining events in the case. This conceptualization was called "school development" because it attempted to emphasize the interrelationship of "program development" and "organization development" in any realistic effort at educational change. "School development" was conceived as a process very different from the ends-means conception of curricular-instructional decision-making. The basis for the conceptual approach proposed in this study was the observation that the change leaders in the case were essentially attempting to create a new school by borrowing, adapting, elaborating, and specifying to a particular situation a number of educational ideas drawn from professional
literature and contacts. This process seemed not unlike what I had observed informally in other cases. It was also noted that the progress of the efforts in the U. Town case to use various ideas about better methods of organizing programs was dependent upon social processes occurring among various participants in the case. One of the most important types of relationship bearing upon the development of the school seemed to be the organizational superior-subordinate relationship, discussed above in the context of "authority" and "responsibility." A related type of social relationship in school development seemed to be the respect of local change agents for professional leaders outside the school system. The conclusion was formed that school development occurs through the exercise of authority by local educational leaders, who are influenced by leading authors of professional literature. The process of school development is seen as one of adapting and specifying educational ideas at successive levels of the organizational hierarchy. The school development process is viewed as a creative process, but the particular type of creativity found in school development is seen to be that of matching ideas and situations by selecting and combining existing concepts. The development of fundamentally new ideas is viewed as a function usually performed by professional authors, not local actors.

The concept of school development advanced in this study thus stresses the integration of a concept of social
organization with a concept of educational change. In addition, school development is viewed as a problem-solving process—a process of reducing discrepancies between desired and perceived states of the school. It is concluded that leading educators, community spokesmen, and local school district administrators operate at different levels of generality in defining the desired and the perceived. School district trustees represent the community's value orientation at a very general level, relying upon the professional leadership to give form to the educational implications of social values, and relying upon the school district administration to invent local implementations.

A final question to which this study must address itself is: What are the implications for future studies? Perhaps the most important research need stemming from the present study is for testing in other cases of the approach taken here to the conceptualization of school development. As useful as the U. Town case was in generating conceptual questions, it must be recognized that the notion of school development formed here was designed as a means of describing and explaining events in one case. Whether the general concepts which arose from this inquiry are applicable to other cases is a worthwhile question that cannot be answered without undertaking further studies.
In other respects, also, the conceptual conclusions of this study are in need of further testing. The data from the U. Town case led me to reach certain conclusions concerning the conceptual frameworks with which I started the study. In some instances I retained concepts, while in others I rejected fundamental components. Particularly in the latter areas, there is a need for further research to determine whether the conclusions formed at U. Town are generalizable. It is recommended that future research look closely at other innovative schools to find out whether "program development" as a distinct ends-means curricular-instructional decision-making process occurs in any important way at the school level. It would be wrong to accept the negative conclusions reached in the U. Town case concerning this important question without diligent further investigation. Further study and testing of the concept of decision-making as a problem-solving process is needed to determine whether the changes in that concept suggested at U. Town have general value when it comes to group decision-making at the school level. It is also recommended that future studies be attentive to the measurement of differences in the influence, power, and authority exercised by various participants in decision-making at the school level. Last but not least, there is a need for further study of the limitations on the broadening of participation in school-level decision-making imposed by the organizational structure of authority and responsibility, which was found to be so important in the case of U. Town.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW INSTRUMENTS

Approach Letter

Centre for the Study of Administration in Education, University of B.C., Vancouver 8, B.C.

I am making a study of participation in decision-making at University Town Secondary School. I am interested in the effort to involve teachers, students, and parents in decision-making. I would like to interview you in connection with my study, if you are willing.

The study focusses on school-level program decisions. Examples of school-level program decisions are:

1. The decision to emphasize student responsibility and individualization of instruction at University Town Secondary School.

2. The decision to utilize "contracts" between students and teachers as a method of individualizing instruction and emphasizing student responsibility.

