A CASE STUDY OF A SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT'S DECISION
MAKING IN INITIATING YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION
IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN TEXAS

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
University of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Ellyn Eckert Mefford, B.A., M.Ed.
Denton, Texas
August, 1994
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Using a case study approach, this investigation focused on the decision-making processes and leadership of a school district superintendent as he initiated and implemented the school restructuring effort of year-round education. The study was conducted during 1 school year period but was enhanced through a 3 year follow-up report. The research questions focused on the superintendent’s decision-making processes and the impact that groups had on those processes. Questions also emerged during the data collection phase of the study about the superintendent’s change-facilitation leadership behaviors.

A Texas school superintendent committed to the implementation of year-round education was selected as the subject of this study. Data were collected for 1 school year by the participant observer who served as an unpaid intern to the superintendent. Data included field notes recorded during the day-to-day operations and interactions of the district, meetings which the superintendent attended,
newspaper articles, district memoranda and documents, observation, and interviews. Field notes and interviews were triangulated with document analysis to identify patterns in the data and to identify the factors influencing the decision-making processes and the leadership behaviors of the superintendent.

The findings suggest that the superintendent did not modify his decision-making processes significantly during the study. He did, however, modify the goal upon which his decisions were based thereby changing the outcome of a decision and, in some cases, his relationship with district groups, particularly the board. Other findings implied the importance of trust between policy makers and innovators, the unintended consequences of participatory leadership, and the necessity that a major organizational change should solve more problems than it creates. Further research topics in the areas of the superintendent leadership style(s) conducive to promoting organizational change, the relationship between organizational change and superintendent tenure, and the impact of bond election failures on superintendent and board interaction and confidence were suggested.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the day-to-day operation of public school districts, most decisions made for continued, successful operation of the district as a whole are made by the superintendent or his or her administrative staff. These individuals rarely make decisions in isolation, but have fairly well-established processes for facilitating the transition from problem to solution. However, when major changes are proposed, decision making processes of the organization often are affected, as is the role of the superintendent as primary decision maker.

Bacharach (1981) discussed the central dilemma facing school district administrators. The dilemma exists because of the need to "satisfy the political imperative inherent in the notion of the school as a local democracy, while not compromising the administrative imperative of effectiveness and efficiency" (p. 3). To succeed, administrators must attend to, and adapt to, external pressures while maintaining the internal control necessary for reaching effective decisions.
Although significant research is available on school principals as agents of change, little is known about how superintendents' facilitation of organizational decision making can provide the impetus for a radical departure from the status quo. When a district moves too rapidly away from the traditional into the unknown of change, political pressures are exerted to thwart or accelerate the efforts (DeYoung, 1986). At this point there may be no best decision, but instead a best-bet decision in response to the political climate (Michaelsen, 1981; Murray, 1986). These local political influences are often complicated by state or federal legislation that removes some of the solution options from local decision makers.

The 70th Legislature (Summer, 1984) of the State of Texas, with its massive school reform legislation, forever changed the way in which public schools in Texas would operate. Not only did it impact the fiscal and educational requirements and accountability of educational institutions, but it made it more difficult for superintendents to meet the imperatives of both democracy and efficiency. No longer did local districts have as much control over curriculum, evaluation, staff development, and special program decisions. They did, however, have to implement at a local level increased requirements without commensurate state funding. As a result, many district leaders found
themselves increasing local taxes to pay for state-mandated programs with which they did not always agree.

This increased tax burden has caused a ground swell of tax limitation efforts at the local level similar to California's Proposition 13. Texas school districts are permitted to increase local taxes up to 8% each year without being subject to public approval. Districts that exceed the 8% increase are eligible for rollback election if 10% of the registered voters petition for it. In the 1989-1990 school year alone, 32 of 57 rollback election efforts passed (M. Estes, personal communication, September 30, 1991) and 15 of 45 bond issue election efforts failed (Burger, 1991) in the State of Texas. School districts are finding it increasingly difficult to provide the same level of education for the same dollar amount. Tax limitation efforts directly or indirectly effect decision making in the district.

California schools felt the fiscal belt-tightening of Proposition 13 in 1972. Since then districts in California and other western states have found a variety of ways to restructure their schools in an effort to be more fiscally responsive to the constituency. As a legacy, several of these restructuring efforts such as year-round, multitrack schedules are still operating today. Although there is much documentation and research on the impact of these major
change efforts, little research is available on the decision
making processes involved in adopting them.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine what
decision-making processes superintendents use to institute
major educational and organizational change (year-round
education) and to explain how both formal (e.g., district
leadership and school board sanctioned committees) and
informal groups affect these processes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to add to the knowledge
base on superintendent decision making, to provide
information on the role of a superintendent as a change
facilitator, and to expand the understanding of district
leaders interested in school restructuring.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this
study:

1. What decision making processes are employed by the
   superintendent to institute a major educational and
   organizational change in the operation of a school district?

2. How do internal and external groups shape the
decision making processes employed by the superintendent?
3. How does site based management impact the decision making processes employed by the superintendent?

4. How is the superintendent/school board decision making process impacted by the introduction of a major educational and/or organizational change?

Definition of Terms

Bond election.—Texas schools fund large capital expenditures and building programs through the issue of bonds. Similar to municipal bonds in function, school district bonds have first call on tax generated money and are therefore approved through public referendum.

Case study.—A case study is a method of conducting social science research that is the preferred strategy when how or why questions are being posed (Yin, 1989).

Decisions.—Decisions are all judgments that affect a course of action (Bacharach, 1981).

Decision-making process.—The decision-making process involves not only the decision but also the acts necessary to come to the decision and to put it into operation (Duke, Showers, & Imber, 1981).

Ethnography.—Ethnography uses research techniques of participant observation, interviews, and document analysis to study human behavior. The objective is to provide rich,
descriptive data about the contexts, beliefs, and activities of participants in educational settings (Merriam, 1988).

**House Bill 72.**—This reform legislation was passed by the 70th Legislature of the State of Texas during summer of 1984.

**Planned organizational change.**—Planned organizational change encompasses several levels of intentional efforts to modify some aspect of an educational organization or the practice of schooling (Firestone & Corbett, 1988). Both reform (changing the operations of the organization) and restructuring (changing the actual structure of the organization) are commonly used to describe this intentional effort.

**Year-round education.**—Year round education is a planned organizational change that restructures the school year by spreading the traditional 3-month summer vacation throughout the year so that students attend school with short, intermittent breaks. Year-round education does not increase the number of days students attend school.

**Limitations**

This case study was intended to provide a detailed description of the decision-making processes employed by the superintendent of a Texas school district and was therefore limited in scope by the laws, policies and practices that
govern Texas schools. Furthermore, in naturalistic studies certain subject and researcher bias may be present. Conclusions should be treated as tentative hypotheses and used only to add to the knowledge base. Further researcher bias may be present because of the time spent in the district in a quasi-leadership role and because of the relationships built with the superintendent, staff, and, to some extent, the school board. Because the research occurred after the district began its study of year-round education and concluded before the full-blown implementation, some key events and decisions relating to implementation took place outside the formal data collection. Therefore, information could be subject to inaccuracies and selectivity of recall.

A variety of data collection techniques were used to minimize the particular limitations. Techniques used in this descriptive study included analysis of written documents such as memos, meeting agenda, and reports; verbatim scripts of formal and informal conversations; and descriptive field notes. Whenever possible, conclusions were verified with key individuals or through triangulating the data using a variety of resources.

Because this study was descriptive, its primary objectives were to add to the knowledge base and to generate an understanding of the decision-making and change-
facilitating processes used to initiate organizational change. This study should not be considered exhaustive or definitive, nor are its results intended to provide a model for superintendents' decision-making.

Background and Significance of the Study

In recent years, emphasis has been placed on the quality of education provided to children in the United States. Educators and legislators have been challenged to provide a cost efficient institution that maximizes the use of facilities and tax dollars while improving the learning that was a product of the schools. Adding to the pressures of school finance, studies such as A Nation At Risk have consistently recommended extending, rethinking, and restructuring the school.

School Funding Issues

As a result of the Supreme Court decision in San Antonio ISD v. Rodriguez (1973), the Texas Legislature has tried several times in the last 20 years to reform its school finance system to simultaneously make it constitutional (providing equity to taxpayer and child) and affordable. As in many states, Texas uses local property taxes to fund the educational programs of its more than 1,000 school districts. Unlike many states, Texas does not have a personal income tax and uses state sales taxes to
underwrite the cost of education from the state level. The state redesigned its funding formula in the 1987, 1989, and 1991 legislative sessions in response to litigation brought by several property-poor school districts whose students were underfunded and whose taxpayers were overtaxed in relationship to students and taxpayers in property-wealthy districts.

As a result of the restructuring of the funding formulas, many growing Texas school districts have looked for ways to accommodate increasing student populations while trying to hold increases in taxes to a minimum. This study was conducted as the legislature was trying to create a funding plan that would meet the test of the court, decrease the percentage of state support to most districts, and maintain local control for the district.

Support for School Restructuring

In 1990, a new commissioner of education led the state education agency and opened the doors to local school restructuring initiatives. As the hand-picked agent of the governor, the commissioner felt the political pressure and hopeful expectation that he could and would change the paradigm of schooling in Texas. He reorganized the state education agency. A key element of the new organization was a waiver request process that would allow school districts or campuses to request relief from constraining policies
that they believed inhibited their success with students. School year restructuring, including year-round education, was at the top of the list of strongly supported waived areas.

To support school restructuring efforts, the 1989 legislature appropriated several million dollars to be awarded on a competitive basis to campuses as restructuring grants. The proposal process included an opportunity to request waivers to accomplish the proposed change. In addition to this discretionary money, state dollars were allocated in 1991 to reimburse any district with campuses on year-round schedules. The money was divided equitably among the districts participating in school calendar restructuring. This financial support helped school districts look more objectively at year-round education and other restructuring initiatives.

Significance

At the time this study of year-round education began, only one school district in the state had initiated and maintained a year-round schedule and the new schedule only affected a portion of the students. Other districts in the state had tried year-round education but had not maintained it over an extended period of time. However, as I began my study of year-round education in one school district, other
school districts in Texas began to investigate the advantages of year-round education as a viable alternative. Understanding the dynamics necessary to make year-round education a success in Texas seemed an important contribution to other districts interested in a similar change effort.

In addition, other initiatives such as site-based decision making and its companion piece, participatory management, were receiving attention at the state and local level. Educational leaders would need a comprehensive understanding of how these reforms coincided with proposed school restructuring such as year-round education. Would these innovations need separate or coincident implementation?

Although Fullan and Miles (1992) provided the recipe for successful change in school organizations, only in-depth studies will provide the opportunity to trace these principles in action, interacting with the everyday decision-making processes of a superintendent, district administrators, and board of trustees.

Finally, this study adds to the understanding of one dynamic relationship of a superintendent and his or her board of trustees. What factors, internal or external, impact the confidence and trust needed for governing and administering a growing school district? Is a
superintendent’s role as change agent appropriate and recognized as important by the board of trustees?
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

"An investigator who ignores prior research and theory chances pursuing a trivial problem, duplicating a study already done, or repeating others' mistakes" (Merriam, 1988, p. 61). Four lines of investigation were used to guide this review of related literature in an effort to illuminate theories that bear on the problem under study. This synthesis includes sections on decision-making theory, particularly as it relates to education; planned organizational change and the change process; superintendent leadership; and year-round education.

Decision-Making Theories

A decision is a judgment that affects a course of action. Individuals make decisions but, because there is an ultimate impact on other humans, there is almost always a compromise among the participants. Moody (1983) stated "a decision is rarely a choice between right and wrong but instead a choice between 'almost right' and 'almost wrong'" (p. 7). Because problems are different, educational
organizations use different decision-making processes under different conditions.

Five components frequently are identified as inherent in the decision making process: identification of the problem, determining guidelines, gathering information, designing choices, and making a choice (Duke, Showers, & Imber, 1981). The decision-making process, then, includes the decision as well as the actions required to put the decision into operation.

In her discussion of decision making in education, Estler (1988) identified four broad perspectives of decision making theory which have been cumulatively built from the turn of the century to the present: rational-bureaucratic, participatory, political, and organized anarchy. Rather than displacing the preceding theory, new models have integrated aspects of the earlier version and have, thereby, provided fuller more complete explanations of the complexities of decision making. Some of the more significant shifts in this evolution include a move away from prescriptive formulas, a better understanding of the role of goals in decision making, and a fuller view of the decision maker (Estler, 1988).

Each day, school board members, school administrators, and teachers make decisions that directly and indirectly impact a broad spectrum of participants--students, parents,
community members, employers—in the school organization. The decision-making process chosen depends upon the problem situation as well as the conditions under which the decision will be made. The emphasis is not on which model is right but on how each can contribute to the decision-making process (Allison, 1971).

Rational-Bureaucratic Decision-Making Model

The rational-bureaucratic decision making theory grew out of Weber's theory of bureaucracy (Berman, 1981). By definition, rational decision making relies on choosing among alternatives that flow from agreed upon goals and objectives. It is assumed that the organization has decided what the goal is and who has the right and responsibility to make the decision. In the rational model, individual values and perspectives are set aside for goals of the organization.

To use the rational model of decision making effectively, an organization must be a tightly-coupled and goal-oriented closed system. Ideally, both man and organization are rational, with the decision maker acting in a logical and methodical way (Alexis & Wilson, 1967). Structured decision-making models focus on clear beginnings and explicitly clear endings (Murray, 1986) that place "great emphasis on the linkages between decision, action, and influence" (Pinfield, 1986, p. 386).
To evaluate a decision made through the rational approach the appropriate means-to-ends connections must be clear (Murray, 1986). Estler (1988) described the optimum means-to-ends path. "The steps include the specification of goals and objectives with a ranking based on organizational values (preferences), identification of alternatives, evaluation of the consequences of alternatives, and choice based on goal optimization" (Estler, 1988, p. 308).

While it remains the normative model for how decisions should be made, the rational-bureaucratic model has weaknesses (Gorton, 1987). Chief among the problems are multiple and ambiguous goals that provide mixed messages about the preferences of the organization; human attitudes of participants where there may exist confusion about who should participate, how much, and when; and scarce or inaccessible information (Cohen & March, 1974). Estler (1988) contended, however, that the rational-bureaucratic model has served an important function in the field of education. She maintained that the image of scientific management with its incumbent hierarchical structure has helped legitimize the educational enterprise to the outside world. In essence, by supporting the trappings of rationality, school systems have operated with the blessing of an environment that values order and rational thinking.
Participatory Decision Making Model

Participatory decision making as a model has little conclusive research to recommend it (Estler, 1988). It is considered here for two reasons. First, it seems to provide an important evolutionary link between the rational and nonrational models of decision making. Second, in recent literature and legislation regarding school reform, emphasis has been placed on the so-called participatory decision making process.

Estler (1988) proposed that this model came into prominence during the 1960s and 1970s as the unionization movement began to impact schools. The need for this alternative model is a result of the tension between professional values and ideologies as might be found as a part of school decision making as opposed to the relatively value-free orientation of rational decision making. These subjective factors (values) may have a profound impact on how decisions are made as well as what decisions are made (Beyer, 1981).

Participatory decision making relies heavily upon the idea of consensus among relevant participants as well as the preconditions of shared goals or values, of professional expertise, and of the reasonableness of participants. This model still treats the organization as a closed system and, like the rational model, a goal optimizing one. However,
the emphasis is more on the human processes used to reach those goals and less on the structure used to reach them (Estler, 1988). The benefits of the participatory model may come less from the actual decision outcomes than from the indirect effects, such as morale and satisfaction (Duke et al., 1981).

"As a model to explain decision-making processes in organizations, the participatory model . . . does not deal with external influences or aspects of structure and bureaucratic authority that affect the reality of most educational decision problems" (Estler, 1988, p. 309). The political (or social) decision making model opens the system to the environment.

**Political Decision Making Model**

Both the rational and participatory decision making models assume that the organization is a closed system. Often, however, outside interests influence the decisions made within the school setting. The effect of external forces of legitimate interest and power cause the public, nonprofit organization to use a political (or social) decision making model (Estler, 1988; Michaelsen, 1981).

The political model retains aspects of the rational model in that it assumes that participants are goal driven and intentional about their decision-making processes.
However, instead of a single organizational goal, there are multiple goals with multiple interests. If consensus is an outcome of the participatory model, compromise is required for the political model. Because there are finite resources, differing levels of formal and informal power, and multiple interests, bargaining is the basic process of producing decisions (Estler, 1988). Michaelsen (1981) observed that often, in an effort to survive in the political model, district decision makers do not maximize the quality of the district’s activities, but instead maximize the perceived quality. This approach allows for intraorganizational goal attainment while satisfying the district’s owners.

The political model gives a clear understanding of decision-making processes when there are competing interests. It assumes the opportunity for bargaining among groups to maximize their separate goals.

Non-Rational Decision Making Models

"The fact that a decisional approach is not orderly does not necessarily mean it is chaotic" (Murray, 1986, p. 32). Nonrational is not the same as irrational. Cohen, March, and Olsen (1972) identified the organized anarchy as a type of organization characterized by ill-defined preferences (goals), unclear technology, and fluid
participation. These characteristics are particularly
costigious in educational organizations. The decisions
made in an organized anarchy depend on the specific mix of
problems, solutions and participants rather than on the
rightness of one solution over another. There is order in
the process, but not conventional order.

