PERCEPTIONS OF SITE BASED DECISION MAKING IMPLEMENTATION IN THE IRVING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, IRVING, 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 EDUCATION

By

Larry Watson, B. S., M. Ed.
Denton, Texas
August, 1994
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In 1983, the report *A Nation at Risk* catapulted school reform to the forefront of national attention. The State of Texas responded with legislation dictating curriculum and instructional time. Failure to accomplish the desired improvement in student achievement caused these mandates to be eased. In lieu of the mandates, the Texas legislature and the Texas Education Agency have set expectation standards called academic indicators. Local districts and campuses must utilize site based decision making (SBDM) to determine how each campus will meet the set standards.

Dealing primarily with curriculum roles and responsibilities, this study details perceptions of principals and teachers as SBDM was being implemented in a suburban school district serving 25,000 students. Data were gathered utilizing a structured interview and a follow-up telephone interview. Addressed in the study are perceptions of: (a) role changes, (b) responsibility changes, (c) needed improvements in the implementation process, (d) teacher empowerment, (e) positive and negative elements, and (f) student achievement.
Perceptions revealed in the study include: (a) district responsibilities will not change, (b) district roles will change, (c) campus roles will change, and (d) campus responsibilities will change. Respondents indicated that three years will be required for the effective implementation of SBDM and that implementation could have been enhanced with better training in the SBDM process as well as more effective communication both before and during the implementation of SBDM. Based upon teachers' being able to provide more input into the decision making process, teacher empowerment was perceived as available if desired. SBDM was not perceived to have a direct influence on student achievement. Respondents believed that SBDM might lead to (a) access, (b) focus, (c) ownership, (d) proximity, and (e) teamwork. These five factors might then influence curriculum, instruction, and learning which—in turn—might improve student achievement.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was accomplished with the assistance of many people. Special thanks goes to Dr. Robert Bane. His counsel throughout the process kept the task sequential and also made it enjoyable. Great appreciation must also go to my wife Terri and my daughters Sara and Katie. Their patience and understanding as they lived almost without a husband and father goes beyond what mere words can express.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Historically, schools in the United States have been pressured to align their curriculum with the prevailing values of society. From Massachusetts to California, from Olde Deluder Satan to the present, schools have been and continue to be a reflection of society's demands (Orlich, 1989; Joyce, Hersh, & McKibbin, 1983).

With the publication of A nation at risk in 1983, the schools have been pressured to produce students who can compete successfully with their counterparts worldwide (Cuban, 1990). The states responded to this call for a higher achieving student by mandating change in almost every facet of education: teacher training, curriculum, and required courses as well as length of school day and year. Though some positive results have been noted, the myriad of reforms instituted across the United States have not produced the outcome demanded by politicians, business leaders, and the public.

Numerous explanations have been offered for the results' not corresponding to mandated change. The most recent explanation has been that the external mandates have
not reached the classroom. Furthermore, to reach into the classroom, reform would require involvement in the planning process by those who have responsibility for implementing the change. Thus, getting at the hub rather than the rim of the change process should involve planning by those closest to its implementation (Davies & Ellison, 1991; Koppich & Kerchner, 1990; & Sergiovanni, 1989).

Site Based Decision Making (SBDM) is a process for relocating decision making to the local campus in an effort to improve the students' educational outcome. These decentralized decisions may include assessing student outcome, determining goals and strategies, and ensuring that implementation—including needed adjustments—occur (Jenni & Mauriel, 1990). The State of Texas has mandated SBDM, yet flexibility has been given to the individual school districts for its implementation. By September 1, 1992, each school district was required to submit to the Commissioner of Education their plan for implementation of SBDM.

Statement of the Problem

As site based decision making has been implemented across the State of Texas, traditional roles and responsibilities within districts as well as individual schools have been in a state of flux. Who would make what curriculum decisions? Who would provide input and advice
before the decisions were made? Who would approve the decisions? Who would be accountable for ensuring results?

Purpose of the Study

This study sought to determine how the perception of roles and responsibilities in areas of curriculum matters have been impacted by the implementation of SBDM in a large suburban school district: the Irving Independent School District (IISD) in Irving, Texas.

Research Questions

1. How were curriculum roles within the Irving Independent School District changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

2. How were curriculum responsibilities within the Irving Independent School District changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

3. How were curriculum roles and responsibilities within an individual school changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

Significance of the Study

Designed to elicit responses relative to perceptions of changes in curriculum roles and responsibilities in the IISD as SBDM took effect, this study has also sought to determine if the changes would reach into the classroom as
well as whether the implementation of SBDM could have been made more effective.

Findings of this study may enable the IISD and other school districts to make better use of SBDM while redirecting energies and finances into more constructive, student achievement impacting areas than originally planned.

Definitions

**Community Representative:** a person who is not a school district employee and does not have a child enrolled in the school (Irving Independent, 1992b).

**Continuity:** a relationship between a subsequent learning experience and its predecessor (Armstrong, 1989).

**Core Committee:** the principal and the four teachers elected by their faculty to serve on the campus SBDM committee (Irving Independent, 1992b).

**Parent:** a person who is not a district employee having a parental relationship to a student currently enrolled on campus (Irving Independent, 1992b).

**Site Based Decision Making (SBDM):** a process for decentralizing decisions to the local campus in an effort to improve the students' educational outcome. Decentralized decisions may include assessing student outcome, determining goals and strategies, and ensuring that implementation and needed adjustments occur (Meno, 1992).
IISD Demographics

Over the past ten years, Irving has become a diversified community, and this diversity has presented challenges to the Irving Independent School District in meeting the educational needs of the 25,000 students it serves (see Table 1).

Table 1.
Irving Independent School District, 1992-93 Profile

| ENROLLMENT | 25,064 |
| STUDENT/TEACHER RATIO: | |
| Elementary | 18.0 to 1 |
| Junior High | 17.4 to 1 |
| High School | 17.7 to 1 |
| NUMBER OF CAMPUSES: | |
| Elementary PreK-5 | 17 |
| Junior High Grades 6-8 | 6 |
| High Schools Grades 9-12 | 3 |
| Alternative School | 1 |
| ETHNICITY: | |
| American Indian | 0.7 |
| Asian | 6.1 |
| Black | 11.4 |
| Hispanic | 26.2 |
| Caucasian | 55.6 |
Table 1 continued

<table>
<thead>
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<th>STAFF:</th>
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<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Professionals</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraprofessional/Classified</td>
<td>923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,593</strong></td>
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**ADVANCED DEGREES:**  45.5%

**IISD FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

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<tr>
<td>Assessed Valuation</td>
<td>$5,633,673,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IISD Tax Rate per $100</td>
<td>$0.5373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Education District per $100</td>
<td>$0.9876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IISD Operating Budget</td>
<td>93,375,966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Student Cost</td>
<td>3,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonded Indebtedness</td>
<td>120,361,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund Balance</td>
<td>10,012,857</td>
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**FUNDING SOURCES:**

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<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>3%</td>
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**ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED:** 34%

(Irving Independent, 1992a).
Since 1982, the ethnicity of the student population has changed dramatically. In 1982 there was a total minority population of 15.9% with 10% Hispanic. By 1992 the ethnicity changed to include 44.4% minority with 26.2% Hispanic, 11.4% Black, 6.1% Asian, and 0.7% American Indian. This change has brought an increase in the number of students who are Limited English Proficient. On some campuses, as many as 26 different languages are spoken among the minority students.

With the changing demographics of the community, the District has witnessed a change in the socioeconomic level of the student population. In the past, the majority of the students came from families of comfortable wealth or modest income. Today, many students come from families who are struggling with poverty. At each school there is a wide range of socioeconomic levels: from families with income of six digit figures to those with little or no income. During the 1991-92 school year 34% of the students in the District were economically disadvantaged in comparison to 18% in 1987-88. The change in socioeconomic level may be one of the factors that has contributed to more students leaving school before completing requirements for graduation. The most recent report available indicates the District's dropout rate was 4.5% or 460 students for grades 7-12 for the 1991-92 school year.
As the demographics of Irving have changed, the student population has increased and the amount of state funding has decreased because Irving is an above average property wealth school district. Since the 1983-84 school year, the student population has increased from 20,070 to 25,064 for 1992-93. Simultaneously, state funding has decreased from 39.25% in 1983-84 to 8% in 1992-93 (Irving Independent, 1992a).

IISD Site Based Decision Making Plan

The IISD Site Based Decision Making (SBDM) Plan specifies in Policy EAB (Local) that the minimum SBDM committee for each campus will consist of: (a) principal, (b) four teachers, (c) two parents, (d) two community representatives, and (e) two students (high school only).

Policy EAB (Local) provides for four teachers on the minimum SBDM committee. The principal and these four teachers are referred to as the core committee. This core committee will, as policy provides, elect the parents, community representatives, and students to the SBDM committee.

Policy EAB (Local) also provides that not more than two-thirds of the membership of the campus SBDM committee shall be school district employees. Not less than two-thirds of the school district employees shall be classroom teachers. Additional members may be included
and, "ideally, the SBDM committee will reflect the full socioeconomic and ethnic diversity of the campus committee" (Irving Independent, 1992b, p. 9).
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reform in American public education has had a long history. From the Olde Deluder Satan Act of 1647 to the present, educational reforms have been suggested by individuals, foundations, associations, governmental agencies, university boards of regents, state boards of education, and local school boards. Frequently, the suggested reforms have been contradictory in nature, poorly implemented, and eventually abandoned. Many of these suggested reforms have been described as purely cosmetic—having no real impact on instructional strategies, on the organization of schools, or on student learning. Most of the suggested reforms have been "intrinsically inferior, the products of armchair theorists who suggest simplistic solutions to complex educational and social problems" (Orlich, 1989, p. 513).

Centralized Reform in the United States

In 1988 Roger Porter, a former White House assistant for economic and domestic policy, labeled America's educational output depressing and uninspiring. Yet
Porter was describing those relative achievers who at least graduate from high school. About 25% of all high school students in the United States—some 750,000 each year—simply drop out (Perry, 1989).

Porter's negative description of the schools' output came five years after a flurry of educational reform was generated by the release of the report from the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE). This 1983 report titled *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform* had, by the end of that year, caused the Education Commission of the States to observe:

Hardly a month has passed without the release of a major report by a prestigious group of citizens concerned about the nature of American education. And sprinkled between the major releases have been dozens of state task force reports, interim studies and articles about school renewal, effective schools, business-related partnerships or ways to meet the educational needs of a rapidly changing society. (cited in Passow, 1989, p. 13)

The NCEE's report listed thirteen educational dimensions of risk viewed as indicators of a serious crisis in education. These dimensions included but were not limited to: (a) poor achievement on test scores, (b) declines in both enrollments and achievement in science and mathematics courses, (c) the high cost of providing remedial and training programs to business and to the military, (d) unacceptable levels of functional illiteracy found among American children and adults, and (e) poor
performance of America's students on comparative studies of educational achievement (Education Commission, 1983).

The NCEE's report recommended: (a) tougher coursework requirements for high school graduation, (b) higher admission standards for universities, (c) a longer school day as well as a longer school year, (d) merit pay for outstanding teachers, and (e) more participation by citizens in the public schools (Education Commission, 1983). This report offered nothing that had not been advocated and discarded between the 1890s and the 1950s. C. H. Edson concluded that A nation at risk closely resembled the 1893 report issued by the Committee of Ten. Both reports recommended longer school terms and survival of the academically fittest, and both groups were dominated by non-public school personnel (Edson, 1983).

In May 1984, the Department of Education noted a deep public concern and a tidal wave of school reform (A nation responds, 1984). The authors of A nation responds stated:

These efforts [were] not narrow in origin, focus, support, or goals. The diversity of task forces at work on education around the country--task forces including citizens, parents, students, teachers, administrators, business and community leaders, and elected and appointed public officials--[was] evidence of the scope. (U.S. Department of Education, 1984, p. 17)

The Department of Education talked about the "extraordinary array of initiatives under discussion and
underway" as being impressive (U.S. Department of Education, 1984, p. 17). The Education Commission of the States estimated that well over 300 state level task forces were working on some aspect of school reform, with governors, legislators, and state education departments all competing for leadership. The National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and their local and state affiliates joined the reform movement. Many local school districts acknowledged the need for reform and undertook local reforms. Corporations and businesses became more visibly involved in efforts to improve education. To this date, six years after the publication of A nation at risk, both the media and the public still seem interested and concerned about educational excellence and what needs to be done to achieve it (Passow, 1989).

In an overview of reform, Orlich (1989) stated that reform of the teaching profession was addressed in a 1986 report by the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession sponsored by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy. The report, A nation prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century, proposed eight major reforms:

1. Create a national board to license teachers.

2. Allow teachers to determine what will be taught in the schools, consistent with state or local goals.
3. Establish ranks within the teaching profession, or at least designate lead teachers.

4. Require a bachelor's degree in arts and science as a prerequisite for enrollment in education courses leading to certification.

5. Reinstate the master of teaching degree.

6. Prepare more minority teachers.

7. Institute merit pay, with student test scores as the basic criterion.

8. Dramatically increase teacher salaries, to a maximum of $72,000 per year (Carnegie Corporation, 1986).

The proposals in A nation prepared have not been practical for several reasons. The fifty states have 50 different school systems, and contractual agreements exist between several thousand school districts and their teacher bargaining units. The diversity among states and the variety of union or bargaining agreements presents an almost impregnable obstacle to the attempt to create a national licensing board for teachers. A lengthened program for teacher certification would reduce, not increase, the entry of students into the program. Finally, the states would have to raise taxes by 100% to 200% just to pay the suggested teacher salaries (Orlich, 1989).

Some of the same ideas appear in Tomorrow's teachers: A report of the Holmes Group. The Holmes Group was a club
of research universities that have joined together to reform teacher education. The goals of the group were:

1. To make the education of teachers intellectual more solid.
2. To recognize differences in teachers' knowledge, skill, and commitment, in their education, certification, and work.
3. To create standards of entry to the profession--examinations and education requirements--that are professionally relevant and intellectually defensible.
4. To connect our own institutions to schools.
5. To make schools better places for teachers to work, and to learn. (The Holmes Group, 1986, p. 4)

Like A nation prepared, the report from the Holmes Group has not been practical for several reasons. Differentiated staffing proved to be ineffective in the 1970s. The proposed longer teacher certification process would cost teachers lost salaries and extra tuition. Improving the workplace is an exalted goal, but difficult to achieve. And, in one instance, implementing the goals of the two groups would have the same undesirable effect: reducing the number of minority teachers from few to almost none (Orlich, 1989).