3. The decision to use a questionnaire on contracted student time in the first-year evaluation of the school.

4. The decision to retain contractual time in the 1972-73 program.

I would like to ask you, first of all, certain questions about those four particular decisions. Secondly, I would like to ask you some questions about school-level program decision-making prior to the current innovations; and finally, I would like to ask you some questions about how you think school-level program decisions should be made. It may very well be that you will be able to give me information about some, but not all, of these topics.

This study is approved by the Sallcrest school board's department of planning and evaluation, and by the U. Town staff and consultative committee. The research report coming out of the study is expected to be of use to the school and school system, as well as to education as a field of study.

I hope you will be able to give me an interview. I will phone you in a few days to arrange a time and place, if you consent.

Sincerely yours,

Robert R. Hoen
Graduate Student
Interview Guide

INTRODUCTION FOR INTERVIEWEES

I am making a study of participation in decision-making at University Town Secondary School. I am interested in the effort to involve teachers, students, and parents in decision-making. My study focusses on school-level program decisions. Examples of school-level program decisions are:

1. The decision to emphasize student responsibility and individualization of instruction at University Town Secondary School.

2. The decision to utilize "contracts" between students and teachers as a method of individualizing instruction and emphasizing student responsibility.

3. The decision to use a "contracted student time questionnaire" in the first-year evaluation of the school.

4. The decision to retain contractual time in the 1972-73 school program.

I would like to ask you, first of all, certain questions about those four particular decisions. Secondly, I would like to ask you certain questions about school-level program decision-making prior to the current innovations; and finally, I would like to ask you some questions about how you think school-level program decisions should be made.

Do you have any questions about what I am trying to accomplish?
EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL-LEVEL PROGRAM DECISIONS

1. The decision to emphasize student responsibility and individualization of instruction at University Town Secondary School.

2. The decision to utilize "contracts" between students and teachers as a method of individualizing instruction and emphasizing student responsibility.

3. The decision to use a "contracted student time questionnaire" in the first-year evaluation of the school.

4. The decision to retain contractual time in the 1972-73 school program.

Figure 8. Facsimile of Card Used in Interviews.
QUESTIONS CONCERNING PARTICULAR DECISIONS

1. Have you any knowledge or impression of how the decision was made to ________? (If not, go to question #13.)

2. What is your recollection of how that decision was made?

3. A decision of this sort is usually made because of some problem, which the decision is intended to solve. What problem was that decision intended to solve?

4. A problem usually has to be brought up by someone or some group before it gets attention. Who raised that problem for consideration in the first place?

5. Often when someone brings up a problem, there are others who think the problem is not important enough to spend time on. Were there others who thought that problem was not worthy of attention, or that other problems were more important? If so, who were they, and what was their opinion?

6. At some point, after a problem has been brought forward, someone or some group has to decide whether the problem will be given attention. Who decided that the problem of ________ would be given attention?

7. When there is a recognized need to solve a problem, the various possible solutions have to be identified. What were the various proposals concerning what should be done about the problem of ________? Who made the proposals?

8. After a number of proposed solutions to a problem are brought forward, their advantages and disadvantages have to be weighed. Who took part in considering the merits of the various proposals?

9. When different people who are interested in a problem have considered the various alternatives, they often do not agree on which solution is best. Who favored each of the proposals concerning how the problem should be solved?

10. Often those who have an opinion concerning the best solution make an effort to influence the final decision. Who tried to influence the final selection of a course of action?
11. It often happens that one person or group is successful in influencing a decision, and others not successful. Whose influence prevailed in the making of the decision to ________? Why?

12. Finally, a course of action has to be selected by someone or some group. Who made the decision to ________?

13. What did you understand this decision to mean, in terms of specific actions or outcomes?

14. Sometimes a decision is made but, for some reason, not put into effect. Was the decision to implemented? If so, how was it implemented, and who took part in the implementation? If it was not implemented, why not?

15. Did you participate in the making or implementing of the decision to ________? If so, in what way?

16. Did you express any opinion or make any proposal, during the making of that decision, which was not reflected in the final outcome? If so, what?