While rational decision making models assume a
well-defined organizational structure of roles and
responsibilities, the nonrational model exists most
frequently in loosely coupled systems. Weick (1983)
described loose coupling:

By loose coupling, the author intends to convey the
image that coupled events are responsive, but that each
event also preserves its own identity and some evidence
of its physical or logical separateness. . . . Loose
coupling also carries connotations of impermanence,
dissolvability, and tacitness, all of which are
potentially crucial properties of the "glue" that holds
the organizations together. (p. 18)

This loose coupling affects the attention patterns
within the organization, because not everyone is attending
to everything all of the time (Cohen et al., 1972). An
example of loose coupling in education is the link between
the principal’s office and the counselor’s office. Although
there are times when the coupling might be tight, most of
the time students come and go and programs are planned and
executed without tight lines of communication or interaction
between the two offices. High schools, because of their
departmentalization, have more diverse goals and are more loosely coupled than are elementary schools (Estler, 1988).

Cohen et al. (1972) described how choices (decisions) are made in organized anarchies and loosely coupled systems. Their garbage-can model of decision making provides both a way to understand the decision outcomes and a way to discover the goals of the organization. They conceive of choice as the outcome of a simultaneous confluence of opportunities, problems, solutions, and participants (Murray, 1986). The garbage-can model suggests order that is situational.

Thus, the nature of the choice, the time it takes, and the problems it solves all depend on the intersection of the mix of available choices, the mix of problems that have access to the organization, the mix of solutions looking for problems, and the competing demands on decision makers at a specific time. (Estler, 1988, p. 312)

Cohen et al. (1972) drew several observations about the garbage-can process:

1. Flight (moving to a more attractive choice) and oversight (choices made quickly without any attention to existing problems) are more typical decision styles than resolution.

2. The process is sensitive to variations in load. This one aspect could account for quite different decisions at different times during the school year.
3. Problems and decision makers track each other through choices.

4. The decision process is sharply interactive.

5. Important problems and early-arriving problems are more likely to be solved than unimportant or late-arriving ones.

6. Important choices are less likely to resolve problems than are unimportant choices.

7. Choices of intermediate importance are almost always made.

These conclusions about the process may provide insight into how some organizations survive when they do not know what they are doing. While the garbage-can model does not resolve problems efficiently, it does allow for choices to be made and problems to be resolved.

Managing the Change Process

Change has been an often used term in public education for the last 40 years. Current literature shows that educational researchers are still arguing about change terminology (e.g., reform versus restructure) (Deal, 1990). If change is the constant in today's education, what has been learned about how to manage that change? How does change happen?
Change is a process, not an event (Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall, 1987) with implementors moving from undifferentiated use to coping and finally to refinement and extension. This process takes time during which critics and frustration arise. Successful implementation and ultimately institutionalization appear to depend upon consistent, patient, central support (Miles, 1983). There is evidence that to institutionalize the innovation, temporary modifications must eventually be codified as rules.

Fullan (1982) identified several assumptions about change that must be recognized before adopting an innovation. Change leaders should never assume their version of change is the version because implementors must work on their own meaning. Conflict and disagreement are fundamental to the change process; therefore, change takes time. Because people need pressure to change, lack of implementation does not equal rejection of the values embodied in the change. Change is frustrating and discouraging and one should never expect universal change. Fullan's final assumptions involve planning and decision making. Change leaders need a plan that is based on the assumptions of change and addresses the factors of implementation; however, action decisions are never totally clear. They are situational and require knowledge, acceptance of political realities, and intuition.
Change, according to Fullan (1982, p. 13; 1991), can arise in three broad ways: natural disasters, external forces, or internal contradictions. Fullan posited that one can determine why educators promote a particular change by answering two questions: Who benefits? and How sound is the practice? The answers help determine whether this is a symbolic change (revolving around political or personal reasons) or real change which involves loss, anxiety, and struggle (Fullan, 1993; Fullan & Miles, 1992). Successful implementation depends upon the characteristics of the change itself, the characteristics of the school district, and the characteristics of the external environment. "The more factors supporting implementation, the more change in practice will be accomplished" (Fullan, 1982, p. 56).

Fullan (1982) identified the following 12 factors that must work together as a system to increase the likelihood of successful implementation:

1. formal recognition in the organization of an unmet need,

2. a clarity about goals (what is to be done) and means (how it will be accomplished),

3. an understanding of the complexity of the change—its difficulty and extent, and

4. an appreciation for the quality and practicality of the innovation.
In addition, the district must have

5. a history of successful innovative attempts so that positive experiences precede this effort,
6. an adoption process in place,
7. administrative support including the superintendent,
8. a plan for promoting participation in decision making and a process for resocializing the participants to a new way of doing things,
9. a time-line and evaluation process, and
10. a politically stable relationship between administration, board, and community.

Finally, there must be

11. neutral or positive support (e.g., accommodating policies) of governmental agencies and the legislature, and
12. external assistance in the form of dollars and technical assistance.

Fullan (1982) concluded that "The odds against successful planned educational change are not small" (p. 80).

Planned organizational change does not just happen. Three dynamics that impact the change process were identified by House (1981): the technological, political, and cultural perspectives. The technological perspective suggests that change is implemented as a very rational task which assumes that any barriers can be anticipated and
managed (Firestone & Corbett, 1988). However, change is often less than rational, and the purpose becomes obvious only when a change of action clarifies the potential benefits (Weick, 1983). "The technological perspective often fails to capture many complexities of implementation" (Firestone & Corbett, 1988, p. 324). Fullan (1982) elaborated:

Change is full of paradoxes. Being deeply committed to a particular change in itself provides no guidelines for attaining it, and may blind us to the realities of others which would be necessary for transforming and implementing the change effectively. (p. 88)

The second perspective—political—identifies the special interest, power, and authority relationships involved in the change effort. This political pressure causes much more uncertainty than in the technological perspective, but also provides more incentives for career advancement through innovation (House, 1981). However, political implementation often causes only superficial change because there are often few incentives to cause teachers to implement the innovation (Firestone & Corbett, 1988).

Since the late 1970s, the cultural perspective has received the most attention. Innovations are accepted if the culture's (long-standing values of the organization) evaluation standards can be met (Firestone & Corbett, 1988). Implementation through the cultural perspective is basically
an optimistic approach. Certain cultural features of an organization promote or tolerate innovation: certain leadership tasks, participation in decision making, and the local setting in which the change is initiated (Firestone & Corbett, 1988).

Most research points to the principal's role as one that is critical in the implementation of innovations (Deal & Peterson, 1990). However, Rosenblum and Louis (1981), and more recently Hord (1990a), identified the critical role that the superintendent plays in successful implementation. Particularly important leadership tasks are providing adequate resources, encouraging the implementor, and providing necessary structure (internal and external). Leaders make sure that sufficient time, help, and facilities are readily available for a smooth transition from old to new. The leader must also be willing to run interference and cheerlead. Finally, because change causes dissonance, the leader must be willing to adapt policy, procedure, and practice to accommodate the innovation (Miles, 1983).

"Leadership can be defined as providing vision, direction, and support toward a different and preferred state. . . . It could be said that leaders are change-makers" (Hord, 1991, p. 2). In an integration of literature from several case studies about change leaders, Hord (1991) identified five sets of action that promote
effective change implementation even though they do not assure it. First, change leaders must be able to consistently articulate the vision so that it is well understood by others. In addition, the change leader must share influence, authority, responsibility, and accountability with others (staff, community, parents) in creating the vision so that shared ownership occurs. Second, these leaders must plan and provide resources to facilitate implementation. Their planning must be evolutionary, flexible so as to be responsive to what works and what does not work, particularly as it relates to the vision. Third, change leaders must provide the training required to implement new knowledge and skills. Fourth, they must monitor the progress of implementation by "touching base," by asking for input from the implementors as well as through more formal data collection and analysis. Finally, change leaders must coordinate and orchestrate the change effort by "exhibiting enormous persistence, tenacity, and willingness to live with risks" (Hord, 1991, p. 3).

Participation in decision making augments the leadership function in promoting innovation. Critical outcomes of local participation include increased commitment to intensified risk taking, time, and effort; improved local capacity (knowledge and skills) to change behavior; and
shared control to insure appropriateness of changes to the setting (Firestone & Corbett, 1988).

Both leadership tasks and participatory decision making can be in place and the innovation still fail if the cultural setting interacts with the change in a negative way. "Setting" is contingent on the human factor and extenuating circumstances of the organizational context of the school. In addition, the cumulative residue of previous change efforts can positively or negatively impact subsequent change in the same setting. "The better the fit between a change projects' objectives and school . . . priorities, the greater the likelihood that change will result" (Firestone & Corbett, 1988, p. 334). In loosely coupled systems, individual efforts rarely spread throughout the organization. The more loosely coupled the setting, the less likely a successful implementation will result (Miles, 1983; Weick, 1983). Fullan (1993) expressed it this way, "Only when individuals take action to alter their own environments is there any chance for deep change. As more people take such action, they have greater chances of intersecting and of forming the critical mass necessary for system change" (p. 124).

Fullan and Miles (1992) also noted "that serious education reform will never be achieved until there is a significant increase in the number of people . . . who have
come to internalize and habitually act on basic knowledge of how successful change takes place" (p. 745). They cite seven basic reasons why reform efforts fail and seven propositions that contribute to success.

Reform fails, according to Fullan and Miles (1992) because the change leader has a faulty map of what change is, acts on that map, and ends up somewhere different than what was intended. Schools are very complex, and reform efforts are even more complex. In some cases, there may not be answers or may be only partial answers, which means that reform must be open-ended to meet the complexity of the problems. Too, reform initiatives often fail because they are put in place to meet a symbolic need ("see how innovative we are") rather than a substantive need. Although symbols are important, "reform often fails because politics favors symbols over substance" (Fullan & Miles, 1992, p. 747).

To be successful in reform efforts, several change "realities" must form a new map for the leader. Senge (1990) identified the importance of mental models in redesigning an organization. He proposed that visualizing the organization, its processes, and relationships as a map or model impacts not only what we see, but what we do. Most current mental models impede learning new things; thus, redesigning the mental models can accelerate learning.
Fullan (1993) proposed the constructs for the change model. First, change is learning and coming to grips with new personal meaning. The effect of this steep learning curve is so consistent that the change literature has labelled it "the implementation dip" (Fullan & Miles, 1992). Next, change is a journey, rather than blueprint; because it is evolutionary no specific plan can last. Organizations involved in change efforts must move away from the traditional plan, then do to more productive do, then plan; do, then plan some more (Peters & Waterman, 1982). "Even the development of a shared vision that is central to reform is better thought of as a journey [that is] . . . continuously shaped and reshaped" (Fullan & Miles, 1992, p. 749). Third, problems are viewed as friends and as an important part of the learning process. Finally, change is systemic because the organization being changed is a system. Touching one part of the system with a change effort will cause ripple-effect changes in other parts of the organization. Therefore, the change effort must focus on both system components and system culture (Fullan, 1993). "It is both restructuring and 'reculturing'" (Fullan & Miles, 1992, p. 752).
The Superintendent As Organizational Leader

Much of the research on the superintendency has been focused on strategies for dealing with conflict between the board and superintendent (Bowman, 1963; Crowson, 1987). Researchers have outlined the very political nature of the superintendency, where decisions are made to maintain balance of the district rather than to promote innovation or change (Blumberg, 1985). Recently, there has been renewed interest in the study of the superintendent's role in school effectiveness and as a leader of innovative changes; however, the research is not deep. DeYoung (1986) suggested that the question is not "whether school administrators will have important leadership duties in public education, but rather under what circumstances is aggressive school leadership possible?" (p. 99).

Pitner and Ogawa (1981), in their studies of the superintendent as an organizational leader, identified two important patterns--communication and influence. These two patterns, taken together, provide a picture of the superintendent as a mediator who manages the process by which shared meanings are constructed among participants in the governance and operation of the school system.

Peterson et al. (1987) found that superintendents can increase their influence on student outcomes by structuring, standardizing, and monitoring curriculum and instruction
methods and by evaluating principals, teachers, and students frequently and with specificity. These efforts apparently serve two functions. First, they tighten the linkages between the central office, the campus office, and the classroom. Second, they send a cultural message about what is important in the district (Peterson et al., 1987). The superintendent must supply the instructional vision as well as the accountability. "A new vision requires new language, at least until the old language can be unloaded of its prior meanings and recharged with new meaning" (Schlechty, 1990, p. 130).

"All superintendents . . . are involved in some manner with change. The variation comes into play in relation to how change is approached and reacted to, not whether change is considered" (Fullan, 1982, p. 162). What the superintendent does at each of the three main phases of change affects the destiny of the proposed change. During the initiation phase, the superintendent has two roles: the first is determining if the innovation potentially addresses the priority and the second is taking the change seriously. For implementation, the superintendent must address the technical knowledge requirements of the innovation, must understand the dynamics of the change process and the underlying principles of successful change implementation, and finally, must have the interpersonal skills and behavior
of an active communicator. Institutionalization support requires that the superintendent continue to pay attention to the innovation, address the issue of turnover, and incorporate the innovation into the budget of the district as a long-term commitment (Fullan, 1982).

Wallace (1985) proposed the following list of key components which help further define the superintendent as a change leader:

1. The superintendent who promotes educational reform must be data driven. He or she must seek and process a variety of educational data and determine its meaning.
2. Participatory planning is crucial to the success of any reform effort. Those most affected by the innovation should be involved in its planning.
3. Recognition and respect for contributions must be communicated to those who develop and implement programs.
4. Risk taking is essential. The superintendent must push people beyond their obvious reach.
5. Understanding the change process is important. Acknowledging and attending to phases of change will smooth the process and contribute to its success.
6. The superintendent must provide the vision of good education.
7. Follow through by the superintendent is essential. It includes comprehensive planning, careful implementation, and thorough evaluation.

8. Recognition of the key role that principals play in school improvement is vital.

9. To have time to serve as the instructional leader, routine administrative matters must be delegated.

10. The superintendent must serve as the model for instructional leadership in the district. These components identify the behaviors that vigorous leaders employ to shape their organizations.

Schlechty (1990) echoed Wallace’s (1985) points and called for participatory leadership that "invites others to share the authority of the office and expects those who accept the invitation to share the responsibility as well" (p. 129). He explained that the superintendent who can lead a school system through change must assert a desire for leadership, unfreeze the system, compose a personal version of belief, provide central support for change, and develop a plan for restructuring.

So, it is obvious that superintendents know how to manage conflict and maintain the status quo (Blumberg, 1985). And, it is apparent that superintendents can and do play an important role in creating the vision and impetus for change (Fullan, 1982; Schlechty, 1990; Wallace, 1985).
An effective chief executive must strike a balance between the two in order to function as the leader of a dynamic school organization.

Year-Round Education

Year-round education can best be described as a system that rearranges a school calendar to take advantage of the entire year. Vacation periods are usually shorter than the traditional 3-month summer. With this form of scheduling, students are divided into equal groups, with most students attending school while others are on vacation. It is a drastic change in a 100-year-old tradition based on an agrarian calendar (Ballinger, Kirschenbaum, & Poimbeauf, 1987).

Although conceived more than 20 years ago to address a shortage of school buildings and a diminishing tax base, year-round education has been expanded to accommodate educational goals as well (Brekke, 1990b). Year-round education programs extend the learning opportunities available to all students by increasing the resources available to society in three specific areas: human, physical, and fiscal (Bacharach & Conley, 1986). Indeed, in a recent Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies report, Bishop reported that longitudinal studies have revealed that the pace of learning slows considerably during the summer,
and that disadvantaged students, especially, lose ground during the summer months. Shorter vacation breaks that substitute for the traditional 3-month vacation enhance momentum and continuity of instruction as well as produce high payoffs for difficult-to-educate students (Bishop, 1989).

Proponents of year-round education use cost analyses to cite the fiscal advantage of restructuring the school year (Brekke, 1990a). When school buildings are used on a year-round basis, the data show that, at about 120% building capacity, the per student operating costs actually go down. Such items as building administration, utilities, and special services remain constant for the beyond capacity building on a year-round education multi-track schedule. Additional cost savings are cited for reduced teacher absenteeism and reduction in vandalism, burglary, and graffiti. However, the major savings realized are through phantom buildings that would be built without the year-round schedule. By using each building at 125% to 133%, the district avoids building schools because it can accommodate the same number of students in a reduced number of buildings. These unbuilt structures, ranging in cost from $5 million to $20 million, are called phantom buildings and account for most of the claim to savings from the year-round schedule.
Opponents of year-round education are not convinced that there are fiscal or educational advantages. Until recently, few replicable studies had shown significant educational improvement of test scores (Howell, 1988). Initial studies were focused on verifying that there was no disadvantage to students. Similarly, opponents criticize the identified fiscal advantages as accounting hocus-pocus (Howell, 1988).

However, in schools where year-round education has failed, evidence shows that the political controversy surrounding the change effort had more impact on the lack of success than did lack of educational or fiscal advantage. Year-round education calendar changes impact family lifestyle, summer activity traditions, athletic schedules, interdistrict transfers, student work schedules, and promote administrator burnout (Brekke, 1990b). Without proper accommodations for these concerns, year-round education programs have failed.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Procedures

A case study approach (Wolcott, 1988; Yin, 1989) using qualitative data collection and analysis procedures was chosen for this study of a superintendent’s leadership and culture-shaping processes in initiating a significant organizational change. The actions taken by a superintendent to ready a district for major organizational restructuring as well as his efforts to build on the leadership foundation he had prepared were examined. The interactions of the school board, administrative team, and community with the superintendent in accepting and embracing the new structure were also studied. One goal of this study was to describe in narrative form a superintendent’s behaviors and decisions that might support initiating a change of this magnitude. The second goal was to analyze the data to determine implications for future research.