From the late 1950s through the early 1970s, the Ford Foundation—a private, nonprofit agency—supported a variety of reform efforts in a wide range of schools: small and large, rural and suburban as well as urban. More than $30 million was invested in this Comprehensive
School Improvement Program (CSIP). According to Orlich, their report listed these conclusions:

1. Innovations took hold best where the number of schools was limited and the objectives and techniques were few and sharply defined.
2. The policy and governance structures for projects seemed to have little to do with the projects' initial effectiveness, their staying power, or their ultimate acceptance.
3. Larger changes seemed to take place when the recipients of funds agreed at the outset on the nature, extent, limitations, and specific purposes of a project. Projects that focused on broad purposes produced few measurable outcomes.
4. Projects that were most effective in the short run and that sustained their momentum after outside assistance ended were those whose directors were present at the planning stage and remained through the implementation, evaluation, and adaptation phase.
5. Innovation and change require the broadest possible commitment of intellectual and financial resources—from multiple funding sources, but especially from the parent district. The provision of such resources demonstrates to project participants and to the public a budgetary and philosophical commitment to the concept.
6. The university as an institution seldom functioned as a force for improving elementary and secondary schooling, although individual faculty members worked in schools and with teachers.
7. The less complex a school system's structure, the more easily innovations were introduced and accepted. Small schools changed faster than large ones. But small schools were also quicker to abandon innovations when the project director departed or external funding decreased.
8. The most lasting innovations seemed to occur in middle-sized suburbs—communities small enough to avoid divisive debates among powerful interest groups but large enough to guarantee that the innovations are not identified with a single individual or representative of a simple or localized concern.
9. Communities that were approaching crisis and confrontations in their school systems were more likely to waste funds than were communities that had already resolved some of their conflicts and were not ready to conduct an organized search for solutions. (Orlich, 1989, p. 515)
The Ford Foundation's ultimate conclusion was that even with massive effort a comprehensive school reform was not economically feasible (Ford Foundation, 1972).

Although the reports differed in their mechanics, there were commonalities in emphasis. Educational excellence (defined as higher standards and indicated by tougher academic requirements, reduction or elimination of electives, more mathematics and science, more homework, more tests, tighter disciplines, and longer school days and school years) needed to be promoted to reverse the rising tide of mediocrity (Passow, 1989).

With this perception of reform, together with the traditional view of education as a state function, in the early stages of the reform movement states approached the perceived need for change with sweeping legislative mandates. In some states these were single laws (though some ran as long as 100 pages); in other states reform packages consisted of many bills enacted at the same time. Meanwhile, state boards of regents and state boards of education were also mandating changes (Passow, 1989).

As for changes affecting student standards:

Forty-five states and the District of Columbia altered their requirements for earning a standard high school diploma, and these changes have universally been increases in required courses:
1. Thirty-four states and the District of Columbia had minimum requirements in 1980 and have added to that number.

2. Forty-two states increased mathematics requirements.

3. Thirty-four states changed their science requirements.

4. Eighteen states modified their language arts requirements.

5. Twenty-six states changed their social studies requirements.

6. Fourteen states changed requirements in physical education and health.

7. Six states now require computer literacy.

8. Fifteen states changed the school attendance age, with six states adding years at the end of mandatory schooling, six starting students younger, and three doing both; and

9. Six states increased the length of the school year; seven states decreased it. The length of the school day has not experienced a major change (cited in Passow, 1989).

To further illustrate the phenomenon of spontaneously generated school studies more than 275 education task forces had been organized in the United States in the early and mid-1980s. In addition to the reports generated by task forces, at least 18 books or book-length national
reports intended to fix the schools were published during the 1980s. Besides the changes noted above, the outcome of these reports, included: (a) higher college admission standards in 17 states, (b) statewide student assessment programs in 37 states, (c) teacher competency tests in 29 states, and (d) changes in teacher certification requirements in 28 states (Chance, 1988). Nationwide, more than 700 state statutes affecting some aspect of the teaching profession were enacted between 1984 and 1986 (Timar & Kirp, 1989). Even so, most reform has been political and fleeting (Chance, 1988).

A theme common to almost all the reports was the clear warning that American education was deteriorating seriously and that the nation's very future was threatened by the erosion of its educational foundations (Passow, 1989). "Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovations is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world" (U.S. Department of Education, 1983, p. 5).

Beginning with A nation at risk in 1983 and continuing through the 1980s and into the 1990s, school reform has become a major political issue (Perry, 1989). Because education exerted a strong influence on the young, society placed great constraints on its schools so that they would reflect the prevailing social attitudes as well as fit current views about how its children should be trained.
(Joyce, Hersh, & McKibbin, 1983). Pressure has been placed on schools to align with public shifts in values. These value shifts have occurred when economic, social, and demographic changes created social turmoil. The public schools are charged with the responsibility for addressing the national ills or quieting the turmoil. If schools would work on these tasks, it was assumed that slow improvement in the next generation might occur. The conservative leaders of the 1980s and early 1990s valued an individual who could compete in the world marketplace. Schools are moving to accommodate this value shift as they attempt to be an "engine of social and industrial improvement" (Cuban, 1990, p. 8). The equation of the failure of America's schools with a declining economy and weakened national security triggered the current reform movement (Passow, 1989).

**Reform Dilemma**

In the midst of this extensive and far-reaching reform a dilemma has arisen. In the 1984 comprehensive report, *A Place Called School*, Goodlad suggested that reform was failing to produce an impact at the most critical level: the classroom. Goodlad also questioned whether some education stereotypes were so ingrained in our culture that they virtually shape the entire education enterprise, discouraging or even destroying innovation.
As one of the more active states involved in educational reform, California provides some insights into the educational reform movement and its dilemma. In its report, *Conditions of education in California, 1986-87*, the Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) group observed that structural changes could be made relatively straightforwardly.

Decisions slowing the intent of reform include: (a) determining the content of required courses, (b) selecting adequate textbooks, (c) purchasing appropriate materials, (d) recruiting qualified teachers, (e) training teachers in the necessary skills, (f) changing the district policies and school structures to nurture the teaching of required courses, and (g) ensuring that new courses produced improved student learning. These involve a long-term complicated process, the existence and success of which are not assured by structural changes alone (PACE, 1986-87).

To achieve full and effective implementation of the goals of reform "requires changes in teachers' attitudes and skills, in administrators' expertise, and in school organization and culture, all of which are difficult, time consuming to produce, and dependent upon local enthusiasm, commitment, and effort" (PACE, 1986-87, p.4). The authors of PACE concluded that if change were to take place, the locus of action and responsibility must shift from the
state level to the local level. Although the state could "initiate and nurture these processes, it cannot mandate their outcomes. . . . The state now depends upon actions of those at the local level, persons who actually manage and deliver educational services to students, to implement the hopes of educational reform and improvement" (PACE, 1986-87, p. 5).

In October 1989, at Fortune magazine's second education summit, a group of more than 200 business leaders, politicians, and educators met to consider the issues facing education in the United States. Those in attendance conceded that real improvement—which everyone seemed to agree really refers to standardized test scores—will require a complete restructuring of United States' schools (Orlich, 1989; Perry, 1989).

The structural design of a school—such as cellular classrooms—physically and temporarily isolates people in schools and help keep their behavior within narrow limits. Such structure creates a harmful form of homeostasis or resistance to change which separates teachers from the community, administration, and each other, and thus effectively neutralizes almost all attempts at serious innovation (Joyce et al., 1983).

Bureaucratic decentralization lies at the heart of restructuring. However, decentralization goes against the grain of a 30-year educational procedure which has relied
on centralization and regulation to achieve specific policy goals (Timar, 1989). This procedure has revolved around the dominance and acceptance of the state's role and the district's reinforcement of that role (Anderson & Klein, 1990).

Decentralizing Reform in the United States

"But the times, they are a-changing" (Davies, Topping, & Koon, 1989, p. 5). The wave of reform has moved from the centralization of decision making about educational policies to its decentralization (Anderson & Klein, 1990). Basically, schools are being asked to assume more autonomy and control their own destiny (Davies et al., 1989). The new movement is toward site based management where administrators and teachers have greater power over decision making (Anderson & Klein, 1990). From their review of school effectiveness studies conducted in 35 states, Bancroft and Lezotte concluded that establishing a building-based improvement team composed of teachers and administrators accelerates school improvement efforts (Bancroft & Lezotte, 1989). This coincides with James Conant's earlier advice that U.S. high schools should be improved school by school (Conant, 1959).
Site Based Decision Making as Decentralized Reform

Site based decision making, or school or site based management, implied a redistribution of power from a centralized locus to decentralized subunits within the organization. In a school district this usually meant from the central office to the school building. The administrators (principals) of these site-managed schools typically delegated this authority to, or shared it with, a local site council. At least, in theory, that has been what was supposed to happen. The local site councils, or responsible parties (Joyce et al., 1983), have been comprised of representatives from various groups from within the school's community.

These groups commonly included: (a) the teaching staff, (b) the administrative staff, (c) the parents, (d) sometimes students, and occasionally (e) non-parent community members. The decision making authority and role of the school site council has been generally set forth in a written agreement or policy statement from the school board. This agreement usually stated the purpose of the group, and the philosophical foundation for implementing a decentralized plan, and it may or may not have established the delegated decision making powers of the group. Even if the agreement spoke to these powers, it usually did so in very vague and general terms allowing for some
ambiguity in the definition. This vagueness and ambiguity have led to differing perceptions about the role and function of site-based management in schools and about the role and function of the site council (Jenni & Mauriel, 1990).

School-site management has not guaranteed that the same bureaucratic strategies for managing teachers would not emerge during this current wave of reform. For school-site management to succeed, it would have to be developed with the specific goal of creating a professional work environment for teachers. School-site management alone did not guarantee administrative decentralization. Many schools today fit the criteria commonly attributed to school-site management yet are managed by the principal. The issue was not simply how to achieve school-based management, but rather how to achieve collegial and collective management at the school level (Conley & Bacharach, 1990). "Any attempt to create a better environment for education will have to decrease isolation, increase cooperative planning, and sharply lengthen the amount of time in meetings" (Joyce et al., 1983, p. 69).

Taylor and Levine (1991) agreed that a professional work environment was necessary for school improvement, but that alone was not sufficient. A comprehensive improvement process that restructures both at the district
and school levels is required. School districts and schools must agree upon their responsibilities. Communication at the district level and at the school level must be improved. Reporting, student monitoring, and evaluation systems must be restructured. These are essential in order to avoid confusion and frustration on the part of those involved in setting priorities. Without this restructuring site-based management could end up doing little to promote school improvement (Taylor & Levine, 1991).

Historical Perspective

The idea of placing authority to make day-to-day decisions at the school site is not new. The earliest multiclassroom schools were managed by teachers and a principal teacher. Usually unmarried women, these teachers were able to meet with one another before and after school to administer the school and discuss the educational program. After World War II, when the increase of school administrators and the expansion of teacher unions placed teachers and administrators in conflict with one another, school-site decision making decreased. The principal handed down district policies and procedures to the teachers, who were then expected to carry them out. Authority in the schools had become more and more centralized and bureaucratized (Taylor & Levine,
This centralized decision making continued, with certain exceptions, until 1989—the beginning of the current wave of reform.

**Site Based Decision Making in England**

The American schools are not the only schools moving toward site-based decision making or management. In 1988, English legislators passed the Education Reform Act. With the intent of improving schools, this package of reform initiatives gave greater powers to the governors of schools. Included in this package was the concept of Local Management of Schools (LMS) intending to enhance the ability of schools to function as educational institutions while becoming more cost effective through greater managerial efficiency (Davies & Ellison, 1991).

This Education Reform Act was preceded by an Audit Commission study. The Commission considered that "more delegation of authority and responsibility to the local level will result in better value for money and avoidance of waste, provided . . . that the ground is prepared properly in advance" (Davies & Ellison, 1991, p. 13).

In September 1986, Bob Dunn, the Junior Minister for Education in England, stated:

> Our view is that financial management responsibility should be delegated as closely as possible to the point of delivery. . . . we want decisions to be taken at the rim of the wheel rather than the hub. (Davies & Ellison, 1991, p. 13)
The Local Education Authority (LEA) in England, similar to the school board in the United States, had to submit a plan for implementation of the Education Reform Act by September 1989—with full implementation to be accomplished by April 1993. The thinking behind the delegation to governors was that it would increase the involvement of parents and the wider community in improving the quality of education. Working together, the governor, parents, teachers, community members, and the LEA would provide the education desired by consumers. The LEA maintains the strategic role of setting policy and parameters, ensuring that schemes of delegation are effective in delivering better education, and monitoring performance. However, the actual detailed implementation is left to the schools (Davies & Ellison, 1991).

Local Management of Schools (LMS) involved the participants at the school level in a much wider range of functions than had previously been the case. The management task to be accomplished involved the organization of effective decision making structures with appropriate levels of participation by those to be affected by the decisions. This is not merely consultation, but participation in the decision making process. This may necessitate a change in the leadership philosophy of the head. It was inevitable that an extensive system of delegation would result in a greater
input of time at the school level. Most commentators have viewed the success of delegation of financial control as being dependent on the adequate fiscal training of heads, staff, and governors in their new roles and responsibilities.

As an effective scheme for training Heads and staff a three stage systematic and comprehensive program involves:

1. Initial familiarization with the nature and dimensions of the change;
2. A detailed development of management strategies and skills to manage delegated responsibilities;

A basic principle underlying the LMS was that of open enrollment, or parental choice of schools. The tenet at work has been that parents, as consumers, should have as great a choice as possible over the schools where their children are educated. The philosophy behind this legislation was the idea of the free market economy in which successful schools would recruit and flourish while unsuccessful ones would flounder.

Because schools would be funded on a formula which was largely based on pupil numbers, the effect of rising enrollment would be to improve the facilities available for pupil use. Schools losing enrollment will find it more difficult to meet their costs so that staffing and the curriculum would suffer. As a result, these schools
would probably lose even more pupils and would be on the downward spiral towards closure (Davies & Ellison, 1991).

If applied correctly, local management of schools would allow schools to be different. "Different schools bring meaning to choice, and choice brings competition. . . . Competition means schools must satisfy the customers in order to survive" (Neal, 1991, p. 14).

When choosing a school, parents would be concerned about the output of the school, particularly the performance of the pupils in the various curriculum areas. Thus, the concept of open enrollment, or parental choice, was linked to another aspect of the 1988 Act—the publication of performance indicators (Davies & Ellison, 1991). The British government legislated for delegation of budgets and associated powers to the governing bodies of many English schools by 1993. The experiences to date demonstrate the significant advantages of delegation:

1. Schools will be able to meet perceived local needs;
2. There will be the ability to respond quickly to changed circumstances;
3. When planning, a multi-year time horizon will be possible. (Davies & Ellison, 1991, p. 43)

Certain problems have subsequently arisen that need to be addressed:

1. A need to look at the time implications for the management and administration of the system;
2. The need for sophisticated management information systems;
3. The need to respond to training needs at all levels in terms of both attitude development and skill enhancement. (Davies & Ellison, 1991, p. 44)
The LMS has taken on concepts current in United States education. The English have taken parental choice of schools, delegation, autonomy and school site management and put them into a working model (Davies & Ellison, 1991).

Site Based Decision Making in the United States

American schools have quickly followed suit. Shared decision making was the main feature of the reform effort in Jefferson County (Kentucky). It was intended to "promote school-based planning, teacher participation in decision making, and a sense of collegiality—all of which would, in turn, yield programmatic innovations and so improve student achievement" (Timar, 1989, p. 270).