17. Do you at the present time have any opinion concerning the decision to ________ or the way in which it was made? If so, what?

18. Is there any other information, not brought out in our discussion of this decision, which you think I should have?

*******
QUESTIONS TO FOLLOW THE ANALYSIS
OF PARTICULAR DECISIONS

1. Have there been school-level program decisions, other than those four which we have discussed, that you think were more important? If so, which decisions? Why do you think they were more important?

2. Do you think that any of the decisions which I have asked you about were not important? If so, which ones, and why?

3. Have there been school-level program problems which you thought should have been dealt with, but were not given attention? If so, what problems do you have in mind?

4. Have there been school-level program decisions with which you disagreed? If so, what were they, and what was your opinion?

5. Are there at the present time any school-level program problems which you think should be given attention? If so, what are they?

6. Are there at the present time any school-level program problems, being given attention, about which you have an opinion concerning the best solution? If so, what problems do you have in mind, and what solutions do you propose?

7. Is there any other information about school-level program decision-making at U. Town which you think I should have?

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QUESTIONS CONCERNING PRE-INNOVATION DECISION-MAKING

As I proceed now with certain questions about school-level program decision-making prior to the current innovations at U. Town, please keep in mind that we are talking about decisions like the four particular ones to which I have referred. I have identified those four examples on this card for your convenience. (Give interviewee the card for reference throughout the interview.)

Do you have any questions?

1. First of all, what was your connection with University Town Secondary School before the current innovations? For what period of time did you have that connection with the school?

2. As you remember it, how were school-level program decisions made before the current innovations were initiated? Please think in terms of the year or two immediately preceding the innovations.

3. A decision is usually made because of some problem, which the decision is intended to solve. A problem usually has to be brought up by someone or some group before it gets attention. Who took part in proposing school-level program problems for consideration at that time?

4. There are often several problems needing attention at any given time. The relative importance of the problems must then be considered. Who took part in considering which school-level program problems should be given attention in the case of U. Town in the period before the current innovations?

5. At some point, after a problem has been brought forward, someone or some group has to decide whether the problem will be given attention. Who decided which school-level program problems would be given attention at that time?

6. When there is a recognized need to solve a problem, the various possible solutions have to be identified. Who took part in proposing solutions to school-level program problems at U. Town at that time?
7. After a number of proposed solutions to a problem are brought forward, their advantages and disadvantages have to be weighed. **Who took part in considering the merits of various solutions to school-level program problems at that time?**

8. When different people who are interested in a problem have considered the various alternatives, they often do not agree on which solution is best. **Was there any pattern in the positions people took concerning solutions to school-level program problems in the case of U. Town at that time?**

9. Often those who have an opinion concerning the best solution to a problem make an effort to influence the final decision. **What persons or groups took part in trying to influence the selection of courses of action concerning school-level program problems at that time?**

10. It often happens that one person or group is successful in influencing a decision, and others not successful. **Was there a person or group whose influence usually prevailed in the making of school-level program decisions at that time? If so, why?**

11. Finally, a course of action has to be selected by someone or some group. **Who made the final decisions concerning school-level program actions at that time?**

12. Sometimes a decision is made but, for some reason, not put into effect. **Were school-level program decisions usually implemented at that time? If so, who took part in implementing them? If not, why?**

13. Did you usually participate in the making or implementing of school-level program decisions at that time? **If so, in what way?**

14. Did you often express opinions or make proposals, concerning school-level program problems, which were not reflected in the final outcomes? **If so, what would be some examples, if you can recall?**

15. Do you at the present time have any opinions concerning school-level program decisions, or the way in which they were made, in the period before the current innovations? **If so, what?**

16. Is there any other information concerning school-level program decision-making, in the case of U. Town prior to the current innovations, which you think I should have?