The intent for this research was to increase understanding of the role chief executives, in this case superintendents, play in promoting and sustaining organizational change. Miles and Huberman (1984) suggested
that "qualitative data are more likely to lead to serendipitous findings and to new theoretical integrations; they help researchers go beyond initial preconceptions and frameworks" (p. 15). Case studies can add to the base of understanding and shared experiences because they lead to the identification of similar occurrences, processes, and perceptions. Miles and Huberman (1984) proposed a certain undeniability of case study research because of its focus on a process rather than an outcome or product.

The ethnographic approach used in this case study provided detailed information about factors such as relationships between the superintendent and other key players, influences of the external and internal environments, and the subtleties of leadership and communication on decision-making processes. Qualitative research tools used to gather data included observations of the school board and community and staff meetings, collection of documents, field notes and extensive interviews with the superintendent and other key players. The data were triangulated both during the study and during the analysis phase to increase the internal validity of the qualitative research findings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Descriptive methods were used to collect the primary data. These data included verbatim transcriptions of interviews, meetings and documents generated prior to the formal
year-long study, during the study, and following the study. Consistent patterns of behavior were looked for at different points in the chronology as well as at different levels of interaction.

As suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984), I did operate under some broad conceptual frameworks for collection and categorization of the data. These frameworks included those of decision-making, leadership, and change facilitation and helped form boundaries for data organization. However, because such broad-based access was provided to the inner workings of the setting, it was most appropriate to capture thick data about the dynamics of events, what individuals said, what they perceived to be facts, and how decisions were translated into actions, prior to reducing the data into one of the frameworks to reduce the effect of bias.

The purpose of this research design was to allow me to immerse myself in the school district setting, to become a trusted confidant of the superintendent and other key players, and to become acquainted with the dynamics of the day-to-day operations of the district and its participants. In the process, it was possible to collect pure descriptions of participants, their activities, and interactions among them. Direct quotations became a critical part of the data base. In a case study, a researcher’s task is to develop a
deep understanding of the actions and interactions rather than to make judgments about the process. Because the naturalistic setting was entered with only the broadest constructs for investigation, the bias of preconceived mind-sets was minimized. The qualitative investigation encouraged the case study to structure the research as it unfolded.

Subjects

The subject for this case study was the superintendent of Anderson Independent School District (ISD), a medium-sized suburban school district in Texas. The superintendent was in his early 50s, had served as superintendent in a school district similar in size to Anderson, and had experience as a central and campus administrator in both large and small districts. In 1990-1991 he was in the 5th year of his superintendency in Anderson and was proposing a major organizational restructuring effort for his district. Anderson ISD was a rapidly growing school district of 5,300 students, with an accelerating tax rate and a declining tax base which placed the district in a financial crisis. The district’s student population was relatively homogeneous, and the community was made up of middle-class or upper-middle-class Anglo families. The superintendent believed he had a viable
solution—year-round education—to the stressed tax situation in the district.

The district and its superintendent were chosen for this study for several reasons. First, the district had made an extensive study of year-round education and was seriously considering fairly widespread implementation of this major organizational change. Second, the superintendent was well-known among his peers as an advocate of participatory decision making and was a proponent of site-based management/decision making. Third, results of this study should have implications for other suburban districts that are considering a similar innovation.

Data Collection

Data for this study were collected as I served for a full school year as a participant observer in the school district. I served two roles during the study: the first as intern to the superintendent of schools and the second as observer of the district’s processes, particularly as they related to the initiation and implementation of year-round education.

Methods used for collecting data included scripted interviews using focused and in-depth questions; scripted conversations (including monologues) with district staff, community, and board; written field notes, observations, and
an extensive collection of documents including memos and newspaper articles (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The variety and depth of the data made it possible to draw and verify conclusions through the support of triangulation (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Data were collected over a 10-month period from August 1990 and May 1991.

Initial contact was made with the superintendent 2 years prior to the study as a student investigating the structure of board meetings. I became aware of Anderson ISD’s study of and intent to implement year-round education as a cost saving strategy from a doctoral student-classmate in the spring of 1990. The classmate was an employee of Anderson ISD and a member of the district’s Growth Management Committee which was studying the possibility of year-round education. Informal data collection began at this point with a call to the district to request informational literature and another call to initiate newspaper service that would provide a source of information.

When the superintendent began to promote the use of year-round education as a solution to the district’s growth and financial situation, a formal written request was made to serve as an unpaid intern to the superintendent and to study the change process he was proposing for the district.
The superintendent supported the proposal, and the school board accepted the situation without reservation.

Because of the amount of time available to the study, a formal interview protocol was not developed. Instead, every formally scheduled meeting involving the superintendent was attended. This included all open-session board meetings, leadership team meetings, parent and community advisory group meetings, and district communication meetings. The superintendent attended an average of four meetings a week, with the maximum number of weekly formal meetings escalating to seven. I was invited to observe and take notes at most spontaneous or informal meetings. This access was possible because I was serving a two-semester, unpaid internship in the district. In exchange for office space in the administrative building provided by the district, tasks assigned by the superintendent were accomplished to fulfill internship requirements.

I was afforded virtually unlimited access to the superintendent to discuss his thinking about a particular issue or interaction that was raised at any meeting. Typically these interviews allowed for probing questions about decisions, leadership philosophy, and interpersonal relationships between the superintendent and other key players. Because of his open acceptance, other members of the school district and community ultimately were open and
spontaneous and allowed a free-flowing exchange of ideas without need for formal interview documents. However, all interactions pertaining to the study were captured in field notes.

The written field notes included descriptions of the school district, the participants in the operation and decision-making of the district, and my perceptions and impressions of both. As the study progressed, the field notes included questions and lines of inquiry to be pursued further.

Document analysis was focused on local newspaper coverage; school district-generated materials such as budgets, annual performance reports, superintendent's reports, information pamphlets, meeting handouts, board agendas, and organizational charts; and superintendent documents such as presentation materials, memorandum, and notes to the board. The document search spanned a period of 2½ years so that pre- and post-study processes could be analyzed and used to help in triangulation of the analysis of data.

Data Analysis
In a case study, data are collected in the form of words rather than statistics or numbers. This means that the essence of interviews, observations, and extracts from
documents must be processed in some way to reveal their meaning. Miles and Huberman (1984) focused on three stages of analysis that are completed before, during, and after formal data collection.

Data reduction refers to the process of extracting the essentials from raw data and transforming them into representative patterns of information upon which conclusions can be drawn and verified. Typical activities of data reduction include coding, summarizing, and clustering chunks of data into meaningful trends and patterns. The second stage, data display, is designed to organize bits of information into matrices, graphs and charts that display the relationships between and among seemingly unrelated events or interactions. The key to effective data display is the accessibility of the information. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification describe the meaning to be drawn from data collected.

Using an interactive procedure, the data were reduced by reading and rereading transcriptions, documents, and field notes to discover patterns. Some of the patterns had been suggested in the research questions proposed for this study; others emerged or became more important as the data were continuously reviewed and reduced into meaningful units. For example, although this study began with the foundation theories of decision-making processes as a major
area of study, it became obvious during the final stages of data reduction that the theories of change facilitation were important to review as well.

Based on emerging patterns, a categorical coding system was designed.

Codes are categories; usually derived from research questions, key concepts, or important themes. They are retrieval and organizing devices that allow the analyst to spot quickly, pull out, and then cluster all the segments relating to a particular question, hypothesis, concept or theme." (Miles & Huberman 1984, p. 56)

Six major coding categories emerged: decision-making process, leadership style, change facilitation behaviors, communication patterns, perceptions, and external factors. These categories were further subdivided into more specific categories that supported details of the data. For instance, because change facilitation behaviors of the superintendent were different before and after the bond election, codes were defined for change facilitation before bond and change facilitation after bond to help sharpen and focus the data.

Data reduction continued throughout the project but at some point data display became the focus of my efforts. The narrative text comprised the greatest portion of data display, as is common in qualitative research. However, graphic displays were designed whenever possible to support
the analysis of data. An example is the chronology chart prepared to guide the reader throughout the narrative.

Finally, conclusions which had emerged from the data were drawn and verified. Miles and Huberman (1984) proposed 12 tactics for generating meaning in a credible way. These tactics follow a path generally from more concrete to more conceptual: counting, noting patterns/themes, seeing plausibility, clustering, making metaphors, splitting variables, subsuming particulars into the general, factoring, noting relations between variables, finding intervening variables, logical chain of evidence, and making conceptual/theoretical coherence. These 12 tactics were used throughout the analysis of the data. Examples included the identification of the pattern that the superintendent used two-word phrases to capture and transmit meaning; the clustering of information about behaviors based on before and after bond election failure; the framing of behaviors metaphorically (well-informed disciples); and the building of a chain of evidence that the financial situation of the district forced consideration of organizational change.

The accuracy of the analysis was verified by inviting a district staff member to review and comment on a first draft of the synthesized data. Her perspective provided yet another point on which to triangulate the data and to address issues of validity and reliability.
Analytic induction builds upon the patterns and themes which arise out of the data. This process of enticing the elements to emerge from the data required a survey of the data until the categories of occurrences and relationships among the categories were clearly defined.

Summary

In this case study qualitative data collection and analysis procedures were used to describe a school superintendent's decision-making and leadership patterns. The case study approach was used to explain and describe the causal links between real-life interactions that are too complex for survey or experimental strategies.

Data were collected while serving for full school year as a participant observer in the school district. A triangulated data collection process involving observations, interviews, and document analysis was used to construct the data base. From these data were drawn suggestions and insights for future research in the area of the superintendent's role in significant organizational change processes.
CHAPTER 4

NARRATIVE OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine a superintendent's leadership and culture-shaping processes in initiating a significant organizational change. For purposes of anonymity, the school district which served as the case study site is identified as the Anderson School District and the superintendent is referred to as Superintendent Brown. The district was located within a 40-mile radius of a major metropolitan area in North Texas.

This chapter contains a case narrative of a superintendent as he attempts to create a culture for change within the school district. The case is divided into four sections: setting; leadership and culture-shaping processes; adopting and implementing the change; and consequences of culture-shaping. The section describing the setting details general characteristics of the district, its organizational structure, the district's property tax situation, the state's unconstitutional system of school finance, and the media coverage afforded the district. The section on leadership processes describes both the leadership style and vision of the superintendent as well as
the specific efforts he made to shape a district culture that was accepting of change processes as they related to implementing year-round education. The themes of teamship and communication are elaborated. In the section on adopting and implementing, the following turning points in the implementation of year-round education are discussed: acceptance of year-round education as a concept, failure of the bond election, superintendent and board relations, planning for year-round education, budget constraints, and post-study realities. Finally, the section on consequences includes a description of the impact a change in organizational culture can have for a school district and for its superintendent.

The chronology provided in Table 1 is designed to help the reader organize the narrative with respect to key events that took place in the study time period. An overview of the pattern of meetings which took place on a monthly cycle throughout the study is presented in Table 2.

The Setting

Anderson Independent School District (ISD) had a student population of 5,298 in 1990-1991. Most students were from middle-class to upper-middle-class families, 70% of which were two-income households. The district’s student
Table 1

Chronology of Major Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 1990 . .</td>
<td>Superintendent holds first of three town-hall meetings to discuss the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>district budget with the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1990 . .</td>
<td>Thirty-five member growth management committee is established to study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ways of dealing with district student population growth and its impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on the budget. Year-round education is an option.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February-May 1990 . .</td>
<td>Community and school district personnel make site-visits to schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that have implemented year-round education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1990 . .</td>
<td>Growth management committee completes its study and formulates its</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>recommendation. Superintendent gives the school board a preview of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the recommendation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1990 . .</td>
<td>School board adopts growth management committee’s recommendation to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>phase-in year-round education and to call for a bond election to build</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a new middle school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September-October 1990 .</td>
<td>District takes a low profile in promoting the $13 million bond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>election.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1990 . .</td>
<td>Bond election fails by a ratio of 3 to 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1990 . .</td>
<td>District begins to plan in earnest for phase-in of year-round education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in fall 1991.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November-January 1991</td>
<td>Superintendent and board relations deteriorate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1991</td>
<td>School board adopts two school calendars—one traditional, one year-round.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January-May 1991</td>
<td>State funding of public schools is in question as 72nd legislature meets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1991</td>
<td>Innovative grants for funding elementary school implementation of year-round education are not approved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 25, 1991</td>
<td>A dual track year-round calendar is approved for implementation at one district elementary campus. Over 40% of the students, parents, and teachers volunteer to go onto the alternative calendar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1991</td>
<td>District gets funding relief from the state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1992</td>
<td>Four additional elementary schools implement a dual calendar. One school operates with three calendars. No cost savings are realized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1993</td>
<td>Community finally passes bond election to build a new middle school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Population was relatively homogeneous, with less than 5% from minority groups. The district was experiencing rapid growth (approximately 300 students per year) and high taxes.
Table 2

Regularly Scheduled Leadership and Community Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board of trustee meetings . . . .</td>
<td>Monthly on the third Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal involvement council . .</td>
<td>First and third Tuesday of the month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership team . . . . . . . . . . . .</td>
<td>Monthly on the third Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topical think tank . . . . . . . . . .</td>
<td>Monthly on the second Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key communicators (district personnel) . . . .</td>
<td>Monthly on the second Thursday . . . . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACE (parent advisory group) . .</td>
<td>Monthly on the second Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen's round table . . . . . . . .</td>
<td>Monthly on the second Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District operations committee . .</td>
<td>First and third Monday of the month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The focus of the district operations committee was on "big picture" coordination and long-range planning. The focus of the principal involvement council was on issues related to daily school operations. The focus of the think tanks was on discussion and planning of specific issues that were pre-announced (open to any interested persons on the leadership team). The leadership team reviewed the board agenda and discussed topics of common interest.

($1.54 per $100 valuation) relative to other districts in the region. Prior to 1990, Anderson ISD had a history of successful tax increases and bond issues to support its aggressive building program and its emphasis on quality
education. As an example of this support, all district campuses were less than 15 years old.

Anderson ISD drew its students from one large incorporated community of 20,000 and several small communities within a 15 mile radius of the district's central offices. The communities were comprised of small service-oriented businesses and bedroom subdivisions. At the time of the study, city developers estimated that the major community, Anderson, was 29% built. Statistics showed that 75% of the workers left the area for their jobs. During the time of this study an economic developer was hired jointly by the city, school district, and Chamber of Commerce to help develop the business base of Anderson.

District Organization and Management

Members of the board of trustees at the time of the study, who were primarily from the professional ranks, included a banker, two engineers, two insurance executives, an investor, and an executive secretary. All were Anglo; two were women and five were men.

The district's seven-member board of trustees had remained relatively stable, with only two new members in 4 years. The new members took over in 1988, replacing retiring board members who had served on the board while their children were in school, but chose to retire after an
average tenure of 10 years. Membership transition was relatively smooth, with those elected often running unopposed in races recording less than 500 votes. However, the retiring board president, who had served 13 years, still maintained a high profile position in the community and influenced the direction of the board through community pressure.

The board president in 1990 had served as the vice president of the board for 1 year before election to the presidency. In 1985 virtually the same board had received the state’s exemplary school board award from the state Association of School Boards. Minutes from regularly scheduled meetings showed that this board decided votes unanimously upon the recommendation of the superintendent.

In 1985, Superintendent Brown was selected by a unanimous vote of the board to serve Anderson ISD after the incumbent superintendent took a position with another school district. Superintendent Brown was in his 5th year as superintendent during the study. He enjoyed telling district constituents that, when he arrived, the district he left was the same size as Anderson. The intervening years had seen Anderson grow at a steady rate while the other district had remained the same size. Brown weathered early community criticism about student dress codes, discipline policies, and a new elementary school to achieve a level of
comfort with the community and school board by 1990-1991. The board unanimously extended his contract each year.

Anderson ISD's management structure was fairly flat and lean with only four directorships and no assistant superintendents at the central office. The superintendent established a leadership team that operated in an advisory capacity and was the conduit to the rest of the district for communication and decision action. The 30-member leadership team included directors of business, personnel, special education, and curriculum; 7 campus principals and 11 assistant principals; an athletic director; and, coordinators of community education, public information, transportation, facilities, food services, drug education, and technology. Throughout the study this group played an active part; most leadership team meetings were well attended.

Seven campuses, one central office (a renovated elementary school), and a maintenance/warehouse complex housed the district's staff and students. Five kindergarten-through-6th-grade elementary campuses fed into one 7th- and 8th-grade middle school, and ultimately into the 1,500-student 9th-through-12th-grade high school. The student capacity of each elementary campus ranged from 600 to 750. Each was managed by a principal and an assistant who had primary responsibility for curriculum and testing.
The campus administrators felt that their campuses operated under a site-based management philosophy.

In the year prior to this study, principals had created their school budgets, hired their own personnel, and established community/parent networks that focused on campus needs. While curriculum throughout the district was standardized, some differences were noticed among the elementary campuses regarding delivery of the curriculum and deployment of auxiliary staff (instructional aides, music teachers, physical education teachers, and librarians). All campuses, including the high school, had active parent/teacher organizations, and each school board member was assigned to a specific campus to attend school functions throughout the year.