Restructuring in Dade County (Florida) has focused on the concept of site-based management (SBM) and recommended that decision making should occur at the instructional level (Timar, 1989). In California, Trust Agreements appeared to be encouraging teachers and school managers to assume collective responsibility for educational processes and outcome. Trust Agreements involved the transfer of authority from the exclusive domain of the district administration to the sphere of teachers or of teachers and management acting together. Trust Agreements were meant to encourage a sharing of decision making
responsibility between teachers and school administrators and, as a result, alter traditional hierarchical school district authority relationships (Koppich & Kerchner, 1990).

The current educational reform movement has differed from previous school efforts in its recognition that teachers were to be active partners in the change process (Koppich & Kerchner, 1990). Excellence could not be mandated; the key was the commitment of the participants (Raywid, Tesconi, & Warren, 1984). Through these changes, the initial stages in the development of an authentic profession of teaching could be seen.

Site Based Decision Making in Texas

The elevation of the education reforms across the United States during the past decade have been paralleled, even given leadership, by the State of Texas. Powerful demographic changes toward a predominantly minority school population spurred concerns. The apparent failure of schools to ensure a high level of academic performance and a minimum incidence of dropouts among school children was viewed as unacceptable. The state legislature responded with massive mandates aimed at rectifying a state education system that was perceived to be in crisis (Meno, 1992).
This period presented a tremendous challenge for schools. Shaped by frequent and detailed legislative mandates, the statewide educational system has undergone a rapidly evolving metamorphosis. To a limited extent, students have begun to acquire the benefits of some of these reform efforts, such as constantly rising expectations for performance on state adopted academic skill tests, gradually improving technology-based information systems, and expanding alternative professional preparation programs. However, the constraints imposed by such extreme state-level control of specific education structures has created confusion and, at times, inhibited innovative instructional strategies (Meno, 1992).

Along with the state government's prescriptions aimed at educational correction, independent school systems pursued other, more effective, ways to meet students' needs. Initiatives emerged for restructuring the entire educational organization and management of education. Strategic planning, utilizing committees of parents, community members, and educators, grew in popularity. Some campuses abolished state required remedial classes and created interdisciplinary team schedules.

These localized efforts to improve educational services have been noticed at the state level. The indication of this is the shift in legislation aimed at
redirecting the educational reform. Texas' second wave of reform is concentrating on decreasing the role of the state in determining the specifics of how programs are to be run at the school level. The new legislative efforts are designed to clear the path for campus-based plans aimed at improving outcome for all students (Meno, 1992). The legislators in Texas have seemingly accepted that outstanding performance is rarely given by subordinates responding to authority. Outstanding performance is a quality associated with one's beliefs and commitments. Sustained quality performance that exceeds the ordinary cannot be legislated or compelled (Sergiovanni, 1989).

Legislative actions that signal this new approach are a series of mandates for accountability for student performance paired with mandates for the establishment of committees at the district and campus levels to assist in developing local educational goals and initiatives. In addition to a strong focus on expectations for improved student performance embedded in the law, the intent of organizational decentralization is clearly empowered through a set of related legislative measures (Meno, 1992).

Senate Bill 1, passed in June of 1990 by the Texas legislature, provided for the establishment of district and campus committees whose classroom teacher and campus-based staff representatives are elected. Senate Bill 1 also provided that principals are to have primary
authority for campus staff appointments, after consultation with faculty regarding the desired qualifications for the position. Likewise, principals' appraisals are to be based, in part, on campus progress in attaining student performance objectives set by the principal with the assistance of the campus committee of teachers, other campus professional staff, parents, and community members. In addition, campuses and districts have the option of requesting waivers from inhibitions in law or state rules from the state commissioner of education, after local school board approval of the request.

In May of 1991, House Bill 2885 requiring SBDM, was passed by the Texas legislature. This law is an extension of the decentralization begun in Senate Bill 1. HB 2885 takes the committees already required by SB 1 and demands responsibility for improving student outcome through: (a) goal setting, (b) curriculum, (c) budgeting, (d) staffing patterns, and (e) school organization. HB 2885 requires that a district's plan for SBDM be developed and submitted for approval to the commissioner of education by September 1, 1992 (Meno, 1992). (Recall that English legislators required all LEA's to submit their plans for the implementation of the Education Reform Act by September of 1989 [Davies & Ellison, 1991].)
The paradox of the state of Texas dictating local
decision making mechanics represented a major
philosophical turning point at the state level. The
message from the Texas legislature was that local
communities and their respective school systems are to
determine how educational programs will be structured.
The state's role is to establish standards for
performance, determine district accountability with
respect to state standards, and coordinate technical
support to assist local districts in their efforts to
improve student performance (Meno, 1992). Again the Texas
legislators seemed to agree with Sergiovanni in that the
profession of teaching should rightly be held accountable
to the whats of schooling, issues of purpose, the
substance of schooling, and broad outcome, but only if the
profession is given the responsibility for deciding the
how (Sergiovanni, 1989).

Ideally, SBDM would be developed collaboratively by a
school or a district, not mandated by a state legisla-
ture. If a state does intervene, as was the case in
Texas, the laws should be very general and should support
the basic principles of decentralized and collaborative
management (Neal, 1991). This was clearly the message
being sent by the Texas legislature. Equally clear was
the message that local school districts must also
decentralize decision making (Meno, 1992).
HB 2885 designated the commissioner of education to assist districts in the shift to local decision making. The commissioner was to identify or make available various models for implementing SBDM. The commissioner was also charged with arranging for training in SBDM for school board trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, and other members of school committees (Meno, 1992). The amount of progress you can make with site-based management is limited unless the teachers are trained in problem analysis and decision making. Little will be accomplished with site-based management and training everyone in how to do it, if teachers are not also prepared to teach in different ways. Training must incorporate dealing with authority and decision-making responsibility, with preparation and staff development for teachers, with new forms of instruction, with new curriculum, with new assessment tools, new accountability systems, and with the culture of the system. Managing the entire change process is difficult to tackle (Brandt, 1991).

In any management system, success depends on all participants knowing their roles and responsibilities. Lacking this knowledge results in degrees of inactivity, duplication, conflict, and diminished effectiveness. This maxim is particularly true for site based management in which so many individuals with such an experiential
diversity are participating in the decision making process. Without a clear understanding of who does what, there can be chaos (Neal, 1991). In the private sector, in business and industry, large scale complicated change efforts began with top-down training. Once the organizational leaders have determined the desired direction and the skills people need, training was started for people at the top. Later training included those at lower levels. By the time the line workers were trained, the people above the line workers were already prepared to operate in the new environment (Brandt, 1991).

The school principal should be given special training for site based management. This training should include:

1. How to write a school plan;
2. How to prepare a school budget;
3. How to coordinate collaboration;
4. How to carry out purchasing responsibilities;
5. How to utilize the allocation formula;
6. How to develop evaluation processes for the school plan;
7. How to conduct a needs assessment;
8. How to carry out non-instructional and non-educational management functions. (Neal, 1991, p. 30)

"The principal is held accountable for the success and stability of the school. Therefore, he or she is entitled to premium training" (Neal, 1991, p. 30).

Generally, efficient staff development/training for site based management consists of orientation, strategic planning, financial planning, management/leadership
skills, group and collaborative planning, purchasing, personnel management, and effective school training.

This amount of extensive training, though best case scenario, is not seen by everyone as absolutely necessary. Even with a short period of training, the probability that team members will produce usable materials is substantially increased (Dick, 1986-87). But some degree of training is needed and the commissioner of education has been charged with that responsibility.

There are as many different ways of developing and implementing site-based decision making as there are campuses in the State of Texas. Each district must develop its own plan within the requirements of the law, local policy, and local condition. Each district's commitment to the SBDM process will determine the quality of the results and ultimate success in student achievement. As recognized by the commissioner of education, the implementation of SBDM is to be a long-term process. Even so, the commissioner urged districts to "go forward cautiously with vigor" in the implementation of plans, training, and support for SBDM (Meno, 1992, p. I-6).

**Definition of Site Based Decision Making**

Site based decision making is a process for decentralizing decisions. The demand placed upon each campus is to improve the educational outcome through a
collaborative effort by which principals, teachers, campus staff, district staff, parents, and community representatives assess educational outcome of all students and determine goals and strategies. The strategies are then to be implemented and adjusted to improve student achievement (Meno, 1992).

**Expected Outcome of Site Based Decision Making**

According to Lionel Meno, Commissioner of Education for the State of Texas, the expected outcome of site-based decision making is improved student performance as a result of:

1. Effective campus and district planning for the purpose of improved student performance;
2. Improved community involvement in the school improvement process;
3. Clearly established accountability parameters for student performance;
4. Raised staff productivity and satisfaction;
5. Improved communication and information flow;
6. Consensus-based, effective decisions;
7. Pervasive and long-range commitment to implementation;
8. Increased flexibility at the campus level in the allocation and use of both human and fiscal resources;
9. Coordination of regular and special program components. (Meno, 1992, p. II-1)

**Basic Components of Site Based Decision Making**

The State Advisory Committee on Site Based Decision Making identified six basic components of site-based
decision making. The basic components were to be considered during the initial development of a district plan for site-based decision making. As stated by Lionel Meno, Commissioner of Education,

Site based decision making will be implemented in a way that:

1. Reflects a commitment to improved outcomes for all students. . . . This expectation for student success is established as the primary anticipated result of site-based decision making. Improved student outcomes are based on the Academic Excellence Indicators and other locally defined student outcomes. A system of accountability for student outcomes is established that includes multiple alternative performance measures.

2. Outlines a collaborative structure and process. . . . Policies and procedures guide the establishment of district and campus level decision-making committees to ensure representative collaboration of principals, teachers, other staff, parents, and community members. The procedures provide clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of the school staff and the committee members for site-based decision making. Collaborative involvement and shared decision making are evidenced by school improvement plans, schedules of regular committee meetings, and open communication channels.

3. Provides a statement of purpose for site-based decision making. . . . The purpose of site-based decision making is clearly defined in the district plan. The uniqueness of each campus related to its needs, and its decision-making capacity to address those needs, are acknowledged in district policy and demonstrated in actual practice.

4. Defines decentralization parameters. . . . The specific areas of decision-making authority and responsibility for implementation with respect to goal setting, curriculum, budgeting, staffing patterns, and school organization are clearly defined at both the district and campus levels. Deregulation avenues are provided to waive local policies and state statutes, rules, and regulations if they inhibit improved student performance.

5. Provides adequate time, ongoing human resource development, and technical support. . . . Sufficient time is allotted to allow for the development of skills and attitudes that will ensure effective
site-based decision making. Awareness sessions and developmental workshops are provided for parents and community members, board members, all central office and campus professional and support staff, and district and campus level committee members on site-based decision making processes and procedures. When possible, multiple-role team training sessions are used to develop skills in conflict management, consensus building, team building, and problem solving. Session topics include planning and goal setting, laws and rules related to staffing and budgeting, waiver request procedures, and current educational trends and research.

6. Establishes procedures for planning and evaluating the decision-making process. . . .

Organizational and management procedures are established for planning scheduling, and conducting site-based decision making meetings and events. An evaluation process is developed and used to assess the effectiveness of committee decision making on an ongoing basis. Evaluation of performance on the Academic Excellence Indicators and other locally defined student outcomes is conducted periodically to determine the impact of decision making on student performance. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

For most school districts, planning and implementing these components of site-based decision making will require a reconceptualization of the roles and responsibilities of the board of trustees and the central office staff in respect to the campus school staff. If greater decision-making responsibility is to be decentralized to campuses, the role of central office staff will be strengthened in the areas of providing leadership for individual campus autonomy and providing support and services to the campuses. These pervasive role changes may require broad revision of job descriptions and central office procedures and extensive staff development efforts. (Meno, 1992, p. II-3-5)

The Change in Approach

The first wave of reform demonstrated that administrators sometimes view teachers not as decision makers but as bureaucrats or paper pushers (Conley, 1988). Typically, administrators who hold this belief
spell out the steps and procedures for teachers to use in carrying out their work (Conley & Bacharach, 1990). This makes schools "little more than franchises following rules issued from a central office" (Neal, 1991, p. 13). If, however, building administrators define the work of teaching as decision making, they are more likely to specify goals or expected outcome for teachers than to reproduce detailed procedures. Such administrators recognize that the success of school-site management depends on teachers' abilities to cope with uncertainty and make appropriate decisions. When teachers are viewed as professionals who must deal with problems flexibly, school administrators allow teachers latitude for dealing with classroom situations. The success of school-site management depends on the degree to which administrators allow teachers to take calculated risks (Conley & Bacharach, 1990). This is one of the pervasive role changes required for site-based management.

Change on a grander scale will require a new approach by the central office in at least five areas:

1. The office of superintendent, who is seen as strong, tough, and masculine, a take-charge boss who wields power with a doctorate in education, must not only have personal vision, but must work with others to develop a shared vision; they must answer, but also question; they must persuade, but also listen and consult; they must
exercise leadership, but also nurture the development of leadership throughout the school district.

2. The central office must insure that core values, beliefs, and goals of the school system are identified and proclaimed throughout the district. If core values are shared at the rim, school officials will feel that they have an investment in the larger whole and will adhere to these values even with the fragmentation that site-based management creates.

3. The central office must become more of a service agency staffed by facilitators and coordinators than an enforcement agency staffed by police officers. The underlying assumption is that schools can be trusted and may need help, but do not need to be controlled.

4. The central office must change from the concept of centrally enforced rules to a system of checks and balances. Using this approach, administrators concentrate their attention in areas with problems and unrealized potential, while giving great freedom to others.

5. School boards need to think differently about their role and their exercise of control. The school board must realize that they have a very limited capacity to control change in teaching and learning. This perspective also suggests that boards rely less on the uniform application of narrow rules and more on broad guidelines that can be waived in special cases (Murphy, 1989).
Based upon research, experience, and observation, Neal adds what would be a sixth new approach for school boards. Stating that "there is a direct correlation between the amount of money transferred to the control of local schools and the extent to which there is true management at the school level," he contends that many school districts claiming to be following site based management practices were, in fact, centralized in their control of the budget. For a school district to be fully committed to site based management, at least 75 percent of the entire school district's operating budget should be spent by the local schools. In this manner, "the local school principal is empowered to manage the school and be held accountable for a quality program. Under this arrangement, the principal has the ability to hire all employees; purchase all supplies, furniture, and equipment; structure the organization of the school; and implement a quality education program" as allowed by the parameters set by the school board (Neal, 1991, p. 24).

Glasser (1990) asserts that to move toward quality education will require a change from boss-management to lead-management. He offers four essential elements of lead management:

1. The leader engages the workers in a discussion of the quality of the work to be done and the time needed to do it so that the workers' input can be considered. The manager makes a continual effort to fit the job to the skills and the needs of the workers.
2. The leader models the job so that the workers who are to perform the job can see exactly what the manager thinks is the best way to work. At the same time, the workers are continually asked for their input regarding better ways to do the job.

3. The leader asks the workers to inspect or evaluate their own work for quality, with the understanding that the manager will listen to what they say because they know a great deal about how to produce high-quality work.