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QUESTIONS CONCERNING OPINIONS OF HOW SCHOOL-LEVEL PROGRAM DECISIONS SHOULD BE MADE

I would now like to ask you some questions about how you think school-level program decisions should be made. Here, again, we are talking about decisions like the four examples on the card.

Do you have any questions?

1. How do you think school-level program decisions should be made? Who should be involved and in what ways?

2. What is the rationale for your opinions?

3. A decision is usually made because of some problem, which the decision is intended to solve. A problem usually has to be brought up by someone or some group before it gets attention. Who do you think should participate in proposing school-level program problems for consideration?

4. Why?

5. There are often several problems needing attention at any given time. The relative importance of the problems must then be considered. Who do you think should take part in considering which school-level program problems should be given attention?

6. Why?

7. At some point, after a problem has been brought forward, someone or some group has to decide whether the problem will be given attention. Who do you think should decide which school-level program problems will be attended to?

8. Why?

9. When there is a recognized need to solve a problem, the various possible solutions have to be identified. Who do you think should participate in proposing solutions to school-level program problems?

10. Why?
11. After a number of proposed solutions to a problem are brought forward, their advantages and disadvantages have to be weighed. **Who do you think should take part in considering the merits of various solutions to school-level program problems?**

12. Why?

13. When different people who are interested in a problem have considered the various alternatives, they often do not agree on which solution is best. **Do you think there should be any particular pattern in the positions people take concerning solutions to school-level program problems?**

14. Why?

15. Often those who have an opinion concerning the best solution to a problem make an effort to influence the final decision. **Who do you think should take part in trying to influence the selection of courses of action concerning school-level program problems?**

16. Why?

17. It often happens that one person or group is successful in influencing a decision, and others not successful. **Whose influence do you think should prevail in the making of school-level program decisions?**

18. Why?

19. Finally, a course of action has to be selected by someone or some group. **Who do you think should make final decisions concerning school-level program actions?**

20. Why?

21. A decision, once made, has to be put into effect. **Who do you think should participate in implementing school-level program decisions, and in what ways?**

22. Why?

23. Do you think that you should participate in the making or implementing of school-level program decisions? If so, in what way?

24. Why?

25. Do you have any other opinions, concerning how school-level program decisions should be made, of which you think I should take note?

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PARTICIPANTS' OPINIONS OF HOW SCHOOL-LEVEL PROGRAM DECISIONS SHOULD BE MADE

As part of my interviews, I asked participants how they thought decisions concerning school-level program should be made—who should be involved and in what ways. (See Interview Guide, Appendix A.)

Students interviewed tended, perhaps not surprisingly, to favor broad participation in decision-making, while recognizing some practical difficulties. One student had this to say:

Those decisions should be made by somebody like the advisory committee. All they can do now is advise; they have no power whatsoever. With a tough school board, a thing like an advisory committee is a difficult thing; but these decisions should be made by a three-part body... Anyone should participate in proposing problems. We shouldn't censor problems. Everyone should have equal rights to propose problems for consideration. Ideally, all three parties should take part in considering the problems, but that's difficult because of different roles. We shouldn't divide the advisory committee into three camps. If you want something done fairly, you have to involve everyone, but that means you get a lot of mucking around with disagreements. To say who should decide which problems to give attention, is going too far. Any problem should be considered. If there's a shortage of time, you have to pick the one that's most critical. I don't know how. All three parties should be involved in proposing solutions to problems... There are lots of hassles in weighing proposals. You have to compromise. Perhaps just some students and some teachers who really know what's going on should do it... Right now society has to have its way in the school system. All the paranoid feelings in society are projected onto the kids; but if the decision is made within the school,
then the three-party committee should make the decision jointly. You can make a decision, then have trouble actualizing it. The interpretation of the decision would have to undergo debate. That would be a three-party process.

I really have a lot of confidence in this three-party thing. Everyone sort of accepts things as they are now. I would fear the students would be apathetic. . . If no one wants to participate, there's no need for an advisory committee, and everything will lapse back to the board.