**District Property Tax Situation**

Between 1986 and 1990, the district’s taxable property value had fallen by 14% and the tax rate had risen from $0.85 to $1.54 per $100 valuation. The property value loss occurred because of over-speculation in land values during a boom in the region’s economy. Anderson ISD suffered from the lack of a business base while attracting an ever-increasing suburban bedroom population. Most industry in Anderson was service oriented—primarily grocery stores, fast food stores, gas stations, and drug stores. Two light
manufacturing concerns were the district's only major tax contributors.

Because of the aggressive building program of previous years, the tax rate for 1990-1991 increased five cents to cover debt service obligations. The influx of 300 students for the 1990-1991 year increased expenditures by $1 million, and necessitated a four cent tax increase. To further complicate the decision making process, two current district buildings were expected to be over capacity and the others at capacity by fall 1992 if district growth continued at its projected rate (Table 3).

Table 3

Tax Information for Anderson Independent School District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Taxable Base</th>
<th>Tax Rate per $100</th>
<th># of Students</th>
<th>Tax Base Value/Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987-1988</td>
<td>886,950,896</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>4,320</td>
<td>205,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-1989</td>
<td>873,171,703</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>4,683</td>
<td>186,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989-1990</td>
<td>799,349,444</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>4,994</td>
<td>175,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1991</td>
<td>757,545,946</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>5,298</td>
<td>158,020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anderson ISD suffered from state legislative constraints which required a ratio of 22 students to 1 teacher for classrooms in grades kindergarten to four, a required teacher planning period during the school day, and a duty free lunch for teachers. In addition, state mandated elementary subject area curriculum and time requirements made it imperative that special teachers were hired to teach subjects such as music and physical education. To accommodate the additional 300 students each year required not only new classroom teaching staff, but support staff and classroom space to house these students. The district anticipated needing a new campus every 2 years.

State Level School Finance

In 1989, the State Supreme Court found the system of financing schools unconstitutional. The state constitution called for an equitable system of state funding for all students in all schools in the state. Because each of the 1,100 school districts in the state financed a large portion of the school budget through local property tax, the amount of funding available to educate each child varied widely from district to district. Property-poor school districts did not receive enough funding from the state to overcome the funding inequities caused by the ability of property-wealthy districts to generate greater funding with
less tax effort. At the time of this study, the 72nd legislature was required by the State Supreme Court to find a constitutional (i.e., equitable) way to fund public education in Texas. Anderson, although not an extremely property-poor district, stood to benefit from many of the proposed funding solutions. How much the district would benefit depended upon which plan was adopted. Because Anderson ISD was near the ceiling on its tax rate, the board and administration were anxious about the resolution to the funding issue.

**Media Coverage**

Two local newspapers served the community of Anderson. One was a biweekly paper, the *Anderson Awareness*; the other, *The County Crier*, was a daily paper with home offices located in nearby Mega which reported on all occurrences in smaller towns and cities in the county. Both papers had education reporters who attended all regularly scheduled board meetings during the time the study took place.

The *Anderson Awareness* covered school events on a regular basis; Anderson ISD staff had direct access to the paper and reporter. Approximately 50% of the coverage in any issue of the paper during the study related in some way to school activities, students, or district inner workings. Superintendent Brown wrote regular articles as a
state-of-the-district communication device. He encouraged constituents to ask questions, gave information, and admonished the community to join in the participatory management of the district. He closed each article with "Thank you for caring." The relationship between district personnel and the paper was a positive one.

Coverage in The County Crier was less frequent. School board meeting proceedings were reported on a regular basis, but reporters were not in continual contact with district personnel. The relationship between paper and district was cordial, if distant. Subscriptions to both of these papers as well as the major metropolitan daily, The Daily Planet, were maintained throughout the study.

The topic of year-round education was addressed periodically in The Daily Planet, but only infrequently did articles or discussions include references to Anderson ISD. Several other larger, high-profile school districts were considering year-round education as an option. This lack of recognition of Anderson as a cutting edge district caused concern with some school staff because soon other school districts that were not as far along as Anderson received more widespread publicity. When the district was included in the metropolitan print, coverage was positive.

In November, The County Crier published an article revealing that several other school districts in Chi County
were reviewing the possibilities of year-round education. The uncertainty of the state school finance system, local growth, and the widespread resistance to raising taxes prompted superintendents and board members to consider year-round education. The Crier reported that administrators in other districts were following Anderson’s year-round education efforts with interest. For school year 1991-1992, only two Chi County schools and five districts in the extended metroplex area implemented some form of year-round education.

Media interest in year-round education followed the ebb and flow of decisions by Anderson’s board and administration. Over 50 articles relating to year-round education, particularly in Anderson ISD, were collected for analysis. Half of the articles detailed board considerations either before or after each meeting. Twenty percent were feature articles and the remaining coverage was divided equally among Superintendent Brown’s articles, meeting reports, and letters to the editor.

Leadership and Culture-Shaping Processes--Creating a Context for Change

Major organizational change happens most effectively in a culture that supports it and with a leader who promotes it in an overt way (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). Superintendent Brown chose a leadership style and adopted
behaviors that he believed would create a culture in which an organizational transformation would flourish.

**Leadership Style**

Superintendent Brown's educational background included classroom teaching, coaching, staff development, the principalship, and the assistant superintendency in districts ranging from small to the second largest district in the state. His leadership style was an outgrowth of these experiences and was markedly different from his predecessor at Anderson ISD. Brown introduced a democratic leadership style through what was eventually labelled "teamship." Teamship promoted a participatory style of decision making and included formalized lines of communication with both the community and staff, not only for disseminating information but to involve these groups in problem solving for the district. This approach to leadership endorsed ownership as the foundation of support for district decisions. The staff, community, and school board became more actively involved in district governance than they ever had. Superintendent Brown felt so strongly about this commitment to teamship that the board adopted a resolution in October 1986 describing the district's intended approach to decision-making and participatory management. From the resolution:
The Board endorses a style of leadership which will promote participatory management and bring about feelings of teamship, ownership, and support for the District. . . . This Board directs the Superintendent to . . . secure the appropriate involvement of all personnel and citizens in the decision-making process of the District.

If asked to which management philosophy he ascribed, Superintendent Brown would not hesitate to say participatory management. His actions and words consistently promoted this teamship approach to decision and vision making. References to teamship are evidenced in the transcript of almost every meeting, memo, and newspaper column. Brown believed that if you got enough input and "buy-in" for any decision, it would be a success. Quotes, cartoons, and anecdotes were used constantly to promote the importance of participatory management. He believed that his task as leader was to model leadership and promote leadership in others. Superintendent Brown's philosophy is exemplified in the following comment.

It is incredible how much can be accomplished in an organization when people do not fix blame when mistakes are made or concern themselves about who will get credit for the positive results of their collective efforts.

In an effort to demonstrate this participatory management theme, the district collected data from 150 community influentials in 1986 about the district's direction for the next 5 years. Using a modified Delphi approach, input from these individuals was collected and
synthesized into six goals or keystones which served as targets or guiding principles. These keystones formed the structure for board agenda items, the board's yearly evaluation, and the superintendent's evaluation. Progress on these goals was disseminated in the superintendent's annual report to the community. The keystones were instructional excellence, fiscal responsibility, personnel support, participatory management, growth management, and positive discipline. This approach to goal setting was very different for the citizens and employees of Anderson ISD but set the expectation for involvement early in the superintendent's tenure. The district was in the 5th year of operating within the framework of the keystones when this study took place.

Participatory leadership and staff development were themes in how Brown did business. He had a reputation with other superintendents and state education officials of being the "new style" superintendent: innovative, progressive, focused on change. He sought opportunities to be in high-profile positions in statewide leadership initiatives. For example, he served on the advisory board of the Texas LEAD Center, a state level research center established to develop leadership training for administrators throughout the state. He was one of the first superintendents involved in the center's Leadership Development Process training,
professional development training adapted from the DuPont company's internal leadership development program. The training provided tools through which leaders could develop group consensus about an issue. Because he believed in the power of consensus, Brown modeled these process tools at every opportunity and arranged for all the district's administrators to receive the training too. Using the DuPont processes not only met Brown's expectations for professional growth, but provided some valuable tools for continued immersion in participatory management.

Because of Brown's strong belief in participatory management, Anderson ISD had moved to a site-based decision making approach 2 years prior to this study and at least 2 years before the state mandated it. Adopting a site-based approach moved decision-making to the campus level and, by its very nature, involved more individuals in decision-making. Campus principals and their communities of staff and parents regularly made budget and staffing decisions. Every campus supported assistant principals who took responsibility for campus-based curriculum and instruction decisions.

Implementing a major district wide organizational change such as year-round education, however, frequently required centralized decision-making. During the study, Brown found it necessary to compromise his stance on
site-based decision-making and to promote an all-for-one and one-for-all approach to establishing the year-round education restructuring effort. His message about site-based management at times became a mixed message—sometimes it was appropriate to make campus-level decisions, sometimes it was not.

Although laudable in concept, participatory leadership had its detractors. It looked messy and inefficient at times and Brown often found himself justifying his style. On one occasion during the study Brown was pressed to be bold and make a decision for the sake of efficiency. He openly coached his administrative team on the political realities of running a school system in Anderson:

When I get into these discussions with you, part of me says don't, but I need your insight and understanding. We need to harness the energy of the community members with the values to influence politically. ... We need to manipulate the political arena so that people who support us get heard. ... This puts you in a position to support and influence when you're out there in the real world. ... You, as leaders, can influence some positive comments to the board on a regularly scheduled basis.

After the failed bond election the superintendent and administrative team questioned whether the negative vote was an indictment of their management philosophy. Participatory management consumed a lot of time. Some members of the leadership team questioned the value and purpose of all the meetings scheduled with the superintendent. Was it really
necessary to gather the principals every week and the whole leadership team once a month? And, how essential could a bi-monthly District Operations Council meeting be? Some claimed that few decisions were made in these meetings and that topics appeared on subsequent agendas again and again. To several members of the leadership team, participatory management seemed to be very slow-moving when so much needed to be accomplished.

Brown chided the group. "The democratic process takes time. [We have] a lot at stake. [We have] a 10 month investment in a sophisticated management system. Our philosophy has been tested. We must be careful in interpreting the results." As the pressure of the failed bond issue and the decision about year-round school began to build, Superintendent Brown felt increasingly isolated. "Right now I feel like I'm the keeper of the attitudes. . . . Pressure will affect attitudes and then efficiency. It's not time to fall apart. Leadership has to act as if the game is not lost."

January 1991 was a difficult time for the superintendent. It seemed to him that the management philosophy and leadership style he had been building for 5 years were being questioned. Only his evaluation by the board, his contract extension, and his compromise on
finances at the January 21 board meeting appeared to revitalize his efforts.

During this same time period, Brown began to verbalize the importance of participatory leadership in change management. "Now our challenge is to manage change since one tool [the proposed building program] has been taken away. Our timeline [for year-round education] will need to be faster." He encouraged the principals, teachers and involved community members to begin moving forward with budget planning, surveys of students and teachers who would participate in the year-round schedule, and decisions about any special program adjustments. There was to be a phase-in which took into account the needs and fears of the individuals involved. The superintendent's watchwords were, "Don't force change. Above all, no person should feel punishment or retaliation." Change was to be seen as a process with choice as a key component. "We don't want to make those who choose traditional (calendars) seem like an enemy. We need to attend to their concerns and keep positive."

**Vision**

When Brown adopted a vision, he championed the cause to the exclusion of almost all else. Early in his career as superintendent for Anderson, Brown had the vision of
excellence in education via the effective schools research. He also championed a vision of developing leadership—both within and outside the school system. He used every interaction with staff or community to promote these visions and his newest one—year-round education. Most important in transmitting the vision were the regularly scheduled meetings Brown had with staff and community groups.

The agendas for the regularly scheduled meetings of community leaders, parent advisory group, and key communicator groups were identical and assured a consistent message throughout all groups. Superintendent Brown used these forums to give updates, provide compelling data, discuss tangential issues, give pep talks, and ask questions. On average, 75% of the meeting time was a well-organized monologue, and even though the agendas were the same, Brown emphasized the issues of most concern for the group to which he was speaking at the time. The effect of the monologues seemed to be a renewed interest in or commitment to the vision. Indeed, these regularly scheduled interactions created well-informed disciples who then took the message back to their peers.

Brown prided himself in his ability to create and sustain a vision for the direction of the district. In 1990-1991, his vision was the initiation of year-round education as a restructuring effort for the district.
Superintendent Brown shaped this vision through the priorities he set, actions he took, and language he used. One of his most powerful tools was the use of carefully crafted two-to-three-word phrases that carried meaning throughout his interactions. Phrases such as "growth management," "consensus for kids," "the Anderson image" carried meaning beyond the words and helped cement the vision these phrases represented. The data showed repeated incidents of his leadership team and the community hearing key phrases over and over again. These individuals, within a matter of weeks and in some cases a matter of days, began using the phrases too—thus carrying the vision forward.

Anderson ISD's study of year-round education began as a tax and budget issue in January 1990. Superintendent Brown realized that the Texas school finance situation, the decline of property values in the district, and the rapid growth of the district would combine to put Anderson in a precarious position with respect to the district's budget and ultimate need for new school buildings. His vision for the solution was articulated in the phrase growth management which embedded the concepts of budget, building program, and year-round education. This terminology reduced the focus on year-round education as the solution and at the same time sent the message of fiscal responsibility. In Brown's own words, "[We must] use year-round education for efficiency in
cost as well as student achievement. Growth is the significant issue in this district; it’s what causes the irritation with regard to finance."

In at least eight meetings, including those with staff, the board, the community, the growth management committee and the leadership team, the superintendent used cohort study charts to support the need for a strategy for growth management. These numbers were so compelling that the outcome seemed inevitable. One of the board members queried, "We’ve studied it all. Is there another choice?" Another member commented before the board’s unanimous vote on the two-pronged approach (bond election and year-round education), "There is absolutely no choice but to go with this scenario. This is the only way that I can see it. So, before the lights go out, I propose that we adopt this."

However, early in the process of shaping the vision for growth management through year-round education, Brown realized another key element to community acceptance--year-round education had to be good for kids too. In his comments to the principals, the superintendent verbalized the commitment to the district’s students, "As gatekeepers for kids we can rethink priorities, but let’s not sacrifice kids for dollars." Particularly after the failed bond election, the new theme, "consensus for kids," began to appear on meeting agendas and in newspaper articles. "If we
all get involved and informed, then perhaps we can build a 'consensus for kids,' even at the price of paying increased taxes."

Others caught the vision. Three parents echoed their support of year-round education and the district’s efforts in January, "Year-round education is the best thing for schools and kids." Three of the five elementary principals reported enthusiastic support of parents, staff and students. When Brown discussed flexibility for staffing in year-round schools, the one non-negotiable item in all the decision-making was the student and providing students with a quality education. He challenged himself and the board, "The superintendent and the board must have the 'guts' to make a decision and avoid the politics. Don’t lose sight of the kids."

Anderson ISD had a reputation for providing a high quality of education. A survey of citizens who had recently moved to Anderson indicated two key determiners: proximity to a large international airport and the quality of the schools. Although not responsible for establishing this image of quality, Brown stressed the importance of maintaining the "Anderson image" even through the tough times of shaky school finance and transition to year-round education. He said at the first meeting with his staff after the failed bond election, "Give no signal that quality
will be compromised because of the failure of the bond."
However, Brown was concerned about the district’s ability to
maintain quality while spending less money.

Brown was active in the regional and state
organizations which allowed him to profile Anderson ISD as a
model for innovative school restructuring and gave him the
opportunity to share the vision with an even-wider audience.
This not only served him professionally, but gave the
district leaders comfort that they were indeed headed in the
right direction. He served as a member of the State
Association of School Administrators executive board. This
position required frequent trips to the state capitol and
gave Brown access to state agency personnel as well as the
organization’s lobbyists. From this vantage point, the
superintendent was able to keep abreast of the legislative
efforts regarding the state school funding issue. He kept
the district administrators and school board informed on the
slow progress of this very political issue. Much of the
time he was not encouraged that an equitable solution would
be found or that the solutions proposed would benefit
Anderson. He strongly suggested that anyone who had
connections with members of the legislature begin to apply
political pressure. Superintendent Brown had his vision
threatened by a legislature over which he had very little
influence.
It was these state capitol connections that led Brown to reflect to his leadership team, "People at the State Education Agency are watching us very carefully and making things work for us." Because of a highly placed contact in the State Education Agency, Superintendent Brown received many calls from leaders in other school districts who were investigating year-round education. He was visited by three superintendents, five assistant superintendents, and travelled to two school districts to discuss year-round education with administrators and school boards. At one point in the study, he told a group with whom he was meeting that "at least 25 to 30 school districts have contacted me about year-round education. They are watching carefully what we do." Brown also presented Anderson’s year-round education initiative at a well-attended regional administrator’s conference. He was viewed by his peers as a pioneer in the state’s involvement in year-round education.