4. The leader is a facilitator in that he or she tries to show the workers that everything feasible has been done to provide them with the best possible tools and workplace, as well as a noncoercive and cooperative atmosphere in which to do the job. (Glasser, 1990, p. 431)

A lead-manager emphasizes that problems are never solved by coercion. Problem solving requires that all parties to the problem figure out a better way that is acceptable to all. If the first solution is not successful, the problem is readdressed. Because coercion is never an option, the lead-manager and workers cannot become adversaries. This lead-manager concept applies to the school board, superintendent, central office, middle management, principals, teachers, and students (Glasser, 1990). In total, these changes in the concept of school district leadership will require a new abstract be formed for site-based management.

More specifically, the leadership skills needed by a principal to be successful in a typical bureaucratic, centralized school district are somewhat different from the skills needed by a principal in a site-based management system. In a controlled, centralized system,
principals are judged by their ability to follow rules, regulations, and orders from above and to impress the powers-that-be within the bureaucracy. Under decentralized management, there are fewer orders from above and the principal is more accountable to students, parents, and school employees. This will require principals who are entrepreneurs, who are risk takers, who are innovators, and not those locked into tradition (Neal, 1991).

It would seem obvious that the principal cannot accomplish the job of leadership in site based management by himself or herself. The principal must train others to assume leadership roles within the school. Department heads, grade level chairpersons, PTA presidents, head custodians, committee chairpersons, and others have leadership roles which must be developed and supported by the principal (Neal, 1991).

The one thing that must remain constant and stable in the life of the school is the emotional and intellectual inclination toward improvement on the part of the site committee, or Responsible Parties. This constant and stable condition is referred to as the homeostasis of improvement (Joyce et al., 1983). In essence the focus is on creating an environment that promotes a continuous examination of school effectiveness so that specific, deliberated improvements can be made (Joyce et al., 1983).
Districts are urged to diagnose local problems rather than imitate another plan or model. SBDM is designed to provide: (a) individual school sites with the catalyst to speed change, (b) greater flexibility in programs, (c) more varied forms of assessment—break away from the norm-referenced, standardized tests, (d) reduce the influence of textbooks on the curriculum while increasing the use of other books, materials, technology, and experiential education (Maeroff, 1991), and (e) increased opportunities to solve the educational problems the schools identify (Koppich & Kerchner, 1990).

Administrators are being forced to use data in decision making and planning to various degrees. This may range from having too much data and reaching a point of analysis paralysis, inhibiting decision making to making the decision, or making a poor quality decision, with partial or incomplete data. To many administrators, data simply seems a burden (Davies, Topping, & Koon, 1989).

School districts typically report on three areas; output, input, and process indicators. Among the output indicators are (a) SAT/ACT/PSAT results, (b) national norm-referenced achievement test results, (c) state criterion-referenced tests (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS)), (d) percentage of vocational program completers who were placed, (e) graduation rate, (f) dropout rate, (g) attendance, and (h) averages. Input
indicators include: (a) teachers with advanced degrees, (b) minority teachers, (c) average student cost, and (d) average salary of instructional personnel. Process indicators include: (a) percentage of students in advanced math science, (b) foreign language, (c) advanced placement, and (d) fine arts courses. Site based management, along with the academic excellence indicators and derived data, is designed to reward schools that show productivity in improved graduation, dropout, and promotion rates (output); increased enrollment in upper level courses; and improved use of the postsecondary feedback report (Davies et al, 1989).

Neal (1991) states the evaluation plan for site based management should examine more than just output data, input data, and process data. The evaluation should also include the effects of the project on school system employees. The evaluation should include responses from students, parents, and the community regarding the restructured management system and focus on academic progress. Changes in attitudes of parents, students, teachers, classified personnel, supervisors, and administrators should be identified and studied. Also, the impact of secondary elements such as attendance, suspensions and expulsions, staff absenteeism, and teacher turnover should be identified and utilized for evaluation.
Conclusion

A public school system can be operated without serious input from its stakeholders, but in general, the school system will do better by taking advantage of the strength, knowledge, and good will of those who have a stake in the success of the schools (Neal, 1991). Site based management is being encouraged so that those associated with each school will make decisions about its operation (Maeroff, 1991). "When people are allowed to make decisions and are held accountable for those decisions, they tend to be much more analytical and responsible in making those decisions and will strive to make those decisions work" (Neal, 1991, p. 10). The belief among teachers is that teachers themselves need to contribute more extensively to school management and, that, if given the opportunity to try to solve educational problems through school-based management, the teachers will then have more of a vested interest in finding solution (Maeroff, 1991). The value of this ownership is based upon two well-established principles:

1. Innovation and reform are more likely when carried out by those who have ownership, responsibility, and accountability.

2. Those affected by decisions should have a voice in making those decisions (Neal, 1991).
Some observers see school based management as a power struggle, pitting administrators and school boards against teachers. This is not what exceptional teachers have in mind. What is at stake for them is "the wisdom and practicality of the process of arriving at decisions that affect teaching and learning. It makes little sense to teachers that those who are further away from students than they are determine what is best for students—and often do so without consulting teachers" (Maeroff, 1991, p. 14).

From looking at the data, the goals of site councils seem to be a diverse mixture. Communication, cooperation, and working together account for 40% of a site committee's goals while co-curricular kinds of change account for 30%, academic program or homework or discipline account for 30%, and no goals this year account for 10% (Jenni & Mauriel, 1990).

A conclusion one could draw is that site-based management is a success even though it does not seem to be affecting the major substance of curriculum and instruction. This would lead one to believe that constituents in a school are more concerned with delivery means, with communication, and with areas outside of the academic classroom than they are with the core curriculum and teaching in the school. Another interpretation might be that site-based management is a moderate success.
because site councils aid in the communication and public relations aspect of the school—especially communication between principal and staff and between parents and the staff and administration (Jenni & Mauriel, 1990).

The indicators of school reform must be distinguished from the real thing. They are the same only if the reforms reach into America's schools and classrooms and influence what principals and teachers believe, think, and do and what happens to students and learning (Sergiovanni, 1989). Mike Cohen (cited by Brandt, 1991) extends that thought to include thinking about assessment which requires thinking about accountability which requires thinking about curriculum. Site based decision making may not have much effect on instruction and curriculum unless it starts with a focus on curriculum and assessment that emphasizes students' outcome. "If you don't anchor changes to the student outcomes you want, there's no point in doing them. They are all just tools to bring about the outcomes . . . if the tools don't achieve their purpose, you need to discard them. If it turns out that site-based management isn't getting us where we need to go, there is no point fixating on site-based management" (Brandt, 1991, p. 56). Site based management has to stand or fall on whether or not it gets results.
CHAPTER THREE

METHOD OF RESEARCH

This study sought to determine the perceived changes in roles and responsibilities as Site Based Decision Making (SBDM) was implemented in the Irving Independent School District (IISD), a large suburban school district located near Dallas, Texas.

Research Questions

1. How were curriculum roles within the Irving Independent School District changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

2. How were curriculum responsibilities within the Irving Independent School District changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

3. How were curriculum roles and responsibilities within an individual school changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

Population

All building principals, teachers on the core committee of the site based decision making committee, and
all teachers in the IISD constituted the populations from which samples were drawn for study.

Research Sample

The research samples consisted solely of personnel from the IISD. Three high school principals and the six junior high school principals constituted the entire populations of these groups. From a population of 17, the eight elementary principals were selected by random sampling without replacement. From a population of 1,441, the eleven teachers not on their SBDM core committee were selected by random sampling without replacement. This teacher population was sorted to ensure that three high school teachers, one from each high school campus, four junior high school teachers, and four elementary school teachers were selected for the sample. The sorted populations included: (a) 338 high school teachers, (b) 310 junior high school teachers, and (c) 794 elementary teachers. The eleven teachers selected from the SBDM core committees were selected utilizing principal's recommendation of teachers with first period conference, availability for the study, plus a desire to participate in the study. These populations included: (a) 20 high school teachers, (b) 37 junior high school teachers, and (c) 79 elementary teachers. The campuses from which the junior high school teachers and the elementary school
teachers came were selected by random sampling without replacement from the six junior high school and the 17 elementary schools. The entire sample size was thirty-nine. (See Table 2.)

Table 2
Sample Groupings and Sample Sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Name</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School Principal</td>
<td>HP</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior High School Principal</td>
<td>JP</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School Principal</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Committee High School Teachers</td>
<td>HTC</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Committee Junior High Teachers</td>
<td>JTC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Committee Elementary Teachers</td>
<td>ETC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Committee High School Teachers</td>
<td>HTN</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Committee Junior High Teachers</td>
<td>JTN</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Committee Elementary Teachers</td>
<td>ETN</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=39

Instrumentation

Utilizing two structured interviews with a two to three month time lapse between interviews, responses were elicited from seventeen school administrators and twenty-two
teachers containing detailed perceptions of change within the first six months of the initiation of SBDM. The interviews were conducted individually and confidentiality was ensured. Each interview was tape recorded and transcriptions of each interview were gleaned to collect data for the study. As specific remarks were sifted from interview records, the analysis of this data provided the answers to the research questions. Prior to the actual interview, all potential respondents were provided with a copy of initial structured interview questions concerning (a) roles, (b) budget, (c) programs, (d) instruction, and (e) staff development.

Roles

1. Are curriculum roles within the school district changing with the implementation of SBDM? If so, which roles are changing and how are they changing?

2. Are curriculum roles within individual schools changing with the implementation of SBDM? If so, which roles are changing and how are they changing?

3. How will these role changes be accepted by the persons directly involved? By those not directly involved?

4. What will be the greatest positive impact in the area of role change?

5. What will be the greatest negative impact in the area of role change?
6. How will the resolution of conflicts between the principals (schools) and the central office differ from previous resolution procedures?

Budget

7. Who will be responsible at the district level for developing the curriculum budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?

8. Who will monitor the district budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?

9. Who will be responsible at the individual school level for developing the curriculum budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?

10. Who will monitor the individual school's budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?

11. How will the entire budgeting process differ with SBDM?

Programs

12. Who will be responsible for identifying and prioritizing curriculum problems to be solved? How is this different from previous practice?

13. Who will determine who participates in curriculum planning?

14. Who will develop the goals of the subject matter?

15. Who will determine the content of the subject matter?
16. Who will ensure the curriculum continuity between elementary and secondary schools?

17. Who will be responsible for ensuring that important skills that cut across the disciplines are appropriately taught and reinforced in those disciplines?

18. Who will be responsible for ensuring that the written curriculum is the curriculum that is taught and tested?

19. Who will be responsible for evaluating curriculum at the school level and using evaluative data to identify school level problems?

20. Who will be responsible for ensuring that a new curriculum is implemented after it is developed?

Instruction

21. Who will assist teachers in developing instructional plans based upon curriculum guides?


23. Who will purchase textbooks

24. Who will help teachers use student evaluation results to make needed modifications in the curriculum?

25. Who will determine the minimum level of competence required of students?
Staff Development

26. Who will plan district-wide staff development programs required by curriculum change?

27. Who will implement K-12 staff development programs for a specific area of the curriculum?

28. Who will implement school-site staff development required by curriculum change?

Two to three months later a second interview was held with the same individuals interviewed previously. Additionally, these respondents were asked:

1. How long will it take for SBDM to be effectively implemented in the IISD?

2. With the implementation of SBDM, where will major curriculum changes occur?

3. What are the major obstacles that must be overcome for SBDM to be effective?

4. How could the implementation of SBDM in Irving have been more effectively achieved?

5. How will student achievement be improved through the implementation of SBDM?

The responses were recorded and categorized.

Methodology for the Collection of Data

Data were gathered utilizing an initial structured interview schedule composed primarily of closed-ended questions and a second interview utilizing a structured
interview schedule of open-ended questions. In a structured interview, the questions, their sequence, and their wording are fixed. Relatively little liberty is allowed in asking questions. Unstructured interviews are more flexible and open, with the content, sequence, and wording of questions in the hands of the interviewer and often without a schedule (Kerlinger, 1986).

By combining the two interviews, structured with closed-ended questions and structured with open-ended questions, the beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes of respondents were revealed. A schedule of specific questions required all respondents to reply to the same questions. Additional related information was obtained by probing into the answers given by individual respondents. This flexibility to probe and add data created the personal interview technique necessary for this study.

Permission to conduct the study in the IISD was verbally granted by Assistant Superintendent Jerry Christian in January 1993. Written approval was received on February 3, 1993 (see Appendix A). Samples were selected and an introductory letter was written to each individual in the samples (see Appendix A). This letter included information about the study and solicited their participation. A follow-up phone conversation with each individual was made to respond to their questions. Interviews were then scheduled. Prior to the actual
interview, respondents were provided with a copy of the questions in the initial structured interview. Initial interviews were held within four months of the introduction of SBDM in the IISD. These interviews consisted of the structured interview questions, clarification questions, and probing questions. Additionally, principals were asked if, with the implementation of SBDM, their jobs will change and if so, how? Teachers were asked the same question about their jobs and if they could see teacher empowerment happening now or in the future with the implementation of SBDM. All respondents were asked for closing comments.

Between the first and second interviews, each respondent was provided with a copy of their initial interview. Respondents were then asked to reconsider the responses to the initial structured interview and were given opportunity to change or alter their responses. Respondents were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. A coding system was utilized: interviews were coded by interview number and respondent numbers.

The initial interviews were tape recorded and labeled for identification purposes. Each tape was transcribed. The second interviews were conducted by phone and hand written notes were taken. The transcriptions and the hand written notes were utilized as the basis for the data analysis, in Chapter Four.
Data Analysis

"As yet there are no agreed-upon data set ups among qualitative researchers so each analyst has to invent his or her own" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 79). The data collection methods and analyses utilized for this study followed procedures similar to those of qualitative research but without triangulation. This approach included the following components:

1. Data reduction "is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the raw data. Data reduction is a form of analysis that shortens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organizes data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 21).

2. Data display is an organized assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action taking. Data displays include narrative text, matrices, graphs, networks, and charts. All displays are designed to assemble organized information in an immediately accessible, compact form, so that the analyst can draw justified conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1984). For this study, matrices, which include coded symbols, short summarizing remarks and inferential remarks of participants, and charts are the primary display formats. The matrices used are role-ordered matrices.

People who live in organizations and people who study organizations know that how you see life depends in
part on your role—the complex of expectation-driven behaviors that go to make up what one does and should do as a certain type of inhabitant of an organized system. The teacher's high speed interactions with several dozen to several hundred children over the course of a day have a very different cast to them than the principal's diverse transactions with parents, vendors, secretaries, central office administrators, and teachers. . . . . A role-ordered matrix sorts data in its rows that have been gathered from or about a certain set of role occupants, reflecting their views. (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 104)

The displays were built so that answers to questions were sorted by different roles.

3. Conclusion drawing is the process by which the analyst decides what things mean, noting regularities, patterns, and explanations. This study looked for repeatable regularities and frequency counts in participants' responses that would lead to the answering of the research questions that have driven this study (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

As the tape transcriptions were studied, the responses were condensed so that extraneous material was eliminated and what remained were those phrases, sentences, or paragraphs that specifically answered the involved question. These answers were categorized, combined into frequency counts, and compared to the responses given to the same question by other respondents. Responses of individuals were compared to the responses of other individuals and the consensus of responses from each group was compared to the consensus of other groups. All
analysis efforts were aimed at answering the research questions and determining whether perceptions between individuals or groups were similar or dissimilar. As comparisons were made an encompassing consensus of answers was determined. From the responses of individuals and groups within the sample, conclusions were drawn that revealed the answers to the research questions. Additional analysis of information reached beyond the limits of the research questions and provided further insights into the SBDM implementation process.