Another student emphasized student participation, but saw no desirable role for parents in decision-making:

These decisions should be made by students and teachers. The best way is probably through an elected board of four or five teachers and an equal number of students, with perhaps somebody from the school board. They could use resource people, too. Things could be brought up, discussed, and final decisions made, not just discussed. Parents shouldn't be involved in decision-making at the high school level; school is just between the students and teachers. It's fine for parents to volunteer to help out, but they shouldn't be included in decision-making; it doesn't really concern them. Whoever wanted to should bring up problems for discussion, or propose solutions. . . .

Another student said:

We have to give teachers credit for their experience; but we also have to realize that they're making decisions about other people's lives, and I want to have some say in mine. Lots of kids aren't capable of deciding; they haven't come into contact with the world out there. Teachers should be their resources. With a decision like having contract time in the program, the people with experience should be involved, those who had the idea, and those who will be affected. Decisions shouldn't be forced on anyone. Parents should only get involved if they want to. Often there's no need. Every parent influences his own child.

Teachers tended to think that they themselves should have a greater role in decision-making than the local community.
Teacher:

Students and parents should all be involved to a certain degree. Some of the students feel they should be in on every decision; but I think there are some things which should be strictly staff decisions. . . .

Teacher:

Ideally, the parents should be involved, but if it comes down to the crunch the teacher is the one who has to make the decision. We'd like advice and ideas, but the decision has to be ours. We can't teach in ways we don't agree with, or teach a curriculum we aren't in agreement with. We hope we're open to suggestions.

Teacher:

. . . Parents should be in an advisory capacity—a consultative committee or association—giving teachers their views; the same with students. They should be consulted on decisions that are going to affect them. . . . I think teachers should make final decisions, because we're accountable.

Teacher:

Staff decision-making is probably as far as the broadening of participation in decision-making can go. Student involvement is a problem because of the lack of staff time to develop it; but it's a good idea. We shouldn't have dictatorial decisions. I'd like to see the kids and the parents involved but I doubt it can work. The organizational paraphernalia precludes it happening. If there were good communications between groups it would be satisfying to have other groups influence the professional decision-makers; but how does one get adequate information on community opinion? That is difficult—let alone involving parents and students as decision-makers.

Teacher:

. . . We have to be responsible to some corporate body, but not subservient to it—the department of education and the school board. We (the staff group) should assert ourselves, and we should take responsibility as a group for our decisions. I
don't see any role for parents or students in curricular decision-making. There is great merit in a liaison with parents, but they have no business in the formation of policy in curriculum; that would be untenable for professionals. Suggestions and discussion by parents is fine, but the professionals must make the decisions; and the influence efforts of parents and students should be pretty well thought out and clarified before we listen to them.

Teacher:

All should take part in proposing and selecting problems for consideration; it might have to be a representative group to be mechanically feasible. The discussion of solutions should involve all; but in making the decisions about the school program the staff should have the greatest say, because we are for the most part required to implement those decisions. I would hope that we would consider the opinions of other groups, but it would be very difficult to have a final decision made by the whole group. I wouldn't want any other groups to be able to veto a staff decision, and I guess that means I think the staff should be able to veto others' decisions, but the staff should take others' reactions into account. I guess I'm visualizing a benevolent monarchy. The staff makes this school what it is; they were hand-picked to do a job and should be given the chance to do it. Like anything else, those who are the most involved are in the best position to know what to do.

Teacher:

The decision-making core has to be the staff, with representatives from the staff assistants. The decision process should operate from that core. The kids aren't into school-level program decisions. They're only beginning to talk about it. . . . There should be greater participation by students in all decision-making bodies, except regarding budget, where the staff should have prerogative. Part of the budget comes from staff giving up salary. The students should participate more in areas directly affecting them.
Everyone should take part in proposing problems for consideration, including teachers, students, parents, administrators, and trustees. The chairman (of whatever decision-making group we have) should select the problems to be included in agendas. Proposing solutions is a different matter; that is the responsibility of the staff. Everyone should participate in considering the merits of solutions proposed. The staff should make the final decisions. Implementation would vary from area to area, and likewise would participation in implementation; but there should be no a priori exclusions from participation in implementation.