The Culture of Teamship

Anderson school principals and other leadership team members had personal access to the superintendent on a regular basis. They sent in Friday reports each week which provided a summary of the activities and events of importance during the preceding week. In addition to the regularly scheduled principal meetings, Brown met one-on-one
with individuals or small groups particularly when there were issues still to be resolved or problems that needed to be solved. The principal of New Elementary, which was the campus ultimately chosen to implement year-round education, met with the superintendent several times each week to finalize and fine tune personnel, scheduling, and finance decisions. Although he provided guidance, Brown usually let the principal make decisions based on analysis of the situation for that campus as long as it fit within the broad parameters of the vision.

The leadership team also benefited from Brown’s skills as a coach, and often used coaching on their campuses. When the board and superintendent relations were the most strained or when the bond election failed, Brown addressed the issues in a frank but thoughtful way, always providing an optimistic outlook and shielding the campus leadership from the brunt of controversy. On the Monday after the fateful defeat of the bond election, he handed out a cartoon which captured his feelings and ultimately his strategy. It said, "It’s important to keep things in perspective . . . . Let’s set up a meeting!" Brown’s message, "They [the constituents] just didn’t have all the facts they needed to make the right decision. We can coach and counsel them!"

Brown believed everyone wanted to be a part of the team and
head in the direction of the team effort, but that they just might need a little persuasion.

One of the techniques Brown used to help build a culture of acceptance for differences on the team was Bi-Polar training. This training was designed to develop an individual's self understanding of decision-making and communication styles as well as an understanding of others. Brown, the administrative team, the school board, several parent leaders, and several classroom teachers had participated in a 2-day training on bi-polar. Each individual completed a self-assessment and distributed questionnaires to family and friends who described the individual in relation to a set of bi-polar adjectives. The compilation of this information yielded a profile of that individual's typical mode of operation; for example, assertive, contemplative, action-oriented, or analytical. Each bi-polar profile was numbered and a description of that style number (from 1 to 8) was given to each individual. Part of the training included an understanding of others' styles in relationship to one's own style. The trainers emphasized the importance of honoring everyone's style and of learning to accomplish things as a team when styles were different and often not complementary.

The superintendent hoped that communication problems would be minimized with an increased understanding of how
others operated. It was common to hear a member of the administrative team say, "That’s just how a ‘three’ approaches things," or "You’re letting your ‘eight’ get ahead of the process." As district administrators or board members analyzed the productivity of certain interactions, the analysis often included a reference to the bi-polar similarities or differences involved.

Culture-Shaping Through Communication

Communication was Superintendent Brown’s strongest characteristic. He considered it a major component of his leadership style. He acted on the belief that he was the keeper of the vision and was responsible for coaching, coaxing, and prodding others to accept that vision before any decisions were made. These actions took place at several levels—intradistrict, community-wide, regionally, and statewide. Brown was totally open about every issue and preferred to tell the good news and the bad.

An example of this openness was the way in which the board handled the 1990-1991 school year tax increase. The state statute required an open hearing on the tax increase only if the increase exceeded 7.9% which Anderson’s did not. However, Brown made sure the public had an opportunity to react in an open hearing prior to the vote. In a similar way, he often included controversial issues as non-action
items on the monthly board agendas, again providing an open forum for discussion and modification or, as in most cases, an opportunity to educate before the vote was taken. Several times during this study the superintendent used this approach to stimulate discussion about year-round education issues prior to a decision.

On the Thursday prior to each board meeting, the superintendent met with three groups to inform them about the issues on the agenda and to take the pulse of those most readily impacted by board decisions. One group consisted of local business persons—builders, dentists, ministers, architects, retired citizens—who might not have any other direct contact with the school district. These meetings were poorly attended and those who did attend seemed to be supporters of the district and superintendent. The Parents Advisory Committee for Excellence group met during lunch and was a fairly stable group of 20 to 25 parent representatives from each campus. Their responsibility was to serve as an informed liaison between the school and the home. The third group to meet were staff members from each campus who formed the key communicator team. They too were to represent their peers and disseminate pertinent information back on campus. Brown felt that he built trust and communication by having these meetings prior to the board meeting.
On the morning after each board meeting, a synthesis of board actions and considerations was distributed in writing to all school staff. That same day, an administrative staff meeting allowed campus and district administrators to find out what had transpired the night before and to receive direction from the superintendent. This interaction seemed to add to the consistency of the information disseminated to members of the community. In addition, each board member adopted a campus and attended PTA/PTO meetings and selected staff meetings. Lines of communication were kept fairly open through all of these efforts.

This effort at open communication, however, had an interesting effect on the amount of formal participation by stakeholders. Because the constituents had so much access to Brown, they seldom came and spoke for or against issues to the school board. Although this lessened the number of complaints, it also reduced the amount of positive feedback presented to the board by the community.

Although he did his most compelling communicating in person, Brown also regularly used the local newspaper to influence and involve people. He consistently focused the attention of the community on the needs of the children of the district by closing each Superintendent's Corner article with the expression, "thanks for caring." Even in defeat, Brown claimed during an administrative team meeting, "We're
still in partnership with our citizens. If we get into a battle with our citizens, the students lose. And, we’re in this to win for our students."

The superintendent also scheduled periodic town hall meetings to provide question and answer opportunities. At a typical meeting, 50 to 100 community members attended. These meetings were designed to discuss particular issues such as the bond election or year-round education. The superintendent entertained written questions from the audience. These questions or comments were collected, categorized, and responded to by various board members or the superintendent. In most cases, comments and questions were not particularly challenging and the meetings lasted about an hour and a half. The themes of teamship, participatory management, and communication permeated the journey Brown embarked upon with his district in pursuit of his vision of year-round schools.

**Adopting and Implementing the Change**

Year-round education came to Superintendent Brown’s attention as a solution to the problem posed by district growth. A multi-track year-round schedule allows a district to utilize the school facilities at building capacity all year long. Under some year-round schedules, a district can increase by one-third the number of students a building can
house and thus reduce the need for additional facilities. Brown hoped to gain 20 to 25% additional use at each campus through year-round education.

As the district and community moved from acceptance to implementation of year-round education, events, personalities, and situations combined to make the district fall short of its initial goal. Anderson ISD implemented a form of year-round education, but has yet to reap its financial benefits.

**Acceptance of Year-Round Education**

The superintendent’s first encounter with year-round education was in December 1989. He attended a conference in which superintendents of year-round schools explained how building costs could be contained through a creative scheduling technique called year-round education. In addition, this innovation seemed to have benefits for students academically and emotionally. The possibility that year-round education might help the district cope with growth while containing costs, the increased willingness of the state education agency to look favorably on innovative school restructuring efforts, and the novelty of year-round education in a state which had never used year-round education convinced Brown to pursue year-round education.
Improved student achievement was not an important consideration at this time.

Year-round education certainly caused a stir the first time it was proposed to the community. Months later, Brown recalled,

When the (district’s growth management) study began 8 months ago, there was quite a bit of emotion about year-round education. In fact, our town hall meeting in January was the largest ever. We had about 350 people there.

Superintendent Brown supported the year-round education restructuring through adequate allocation of training and resources—both human and material. Early in the study of year-round schooling, district personnel participated in a variety of training and learning experiences. Principals, parents, board members and teachers attended the spring 1990 National and State Year-Round Education Conferences. From the contacts made at the conferences, small study teams made site visits in Colorado, California, Utah, and Florida. The study team members returned to train and inform others through newspaper articles, videotape productions, cable television discussions, and town meetings. The district public relations office disseminated three question-and-answer documents to all of the citizens of Anderson. A 35-member Growth Management Committee was formed to study district growth and make a recommendation to the board about an appropriate strategy or strategies. Brown functioned as
the committee's chief resource person, attended all the meetings, and generally guided the group to its recommendation.

Norman Brekke, superintendent of the Oxnard Schools in California, spent 2 days with administrators, parents, teachers, and community members discussing the positive aspects and challenges of implementing year-round education. He reported not only financial benefit for successful implementation of multi-track year-round schools, but student achievement benefits as well. After his visit, he remained "on call" for anyone in Anderson who had concerns about year-round education.

Superintendent Brown modeled a learning attitude by searching out books and articles about year-round education and disseminating them widely to leadership team members and community members. He encouraged the use of teacher inservice days for additional training and learning about year-round education.

Three surveys were conducted at the direction of the Growth Management Committee in late spring of 1990. The staff survey showed that staff members (teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals) were generally well-informed and willing to consider the possibility of year-round education, and that more than half of the respondents considered a bond election for new schools a
good idea. Only 133 people responded to the community survey questions, and most respondents reported that their information source was the local newspaper, not the town meetings or seminars provided. Less than half supported a bond election and even fewer favored year-round education. The third survey was conducted by the local Chamber of Commerce of its membership. Forty-six members returned surveys, and only 25 were in favor of year-round education. Community support for both a bond election and year-round education was limited.

Despite the limited stakeholder support, the Growth Management Committee recommended that the district proceed with a bond election of $14 million to build a new middle school and begin to phase-in a by-choice year-round education schedule in the elementary schools as early as August 1991. The phase-in would not eliminate the need for a new elementary school, but was designed, instead, to prepare the community for the eventuality of a fully implemented multi-tracked year-round school system. In fact, the phase-in would cost rather than save the district money. A new middle school building would create enough space to relieve any immediate pressure on the elementary schools, but the Growth Management Committee’s projection was that a new elementary school building could be delayed until 1995 if the elementary campuses were eventually
multi-tracked and a new middle school was built. Year-round calendars do not prevent the eventual need for additional campuses; they do impact the amount of building that must be done.

The superintendent provided a preview of the Growth Management Committee's recommendation at the August 20, 1990, regularly scheduled school board meeting. The recommendation was subsequently reported in the biweekly local newspaper. One month later, on September 17, the Anderson ISD school board unanimously accepted the recommended plan of action. Only two community members attended the meeting, and neither spoke during the open comments section of the board agenda. Newspaper reports of the board meeting and decision elicited no response to the district or to the editorial page of the local newspaper.

The school board as a whole was positive about year-round education in Anderson ISD. Several members were vocal in their support—even advocacy—of the restructuring. Others felt at the very least a move to year-round education was a fiscally sound way to handle the district's growth while at the same time benefiting children academically. None of the board members had young children who would be affected by initial implementation at the elementary level, but this did not keep them from studying the impact of implementing year-round education and speaking widely on
many of the intricacies. Most of their confidence in communicating support of year-round education came from the education Brown provided on a daily basis.

It was, however, hard for the board to separate for the public the issues of bond election and year-round education. On one occasion, Vocal, a member of the school board, was visiting an elementary campus for an evening PTA meeting. A parent asked, "What will happen if the bond election fails." Vocal's response was, "Then we'll have to go to multi-track year-round education immediately." For parents who were supportive of fully implementing year-round education, this was an invitation to vote against the bond issue. The board learned from this experience that everyone in the community was not as informed or conservative about the implementation of year-round education as the board and administration were.

Superintendent Brown spoke often of paradigms and the shifts in those paradigms that he was beginning to see.

In fall 1989, not five people in the state could spell year-round education. Now, one year later we not only can spell it, but we have general acceptance that it is good for the district and good for kids. There has been a change in how people in Anderson think about school.

Failure of the Bond Election

On September 17, 1990, the Anderson ISD board of trustees voted unanimously to schedule a $13 million bond
election for November 3, 1990. The bonds would fund the construction of a $10.5 million middle school as well as renovations at several older schools. Included in the bond package was seed money for technology upgrades and land purchase for future schools. This was a bold but carefully considered move for the seven-member school board. In fact, the superintendent had recommended $14.3 million but the board felt that the community would only support a minimal bond package. The $13 million of bonds would increase the effective tax rate by $.17 to an astronomical $1.71 per 100 dollar valuation.

The biweekly local newspaper carried 10 articles concerning the bond election in the intervening 6-week period between the board’s decision and the bond election. The superintendent and board members were unified in their support of the bond election. They attended PTA/PTO meetings, local civic club gatherings, sponsored an open forum meeting, and prepared an informational brochure that was mailed to every district patron. Their message was **Vote!** In previous bond and school board elections no more than 600 votes had been cast in any one referendum. This was less than 10% of the registered voters. The district leaders felt that if they could mobilize the citizenry, the bond election would pass and the district’s building plans would proceed. There was no historical evidence that the
voters might reject the bond. Previous bonds had passed rather effortlessly.

In an interview for The Anderson Awareness 3 weeks before the scheduled election, Brown cited strong support community-wide for the referendum and attributed this support to "good communications between the school board and the community." He noted that there was no known opposition to the bond issue but qualified his optimism with the following statement, "I’m keeping my fingers crossed . . . you never know until people go to the ballot box what they’re going to do."

In compliance with the state’s absentee voting laws, citizens were given the opportunity to vote early. The administration and school board encouraged early voting in hopes of winning the election before the actual voting date. A record 345 votes were cast absentee, which was only 100 votes less than the total votes cast in the previous bond election. As hoped, absentee voting favored the bond issue at slightly more than 2 to 1. The superintendent was encouraged by the high early voter turn out and was increasingly more positive that the bond election would pass--so positive that he left early on the Friday before the Saturday election to go hunting, a favorite pastime, in the western part of the state.
The election was scheduled for Saturday, November 3, just 3 days before the state and national elections. The election climate in the fall of 1990 was spirited throughout the state. There was a vocal mandate for a radical change in leadership at both the state and national levels. Voters had watched a particularly dirty governor's race unfold on television; Congress had recently voted itself a pay increase; and the state legislature had been virtually paralyzed with regards to the school finance issue. Thus was the prevailing atmosphere as voters went to the polls to decide Anderson ISD's bond election.

Because there was no organized anti-bond issue effort, the superintendent chose not to create a citizen's group to promote the bond election. According to Superintendent Brown, the citizen's group really existed in the form of the Growth Management Committee which had recommended a building program accompanied by the slow implementation of year-round education. This group was not overtly active during the pre-election campaign. No pro-bond literature was developed or disseminated; no mailout or phone bank effort was used to inform or publicize the bond and its benefits; and, no advertisements were purchased or yard signs distributed to identify community members who were visible in their support.
Four days prior to the Saturday election date, an opposition group did emerge. The superintendent later referred to the events occurring on October 31 as the "Halloween Massacre." Calling itself the Chi County Taxpayers’ Coalition, a group hand-distributed to neighborhoods throughout Anderson, a one-page information sheet on why voters should vote "no" on the bond election issue. The information sheet contained numerous errors and exaggerated both the short-term and long-term impact of the bond issue. It was later determined that not one of the Chi County Taxpayers group who distributed the fliers was a resident of Anderson ISD. However, this group had used one of the district’s elementary campuses for an organizational meeting.

The timing of the distribution of the opposition literature was interesting. Because Anderson was served by a biweekly publication delivered on Wednesday and Saturday and the anti-bond literature was delivered on Wednesday afternoon, there was no way for the district or pro-bond citizens to correct the misinformation via the local media and there was no group organized which could counteract the information sheet with one of its own. Anderson ISD officials hoped that the citizenry was well-informed through the other efforts the district had formulated.
Also impacting the dynamics of the bond election was the fact that the county tax assessor had mailed the corrected tax valuations the week prior to the bond election. Anderson residents who had bothered to figure the tax impact of the bond issue were greeted with the possibility that the number might go up because of the re-valuation.

On November 3, 1990, constituents of the Anderson ISD went quietly to the polls and defeated the bond election 1,517 votes to 953. This was the largest school related voter turnout in the history of Anderson and a resounding defeat for the district.

Brown returned to the district from his hunting trip a subdued superintendent. He called a leadership team meeting for 10:00 a.m. the Monday after the bond election defeat. The group used the time to process its reaction to the defeat and to work toward some next step goals. The superintendent felt that the failure of the bond election had less to do with the district than it had to do with the state of the economy and political climate in November, 1990.

People have spoken out about taxes. It happened in spite of . . . participatory management, support groups, and very little organized opposition. We have a lot at stake and our [management] philosophy has been tested. We must be careful in interpreting these results. This district is in trouble but will survive.
We’ll come up with an action plan or strategy but not this week.

Other members of the team expressed different views. Some believed the district’s campaign should have been more aggressive and encouraged open support from local businesses, churches, and other groups. One principal was concerned that the taxpayers group was able to function so effectively without anyone in the district knowing. What had happened to the open lines of communication? Others felt that, although the faculty and staff had voted in the election, there was not the commitment to support the bond that should have been expected. The general consensus of the group was that the district leadership would be watched more carefully than ever and that the community would take its cues from the actions that were to be taken in the next few months. Superintendent Brown synthesized the reality of the situation in which the district now found itself: "Anderson is different. There is a political reality that must be addressed beyond participatory management." His concern was that even though there had been participation and communication with the citizenry, there was an evidenced lack of support for the district.

At the conclusion of the 2-hour meeting, Brown froze the construction fund that was still available from the previous bond election. Only serious emergencies would
receive attention and funding. In addition, he warned the leadership team to "stay in control" and not let emotion take over.

Now that the building option had been removed, year-round education was the one remaining choice. Superintendent Brown told the board,

At least we have another option and it is a good one. Think where we would be if we did not have year-round education! . . . Our biggest challenge is to be positive. We can move forward and struggle a little, but we must move forward, positively and progressively.

One of the board members responded, "This could turn out as a great opportunity." What to do about initiating year-round education became the focal decision of the district for the next 4 months. Brown’s task was to create an atmosphere within which a school restructuring effort that was now mandatory could be implemented.