Summary

This study was aimed at the perceived changes brought about by the implementation of SBDM. The responses to the structured questions from the individuals interviewed provided answers to the research questions. Additional perceptions gathered by probing and open-ended questions yielded information that broadened the boundaries initially set in this study.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This study centered around the implementation of SBDM in one large suburban school district, the Irving Independent School District (IISD), in Irving, Texas. Irving, a suburb situated on the western edge of Dallas, is strategically located near airports, major highways, high technology industries, expansive business development, and Dallas itself. The school district includes Irving, a small section of west Dallas, and a northern section of Grand Prairie, Texas. Twenty-seven schools with three high schools, one alternative education center, six junior high schools, and seventeen elementary schools provide an education for 25,000 students.

This study was conducted within the first six months of the initial implementation of SBDM in the IISD. Responses from district personnel were sought to determine how responsibilities and/or roles within the school district or how responsibilities and/or roles on individual campuses would change with the implementation of SBDM. Seventeen principals and twenty-two teachers responded to interview questions. The responses to these questions constituted
the data for this study. (See Appendix B for interview questions.)

Research Question 1

How were curriculum roles within the Irving Independent School District changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

Five interview questions given to respondents referred to Research Question 1. Interview question 1 was tabulated for convenience and is charted in Table 3. The other four questions (3, 4, 5, and 6) did not lend themselves to tabulation and are covered in more detailed discussion.

Interview Question 1, Part 1

Are curriculum roles within the school district changing with the implementation of SBDM?

Table 3

Frequency Count and Determination of SBDM Function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question 1: Interview Question 1, Part 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=39. Note. aTeachers on committee. bTeachers not on committee.
Illustrated are the perceptions of principals, teachers on the committee, and teachers not on the committee as they responded to the questions related to roles. A majority of principals perceived that district roles will change with the implementation of SBDM. Teachers, both those on the SBDM committee and those not on the SBDM committee, were evenly divided in their perception of district role change.

**Interview Question 1, Part 2**

*If so, which roles are changing and how are they changing?*

Not only did most respondents believe that curriculum roles within their school district will be changed with the implementation of SBDM, but responses indicated which roles would change and how these roles would change. Principals perceived this most strongly, believing that the role of central administration would change from "originating curriculum changes [to] being more supportive and helping a campus to effectively implement a curriculum change" (Interview JP2). This will necessitate a move from dictating what campuses are to do (Interview EP1) to seeking more input as educational changes are being addressed (Interview EP3). Even though the central administration will "still have to have their fingers in the pie, [the actual decision making will be moved to lower
They have to allow the schools to experiment" (Interview HP2).

Teachers on the committee differed in their responses. Perceptions were that, at this point, "we haven't changed our curriculum very much because SBDM has gotten a real slow start in those areas" (Interview HTC3). Central administration was perceived as losing a little bit of power while the schools are gaining a little power (Interview ETC2). The perceptions were of central administration now having to defend their mandates more so than in the past and of the focus having to be on the needs of individual campuses (Interview HTC1). Central administration was still viewed as the ultimate decision makers, but "a great deal of input will come in from other areas, which is good because a lot of times decisions are made that don't take into account the people that are actually involved in the trenches" (Interview HTC2). Even though central administration is losing some power, they will be responsible for interpreting mandates and regulations from the state (Interview ETC4). Central administration still must give direction to the school district.

The responses of teachers not on the committee were evenly split. Central administration was perceived as "having to think more of what responsibilities they're going to hand down to the school level" (Interview ETN1) and "they are going to have to be more attuned to what goes
on at each individual campus. They may even have to go out in the schools to find out what's being done differently among them" (Interview HTN2). Countering these perceptions were views that "the curriculum roles above the campus level are being carried out the same way they have been in the past" (Interview JTN4). Candidly, one respondent said, "I don't know what the role of the superintendent was before SBDM so I would not be able to tell you how it's going to change after SBDM is implemented" (Interview JTN1).

**Interview Question 3**

How will these role changes be accepted by the persons directly involved? By those not directly involved?

Perceptions varied as to how these role changes will be accepted. Although the implementation of SBDM was perceived to be in its infancy and too early to determine attitudes, the belief was that because instruction and student performance will be improved and because the decisions will be made as closely as possible to the teachers, acceptance will be positive (Interview HP3). Concurrency centered around teacher involvement in the decision making process. Even though teachers have not previously been in a position to make the type of decisions they will now be asked to make (Interview JP6), "if the teachers take a part in decisions, . . . it helps them to accept it more" (Interview JP3). This perception of
acceptance was not limited only to those teachers involved in the decision making process, but was also extended to non-participants. "The majority of teachers will be receptive to this because fellow teachers are involved in the decision making process" (Interview JTC4).

Perceptions included the possibility that problems could arise. The necessity of looking at the school as a big picture was discussed as "something we're going to have to work through with the committee is making certain that we look at the school as a whole" (Interview HTC1). This belief was echoed and enlarged as concern was expressed in regard to "gaining a whole school concept for committee members as well as jealousy and power struggles by those not directly involved in decision making" (Interview HP2).

Perceptions strongly suggested that negative reactions could occur if teachers feel "they don't have any input. It'll be coming down at them, edicts, and that's pretty much standard status quo. . . . If they're not directly involved, they're actually out of the loop. And because they didn't know where the changes came from, they'll react in a negative manner" (Interview HTC3).

The possibility persisted that no real changes would take place. This process "requires extra time and effort, and it's a change. And some people are not ready for that change. People that have been twenty years in education and done it a certain way, that classroom teacher is
probably not going to change. That principal who has been there that long and done things a certain way, must make a whole attitude change. And that's hard for people. . . . I think these people who don't shift are going to be finding themselves either moving along or stuck in an unsuccessful career track" (Interview JP2).

Through the SBDM process the perception was that "teachers, for a change, have a chance to . . . make use of their specialties. Their expertise is going to be given a chance to develop. . . . People who have not been directly involved will, through sub-committees and through more faculty working on curriculum, be drawn in and cooperate and work or they're going to be left on the outside" (Interview ETC1). A concise statement of agreement seemed to be: "Teachers probably directly involved may feel empowered. . . . Teachers not directly involved may feel left out" (Interview HTN1).

To resolve these feelings the principals and vice principals must "make sure everyone is aware of what is going on and try to get them involved" (Interview JTN3). "Communication between the principal and teacher will probably give them an opportunity to express their views" (Interview ETN2).

Through deliberate implementation and adequate training, the problems inherent in change could be reduced or eliminated. "By virtue of moving slowly with everybody
being acclimated and people getting away from the perception of outsiders meddling into school business, then, working hand-in-hand, these type of things will be accepted without any hesitation whatsoever" (Interview JP5).

Whether an individual is directly involved and accepting, feeling positive, and enjoying the decision making, or not directly involved and feeling left out and not as accepting of change, communication between all parties was perceived as the vital link in the effective implementation of SBDM.

**Interview Question 4**

*What will be the greatest positive impact in the area of role change?*

The implementation of SBDM produced numerous perceptions of positive impact. The primary positive impact mentioned by respondents was that of ownership. "Those teachers who are coming up with suggestions, if you let them run with it, it's amazing what teachers will do" (Interview HP2). In addition, "Teachers would feel more accountable because it's something that we have decided on. . . . They would feel more positive toward it" (Interview ETC3). Beyond teachers, the perception was that ownership would reach into the students' homes because "parents will feel more a part of what their children are going to be doing" (Interview EP2). The summary line seemed to be
being able to say: "'Hey, I can make a difference here'" (Interview EP5). Added to these descriptive versions of ownership were numerous responses of the one word, ownership, itself. No further elaboration seemed necessary to those respondents.

Another positive impact was that problem solving was perceived as individualized to a campus. "Schools can see a need in their particular school and they can change it if they need to" (Interview JTC3). This will be possible because teachers are "having more control . . . more of a part of what your school is doing" (Interview ETC2). "The teachers, if they choose to, have a great opportunity to get themselves involved in something where they no longer have to feel they're just reactive to everything flowing down from the state" (Interview ETC4). "It's going to put the people that are more closely involved with the individual campus controlling their destiny" (Interview HP3). This teacher input may affect more than teachers' control. "It might even bring administrators and teachers closer together" (Interview HTN1).

The positive impact of collaboration was voiced in that "the decision making process will now be spread over a wide range of expertise" (Interview JP4). "We are getting input from all different areas, which in the long run will help create a better idea" (Interview HPl). Principals will gain from this input because they "will have a broader base
experience" to utilize in the weighing of decisions (Interview HTN3). With more people involved and the process being collaborative, "it's going to be accepted more readily by people because they're involved" (Interview JP5). As a direct result of the involvement of more people in the decision making process, "more people get to work together. . . . You can learn so much from working together with each other" (Interview JTN3). "There will be better communication. . . . There will be more unity within the school" (Interview ETN1). This collaborative effort will also "help to improve relationships between the community and the school" (Interview ETN2).

The essence of SBDM and the positive impact resulting from its implementation focused on student achievement. Students will profit from the implementation of SBDM. "Students can benefit under SBDM. If the school becomes responsive to our client base, the students and the parents, then we have schools that are reflecting the educational needs of that community" (Interview ETC4).

**Interview Question 5**

What will be the greatest negative impact in the area of role change?

Perceptions of the negative impact created by the implementation of SBDM generated a plethora of responses. The primary response centered around the lack of time to do
all that SBDM requires. Concerns with time revolved around two related but separate themes:

1. The actual lack of time itself. "The negative influence will be the time constraints" (Interview JPl). "I'm concerned about doing this because it doesn't seem that we have the time to devote to it" (Interview JTC2).

2. People may become overly involved to the point of job neglect. "Sometimes people overdo it and want to be on every single committee. I can see them getting more involved with being on this committee, being on that committee, versus what is their job description" (Interview ETN3).

Another perceived negative impact encompassed the potential to error in decision making. "Probably we don't know what we're doing. . . . We're really unsure as to what site based management means" (Interview ETC1). "Those of us who are involved in it are inexperienced because it is new. I'm afraid we're going to make some mistakes. But I'm depending on the leadership and the wisdom of my principal to keep that at a minimum" (Interview JTC4).

Several respondents perceived the idea of the administration giving up power as a possible negative impact. Other perceived negatives included: (a) the difficulty in adjusting to change, (b) communication problems, (c) problems caused by campus diversity when students change schools, (d) power struggles, (e) unclear
roles, (f) gaining a whole school philosophy, and (g) problems created when personal ideas are not accepted.

This negative impact could prove debilitating to the effective implementation of SBDM. Underscoring these possible negatives were the needs for administrators to provide leadership, experience, and communication in order to overcome factors which could be detrimental in the application of SBDM.

**Interview Question 6**

*How will the resolution of conflicts between the principals (schools) and the central office differ from previous resolution procedures?*

A change in roles was perceived as necessary when conflicts arise between central administration and principals. Most responses repeated the idea that principals now have more influence. "The principal now has the backing, the authority based on the SBDM to have more—not authority necessarily—but power in the decision making . . . because we have decisions or consensus on issues from our site based committees" (Interview HP3). Perceptions were that before SBDM principals had to compromise more toward central office and school board (Interview ETC3). This relationship was perceived to be changing. "The central administration will see that there is more unity among the schools" (Interview JTC1). "Perhaps with the
support of the committee, principals will be given more
credence at the central level" (Interview EP6). "It's
going to force central administration to have sound
justification for not approving campus changes" (Interview
JP2). "There definitely will be pressure on them to be
more flexible . . . more receptive to other people's ideas"
(Interview EP8).

These perceptions were fairly standard but not without
limitations. Uncertainties were expressed. The conflict
resolution will be determined by how much freedom or
authority that the school board and central administrative
staff let the SBDM committees have (Interview JP5). "When
I was hired, I was told that if I didn't agree with the
central office, then the final decision would be central
office . . . I don't know if that's going to change or not"
(Interview EP2).

Perceptions indicated a change would occur due to the
consensus in decision making. The need for change was
perceived, yet responses reflected degrees of skepticism as
to the freedom yielded for that change to be enacted. The
amount of change, the authority, power, credence, or
flexibility given to principals will be determined by the
willingness of the school board and central administration
to allow that change to actually occur.
Summary of Research Question 1

Curriculum roles within the school district were perceived as changing with the implementation of SBDM. Principals perceived this change more than either teacher group. In total, respondents perceived the roles of the school board, central administration, principal, teachers, parents, and community were going to change. Principals and teachers will gain authority and power. Parents and community members will have a stronger voice in decisions. The school board and central administration must listen more and accept changes originated on the campuses. Central administration will become a judicial branch, verifying that proposed changes are within the limits of state and federal laws. However, the power loss perceived to be necessary at the central administration and school board levels will be controlled at those same levels.

Research Question 2

How were curriculum responsibilities within the Irving Independent School District changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

The answer to Research Question 2 was formulated by using interview questions that dealt with budget, programs, instruction, and staff development. Twenty-three responsibilities were elicited by twenty-two questions including: (a) five in budget, (b) nine in programs, (c)
five in instruction, and (d) three in staff development. Interview Questions summarized in tables 4, 5, and 6 will be listed and dealt with individually during the succeeding discussion. A complete list of interview questions appears in Appendix B.

Table 4 provides a numerical count of respondents' perceptions of where specific decisions will be made. The totals for each question may not equal the thirty-nine respondents because, for most questions, respondents perceived more than one person or group responsible for the curriculum activity. Even though some questions did distinguish between district or campus, respondents answered as they perceived a question, then enlarged and extended their answers. Within the same question, many responses included references to both district and campus issues. For this reason responses were difficult to effectively separate into district or campus. Responses to questions were recorded in the section dealing with Research Question 2. Conclusions related to district or campus were then drawn and reported separately as they addressed either Research Question 2 or Research Question 3.

Table 4 also illustrates the sixteen responsibilities perceived by respondents to fall within the scope of a site or campus and the seven responsibilities perceived by respondents to fall within the scope of central administration. With one exception—Question 14—agreement...
Table 4

Perceptions of Where Decisions Will Be Made When Utilizing Site Based Decision Making

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N=39

Note. <sup>a</sup>Teachers on committee. <sup>b</sup>Teachers not on committee. <sup>c</sup>Central Administration—includes state regulations, school board, superintendent, assistant superintendents, directors, and curriculum consultants. <sup>d</sup>SITE—includes personnel in individual schools: principals, assistant principals, vice principals, classroom teachers, and department chairpersons. <sup>e</sup>Interview question numbers.
among principals, teachers on the committee, and teachers not on the committee was uniform. This exception dealt with the development of school goals. Principals perceived goal development as a central administration function while both teacher groups perceived it as a site responsibility.

Table 5 illustrates who respondents perceived will make decisions once SBDM has been implemented. The numerical count indicates the number of respondents giving responsibility to each person or group. A column was provided for respondents who did not know the responsible person or group. A column was also provided for other answers. The totals for each question may not equal the thirty-nine respondents because, for most questions, respondents perceived more than one person or group responsible for that curriculum activity.