We should work toward a participation-by-everyone body. I'd like to see some staff business handled by staff alone, and student business handled by students; but somewhere at the top there has to be a total-participation body. Yet the teachers would have to be at the core of it. Parents should act as a sounding board... I picture students participating in staff meetings quite a lot; but there has to be a staff prerogative in some matters. Students should still be allowed to sit in when such matters are discussed. You have to distinguish between public staff meetings and staff meetings in which students are actively participating. Students should be encouraged to help make decisions.

The principal was skeptical about attempts to broaden participation in decision-making:

One line of decision-making—what the program must include—goes from the department of education to the school board to the principal. A second line—modifications to suit the different needs of teachers and students—involves the principal and staff as a unit. I am concerned about the inefficiency of group decision-making processes. Does the staff really want to take all this time for decision-making? I think some of them don't. I suspect more and more of it will be delegated as time goes on. This sort of arrangement certainly wouldn't work in a big school of 2,000 pupils. The principal is the hardest put to find a modus operandi. The parents' role is a tough question in a school this size, when you look at the university requirements. There isn't much time left in
the schedule to make decisions about. The kids themselves run out of time. There's little point in asking what courses to offer... As for the students' participation in school-level program decision-making, it wouldn't get too far in committee form in our school, because it would wind up with only the interested volunteers from the student body. The participative student assembly is not as representative as the old student council, as far as I can see... Students should be able to influence the staff, but the staff should make the decisions. The parents wouldn't want to be involved in curriculum decision-making; they made that clear at the general meeting.

Mr. Elvin, the program evaluation official, also expressed reservations about the extent to which teachers, students, and parents should be involved in decision-making:

I feel quite strongly that decision-making in schools today, at the school level, can no longer be a one-person process, as it has been so often in the past. Things are changing too quickly, our views of what is good for young people are changing. Program decisions in the past were often the result of a principal's decision which came out of an earlier decision by a committee at the department of education. There are still times when an administrator can make a program decision, but all major decisions about the program should involve more people. They should involve students, staff, the department of education, the school board and officials, and parents in the school community. Good decision-making in some way involves those people in varying degrees.

But many school decisions have to limit inputs from these sources. You can't go to a parent body for inputs on everything you do in the school... Many in-school decisions have to be made by representatives from the staff... I criticize the group decision process for going too far, spending too much time--costly man-hours--chewing over decisions about whether to spend a hundred dollars for this or that equipment. (Another thing I criticize is the strong individuals who sway the group, to the extent that you don't get a group decision.) Any group decision process has to have one person who has final authority and responsibility; otherwise you have a lot of meaningless costs in manpower and time. If an
individual has the authority to say: 'Look, we've wasted too much time on this,' then the group process can be effective. They don't have this at U. Town. They want to operate without a principal who normally fills this role.

Parents should influence school decisions, but there are certain decisions in education that only the professional should make. I feel very strongly about that. . . .

Director of instruction Meyer had opinions similar to the other administrators interviewed:

It would be desirable for everyone to have an equal say. However, that is perhaps not possible. The professional has to play a greater role in the decision process, while sounding out his ideas against a consultative body. We can't get away from final decision-making by the professional, since we can't please all those who have interests. Also, the School Act is always in the background. The school principal walks the tight rope of ultimate responsibility, as far as school-level decisions are concerned.

Dr. Allworth was concerned about decentralization going too far:

School-level decisions have to be made within areas that people concerned are competent to make them. A problem is that the local entity may want to take over all the decision-making. It is important to place local decision-making in the proper framework, so people don't become involved in decisions they don't have the authority or information base to make.

I am in favor of the school staff and principal taking responsibility for educational matters that concern the school. We have delegated much responsibility in this area. . . . The principal has to have the ultimate responsibility for the school.