When he first came to the district, Brown had conducted a community-wide survey using a modified delphi approach. The issues that came out of the survey guided the superintendent and became the tool by which the board and administration evaluated themselves. After the bond issue failed, the board was concerned that the information from the original survey was outdated and, because of that, the district had misread the community’s willingness to support an aggressive building program. Also at issue was whether the move to year-round education had an impact—positive or
negative—on the failed bond election? I offered to conduct a community-wide random survey to ascertain the effect of year-round education on the bond failure. Although initially considered a good idea by the board and administration, a survey of this nature was never attempted. Brown believed that it would not change the decisions made by the board or administration to know if there was a relationship between the two issues. He also felt that a narrow issue survey would connect the two issues where there had been no connection before.

Brown was getting mixed messages from individual board members about the need for a comprehensive community-wide survey by the time the November board meeting approached. The November board packet included a memo to the board requesting input about the survey.

In view of the fact that plans need to be considered for a community survey and "re-visit" of the district-wide goals and priorities in the spring of 1991, there may not be a need for a survey of voters at this time. On the other hand, voter feedback could be very helpful toward planning a future bond election. This should be discussed and the administration given some direction at the meeting on November 19.

As he spoke to the administrative team after the meeting, Superintendent Brown explained his dilemma, "The board members are concerned about antagonizing the community. Some board members wanted to extend the information to a report card for the district. Others want
us to move toward assessing long term goals—it’s time." In their discussion at the board meeting, two board members suggested the need to broaden the survey. The first board member said, "Don’t do a little survey unless we really need the information." The second member said, "We do need to take the pulse. How do we stand with satisfaction, communication, and trust level?" The consensus of the group was to conduct an extensive survey in the spring.

Still, no one knew exactly what had happened to cause the bond election to fail, but Brown was pleased to have an opportunity to conduct the community-wide survey. He believed it was an opportunity to silence any negative talk, to build the district’s confidence, and to open the eyes of the board. "We need to revisit the process that got us the keystones. This will soften the voice of the naysayers and give a positive stepping stone to the board for decision-making. The board needs a little reality therapy."

Changes in Superintendent and Board Relations

Superintendent Brown’s relationship with the Anderson ISD’s board was one of mutual respect and confidence at the beginning of the study. After the failed bond election, differences between the board and Brown were exaggerated, thus causing a crisis of confidence between board and
administration which ultimately affected the implementation of year-round education.

Anderson ISD's board of trustees had been stable over the past 10 years. Superintendent Smith, Brown's predecessor, had shaped and built the board. Although respected and even loved, Smith was considered autocratic in his leadership approach, both with district staff and with the school board. He made most decisions in the district and kept everyone well informed. Part of his management style was to identify talented individuals in the district and develop them into the district's administrative leadership. These efforts contributed to stability in the district and a level of confidence between the superintendent and school board. With Smith, school board meetings were brief and relatively uninteresting. The district was small and prosperous, and where the superintendent led, everyone followed.

In 1985, Superintendent Smith moved to a larger district. The Anderson ISD's board, community, parents, and school staff were sad to see Smith leave, but a search for his replacement began as soon as his resignation date was determined.

Brown sought and accepted the superintendent's position with Anderson ISD in May 1985. He too left a school district where he was highly respected and had effected much
positive change. Anderson ISD, however, offered the challenge of a growing area and a changing community which Brown could not resist.

During Superintendent Brown's administration, the president of the school board controlled the ebb and flow of the agenda at most board meetings. The board members were well prepared for each meeting, brought forth questions and concerns, and generally conducted themselves in a businesslike manner. However, as early as 1989, the unified front characteristic of the board showed some symptoms of fragmentation. Periodically, there were issue-based coalitions of board members who surprised the board president or superintendent with previously undiscussed issues. These interactions appeared to the superintendent and other top district administrators to be designed to embarrass the superintendent or derail the focus onto other issues. Throughout the fall of 1990, at least one of these instances occurred at each regularly scheduled board meeting. They were usually instigated by one particular member of the board, Vocal.

In 1990 Vocal was beginning his third term. When he had considered not running for the third term, Superintendent Brown intervened to persuade Vocal to run again. After his re-election, Vocal more openly expressed his frustration with the administration's lack of action on
several issues of importance to him including a student parking situation at the high school, gifted and talented instruction, and the number of district administrators. He often wanted to direct the superintendent or administrative team to the solution path he considered most appropriate and expedient. Whenever Vocal presented his concerns, after a certain amount of discussion was allowed, either the board president or superintendent recaptured the agenda and continued the meeting with a promise to address the issue administratively and report back to the board members on action taken.

Board meetings usually lasted 2 to 3 hours, depending on the items under consideration. Throughout this year-long study, no more than a total of 10 individuals addressed the board with issues of concern during the regularly scheduled audience period. The superintendent and several board members linked the level of communication before and after each board meeting with the low level of community activism.

As was typical of this superintendent’s relationship with the board, the superintendent’s recommendations often took the form of a concept in which the broad strokes of a plan were revealed but few details were provided. The growth management recommendation which included year-round education was no exception. This approach followed the superintendent’s view that the board was a policy-making
body which should have little to do with the administration or implementation of the policy. The superintendent did keep the board informed regularly on the progress being made on various projects, but usually (successfully) diverted the board when it began to try to problem solve through administrative issues. However, after the bond election, interaction patterns between the board and superintendent changed.

After the bond election defeat, the board of trustees was anxious to send a message to the community that it was fiscally responsible, even frugal. Twice in the fall of 1990, Vocal challenged Superintendent Brown's recommendations which he perceived as "sending the wrong message about taking care of the taxpayer's dollars." For example, at the third meeting after the election, the superintendent suggested a board retreat to begin budget planning for 1991-1992. Vocal, with support from two other board members, opposed spending money on a retreat, arguing: "We don't have any money [for a retreat] but we do have a sagging credibility. We also have to be attentive to the open meetings act." Brown claimed to be using the term retreat as a generic term which did not necessitate expense. The board could meet at the district offices some Saturday morning and accomplish the needed planning. However, Brown used the term retreat several additional times during the
meeting with reprimands each time from two members of the board. From my point of view, there was obviously a conflict between at least one member of the board and Superintendent Brown.

A similar situation arose at the next board meeting. Brown, in an effort to demonstrate the fiscal responsibility of the district, recommended an external audit of all aspects of the district. His proposal was to invite educational administration professors from an area university to conduct the audit at a cost of between $3,000 and $5,000. The professors would include community members as part of the audit team. Again board members criticized Brown for his lack of sensitivity to the financial status of the district. This recommendation was tabled and was to be reconsidered after a district survey had been accomplished.

Superintendent Brown and the school board had different definitions and philosophies about planning. The board preferred a **blueprint** or task/activity style of plan which included timelines, goals, persons responsible, anticipated costs, and evaluation guidelines which were well-defined and written down. Brown preferred an **evolutionary** planning approach which established conceptual parameters and then worked out the details situationally. Several times during the study, the board asked for a plan to review and support. What they got from the superintendent was a broadly defined
approach to accomplishing the goal. The board viewed planning as a product; the superintendent viewed it as a process.

Planning became a critical issue for the superintendent and school board members after the failure of the bond election. When the district had the option of the two-pronged tool (building and year-round education), the progress of implementing year-round restructuring was left at the administrative level with an information only imperative from the school board. The failed bond election raised the board’s level of concern and, in November, members sent a strong message to the superintendent about the plan of action for implementing year-round education.

Board Member #1: Make sure board members understand the plan.

Board Member #2: What are the trigger points and what are the plans?

Brown: What would you have us do? I can have a plan of action to you by January or February.

Board Member #1: We’ll support you if you put together a good plan. We’ve never failed you. Tell us how it’s going to go and how much money.

Brown: We can outline short-term strategies, but we need support.

Board Member #3: We need to have all the information—short-term and long-term.

Brown: [This means] we will have to show need instead of growing into our schools.
This simple interaction between the board and superintendent was the first indication that the relationship between the school board members and Brown had shifted. Planning for the implementation became increasingly difficult as the board demanded more specifics of each decision made by Superintendent Brown and his staff.

**Planning for Year-Round Education**

In Anderson ISD during 1990-1991, no other issue received even a fraction of the time or resource allocation afforded year-round education restructuring. Meeting agendas and memorandums showed a district level interest in several other major educational topics: a technology plan, a gifted and talented education plan, provision for an alternative secondary school, and a need to align the curriculum with the testing program. Time allocated to these issues was often reallocated to planning for the implementation of year-round education. Superintendent Brown established monthly Topical Think Tank sessions for planning and consideration of issues critical to the district. Of the eight Topical Think Tank meetings scheduled during the course of this study, only three dealt with issues other than those related to year-round education. Often another topic was scheduled, only to be
re-focused to year-round education 1 or 2 days before the meeting date.

Brown used his regularly scheduled meetings to continually touch base with the stakeholders in the decision-making and implementation processes. He took seriously an admonition by a superintendent who had been successful in the long-term implementation of a year-round program--be flexible. This meant that there were no absolutes and that many times the district leadership was operating within a large area of ambiguity when some stakeholders wanted specificity. It was typical for a path of action to be initiated then modified if the feedback regarding the action was not favorable.

The first major implementation decision was to determine the calendar configuration. In the vocabulary of year-round education, there are several typical calendar arrangements: 60-20, 45-15, 30-10, 60-15, Concept 6. Each configuration described the number of days students were in school, the number of days students were on vacation, and ultimately described the actual percentage of savings achieved. For instance, a 45-15 calendar meant that students attended school on one of four tracks for 45 days (9 weeks) and vacationed for 15 days (3 weeks). This meant that one-fourth of the students were always on vacation while the other three-fourths were attending school. On a
campus that can house 600 students, 200 additional students can attend on a multitrack system, thus increasing the campus capacity by one-third. Anderson had to determine what level of savings it needed and whether to offer a traditional calendar in conjunction with the year-round calendar.

Most teachers and elementary principals who had studied calendar options proposed selection of the 45-15 calendar. The length of time students were in school was long enough to accomplish academic goals but the break (15 days) was brief enough to expect that students would return to school refreshed without losing the momentum of the instruction before the break. Parents of younger children too favored a shorter break, while those of older children thought it would be difficult to do any meaningful enrichment or remediation programs within only three weeks.

Superintendent Brown encouraged frank discussions at both the campus and district level about the calendars being considered but emphasized that whichever calendar was chosen, that calendar would be consistent throughout the district.

Of even more concern than that of calendar selection was the decision about whether the district would maintain a traditional calendar in addition to the year-round education calendar to accommodate those families who had children at
elementary school, middle school and high school, or move quickly to a multi-track schedule. This complication arose because of the decision to implement year-round education initially at the elementary level and not for grades 7 through 12. Some community proponents of year-round education supported biting the bullet and implementing year-round education in full force without a trial or phase-in period. Other proponents and opponents valued a more measured approach and recommended keeping the traditional calendar until parents and students became more comfortable with the change. One approach would save the district money but would cause hardship on many constituents; the other would require additional expenditures but would be more accommodating for those who did not appreciate the benefits of year-round education. Consistent with his emphasis on communication, Brown spoke to and listened to any group or individual who had a position they wished to express or investigate.

In January 1991, Superintendent Brown sent an informal survey home with each student and issued a similar survey to all staff. The question was simple: Given the choice of these two calendars, which would you choose, traditional or year-round? The rest of the survey asked for questions, concerns, or comments. A very promising 70% of the parents responded, and more than 50% of the respondents favored the
year-round calendar. Staff survey results were even more supportive. Brown and the leadership team moved forward with plans for implementing a 60-20 year-round calendar in conjunction with a traditional calendar for the elementary (K-6) campuses. He told the board, "We will initiate the process on a volunteer basis . . . phase-in until the schools are full then move to multi-track. If we install by force, we may have problems, but we should be ready by fall 1991."

At the request of the campus principals, Brown met with the support and auxiliary staff of the elementary campuses to discuss the impact of year-round education implementation. He told them at one of three meetings,

We'll keep the process open as long as possible realizing our decisions will effect you directly. At this point, the more people involved in the discussion loop the better. It's educational and stimulates creative thinking.

He encouraged them to do "possibility thinking" through a "what if?" exercise. "Think options. Let me hear from you about ideas and options. The important thing is that we're delivering quality services to kids. Everything else is open." Brown then listened to and answered questions, although many times his response was another question: What do you think we should do about that?

Many of the participants expressed to me that they were comforted to know that they would have some control over the
decisions that would impact their job and lifestyle. Others, however, indicated that they just wished someone would make a decision and tell them what it was. Superintendent Brown realized that the level of ambiguity was counterproductive to some participants. He assured the group in a closing statement, "I get accused all the time of asking for input but really having the decisions made. That's not true—we are open."

Although not conducive to harmonious superintendent and board relations, Brown’s approach to planning was very supportive of the principals as they planned the changes required for year-round education implementation in Anderson ISD. The principals had adequate time to research, formulate, and adapt the plans needed to make year-round education a reality on each campus. They had extensive access to the superintendent for the exchange of ideas and moral support. He offered the parameters for the plan; the planning itself was organic and was designed to provide the maximum flexibility.

Even in the tight financial atmosphere of spring 1991, the district sent five campus principals and me to San Diego for the National Year-Round Education Conference. Although much valuable information was gathered at the conference and subsequent site visits, the principals said that the most powerful outcome was the opportunity to plan and discuss
together. Even though the principals attended weekly meetings with each other, the agenda was the purview of the superintendent. In California they discovered they had common concerns not only about implementing year-round education but about testing, curriculum, and technology which they planned to make agenda items when they returned. Instead of speaking with individual voices which often seemed self-serving or in conflict, the principals decided to voice things together and to meet frequently as a group without the superintendent to continue this open communication.

One of the common concerns expressed by the principals was the perceived lack of decisiveness by the superintendent. They felt they were planning in a vacuum and that their credibility with staff and parents was being compromised. To help stimulate some movement, the principals developed a proposed, itemized budget of $30,000 within which they all felt they could implement year-round education on their campuses. This communication was faxed from California to the superintendent in hopes that it could be incorporated into the plan to be presented to the board in February. Although he applauded their efforts, superintendent Brown delayed the presentation of the proposed budget until more details were available and until he could justify the costs outlined.
During this time of turmoil and indecision, the principals and other district administrators expressed to me that they felt supported by the superintendent. He was realistic about the additional resources required to implement year-round education in Anderson. He recognized the need for curriculum modification and testing, particularly if campuses were on something other than a 6-weeks grading schedule. The principals also expressed a great need for technology to support the change in recordkeeping they perceived would increase once year-round education was implemented. Teacher inservice training and extended contracts would need to be funded. Because the campuses operated with site-based authority, amounts needed varied from campus to campus but each principal had no doubt that the money and time would be available to implement year-round education in the quality way the district approached all educational programs.

The implementation plan requested by the board never materialized. In January, the superintendent asked the board to approve the two calendars--traditional and year-round--and promised a plan in February. In February, he requested a delay of 1 month so that the financial picture for the district might be clearer. A memorandum from a campus principal outlining the needs for implementation at one campus was submitted in March in lieu
of an implementation plan. The board did not see the plan developed by principals while in San Diego. Brown’s comments to the board indicated his unwillingness to tie himself and the campus to a particular plan:

I cannot say to you how much thinking and planning has gone into this. The idea of getting nailed down what costs will be is most difficult. Figures are general frame of reference—ballpark. . . . At New Elementary we can offer a year-round education and traditional schedule for $20,000 to $22,000. We’ve been flexible. We can cover all special programs without additional cost. . . . This is a general direction. We have a rough outline of the phase-in plan. . . . We want to come back [to you] and add funding for intersession.

The board approved the plan and gave the superintendent a 10% leeway in budget.

**Budget Constraints**

In January 1990, the superintendent and board began the district’s budget planning process for the 1990-1991 school year. Their goal was to maintain the quality of education in Anderson ISD while keeping the tax rate as low as possible. Brown realized the financial challenges the district was about to face and, in an effort to protect himself and the board members from criticism, opened the district budget planning process to the community. Brown believed that by including the constituency in the budget deliberations, they would have a better understanding of the budgetary needs of the district and be more supportive of an inevitable tax increase.
Superintendent Brown and his public relations staff took an aggressive approach to getting the community involved in the budget process and its companion piece, growth management. Growth management included studying all possible options for handling the district’s anticipated growth—a building program, temporary buildings, and alternative school schedules. Open forum town meetings were announced and conducted on multiple dates and in multiple locations. Brown used the public access cable channel to brief the community and provide frequent status reports. A 35 member growth management task force made up of a cross-section of the community was commissioned to study options to accommodate growth with minimum negative budget impact. It was to this group that Brown first broached the subject of year-round education as a viable option for growth management and its potential for saving the district money.

Although the superintendent had begun the process by eliciting community input on the budget, very few hard decisions were made by the board concerning the 1990-1991 budget and virtually no community involvement was evident at the board budget workshop meetings or regularly scheduled board meetings. It was as if the emotional energy, both pro and con, surrounding the possibility of year-round education dissipated the concern about the budget and potential tax
increase. The community was so involved in learning about year-round education and debating its merits that they forgot about the initial impetus for their involvement—budget and taxes. The board raised taxes within the legal <8% limit for maintenance and operations purposes, and the tax rate stood at $1.54 for school year 1990-1991. Of that amount, $0.53 was for debt service. The major outcome of the budget process was a plan for future growth management which would impact future budgets. This plan was developed by the Growth Management Committee, recommended by the superintendent, and voted on favorably by the board in September 1990.