In Table 5 the column which provided for responses indicating that the responsibility would fall upon or be shared with the SBDM committee is crucial to the table. Previous to this time, SBDM had not been used. Therefore, SBDM involvement signifies a change in responsibility. The numbers indicate that responsibilities addressed in five questions (9, 12, 13, 19, and 28) are perceived to be changing with the implementation of SBDM. These questions pertain to the school's budget, program, and staff development. Even though these responsibilities may not be perceived to be the responsibility of the SBDM committee
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*Interview question numbers. bSecretary. cCounselor. dLibrarian. eTesting. fLab Manager. gCampus.*

Note. Answers to questions from first interview.

**Column labels:** SB--School Board; CA--central administration including superintendent, assistant superintendents, and directors; CC--curriculum consultants; BA--Building administration including principals, assistant principals, and vice principals; CT--classroom teachers; DC--department chairpersons; SBDMC--Site Based Decision Making Committee; DK--Do not know.
itself, the perception existed that the SBDM committee will be involved in these responsibilities.

Table 6 provides a frequency count to determine if respondents perceived the responsibility to be a direct result of SBDM. Illustrated are perceptions of principals, teachers on the committee, and teachers not on the committee. If a response could not be categorized as a yes or no, the total for that question did not equal the thirty-nine respondents. The frequency counts for each question are grouped. Group consensus is found in twenty of the twenty-five questions. Perceptions of teachers on the committee differed from the other groups on question 10, monitoring the campus budget, and question 19, evaluating curriculum at the school level and using evaluative data to identify school level problems. For these questions the frequency count for the teachers on the committee is relatively even, but the counts for the other groups are definite. Teachers not on the committee differed in perception on three questions. With counts definitely opposite the other groups, perceptions related to question 12, identifying and prioritizing curriculum problems, question 13, determining who participates in curriculum planning, and question 28, implementing school-site staff development, varied from the perception of principals and teachers on the committee. In the five questions where perceptions varied, the two groups that
Table 6
Frequency Count and Determination of SBDM Function

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**Note.** \(^a\)Teachers on committee. \(^b\)Teachers not on committee. \(^c\)Interview question numbers. \(^d\)Perceived as a function of SBDM.
did agree carried the total frequency count in favor of the agreeing groups.

Curriculum responsibilities at the district level, as a whole, were not perceived to be changing with the implementation of SBDM. Though a number of responsibilities were viewed as those of district personnel or state personnel, these responsibilities were not perceived as a function of SBDM.

**Interview Question 7**

Who will be responsible at the district level for developing the curriculum budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?

The development of the district curriculum budget was perceived as the responsibility of central administration and not a function of SBDM at the campus site. Eleven respondents, primarily teachers not on the committee, were uncertain as to who would develop the district curriculum budget, and only one perceived that campus personnel, specifically building administration, would develop the budget. In agreement, the respondents overwhelmingly voiced opinions that central administration would remain in charge of the development of the district curriculum budget. The consensus was expressed as "I don't see much change at district level on budget preparation" (Interview EP1).
Interview Question 8

Who will monitor the district budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?

Monitoring the individual campus curriculum budget was perceived to be the responsibility of central administration and not a function of SBDM. Eleven respondents included the school board in the responsibility for budget monitoring. With the central administration and school board responsible, the perception was of no change from previous practice. The responsibility will be that of the same people as before the implementation of SBDM. Thus, monitoring the district curriculum budget was not perceived to be a function of SBDM.

Interview Question 9

Who will be responsible at the individual school level for developing the curriculum budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?

Developing the curriculum budget at the individual school level was perceived by all respondents to be the responsibility of campus personnel. This was perceived to be a function of SBDM. Principals were perceived to be primarily responsible for developing this budget. "It's still the principal who is responsible . . . But in consultation with the site base. It is a we endeavor" (Interview JP1). All groups agreed that the SBDM committee
would be involved with this budget. "We will discuss this in SBDM, the curriculum, how much we want to spend on this and so forth" (Interview ETC1). As a result, teachers will have more input in this process. The involvement of SDBM Committee in the process constitutes change. The development of the campus curriculum budget was perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel and a function of SBDM.

Interview Question 10

Who will monitor the individual school's budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?

Monitoring the individual campus curriculum budget was perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel but not a function of SBDM. Specifically, the principal was viewed as responsible for monitoring the campus curriculum budget. "The principal will still monitor. I don't see that as a major deviation" (Interview HTCl). "The principal must monitor it. The principal will never not be responsible for monitoring the individual campus curriculum budget" (Interview JP1).

Five respondents did include central administration in this responsibility, the same number that responded that the principal's secretary would continue to monitor the budget. Even though this was not viewed as a function of SBDM, sixteen respondents indicated that the SBDM committee
would have input in this monitoring. "We'll see that the site based committee as well as the principal will be monitoring and will have a role . . . It is incumbent upon the principal to provide information to the site based committee about how funds are being spent" (Interview HP3). "Now we have a SBDM team that will be monitoring the local use of money . . . They will have an overseeing role to see if everything is being equitably shared within the school" (Interview JP4).

With input from classroom teachers and department chairs and the review of the SBDM committees, the building administrators were perceived as responsible for the monitoring of the campus curriculum budget. This was not perceived as a function of SBDM nor as a change.

**Interview Question 11**

**How will the entire budgeting process differ with SBDM?**

The entire budgeting process was perceived to be changing with the implementation of SBDM. The change will be that of having much more input into the creation of the budget. Seeing that "the administrator shouldn't be able to just have the say-so on where all money goes" (Interview ETN1), respondents perceived teachers, parents, and non-parents to be providers of input in the process. "There's going to be a lot more input from many individuals with much more justification for why and how you are
spending your money" (Interview EP1). "It's no longer one person, one decision. It's now a fragmented decision making process. That's positive, not a negative fragmentation" (Interview JP4).

Budgeting may differ from campus to campus. "There will be a wide variation from campus to campus, a much wider variation than in the past. And that will vary according to the needs of each individual campus rather than the standardizing of certain budgetary requirements" (Interview EP4).

The current budget process was also viewed as being reversed. "We receive our budget and then we decide on objectives or goals. I think with site base we're going to see a flip-flop. . . . The process will probably straighten that out, setting priorities first and then budgeting" (Interview HTC1). With priorities set and individual campuses determining specific needs, the budgeting process was perceived as changing through the inclusion of input from the SBDM committee to the building administrators.

**Interview Question 12**

Who will be responsible for identifying and prioritizing curriculum problems to be solved? How is this different from previous practice?

The identifying and prioritizing of curriculum problems was perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel
and a function of SBDM. At the campus level principals and teachers were evenly perceived as participating in this process. Degrees of involvement perceived by principals varied from "the principal presenting a major issue to the SBDM committee for a consensus opinion" (Interview HP3) to the principal and the SBDM committee working together to identify and prioritize problems (Interview HP1). The principal was viewed as "still the final person responsible. But he does now have his SBDM team to give input into curriculum. . . . Previously this was usually dictated from the upper administration to the schools. Now the schools are having an impact and will be able to make these decisions" (Interview JP4). This process was considered "more formal than it was in the past" (Interview EP1) and was perceived as one of the changes taking place with SBDM. More responsibility was perceived to be going to campus level personnel under the direction of the principal (Interview EP8). Other respondents agreed with the change being due to SBDM but the responsibility would be "more of a switch to the teachers" (Interview HTC1). "The teachers are in the classroom with the children and can see the problems. But we do need the help of our campus administrators and our head office administrators" (Interview ETN2). One respondent believed that it will be teachers who will identify and prioritize problems, "and that's no different than it's ever been" (Interview JTC2).
By a large margin, the identifying and prioritizing of curriculum problems was perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel. The only group that did not also perceive this to be a function of SBDM was the teachers not on the committee. This was primarily due to their belief that the principal, department chair persons, and teachers would continue to perform this task just as they have in the past.

**Interview Question 13**

Who will determine who participates in curriculum planning?

The determination of who will participate in curriculum planning was perceived as the responsibility of campus personnel and a function of SBDM. At the campus level principals and teachers were perceived as participating in this process. Within the principals' groups, the high school principals did not perceive this as a function of SBDM. "The principal would be choosing those teachers and I don't know that the SBDM committee would be that involved in that decision" (Interview HP1). One high school principal believed this to be a central administration responsibility.

The junior high school principals unanimously considered this to be a function of SBDM. "As far as teachers are concerned, they will be limited only by the
fact that they don't want to participate. There will be
tons of sub-committees that deal with curriculum questions" (Interview JP2). The sub-committee approach was repeated:
"I see the SBDM team calling in different areas who are not
on the team to get input from them as to what needs to be
approached, what the approaches need to be" (Interview EP1).

By a large margin, the determination of who will
participate in curriculum planning was perceived to be the
responsibility of campus personnel. Even though this was
perceived to be a function of SBDM, that perception was
divided. Teachers not on the committee believed that
principals, teachers, department chair persons, and
curriculum consultants would perform this task just as they
have in the past.

Interview Question 14

Who will develop the goals of the subject matter?

The development of subject matter goals was not
perceived to be a function of SBDM. Depending on the
breadth with which this responsibility was viewed,
responses varied from this being a state responsibility to
a classroom teacher responsibility. Most respondents
interpreted the question in a narrow sense and responded
that teachers are responsible. "Goals should be set at the
local school. . . The teachers who are actually teaching" (Interview JP4). "When you start piecing in what you are
going to teach for this six weeks. . . . You need to leave that to your experts, your department chair people, your teachers" (Interview HP2).

A more global view of this question yielded responses of this being a state responsibility. "There is a lot of state influence on essential elements that must be taught in the course. And I don't see that changing" (Interview HP1). "I just don't know . . . if we're going to see that much freedom getting away from what the state bottom line is" (Interview EP6).

The entire sequence for the development of subject matter goals was tied together with "Now we [teachers] get information on the goals from Texas Education Agency. Then we decide from there for our district and then we decide individually for our buildings" (Interview JTC2). Succinctly stated: "I don't really see the SBDM committee doing any development of subject matter goals" (Interview JTC3).

The principals, with a more global interpretation of this question, were the only group to perceive this to be the responsibility of the state through essential elements. The other respondents heavily favored the campus personnel as being responsible for developing subject matter goals. By a large margin, all groups rejected this as a function of SBDM.
**Interview Question 15**

Who will determine the content of the subject matter?

The determination of subject matter content was perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel but not a function of SBDM. The overwhelming majority believed that classroom teachers bear this responsibility now and will continue to do so.

Diversity of opinions did occur as to levels of collaboration in teachers carrying out the responsibility. "Individual teachers would determine subject matter content" (Interview ETN1). "Department chairs and individual teachers within a department. Those are the individuals who have the knowledge... There always seems to be a kind of possessiveness, maybe ownership, on the part of teachers to know their subject area and to be able to make those decisions. That makes for... very good working conditions" (Interview HTC2). The concept of building teacher and department chair persons was enlarged. "It needs to be district wide with teachers" (Interview ETC2).

Disagreements arose in the perceptions of an entire district as a single entity. "There is not going to be an overall curriculum for the whole district... I think there will be more leeway on each campus as to how that course will be directed. Now, that's the big change I see
as far as curriculum planning is concerned" (Interview HTC2).

Most respondents who did not perceive teachers as responsible for subject matter content believed that the State will continue to determine content. "The content will be decided from the expertise that is passed down from the Texas Education Agency telling what essential elements must be taught" (Interview JP4). This perception was qualified by the declaration, "The content is the essential elements determined by the State. Now, as we all know, practically, the teacher does this" (Interview JP1). The two major concepts, state and teacher, were linked: "The principal and teachers will have more input into the content as long as we meet the goals or the outcomes that the state has established" (Interview EP8).

The determination of subject matter content has been and continues to be perceived as the responsibility of the classroom teacher through the instruction of State essential elements to meet the State requirements. This was not perceived as a function of SBDM.

**Interview Question 16**

Who will ensure the curriculum continuity between elementary and secondary schools?

Ensuring continuity in the curriculum between elementary and secondary schools was not perceived to be a
campus responsibility nor a function of SBDM. Curriculum continuity between elementary and secondary schools was perceived as difficult to ensure and its effectiveness was questioned. "Is that done now?" (Interview EP5). "There really isn't a strong continuity and I don't know who's going to ensure this continuity" (Interview EP2).

Respondents who did envision a responsibility perceived it to be that of curriculum consultants and central administration. The reason behind this perception was the belief that teachers and SBDM committees do not have the network to coordinate elementary and secondary curriculum. "Somebody has to stand back away from those two entities and look and make sure that the connections are being made. That could be done with the principals, but I don't know that we've got the expertise to do that. . . . Your facilitators [curriculum consultants] are the ones who need to form that network to make sure that continuity is made" (Interview HP2). The responsibility for ensuring curriculum continuity was perceived to be that of central administration and not a function of SBDM.

Interview Question 17

Who will be responsible for ensuring that important skills that cut across the disciplines are appropriately taught and reinforced in those disciplines?
Ensuring that important skills that cut across the curriculum are taught and reinforced was perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel but not a function of SBDM. Principals and classroom teachers were perceived as primarily responsible. "The school principal will have a lot of responsibility in ensuring that these skills are taught and reinforced" (Interview HP1). The word taught in the question brought this response: "Any time you're talking about taught, you're talking about teachers" (Interview HTC3). "Individual teachers," said another. "This is also a responsibility of the principal and vice principal to see that teachers are doing this" (Interview ETN2). Other responses provided elaboration and several respondents included curriculum consultants in the sharing of this responsibility. "This will have to be a combination . . . of the local administration, the facilitators, and coordinators, the teachers themselves" (Interview HTN3). Teacher evaluations were perceived as a check to ensure that skill teaching and reinforcement is appropriate. "The follow-up is observations that we make and our discussions with those teachers during observations and evaluations so that we can emphasize how important those skills are for everyone to teach" (Interview HP1). Concurrence and a strong opinion were also offered: "I think that will again be through evaluations on different
levels, obviously through all that God-awful standardized testing we do" (Interview HTC2).

Ensuring the teaching and reinforcing of important skills that cross curriculum boundaries was perceived as the responsibility of principals and teachers with the assistance of curriculum consultants. This was not perceived as a function of SBDM.

**Interview Question 18**

Who will be responsible for ensuring that the written curriculum is the curriculum that is taught and tested?

Ensuring that the written curriculum is the curriculum which is taught and tested was perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel but not a function of SBDM. The principal was the primary person believed responsible. "Gosh! I didn't know you could make somebody else responsible for that besides the principal. Can we do that?" (Interview EP5). "That's going to still fall mainly on the administration of the school as we do classroom observations and as we look at lesson plans" (Interview JP6).

Agreement filled with sarcasm entered into one response. "What we're saying here is we don't trust our teachers. You don't trust them, but at the same time, you may be saying: 'Well, let's see how good of a job you're doing.' That's always the disguise we use for monitoring."
We have them. We pay them. It's our administrators. It's part of their so-called training to be able to evaluate and you're going to have to put that on the hands of the administrators" (Interview HTC3).