My own view is that education is a complicated thing; it requires sophisticated, mature teachers; but decisions should be made on the best possible information base, so the community can help the staff by giving views on the school's program. To involve parents and students directly in curricular
decision-making is inappropriate. Advice is essential from the community, but not decision-making in curriculum. That does not mean that the school should not be sensitive to the feelings or expressed concerns of students and local citizens. It would be a very foolish staff who ignored such important feedback. My opinion on this hasn't changed since the beginning of the U. Town project; it's called an "advisory" council for a good reason.

Trustee Gruner echoed the distinction between professional responsibility and community participation:

You don't have to wait for the community to complain or suggest changes; if the professionals think there is something good to do, they should take it to the trustees, then involve the community. With a community council, you have a way for the parents and students to affect decisions, but the council can't have authority in a final sense. I don't favor any legalistic approach. There should be a mutual give and take, not a laying down of the law. School and community should both have inputs. In a negative sense, the community has decision-making authority, since the school shouldn't institute changes which the community decidedly opposes. In a positive sense, they can say to the school, 'We want this or that change,' then the school investigates the idea. There is a lot to be gained from involving people in secondary decisions, even if they aren't involved in basic decisions.

Parents interviewed also tended to respect the educator's professional authority while viewing community influence as desirable:

Parent:

I think the lay person has to have some position to react to. . . . If you just open the doors to any and all suggestions, you get an unfocussed mass of material, but participation can't be a sham; actions can't be already decided.
In the school there ought to be an inner core program comprising the minimum requirements set provincially or regionally. The public should be able to react to the inner core to some degree. Then as far as the outer core is concerned—electives—parents and students should have a definite input. I'm schizophrenic about student participation; I'd like to propose absolute equality, but I really don't think students should have as much say as parents. Yet the students should have some input and a consciousness of it.

The proposing of problems for consideration should be a four-part affair: the school board has to be involved as well as the teachers, students, and parents. Educators tend to be theoretical, like professionals in other fields. Some infusion of the 'ignorant' community viewpoint would be healthy. It's like the Chinese requiring their academics to spend some time working the soil; there's a continual tendency to get away from the 'soil' when you're in a specialized position. So the educator should at least get public reaction to his proposals. The proper function of the layman is to ask why. It calls forth a better justification, and it can even result in changes sometimes. Final decisions should be made by the professionals in the inner core areas, although the parents and students could take part where electives are concerned.

Parents:

Ultimately you have to leave the decisions to the faculty. Students at the secondary level should have some input—the responsible groups of students, those who recognize the necessity of having some control over their lives. The parents have an appropriate input in assisting with decision-making by expressing concerns to the faculty as to the kinds of things they'd like to see, such as enrichment programs or the degree of structure that should be imposed on students. Parents should also provide opportunities for students to observe the working world to help them decide what they want to prepare for. Parents can also be of help in assessing the program from the viewpoint of the home—are the students becoming capable of handling non-school decision-making? . . .
Parent:

Parents should at least be allowed to voice opinions as a group. . . . We have put educators in their position for a reason, and we should listen to them. I tend to think parents should not have much say in how a school should operate; but we should be able to communicate, at least. Students should almost have more say than parents, because they are more involved in the process. You don't get anywhere with a student unless he has some sense of self-direction.

One parent, however, took a very strong stand in favor of community decision-making:

You have to take knowledge from everywhere in the community to make decisions about education. I would incorporate in an advisory body—a strong advisory body—people who know the complexity of the community—people from churches, the RCMP, clubs, old-age homes, any group that might have something to contribute. All community decisions should be made by representatives from different groups in a decision-making body. Those who have assets to offer should be brought together with those who need help. Anything less than total sharing of authority and responsibility is fake participation.