One of Superintendent Brown's major concerns was guaranteeing enough resources to make implementation of year-round education a success without hurting the existing school program. Year-round education realizes savings only when buildings can be used to a greater capacity than that for which they were built. Even then the savings come in the form of phantom buildings—those campuses that do not need to be constructed because existing buildings are being used beyond normal capacity. However, the operations budget usually has to be increased until the building is overused by at least 19%.

Historically, districts that have implemented year-round education rapidly to realize immediate savings
have suffered negative community and staff reactions. For this reason, Superintendent Brown was proposing a phase-in of year-round education. To accomplish its phase-in approach, Anderson ISD would have to increase its operations budget without seeing any savings on the capital expenditures side. Brown struggled with the importance of acclimating the community to a different way of thinking about school with the need to control the budget. He confided to the campus principals,

The better organized I am about finances, numbers and the plan, the more likely we’ll be able to implement on all five campuses. I don’t want people to have to wait too long but want to have my stuff together to get the best response from the board.

Together with the superintendent, the five elementary campus principals began to plan for the inevitable increase in the operational cost of running two schools on different schedules on each campus. Cost categories of transportation, utilities, salaries, and maintenance appeared to be the areas most heavily impacted. Brown encouraged the principals to leave options for personnel as open as possible without compromising program quality. While this approach quelled the anxiety of the teachers and support personnel, it caused great disparity from campus to campus in the projected cost of operating a dual track calendar. The vision was for all five campuses to plan for and support the same year-round education program; the
reality showed a $10,000 to $15,000 difference in dollars needed from campus to campus. They now had enough teachers and enough students to phase-in on all five campuses. The question remained, was there enough money?

The financial situation in Anderson ISD dictated conservation. However, Brown was diligent in his allocation of available funds and searched for other possible funding sources for further implementation of year-round education in Anderson. For example, the state Legislative Education Board made a request for proposals in fall 1990. Individual campuses were invited to submit proposals outlining innovative programs that could make a difference in student achievement. One of the program priorities listed was year-round education. Brown was encouraged by a highly-ranked officer of the State Education Agency to pursue the funding and waiver possibilities described in the request. An identical proposal was developed and submitted for each of the district's five elementary campuses. Based on his conversations with his State Education Agency contact, Brown had every confidence that the proposals would be accepted and funded at the requested amount: $40,000 per campus. This funding would cover the estimated implementation expenses and put Anderson on the cutting edge with year-round education implementation.
While attending the National Year-Round Education Conference in San Diego in spring 1991, the principals finalized their proposed budgets. The low figure was $20,000; the high figure $40,000. At an average of $30,000 each, the district would have to find $150,000 to fund the restructuring effort on all five campuses. The $150,000 was approximately two cents on the school tax rolls in Anderson. This situation placed Superintendent Brown’s vision for year-round education in Anderson ISD in direct conflict with his January promise of operating the school district at no additional cost for 1991-1992. He communicated his dilemma to the Parents Advisory Committee for Excellence group, "We are struggling in a diverse society and in financially difficult times. The school [district] must be future driven even though folks are living day-to-day." His one hope was the resolution of the state school finance issue to the benefit of Anderson or receipt of funding for the innovative grants which had been submitted to the state in December.

In the state in which the study took place, January was the time that school boards considered the superintendent’s contract through a superintendent and board evaluation process. If the evaluation was favorable, the superintendent’s contract was renewed and extended; if not, the superintendent would begin looking for another job. At
the time of the evaluation, at least one board member and Superintendent Brown had been experiencing difficulty in reaching consensus on issues. Vocal perceived himself a man of action and believed the superintendent took too long to make a decision. The board as a whole was concerned about the financial situation in which the district found itself—a high ad valorem tax and a shrinking tax base. During the 4 hour evaluation session in January 1991, the superintendent and board reached an understanding. Brown and his administrative team would plan the 1991-1992 school year budget at the same dollar amount as had been budgeted for 1990-1991. In return, Superintendent Brown would have his contract extended. This compromise, however, would place in jeopardy the vision to implement year-round education and maintain a quality education in Anderson ISD.

Brown expressed his dilemma openly to his administrative team the morning after the marathon board evaluation session.

We spent most of the time talking about the financial condition of the district—the wolf is at the door. How do you continue to be visionary when the community is focused on the dollar sign? . . . This is our reality: we must sacrifice quality to save dollars; this will be hard. Protecting quality is one thing, loosing quality—that's difficult to regain. It's a ticklish situation.

Even though he knew the compromise would be a difficult one, Superintendent Brown assured the team that they would
move forward with plans for implementing year-round education in a limited way. The team understood the challenge of implementing a restructuring effort with few funds. He closed with this statement: "I can get 'woe is me' if I only look at finance. We can be 'poor and happy.' We can work with an attitude beyond the dollars." In the meantime, the superintendent continued to hope for a rapid resolution to the state finance issue or notification of funding of one or more of the innovative grants.

The Decision to Implement

On March 25, 1991 the Anderson ISD board of trustees voted to approve funding to implement a single track year-round education program at New Elementary for the 1991-1992 school year. The campus was to operate with two calendars--one year-round, one traditional. The other four elementary schools would be added should additional funds become available. By April 1, Brown knew that there would be no additional state funds to support year-round education.

Superintendent Brown's vision for a full-blown phase one implementation at all elementary campuses had evaporated. He said he believed that the processes used and decisions made to implement this change had been the right ones; that year-round education was still an important
option for containing building costs; and, that one day year-round education would be the norm in Anderson, as well as the rest of the state.

New Elementary began the 1991-1992 school year with 700 students in a building designed for 750. Forty percent of the students and teachers were on the year-round calendar.

Post-Adoption Realities

Successful implementation of a major restructuring effort in a school district is highly dependent on the behaviors of the leaders responsible for the innovation. In this study the superintendent displayed many of those behaviors which led to the ultimate decision to implement year-round education on one elementary campus in the district. He articulated the vision of year-round education; he provided resources of time, people, equipment, and assistance; and he communicated with the stakeholders in the process. Certainly, important external catalysts over which there was little personal control were the state school funding issue and the related failed school bond election. These external forces compromised the vision to implement year-round education on all elementary campuses and with the appropriate level of funding. The participant observation stage of the study ended with the adoption of year-round education in one school. However, periodic data
collection continued through interviews, newspaper coverage, and document analysis. The data indicated that the innovation had been expanded to other campuses but that the district was still not saving money.

Interestingly, events unrelated to the decision about year-round education further compromised the superintendent’s credibility with the board, community, and even some of the staff. In May 1991, Superintendent Brown made what appeared to district constituents a unilateral decision about the appointment of a campus principal. The principalship had become available when the principal took a position as assistant superintendent in another school district. He left behind an associate principal who had over the years in that role been perceived by many students, parents and staff as heir apparent. Although he communicated with the groups significantly impacted by the ultimate decision, Brown made the appointment of another person without much consultation. The person he selected was a personal protege and a better match with Brown’s leadership style. This one event was very divisive to the community. Reaction included a walkout by students. Criticism about Superintendent Brown was vocal and extended quickly beyond that one decision to other issues including a recommendation on the tax rate for 1991-1992 and when to hold a future bond election.
Although they approved the superintendent’s recommendation for the principal, the board of trustees, which had been so unified since January of 1991, began to form coalitions around other issues. Where Brown usually enjoyed the luxury of 7 to 0 board votes, he began to battle the same faction of the board with every recommendation. The former school board president, who had resigned soon after the board employed Brown, became a vocal opponent of the superintendent in the community. The ex-president, who still had a stable political base in the community, joined with the Mayor of Anderson and another influential long-time resident of the community in open criticism of Brown. Their criticism, however, did not include undermining the year-round education plans.

Coincident with the turmoil over the principal, the community elected two new school board members to replace two retiring members. Not only was the anti-superintendent coalition still intact, but the board and superintendent also had to deal with the dynamic of new board members. The board’s personality changed with the transition.

Superintendent Brown was baffled by the reaction of the board, staff, and community. In his mind, he had been completely consistent with his leadership and decision-making style. He had gathered and considered input from all the affected parties and made a decision based on
careful consideration of that data. He did acknowledge that there was a breach in trust and that superintendent and board relations were strained.

In January 1992, Superintendent Brown requested that the board not extend his contract. He preferred this to receiving a vote of no confidence from three members of the board. He told me that he was now just managing the district because the board would not let him lead. Brown left the district for another position before his contract expired.

Board leadership has also shifted since the time of the study. In the fall of 1992, Vocal assumed the president's role from the 6-year veteran board president, an outspoken supporter of Superintendent Brown.

In spring 1993, Anderson ISD passed a bond issue of $17.3 million. Voter turnout was large and the bond election passed by a two-to-one ratio. This was accomplished 2½ years after the previous bond election had failed. Anderson plans to ease the overcrowding at the middle school level and to make some needed renovations at some of the older elementary schools. Year-round education has not been implemented in either middle school or high school and is not fully multi-tracked at any elementary campus. The community and staff are still very supportive of year-round education and would probably find it difficult
to go back to a fully traditional schedule. However, the innovation has cost the district money rather than saving it, as promised, and several observers have reported a shift in the board's support of year-round education. The issue of year-round education did not seem to be involved with the new bond election at all.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

In 1990-1991, Anderson ISD chose to implement a year-round education program for the rapidly growing, property-poor school district. The expressed reasons for choosing this restructuring option were to provide the district with financial relief in the building program and to adopt a plan of operation that could benefit students academically. The superintendent of Anderson ISD was very involved in the decision-making and implementation of year-round education in his district and had developed a year-round education advocacy position at the state level. This study was needed because of the limited research literature (Hord, 1990a) on superintendent involvement in the change process and because of the relative newness in the state for implementing year-round education.

The stated purpose of this study was to investigate the decision-making processes of a superintendent who was proposing and shepherding a major restructuring effort for a school district. An entire school year was spent as a participant observer in the district with total access to the superintendent and other district administrators as they
operated on a daily basis and worked toward implementing year-round education for the district. Data collected for the study were largely qualitative in nature. They were composed of verbatim conversations, memos, meeting agendas, and field note observations of interactions among the superintendent and other administrators, as well as parents, board members, and community influencers. The volume and variety of data provided confidence as conclusions were formulated.

Early in the study most data were collected in formal settings such as administrative team meetings or board meetings. However, as more time was spent in the day-to-day operation of the district, informal interactions added dimension and texture to the database. My involvement allowed analysis of interpersonal relationships, conflicts, and politics among key participants on a regular basis. Even after the year-long study was completed, participants in the study kept me apprised of changes, victories, and disappointments in the district. These follow-up data have made possible a more complete analysis of the decisions made and actions taken during the formal data collection stage.

Interestingly, the district has realized no savings from the implementation of year-round education. Currently the district is spending money to maintain its level of involvement in year-round education. Additionally,
Superintendent Brown who was the focus of this study left the district to take a high level position at the state education agency.

Findings and Tentative Explanations

The research questions addressed in this study provide a framework of analysis and discussion of the findings. However, the most instructive explanations go well beyond the narrow focus of decision making processes. The following four questions guided the study.

1. What decision-making processes were employed by the superintendent to institute a major educational and organizational change into the operation of a school district?

2. How did internal and external groups shape the decision-making processes employed by the superintendent?

3. How did site-based management impact the decision-making processes employed by the superintendent?

4. How was the superintendent/school board decision-making process impacted by the introduction of a major educational or organizational change?

Research Question 1

The first research objective was to identify the decision-making processes employed by the superintendent as he implemented year-round education. Superintendent Brown
established a goal for himself, for the school board, and for the district to implement some form of year-round education during the 1991-1992 school year. He believed that year-round education would save the district money in building costs as the district grew. He also developed and expressed a belief that this educational change would benefit students, teachers, and parents. But, at a deeper level of analysis, Brown believed in his leadership ability as a change agent. This initiative was his opportunity to model the philosophies—leadership, culture-shaping, and decision-making—to which he ascribed.

Brown approached decision-making early in the study through a political perspective with a definite stated goal (reduced building costs and enhanced student academic achievement), an open system orientation, and broad-based participant involvement. He used his personal commitment of time and district allocation of funds to build consensus among stakeholders. Until the bond election failure, Superintendent Brown effected a compromise which almost everyone could accept. Enough flexibility was designed into the decision and the change process was slow enough to keep staff, board, and constituents from feeling trapped.

The consensus decision, however, compromised the stated goal of financial control and academic achievement. The district would still have to build campuses, and it would be
at least 3 years before the year-round education was implemented in enough depth to realize cost savings. The participatory process of decision making and the excitement that is generated by doing something differently became the focus of the organization rather than the goal of saving money. As the study progressed, there was much less emphasis by the board on how much money was being saved with year-round education than on how much money was it going to cost to implement year-round education at the reduced level. At some point early in the process, the goal shifted to that of implementing year-round education for the sake of implementing it.

When the bond election that would allow for the building of a new school failed, the decision-making processes became more rational than participatory, particularly between the superintendent and the school board. Several board members and staff members expressed concern that the compromise decision of a building program coupled with year-round education sent a confusing message to voters. If they voted for the bond, would that delay full implementation of year-round education or expedite it? Brown had done a good job of selling the advantages of year-round education to some, and they were anxious to reap the benefits. Brown was indecisive about discovering the
facts behind the election’s failure and relied heavily on speculation.

Major decisions, beyond those necessary to operate the regular business of the school, were virtually non-existent for 4 weeks after the bond referendum failed. However, Superintendent Brown did not let the board, staff, or community forget the goal of implementing year-round education. Never did he allow speculation that year-round education would not be implemented. He indicated that the implementation timeline might even have to be moved up.

Decisions in the post-bond failure period did not follow a logical or pre-defined path. The intra-organization crisis of confidence in addition to external pressures and events such as state legislative deliberations, impacted the superintendent’s decisiveness. The patterns of committee meetings, community forums, and staff involvement of the post-bond failure time were not as successful as in the pre-bond failure period. People--board, staff, parents--wanted Brown to make a decision. He wanted to assure complete buy-in before committing himself. So, the calendar selection was delayed 1 month; the implementation plan requested by the board was delayed 3 months; implementation of single track year-round education at all elementary schools was delayed 1 year; and, multi-track year-round education that would save the
district money was delayed indefinitely. Although the goal remained intact, the attributes of the rational process of decision making—establishing priorities, considering alternatives, collecting facts, anticipating questions, evaluating solution paths—deteriorated during this crisis time.

Superintendent Brown pursued secondary goals that were more subtle than the stated goals of financial relief and academic success. The secondary goals were not overtly pursued, but became the foundation for some decisions made by the superintendent. Brown wanted Anderson ISD to receive recognition statewide as an innovative, risk-taking organization. By becoming the model school district for year-round education, other educators would visit Anderson and emulate the processes used to formulate the restructuring. Brown's philosophies of participatory leadership and change management would be adopted by others, and school districts would be better places for students. Superintendent Brown believed he and Anderson ISD had wisdom to offer others.

Brown became so focused on implementing year-round education that other major decisions suffered. Decisions about an alternative secondary school, a plan for gifted and talented education, and the technology plan were left on the table until year-round education was implemented.
Research Question 2

The second research objective was to look at the impact that internal and external groups had on the decision-making processes of the superintendent. Brown was very involved with groups through an organized communications plan that was designed to place him in regular contact with staff and constituents. His stated philosophy of participatory leadership implied an intention to be influenced as well as to influence.

Early in the study (before the bond failure) Superintendent Brown influenced others' decision making more than he was influenced. With constant marketing, he structured the decision to choose the year-round education option over other options. A committee appointed to study options took responsibility for the decision to combine a slowed-down building program with a phase-in approach to year-round education, but Brown was the driving force behind the decision. He invested his leadership in that decision.

The data show that the majority of every group meeting held by the superintendent was dedicated to "superintendent talk." Although he always provided for a question and answer time, Brown chose the agenda topics, set the pace of the meetings, and generally controlled the flow of information. This effort to manage meetings reduced the amount of influence exerted by groups or individuals in the
formal setting. This arrangement seemed to work well for most of those concerned in the early stages of year-round education implementation. Individuals undecided about the direction of the district were swept along by the overt supporters of the decision to implement a form of year-round education. The pressure to be part of the movement, particularly at its conceptual stage, was substantial both internally and externally.

As implementation of year-round education became more of a reality, groups emerged to qualify their involvement or to challenge the decision altogether. Although they could cognitively accept the transition to year-round education, the individuals who constituted these new groups had difficulty committing themselves to actual participation in year-round education. Specialist teachers (music, physical education, gifted), auxiliary personnel (nurses, counselors, librarians), and para-professional support personnel (instructional aides, school secretaries) made up the most influential internal group. Many of these individuals chose employment with the school because of the convenience of the school schedule which allowed for vacations and breaks with their school-aged children. Year-round education would require, at a minimum, a matching of children’s schedule with parents’ work schedule and might require additional work days.
Superintendent Brown worked with these individuals and groups to help resolve their concerns and to meet their needs as much as possible. They did, however, influence policy changes in the district. Prior to the implementation of year-round education, employees who did not live in the school district could not bring their children to school in Anderson. If the employee chose to work on a year-round schedule, this policy was waived. Likewise, teachers who were willing to teach on one of the year-round tracks could enroll their children on the same track. Policy concessions were also made to accommodate substitute teaching during the intersession breaks and to allow for trade days for teachers on different tracks. This group did not influence the decision to implement year-round education, but it did shape how the implementation would translate into application.