A process was also believed to be involved in the written-taught-tested responsibility. "This rests on the shoulders of the principal. . . . It's kind of a trickle down. He relies on the department chair and the department chair people must carry out their department to make certain that their teachers are doing what is necessary" (Interview HTC1).

Teachers were also perceived as a major participant in this responsibility. "It's the individual teacher. . . . There is not a check other than we turn in our lesson plans every so often" (Interview ETC1). Minimal disagreement did surface with perceptions of state responsibility. "The state is the primary force behind that through TAAS" (Interview JP5).

Ensuring that the written curriculum is what is taught and tested was perceived to be the responsibility of the principal with teachers and department chair persons assisting the principal.

**Interview Question 19**

Who will be responsible for evaluating curriculum at the school level and using evaluative data to identify school level problems?
The evaluating of curriculum at the school level and the using of evaluative data to identify school level problems were perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel but not a function of SBDM. Principals were perceived as primarily responsible for this evaluation, but principals will not be working alone. "It's the principal's responsibility, but it's a collective assessment" (Interview JPl). Being more specific: "The principal, with the assistance from department chairs" (Interview HP3). This collective assessment was even further enlarged. "There are four groups who would definitely be in there, the administration, SBDM, the teachers, and also the counselors, because they have a lot of valuable input in interpreting what needs to be addressed" (Interview EP1).

Respondents perceived teachers to be largely responsible for the evaluation and its use. "If you're going to identify the school problems, you ought to have those who are on that level to see those problems" (Interview HTC3). "Teachers are the first ones that evaluate curriculum" (Interview HP1).

Teachers on the committee perceived this to be a function of SBDM. "Some change will occur with the SBDM committee . . . like looking at the school's test scores and discussing what curriculum changes we might be able to make to improve our test scores and just evaluate the overall program" (Interview JTC3). Several respondents agreed that
the SBDM committee would be involved in this evaluation. In total, though evaluation and its use were perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel, these were not perceived to be functions of SBDM.

**Interview Question 20**

Who will be responsible for ensuring that a new curriculum is implemented after it is developed?

Ensuring that a new curriculum is implemented after it is developed was perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel but not a function of SBDM. Principals were perceived as primarily responsible with that responsibility filtering down to teachers and department chair persons, in that order (Interview HTN2). "The responsibility is still going to be shouldered by the principal, whether there's a committee or not. I don't think you can hold that many people, nine to fifteen or more people, responsible and fulfill a responsibility" (Interview JP6).

A different perspective was conveyed by respondents who perceived that teachers are responsible. Ultimately, "The teacher is the one who is teaching the child" (Interview EP3). The teacher's responsibility was expanded with "Teachers are going to have a different definition. They're not just going to be classroom instructors any more because they are going to do administrative work and be
recognized for it and probably have to be compensated for results. Sometimes compensation for these people is just the opportunity to have input, to be empowered" (Interview HTC3).

Ensuring that a new curriculum is implemented was perceived to be the responsibility of the principal with teachers and department chair persons assisting in the process. This was not perceived as a function of SBDM.

Interview Question 21

Who will assist teachers in developing instructional plans based upon curriculum guides?

Assisting teachers in developing instructional plans based upon curriculum guides was perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel but not a function of SBDM. Even though curriculum consultants, a central administration position, were viewed as primarily responsible, principals, classroom teachers, and department chair persons amassed the majority of responses. Few respondents listed only the principal. One who did stated, "A principal, whether he knows the curriculum or not, can know when teaching is delivered. Lesson planning and lesson instructional strategies cut across any discipline" (Interview JPl). Most respondents included more than one person working to assist teachers. A mentor program where experienced teachers work with inexperienced teachers and
grade level or subject area organization were perceived to be strong assets in assisting teachers. Respondents who listed curriculum consultants as involved did so without elaboration.

Assisting teachers in developing instructional plans was perceived to be the responsibility of curriculum consultants, principals, teachers, and department chair persons. Not one respondent perceived this as a function of SBDM.

Interview Question 22

Who will select instructional materials? A. Textbooks? B. Software? C. Library?

The selection of textbooks and computer software were overwhelmingly perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel but not a function of SBDM. Equally overwhelming was the perception that classroom teachers are, and will be, responsible for these selections. Principals and department chair persons received token acknowledgement. Curriculum consultants were given the responsibility of providing input into the purchase of computer software. However, teachers were perceived as the primary, and near sole, persons responsible for the selection of textbooks and computer software.

The selection of library materials was perceived similarly to that of textbooks and computer software with
the exception that librarians were perceived as equally responsible as teachers. Teachers, in this instance, provided input to the librarians who then selected the materials.

The selection of textbooks, computer software, and library materials were perceived to be the responsibility of teachers with input from curriculum consultants for computer software and to librarians for library materials. By a large margin, none of these selections was perceived as a function of SBDM.

**Interview Question 23**

Who will purchase textbooks?

The purchasing of textbooks was perceived to be the responsibility of central administration and not a function of SBDM. The school board, followed closely by the state, was perceived as primarily responsible for purchasing textbooks. All principals responded with either state or district. Only four responses placed any of this responsibility at the campus level. Fear was a factor in one response: "I still hope the district will. . . . I've just heard too many horror stories of where too much power has been given to site based management as far as budgeting. The buying power and purchasing power is not going to be as good on the local level as it is on a district level or even on a state level" (Interview ETC3).
The purchasing of textbooks was perceived to remain the responsibility of central administration or the State. Not one respondent perceived this as a function of SBDM.

Interview Question 24

Who will help teachers use student evaluation results to make needed modifications in the curriculum?

Helping teachers use student evaluation results to make needed modifications in the curriculum was perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel but not a function of SBDM. Principals were given the primary responsibility in this task. "That's the slowest thing we've got going right now. I don't know. I think the motivating agent is going to have to be the principal" (Interview JP2).

Teachers and curriculum consultants were perceived as almost equally responsible in providing assistance. The importance of counselors in providing assistance was also perceived. Although this was not perceived as a function of SBDM, disagreements surfaced. "Site based management has its tentacles out there in the right areas. Those people will feed that information to them. I just don't even see any way a principal or central administration has ever done a very good job at this. It will come up to the site base. Site base is the end of the line on this thing. And really it's a circle. It's not necessarily a pyramid thing" (Interview HTC3).
Helping teachers use student evaluation results to modify curriculum was perceived to be the responsibility of principals, teachers, and curriculum consultants. This was not perceived as a function of SBDM.

**Interview Question 25**

*Who will determine the minimum level of competence required of students?*

The determination of the minimum level of competence required of students was perceived not to be the responsibility of campus personnel and not a function of SBDM. The State, through the essential elements and the TAAS test, was perceived as primarily responsible for this determination. The setting of State standards was viewed as necessary by several respondents. "The State, more or less, makes that decision. . . . We live in a global economy. What's good for Irving, Texas, at this point in time, doesn't necessarily prepare our students for dealing with New York City and Paris and Tokyo, and getting them to compete on a global level" (Interview ETC4).

At a practical level, teachers were perceived as responsible for determining the minimum level of competence. "You can mandate all you want to, but the teacher's got to determine what they think that child is capable of doing in relation to what the minimum level of
competence is. The chief goal . . . our job, is to pass 'em, not kill 'em" (Interview EP7).

The determination of the minimum level of competence required of students was perceived to be the responsibility of the state. This is how it has been and the perception was that this will continue. Not one respondent perceived this as a function of SBDM.

Interview Question 26

Who will plan district-wide staff development programs required by curriculum change?

The planning of district-wide staff development programs was perceived to be the responsibility of central administration and not a function of SBDM. Primarily, the central administration, along with curriculum consultants, was perceived to be responsible for this planning. "Central administration will still make those decisions" (Interview HP2). Within the central administration, this responsibility was placed in the Department of Instruction. Curriculum consultants were perceived as important in this planning. "So far it has been the consultants who have planned the program. . . . I don't see SBDM changing district-wide staff development" (Interview ETC1). Teachers were perceived as providing input to determine the specific needs for district-wide staff development.
The planning of district-wide staff development programs was perceived to be the responsibility of central administration, particularly the Department of Instruction, and curriculum consultants with teachers providing input. This was not perceived as a function of SBDM.

**Interview Question 27**

Who will implement K-12 staff development programs for a specific area of the curriculum?

The implementation of K-12 staff development programs for a specific area of the curriculum was perceived to be the responsibility of central administration with curriculum consultants perceived equally sharing in this implementation. "The primary implementation will come at the district level in those subject areas" (Interview HP1). "The facilitator [curriculum consultant] is going to be a very important person in K-12 staff development" (Interview HP2).

The implementation of K-12 staff development programs for a specific area of the curriculum was perceived to be the responsibility of central administration and curriculum consultants. By a wide margin, this was not perceived as a function of SBDM.

**Interview Question 28**

Who will implement school-site staff development required by curriculum change?
The implementation of school-site staff development required by curriculum changes was perceived to be the responsibility of campus personnel and a function of SBDM. Principals were perceived to be primarily responsible for this implementation, just as they have been in the past. The change was perceived to be the input that a SBDM committee will provide to the principal as these decisions are made. "I think you'll see more involvement or shared responsibility between campus level administrative staff and campus teaching staff in the implementation of school staff development" (Interview EP8). "Your SBDM team needs to be very involved in staff development. Maybe even at times calling on . . . teachers to come in that may have a little more expertise in those areas than people that are on the committees" (Interview ETC2).

The implementation of school-site staff development required by curriculum changes was perceived to be the responsibility of principals with input from the SBDM committee and teachers. Teachers not on the committee did not perceive this as a function of SBDM stating that the principal and teachers would be responsible for this implementation. The other groups did believe this to be a function of SBDM.

Summary of Research Question 2

Curriculum responsibilities within a school district were not perceived to be changing with the implementation
of SBDM. The responsibilities previously performed by the state, the school board, central administration, and curriculum consultants were perceived to be the same as before the implementation of SBDM. Developing the district curriculum budget, monitoring the district curriculum budget, ensuring curriculum continuity between elementary and secondary schools, purchasing textbooks, computer software, and library materials, determining minimum levels of competence for students, planning district-wide staff development, and implementing K-12 staff development in a specific curriculum area have not been the responsibilities of campus personnel. The perception was that this will not change with the implementation of SBDM. Respondents expressed the desire for these non-campus responsibilities to be carried out with a sensitivity toward the needs of individual districts and campuses. In this manner campus personnel could direct their decisions to best meet their specific needs. The state and district personnel were perceived as needing to give campuses more leeway to accomplish the standards that have been set.

Respondents realized the need for coordination, the setting of standards, and the importance of persons in a position to see the big picture. Therefore, the responsibilities within a school district were not perceived to be changing with the implementation of SBDM.
Research Question 3

How were curriculum roles and responsibilities within an individual school changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

Respondents' answers to Interview Question 2 provided data concerning changing curriculum roles in individual schools, and answers to Research Question 2 provided similar data for changes in responsibility.

Interview Question 2

Are curriculum roles within individual schools changing with the implementation of SBDM? If so, which roles are changing and how are they changing?

Curriculum roles within the individual school were perceived to be changing with the implementation of SBDM. The roles of principal, teacher, and department chair person were perceived to be changing.

At the district level, principals were perceived to be gaining power. With the backing of the SBDM committee, the principal was perceived to have more authority and flexibility in making decisions that impact the campus.

At the campus level, principals' roles were perceived as undergoing the greatest change. A major perception was that principals must now give up some power. Rather than the principal making all decisions alone, many decisions
will be made by principals working together with other campus personnel. Principals must now listen to teachers.

From an increased contact with parents and community members, principals will have more input into what is taught. To make these decisions, principals must know more about curriculum. Communication becomes a key factor. Providing information to the SBDM committee, as well as to those who will provide input into the principal's decisions, was perceived as critical for the success of SBDM.

Understanding power to be the ability to make decisions without consultation, principals were perceived as gaining power at the district level but losing power at the campus level. A greater commitment to working with other campus personnel, listening to teachers, parents, and community, possessing a greater knowledge of curriculum, and the need for an increase and clarity in communication to all parties involved in SBDM were perceived as the role changes required of principals with the implementation of SBDM.

Teachers were perceived as gaining power with the implementation of SBDM. Prior to campus decisions being made, teachers will provide much more input to principals. Teachers will become the originators of ideas with more flexibility in developing and executing the curriculum. This will lead to ownership, accountability, and a positive acceptance of changes.
Teachers will interact more among themselves, within departments, and with the principal. Teachers will be more involved in the curriculum. To do this well, teachers as leaders must be developed. "The staff will need to have a lot of training. . . . They have a general reluctance to take on the responsibility because they have not had the experience" (Interview EP1).

Teachers were perceived as gaining power by providing more input into campus decisions, originating ideas, having more flexibility in developing and executing the curriculum, and being more involved in curriculum decisions. The role of teacher-leader was perceived to be essential for the successful implementation of SBDM.

Department chair persons were perceived to be gaining more of a leadership role in campus decisions. Principals will depend upon their expertise and their input as curriculum decisions are made. "In the past we've known the principal and assistants as leaders within the school doing most of the leadership role, instructional leadership. But now we see department heads and those individuals involved in SBDM having more input in these leadership roles at the local school" (Interview JP4).

Curriculum roles within the individual school were perceived to be changing. More interaction will take place among principals, teachers, and department chair persons.
Campus Curriculum Responsibilities

The second part of Research Question 3 sought to determine how campus responsibilities would change with the implementation of SBDM. From the previous discussion in Research Question 2, respondents perceived that curriculum responsibilities within an individual school would change. SBDM was perceived as creating a much more formal process for decision making. Sub-committees will provide input and serve as a source of participation in decision making for all teachers who wish to take part. Input into curriculum decisions will be greatly increased.

Though many curriculum responsibilities at the campus level were perceived as remaining the same as before SBDM, four specific responsibilities were perceived as being directly changed: (a) developing the campus curriculum budget, (b) identifying and prioritizing of campus curriculum problems, (c) determining who participates in curriculum planning, and (d) implementing campus staff development. These four responsibilities were perceived as functions of SBDM. In carrying out these responsibilities the SBDM committee was perceived as an integral part in the gathering, processing, and communicating of input.

Second Interview

Approximately three months after the initial interview respondents were interviewed a second time. Thirty-seven
of the original respondents participated. Given the opportunity to alter any answers to the first interview, none of the respondents chose to do so. Additionally, during the second interview respondents were asked five questions.

Second Interview, Question 1

How long will it take for SBDM to be effectively implemented in the IISD?

Principals' responses to the length of time to effectively implement SBDM varied from eternity to effective now. The eternity response was emphasized with "Getting worse. . . . Can't get community people to attend. . . . Don't know if SBDM will ever be a good way to make decisions" (Interview 2 JP6). The response of SBDM being effective now was elaborated, "Sharing of decisions and input is going well now" (Interview 2 HP1). On average, principals perceived this change to require three years. "Any change of that caliber, to get a handle on it, lean on it, and understand the five areas fully will take three to five years" (Interview 2 JP5).