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APPENDIX C

REFLECTIONS ON METHODOLOGY

This study has been executed on the assumption that the topic chosen needed to be explored through the case study method. PSLPD was seen at the outset as a trend in educational thought which had not been critically analyzed in the light of observed practice in an experimental school setting. The concepts of program development and participation in decision-making at the level of the individual school as a decision-making unit were initially advanced on the basis of change proposals found in current educational literature. In the planning of this study, it was deemed potentially valuable to subject those concepts to the broad and flexible kind of analysis which could come from looking at the realities of a case where an effort was to be made to implement those innovations. Now, having done such a study, I feel a need to reflect in a self-evaluative manner on the way the research was conducted and its meaning as a contribution to knowledge about educational organization.

What constitutes "knowledge" in the study of educational organization? How is that knowledge gained? In the present study, I have assumed that the "best" knowledge is a body of clearly formed and well tested theory, and that the creation of such knowledge depends upon the prior construction and testing of relatively rough concepts and hypotheses.
through many stages of research. I have further assumed that knowledge in the field of educational organization at the present time stands far short of well tested theory. Hence in the research reported here I have attempted to evaluate and improve upon several rough, simple concepts related to a particular topic; but there are two nagging methodological questions which remain at the conclusion of the study: (1) Could the study's guiding questions have been answered more efficiently or more precisely by inferential use of existing theory and research in the more basic social sciences, in place of undertaking an extensive historical-descriptive case study? (2) If the case study was warranted, how well was it done? Did it yield as much knowledge as possible?

The first question can be debated and speculated upon, but unfortunately cannot be fully answered. In many ways, it can be seen that the present study's conceptual findings and conclusions derive from, and lend support to, well established sociological concepts. For example, it could be argued that this study's highlighting of structures of authority and responsibility as limitations on broadening participation in decision-making might easily have been achieved on a theoretical plane without investing large amounts of time and energy in a case study. Yet, at the same time, it seems unlikely that the total set of ideas coming out of this study could have been reached without
the case as a stimulus. Moreover, the case data provided empirical grounds for the conclusions advanced. Had the case study not been undertaken, there would be the converse nagging question: Are the phenomena of interest to me within this topic really described by my concepts? As it stands, this study has certainly striven to obviate that question.

Assuming, then, that the case study approach was warranted, it is appropriate to evaluate this work as a case study. The present study, as indicated by the introduction and the organization of the text, had essentially three phases: (a) the definition of the topic and formulation of initial conceptual frameworks from study of existing educational literature; (b) the collection and presentation of data in the form of a detailed case history; (c) the analysis of the data in order to apply the initial concepts and to evaluate the concepts themselves. In its broadest outlines, the study followed basic accepted principles of empirical research in general and case study research in particular. However, another one of those nagging unresolvable doubts haunts me with reference to the extent of conceptual testing and refinement in this study. Would it have been more productive to engage in more than one cycle of concept formation, data collection, and concept evaluation? It could be argued that a narrower, more focused definition of the topic would have enabled me to refine
and develop much further one of the concepts with which the study was grappling. Yet I found compelling the apparent interrelatedness of several problems under the heading of "PSLPD." In order to address the topic as a whole, it seemed necessary to gather and consider a wide set of information about the case over a period of time, without permitting the initial conceptual frameworks to restrict my view. The resulting concept of school development, although tentative and unrefined, seems to provide some vindication of my procedure.

Finally, there are methodological problems concerning specific techniques I used in the collection and analysis of data. In the data collection phase, I assumed that it was possible to obtain a sufficiently accurate picture of events by making notes on paper of my own perceptions, then comparing those records against each other and against available documents. Here it can be argued that the picture thus created may be very biased and subjective. That limitation must be acknowledged. Yet for the exploratory purposes of this study the problem does not seem critical.

The techniques used in developing concepts in the last phase of the study are difficult to analyze or explain. From where do ideas come? It can be said that the evaluation of the initial conceptual frameworks proceeded fairly straightforwardly by considering the extent to which the data did and did not support these concepts, but the invention of alternative concepts seems to be a creative act of the mind.

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