Although very nebulous in its structure, one group that influenced the decision-making regarding year-round education was a group of secondary parents, teachers, administrators, and students of Anderson. Although involved at all stages of study and decision-making, this group did not accept the practicality of implementing year-round education for the district's secondary schools except as a last resort. The complications anticipated around extracurricular activities (particularly sports) and the offering of advanced coursework on all tracks were perceived
as too difficult to sell to the participants. The decision made to accommodate the influence of this group caused difficulty with implementation at other levels. Instead of fully implementing a multi-track year-round education system at all levels, the superintendent chose to implement a phase-in plan (two tracks only) at the elementary level only.

Two external groups—parents and the Texas State Legislature—also influenced the superintendent's decisions. Brown sold year-round education on its money saving and academic achievement merits. To achieve the fiscal goal, the district would need to have a multi-track structure that would eschew the traditional school calendar. A small group of parents was very verbal in its conviction that a traditional calendar should be maintained. These parents cited a variety of reasons, mostly related to life-style impact, for maintaining at least one track as a traditional track. Brown committed himself to a transition period that would honor a traditional calendar. Interestingly, in the ensuing 2-year period, the traditional track began to look more like a year-round track with an early school start in August, a long Thanksgiving vacation, and the completion of a semester before the Christmas holidays. So, although he yielded to the group's influence, the superintendent shaped the attitudes of the group by subsequent calendar decisions.
Most influential on the context of change, primarily because they controlled state-wide funding decisions, was the state legislature. Without an understanding of what the funding foundation of the district was to be, Superintendent Brown compromised his decisions on several occasions. Already committed to a phase-in approach for elementary schools only, the superintendent had made the decision to implement at least a dual track year-round calendar at all five district elementary schools. He believed this approach would build support for year-round education in all parts of the district and would build a large enough pool of students on year-round calendars to move implementation to the middle school and, ultimately, the high school within a brief period of time. In the end, this decision would be postponed because of legislative inaction.

Also influential in an indirect way was the county taxpayer group. This group’s literature helped to defeat the bond election which, in turn, heightened the school board’s awareness of its fiscal accountability. The bond election failure certainly influenced the decisions made by both superintendent and board. It also impacted the decision-making processes moving the board toward the safer, more comfortable approach and increasing the distance between superintendent and school board.
In conclusion, Brown’s decisions were directly and indirectly influenced by both formal and informal external and internal groups. His interactions with both individuals and groups caused him to rethink and modify his decisions on several occasions. These modified decisions often had an impact on another decision in the decision path. In an effort to accommodate influence by these groups, Brown diluted his decisions and the ultimate effect of year-round education implementation in Anderson ISD.

**Research Question 3**

The third research objective was to determine the impact of site-based management on the superintendent’s decision-making processes. Anderson ISD had been practicing site-based management 2 years before the study of year-round education was begun. District administrators at all levels were sophisticated in their understanding of site-based decision making. Several district administrators had studied aspects of site-based management to complete their doctoral studies, and all campus administrators believed in the importance and effectiveness of site-based management. Superintendent Brown recognized the philosophical match of site-based management and participatory management, and encouraged and supported the campus principals in their site decisions. However, instituting an organization-wide change
such as year-round education required the centralization of some decisions that had belonged to the site-based teams.

With one notable exception, site-based management did not affect the superintendent’s decision-making. Most decisions made by Brown, such as setting of the district calendar, allocation of operational funds, staffing allocations, and bond election, were already centralized decisions and in the purview of the superintendent or the board of trustees. Typically, year-round education decisions were laid on top of, as opposed to in-lieu of, site-based decisions which did cause concern for some of the campus principals. Campuses maintained program, curriculum, and daily scheduling prerogatives for the traditional schedule as well as for the year-round schedule.

When the superintendent asked each campus principal to submit a budget for implementing dual track year-round education, it became obvious that site-based management, in combination with the state legislature, would impact the superintendent’s decision-making processes. On those campuses where the principals and staff had caught the superintendent’s vision, budget proposals were creative, practical, and highly supportive of moving to year-round education. Principals and staff at these three campuses had worked on plans that would accommodate staff needs, student needs, and parent concerns without compromising the quality
of student education on either track. One principal claimed she could implement year-round education and maintain a traditional calendar at no increase to her budget.

On two other campuses, however, the support for year-round education was passive at best. The principals at these two campuses made no public endorsement of the year-round program. Their staffs were not as well-informed as the staffs at the other elementary campuses, and the staff reaction to adopting year-round education was compliant rather than enthusiastic. The principals at these two campuses submitted budgets that would implement year-round education but at a relatively high cost. The superintendent had budget projections ranging from $0 to $50,000 because of site-based management. This range of budget needs certainly influenced his decision to implement on one campus rather than on all campuses.

Research Question 4

The final research objective was to determine how the superintendent/school board decision-making process was impacted by the introduction of year-round education in Anderson ISD. This is probably the most difficult area to analyze. The superintendent and school board relationship and decision-making processes did change during the study, to such a point that ultimately the superintendent left the
district with only minimal implementation of year-round education. However, it is difficult to find evidence to support a close relationship between year-round education implementation and the change in decision-making patterns.

Every individual member of the board, and the school board as a group, was openly supportive of the year-round education initiative. They educated themselves and others, accepted criticism but remained steadfast at difficult decision points, and supported the superintendent and principals. When asked if the decision to implement year-round education was the cause of deteriorating superintendent/school board relations, members of the board said no, there were other issues. The superintendent concurred. Yet, how Brown made decisions and, ultimately, the decisions that were made contributed to the erosion of the superintendent-board partnership.

Brown seldom brought a recommendation to the board that he did not anticipate they would unanimously endorse. This did not just happen. Superintendent Brown worked to build a consensus in the community, with the staff, and particularly with the board prior to submitting an item for consideration. Often he would offer a concept in the for-your-information section of the board agenda or introduce a new idea in the superintendent’s report. These items were in essence "trial balloons" which were designed
to be conversation starters so that he could shape his recommendation based on the input he received in the ensuing month. Usually the item would appear for a decision on the next month's agenda; for "hot" items, it might be 2 or more months, or sometimes not at all. All of this data-gathering, consensus-building, and compromising were part of Brown's leadership philosophy.

Superintendent Brown maintained a consistent decision-making style throughout his tenure in the district. His actions and decisions are fairly consistent with the actions, behaviors, and decisions described by Fullan (1982, 1993) that are supportive of change. However, the bond election failure changed several board members' tolerance of participatory decision making and moved them toward rational decision-making expectations of the superintendent. Some of the data support that individual board members were more in their "comfort zone" with the rational process; other data suggest the agenda was one of control.

The breakdown in the superintendent/school board decision-making processes rested in a perception by some board members that the superintendent did not plan and was not decisive. They perceived his long data-gathering phase as indecisiveness. They labelled his unwillingness to submit a written plan as ineffectiveness. Both of these traits were magnified during the implementation of
year-round education. So, although the minutes of the board meetings pertaining to decisions made by the board regarding year-round education showed unanimous support of year-round education, the board’s confidence in the superintendent’s decision-making processes eroded.

**Other Significant Findings**

Three other significant findings were evident in analyzing the data. First, major organizational change is hampered when there is a lack of confidence and trust among the policy makers, the innovator, and the implementors. Second, although there are intended consequences of participatory leadership, there are also unintended consequences whose effects must be actively managed if the overall result is to be positive. Third, a proposed major organizational change should solve a problem bigger than the problems it creates.

The failed bond election was a turning point in the level of confidence Superintendent Brown enjoyed with his board and to some extent his administrative team. Until that event, everything that he had proposed had worked, primarily because of his extensive consensus-building and communication philosophy. Although Brown’s leadership style might not be the choice of some board member or some principal, the effectiveness of that style was apparent in
the results until the bond election. At that point, three board members and at least five administrators began to question Brown's effectiveness. The relationship between Brown and the board shifted during this crisis in confidence.

The superintendent wanted to call for another bond election as quickly as was legally possible; all the board members indicated that they would not support that recommendation. The lack of confidence in the superintendent's handling of the bond election was evident more than a year later when the board called for the second bond election. It was spring 1992 when the community did pass a bond package for more than the original amount with a two-to-one positive vote. In the second election, the superintendent played no part at the direction of the board. Instead, the board appointed a citizen's committee to study the need for a bond and to campaign actively for its passage.

This lack of confidence impacted the successful implementation of year-round education. The data showed longer periods of time from consensus building to decisions after the failed bond election than before. Notes from board meetings indicate more initial negative reaction to recommendations after the bond election failed. Although almost all board votes were decided unanimously, it often
took three board meeting agendas to move an item from idea to recommendation, whereas it took only one agenda in the pre-bond election months. In addition, recommendations were often substantially modified from their original idea format in the post-bond failure crisis of confidence era.

The board also wanted much more detail from the superintendent after the bond election. This hampered Brown in making timely decisions with respect to the implementation of year-round education. The lack of trust kept risk-taking behavior low at a time when Brown and the campus administrator's implementing year-round education needed latitude, flexibility, and forgiveness. Finally, in an effort to renew the board's confidence in his leadership and management, the superintendent committed to no increase in the operational budget from 1990-1991 to 1991-1992, which reduced widespread implementation to token implementation.

Based on a synthesis of research by Hord (1991), the leadership style espoused and practiced by Brown should have supported successful implementation of an innovation such as year-round education. He articulated a vision and worked with staff and community to build a shared vision of Anderson ISD as a model for year-round education. He provided direct support of campuses and principals preparing to implement the innovation. He communicated openly and frequently with all stakeholders and worked to alleviate
their concerns. Analysis of the data indicate that although there was evidence of intended outcomes of the superintendent's behaviors, there were also unintended outcomes that may have neutralized or reduced the effect of his behaviors and ultimately the implementation of year-round education. A cross reference to the narrative in Chapter 4 and a sample of intended and unintended consequences of the superintendent's leadership behaviors are provided in Table 4.

Implementing a major organizational change creates problems in the system in which it is implemented. When weighed against each other, the problems solved by a change effort should be greater than the problems it creates. The original intent implementing year-round education was to save the district money primarily in the area of capital building. Data from early year-round education efforts indicate that until buildings are used consistently at 113% of capacity, there is expense instead of savings (Brekke, 1990a). Anderson ISD, currently in its third year of implementation, has not used any building at above 100%. The cost to the district to implement the modified year-round plan of one or two tracks plus a traditional track was projected to cost $30,000 per year per school. Conservatively, the innovation has cost the district $500,000, with no savings yet realized in delayed or reduced
Table 4

**Consequences of Participatory Leadership—Intended and Unintended**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior/Action</th>
<th>Intended</th>
<th>Unintended</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>to guide public opinion; to gather input and buy into decisions which makes them successful</td>
<td>open access to superintendent reduces community participation in board meetings, resulting in less positive feedback to board about district initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communicates regularly with staff and community</td>
<td>opinion leaders in community are kept informed about AISD issues</td>
<td>a false sense of security about community support of bond election; failure to campaign for bond issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consistent information is disseminated about AISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>campus principals are shielded from brunt of controversy</td>
<td>mixed messages about centralized versus site-based decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tailors decisions about year-round education to feedback from staff and community</td>
<td>school staff and community are comforted by having some control over year-round education decisions</td>
<td>administrative team frustrated—they question value of meetings with recurring topics discussed without apparent resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>successful implementation of modified year-round education plan without controversy—parental and community support of decision</td>
<td>pressure on superintendent to be bold and make a decision for the sake of efficiency</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior/Action</th>
<th>Intended</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent focuses energy and resources to implementation of year-round education</td>
<td>principals, staff, board and community perceive that year-round education is a priority in AISD</td>
<td>principals are not able to meet and discuss other concerns about district operational issues and decisions about other important issues are delayed</td>
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<td>many staff and parents catch the vision of year-round education in the district</td>
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<tr>
<td>Superintendent leaves implementation plans open-ended to accommodate staff and community concerns</td>
<td>focuses board on policy; specific implementation decisions given to building principals</td>
<td>general communication about issues, not specifics of year-round education, leaves board frustrated</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>political influence; manipulates political arena so supporters get heard</td>
<td>ambiguity about specifics of year-round education frustrates some staff</td>
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<td></td>
<td>principals feel the superintendent is indecisive and that lack of a decision &quot;at the top&quot; reduces their credibility with staff and parents</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>superintendent loses credibility with his board</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. AISD = Anderson Independent School District.
building costs. As a result, the growth management issue year-round education was implemented to solve has been resolved in other ways—a slight slowdown in district growth, the resolution of the state funding crisis, passage of a bond issue—leaving year-round education an innovation without a cause.

Brown believed that year-round education was the solution to the growth management issues in Anderson ISD. As he understood more about year-round education, Brown began to focus on other benefits for year-round education, both professionally and to the district’s children. He found it increasingly difficult to convince stakeholders that full-scale implementation was preferable and modified the implementation plan which diluted the purpose significantly. The long-range implementation plan—to fully implement year-round education within 1 year of the trial effort—was compromised by a lack of confidence in the superintendent and an easing of the original problem. Therefore, the innovation is facing extinction. At a February 21, 1994 board meeting, the Anderson ISD board moved all campuses to a traditional calendar to save operational costs incurred with the phase-in of year-round education. In a statement quoted in the Anderson Awareness, the board president said, "The district may revisit the need
for year-round education if faced with overcrowding sometime in the future."

Conclusions

After analyzing the data collected in this case study, the following conclusions were reached:

1. The superintendent, as leader of a change process, is the chief communicator of the vision of the change and chief architect of the decision paths.

2. Innovations may be implemented that do not meet the goal for which they are originally selected.

3. Participatory decision making creates positive excitement in stakeholder groups but causes compromised decisions that dilute the effect of an innovation if negotiables and non-negotiables are not defined early in the process.

4. Failed bond elections cause a crisis of confidence particularly between a superintendent and school board.

5. Decision making in a district is impaired when policy makers are in a crisis mode.

6. Groups form to influence decision makers when individuals perceive that no established group is lobbying for their interests.
7. Implementing year-round education to avoid building costs is difficult to achieve if the implementation is only at the elementary level.

8. Implementing year-round education without being fully multi-tracked costs the district money.

9. Maintaining the "traditional" track in year-round education costs a district money.

10. Implementing year-round education district-wide reduces to some extent the autonomy of site-based management.

11. Implementing a major organizational change is not successful when a board does not have confidence in the superintendent and patience with the process.

12. A superintendent who ascribes to the philosophy and practice of participatory leadership creates both intended and unintended consequences of his or her actions. The unintended consequences can neutralize the intended consequences when implementing a major organizational change.

Implications

Specific points that can be drawn from this study and applied to future efforts by school districts to implement major organizational change include the following:
1. An innovation such as year-round education should be implemented to address a specific goal or purpose. There must be a direct relationship and close connection established between the effort to implement and the anticipated benefit, otherwise, the innovation becomes an end in and of itself.

2. The chief innovator should establish negotiable and non-negotiable decisions early in the process. He or she is responsible for communicating the vision, connecting the vision to the outcome, and managing decisions within the framework of what is negotiable.

3. Practitioners of participatory leadership should analyze both the intended and unintended consequences of their behaviors. The benefits of the intended consequences should outweigh those of the unintended consequences.

4. External events can change the dynamics of the relationships of the individuals and groups that must work together to effect major organizational change. A crisis in confidence and trust involving key players must be resolved before accelerating implementation of an innovation. Adjustments in communication levels, decision initiatives, and operating styles should be negotiated so that trust and confidence are re-established prior to proceeding with the innovation.
5. Leaders cannot focus so much energy and attention on an innovation that other major decisions or events are left unattended. Although the innovator's focus must be on keeping the vision of the innovation communicated and supported, he or she must also allocate sufficient time to other needs of the organization. Failure to do so may leave important decisions to others or result in missed opportunities.

6. Long-term research studies can provide a more complete analysis of the lasting effects of decisions, actions, and behaviors. The cycle of initiation to institutionalization to maintenance of major restructuring initiatives in complex organizations has lengthened appreciably. Researchers should be prepared not only to invest time in initial investigation but to follow-up to verify early conclusions and final results.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Findings which emerge from this study point to future areas in which research is needed, whether it is quantitative or qualitative or a combination of the two. One superintendent in one school district and his effort to implement year-round education at a time of uncertainty about state and local finance were looked at in this study. The dynamics of implementing a major organizational change
vary from district to district and over time. A broader research basis is needed on which to build future information about superintendent leadership style, implementing innovative ideas in organizations, and the future of year-round education as a fiscally responsible alternative. The following recommendations should be considered by future researchers who desire to add to the literature:

1. Additional studies on superintendents' leadership styles should be conducted to determine if one specific leadership style is more conducive to promoting organizational change or if change is best facilitated by a situational leadership approach.

2. Research should be designed to find if there is a relationship between superintendent initiated change efforts and superintendent tenure.

3. Further research should be focused on superintendents' knowledge of factors that support and those that sabotage major organizational change (Fullan & Miles, 1992).

4. Research should be conducted to determine if superintendents can (or should) change their leadership styles to match changes in the needs of their districts.

5. Research is warranted in districts where bond elections have been lost to reveal the impact of bond
election failure on board and superintendent interactions and confidence patterns.


Hord, S. (1990b). Realizing school improvement through understanding the change process. Issues about change. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.