Teachers on the committee perceived that two to three years will be required for SBDM to be effectively implemented. "We have set a good base but it will take some time in communication" (Interview 2 HTCl). The maximum time frame perceived was five years because "it
takes that long for principals to fit into the new mold" (Interview 2 ETC1). The minimum time frame of two years was perceived as necessary since it takes that long for principals and teachers to understand the concept (Interview 2 JTC1).

Teachers not on the committee perceived that three to five years will be required for SBDM to be effectively implemented. Three to five years were perceived for the system and teachers to get what they want, to run it smoothly, and for changes to be made (Interview 2 JTN2). Three years was perceived as needed to get the kinks out (Interview 2 JTN3). One respondent said, "I think site base is down the drain with school boards and parents getting involved. . . . Can't see it working" (Interview 2 HTN1).

The dominant response to the time required for the effective implementation of SBDM was three years. "To really get down and define roles and to determine proper structure" will require this much time (Interview 2 HP2).

Second Interview, Question 2

With the implementation of SBDM, where will major curriculum changes occur?

Major curriculum changes were perceived by principals in areas of technology, addressing TAAS scores, blocking or
organizational patterns, and staff development. The primary change perceived by principals was in the delivery of curriculum to meet the needs of students.

Teachers on the committee perceived little, if any, change occurring. Any change that does occur will be done as the SBDM committee determines the specific needs of a campus. Teachers not on the committee perceived changes in the delivery of curriculum through changes in instruction, style, and time flexibility.

Principals, as a group, perceived more curriculum changes than the other groups. In total, the dominant curriculum changes were perceived to be in the areas of curriculum delivery and meeting the needs of students on each individual campus.

Second Interview, Question 3

What are the major obstacles that must be overcome for SBDM to be effective?

For SBDM to be effectively implemented a number obstacles must be overcome. Principals perceived the major obstacles to be: (a) lack of time, (b) lack of training, (c) communication, (d) definition of roles and purpose, (e) teamwork, (f) trust, (g) committee tenure, and (h) lack of experience. A great amount of time is involved in the SBDM process. Even finding a time to meet when all members can be present has been difficult (Interview 2 JP6). Training
for committee members into the format and process of SBDM was perceived as a need which must now be overcome by experience in working within the process itself. Training prior to the implementation of SBDM would have been advantageous. SBDM has created the necessity for communication within committees, to entire staffs, and with central administration. Ensuring that this communication is accomplished was perceived as a major obstacle.

Definition of roles and purpose of SBDM so that participants entered with that understanding rather than that understanding evolving with use was perceived as a major obstacle to be overcome. Teamwork, the desire for all participants to work together, to come together on common goals and objectives, was perceived as a major obstacle (Interview 2 EP3). Trust and speaking freely without worrying about what the boss thinks was perceived as a major obstacle to be overcome (Interview 2 JP3). Because of tenure restrictions, every year new committee members will replace those leaving the committee. Therefore, the committee will always be training and updating. This turnover was perceived as a major obstacle to be overcome. The all encompassing obstacle to be overcome, within which each of the other obstacles rests, was the lack of experience all participants have in the SBDM process. SBDM was perceived as a learning process
(Interview 2 HP1) which will, in the end, produce longer lasting and more effective results (Interview 2 JP1).

Teachers on the committee perceived communication and the change in leadership as the major obstacles to be overcome. The change in leadership will require those in power to give up some of that power and those being empowered to use that power constructively (Interview 2 HTC3). The old notions of the hierarchy of leadership must be replaced with consensus and team building (Interview 2 HTC2). Other perceived obstacles included the lack of time, lack of experience, definition of roles and purpose of SBDM, parent and community involvement, and staff buy in.

Teachers not on the committee perceived the major obstacles to be the administration letting go of the power, getting the committee to work together, state and local boards allowing campuses to make decisions, parent over-involvement, definition of roles and purpose of SBDM, and achieving acceptance of decisions. Responses varied to such a degree that consensus could not be reached.

In total, the dominant obstacles to be overcome for SBDM to be effectively implemented were perceived to be (a) communication, (b) definition of roles and purpose of SBDM, (c) the lack of time, (d) staff buy in, (e) the lack of experience, (f) team work, and (g) the administration letting go of the decision making power.
Second Interview, Question 4

How could the implementation of SBDM in Irving have been more effectively achieved?

Nine respondents perceived that SBDM has already been appropriately achieved and effectively implemented. "I think it has been pretty successful because it was started small and implemented slowly" (Interview 2 JP1). The district provided a lot of information to principals prior to the implementation (Interview 2 EP1).

Other respondents did perceive of needed improvements in the implementation process. Principals perceived that the main improvement would have been more training up front with a longer time line for that training (Interview 2 JP2). Principals also perceived that a more specifically defined purpose, better communication, and release time to meet would have made implementation more effective.

Teachers on the committee perceived the definition of roles and purpose of SBDM as the main improvement needed. Better communication and training were also perceived as needed for a more effective implementation.

Teachers not on the committee perceived better communication and the definition of roles and purpose of SBDM as the main improvements needed. Central administration giving up power and parents wanting to take over were also perceived as hindrances to effective implementation.
In total, the implementation of SBDM was perceived to be appropriate and effective. Improvements could have been made in the areas of definition of roles and purpose of SBDM, communication, and training. One respondent summed it up, "I'm not sure anything could have helped. ... I don't think anyone actually thinks it will work. ... Too many fast decisions to wait on SBDM" (Interview 2 JP6).

Second Interview, Question 5

How will student achievement be improved through the implementation of SBDM?

When asked how student achievement will be improved through the implementation of SBDM, responses revolved around five themes. Though there were other responses, the five dominant themes were (a) ownership, (b) proximity, (c) access, (d) teamwork, and (e) focus.

Ownership

Ownership was the predominant response to how student achievement will be improved through the implementation of SBDM. "Everyone must buy in to improve instruction, then we will see gains in student achievement" (Interview 2 EP2). Ownership will be developed as the staff understands their role and that their ideas and input are sought. They will then better reflect what needs to be done to improve student achievement (Interview 2 EP8). "When you put more
responsibility on the people actually doing work with students, and this is putting more responsibility on teachers, parents, and community, they will ultimately do a better job with their responsibility and that will affect students and their achievement" (Interview 2 JTC2).

**Proximity**

Proximity was perceived as a means to improve student achievement and is illustrated by "the fact that people that are most closely involved with students will now have responsibility to make decisions that directly affect students" (Interview 2 JTC4). "Teachers are at the fundamental level of where they diagnose, prescribe, and implement learning for where kids are and what they need" (Interview 2 JPL). Giving the people, namely teachers, most closely associated with students and their achievement the freedom to diagnose and prescribe methods to improve student achievement was perceived as a means to this improvement.

**Access**

Access was perceived as a means to improve student achievement. "If we can go to the people we need to go to get things changed, that will help get things to students quicker" (Interview 2 JTN1). With the SBDM committee, the people now know where to go and with whom to speak.
"Teachers and parents on the committee know the needs of the school as well as students and can bring ideas to the committee and get something done about it" (Interview 2 JTC3). Having a more direct access for input and decision making was perceived as a means to improve student achievement.

**Teamwork**

Teamwork was perceived as a means to improve student achievement. "If we have input from the principal, central administration, parents, and students, then we can work together on what areas students need" (Interview 2 JTN3). Parental involvement was perceived as important to this team concept. "Parents and school must work together" (Interview 2 ETC1). The parents and staff must be involved to look at the overall picture, not just a grade level or subject area (Interview 2 EP3). This overall picture cannot be "people thinking within the box instead of thinking above and beyond what they have always done" (Interview 2 EP8). With the team concept, learning will be approached from different perspectives (Interview 2 ETN2). Utilizing teamwork in these ways, teamwork was perceived as a means to improve student achievement.

**Focus**

Focus was perceived as a means to improve student achievement. By setting goals that are focused on student
achievement and developing actions that are achievement oriented student achievement will be improved (Interview 2 HP3). Setting specific goals to improve TAAS skills, attendance, and security forces attention to be placed where we want it (Interview 2 JP3). In these ways, specific focus was perceived as a means to improve student achievement.

**Student Achievement Questioned**

Skepticism did arise in the responses to the question of improving student achievement. Some respondents did not perceive SBDM as a means to improve student achievement. With SBDM, "I don't think we are fixing student achievement. We are attempting to make schools more attuned to what those in school think needs to be done. I don't know if the institution has the impact necessary to change attitudes. This is not a magic pill. We are site based at school not at the home" (Interview 2 HTC3). This sentiment was echoed: "Principals, teachers, and kids working together are the bottom line—not SBDM" (Interview 2 ETN3).

Skepticism considered, respondents perceived that student achievement may be improved through the implementation of SBDM. SBDM may foster ownership, proximity, access, teamwork, and focus—factors which may tend to
improve student achievement. As one respondent said, "We have a license to make a difference" (Interview 2 EP7).

Additional Information

At the end of the first interview respondents were asked three open ended questions. Teachers responded to all three questions while principals responded to questions two and three. These questions offered the respondents the opportunity to address themes commonly related to SBDM and to make closing comments.

Additional Information, Question 1

With the implementation of SBDM, will teachers be empowered?

The teachers were asked if, with the implementation of SBDM, teachers will become empowered. Perceptions varied from definitely yes to definitely no. The possibility of empowerment was perceived to exist for some teachers but limited to a few (Interview JTN2). Teacher's choice was expressed, "You can have empowerment if you want it. . . . They have used that word [empowerment] to give you the impression that this is a very powerful opportunity if you take it. But, if you don't, you'll lose it" (Interview HTC3).

Choice was enlarged and qualified with "SBDM provides the opportunity to become empowered. There are teachers
out there who want to be empowered. . . . There would need to be some inservice training to make sure they understand what was being asked of them. . . . And I'm not sure that all teachers want to be so empowered. . . . The status quo makes it easy enough for them to get through life" (Interview ETC4).

Increased teacher input created the perception of empowerment to those teachers who responded that teacher empowerment is a part of SBDM. "I do perceive that it will occur. . . . Teachers are going to definitely have more input, more say, more final input, more final say than they ever have in the past" (Interview HTC2). Agreement was expressed, "They will have more input and they will want to see results" (Interview JTC1).

Skepticism entered into several responses as they questioned ultimate empowerment. "It [SBDM] will give teachers more involvement in decision making for our campus. I believe that the decisions that are made will still be approved by [the principal] and will be either yes or no from him" (Interview ETC1). This belief continued, "It will to some extent [give teacher empowerment], not to as great an extent as people might like to make it sound. As far as the teachers having the power, they really don't. They just have a way to have more input. . . . The real ultimate final power doesn't really lie with the teacher. It lies with either the principal or central
administration or the state" (Interview JTC3). Other teachers repeated this and an earlier theme in that the state and central administration are the determiners of how far SBDM and teacher empowerment will go.

The definitely negative responses centered around perceptions of doubt regarding teachers handling every aspect of school (Interview JTN4) and that SBDM meetings were just a more formalized form of verbal output (Interview HTCl). Teacher empowerment was not perceived by these teachers.

A very different perspective of teacher empowerment was expressed by one teacher. "I guess I'm one of those old fashioned kind. My empowerment needs to be in the classroom. It needs to be with kids. And I need to depend on other people to be able to be on the phone, to be able to make those decisions so that they can do full time there and I can do full time with the kids. If I need teacher empowerment, then I need to look for another job" (Interview ETN3).

As a group, teachers did perceive that their jobs would change with the implementation of SBDM. More input, more responsibility, and being able to do what is important were perceived as factors building teacher empowerment. Questions were raised concerning real or perceived power and whether or not a teacher can do the job in the classroom and also be involved in something that requires as much time as SBDM.
Additional Information, Question 2

With the implementation of SBDM, do you believe that your job will change?

Participants were questioned about whether they perceived that their jobs would change with the implementation of SBDM. Respondents varied in their perceptions of SBDM causing their jobs to change. Principals' responses varied in the degree of change. This variance ranged from not much change to a major shift. "I don't really see it changing my role that much. I've always been one who has tried to gather input primarily from teachers, but it's kind of broadened it now. It's forcing me into gathering even more from kids, community, and parents. I was a little bit afraid at the very beginning of whether I would lose power. I don't think I have. If anything, I think site base would increase my power because now it's not my idea. In certain situations you can create ownership and it becomes a pretty powerful tool" (Interview HP2).

Agreement came with other justifications. "I'm still charged with the day-to-day responsibility of the campus and overseeing the curriculum, overseeing the teaching. . . . I don't see a great change in my role other than this gives me an opportunity to share responsibility where before that avenue was not there" (Interview JP4). A similar view was expressed: "I don't see any major change in my role as
principal. Ultimately, the buck stops here. . . . Where the change will come will be in the way that I will use input from the committee" (Interview EP2). A repeat of this theme came in "The change is not going to be a major change. It's going to be a change in that I'm going to be seeking information about decisions from a wider range of people" (Interview HP3).

The sharing of duties and seeking of input from more people were perceptions expressed by principals who said there will be little or no change and by principals who said some change will occur. These principals differed only in their perceptions of whether or not this sharing and seeking is a change. To some it was, to others it was not.

The principals who perceived a job change as imminent were emphatic in their responses. "Absolutely! . . . The decisions that I have made in the past were, to a large extent, made by me with input perhaps from school personnel. With the SBDM committee . . . you certainly receive different kinds of input from the people represented on your committee. . . . And I have found that after our SBDM committee meetings, we've discussed many topics that, as principal preparing for the next meeting, I am researching and will provide information for the SBDM committee. And the amount of that work has become pretty extensive" (Interview HP1).
Emphasis also came: "Yes, sir! How it changes is going to depend on what the principal's relationship was to his staff prior to this. . . . The relationship between the campus principal and the central administration will change some. I see probably more responsibility and accountability on the campus principal as a result of SBDM. And that is part of the intent of the law that again the state will say, 'Here's what we want you to end up getting to at the end of this particular year or course or grade level.' The campus principal is going to have more responsibility for seeing to it that the staff did get those students to that point" (Interview EP8). Other changes in the job of principal were perceived to be that of becoming more of a negotiator and more knowledgeable about curriculum and educational trends.

All principals perceived their jobs to be changing. Even the principals who responded that there would be little or no change acknowledged that more people would be sharing in the decision making process. Sharing decisions, receiving more input, and becoming more responsible and accountable for meeting set standards were the major themes of change.

The teachers' perceptions of job change varied. High school teachers perceived their jobs to be changing while junior high teachers and elementary teachers reached no consensus. High school teachers perceived more teacher
involvement and accountability in what takes place on a campus. Accountability was elaborated: "I don't think you're going to be able to hide behind . . . the concept of the old corporate shield. We used to be able to hide behind 'this was district policy'" (Interview HTC3).

Junior high teachers and elementary teachers were divided in their perceptions of job change. "Other aspects of my job, like staff development and interrelations with other teachers and the school campus, the things you do on the campus as far as duties and things like that, I do see those changing" (Interview JTC3). Several teachers did perceive that they will have more input but questioned how far it will go. "We're still in the mode of: 'Do we really have this much of a say in all this?'" (Interview ETC2). Having more people to answer to was perceived to be a change. This included answering to the community as well as to central administration.

Some teachers perceived little or no change in their jobs. "No, mine's pretty good. I get a lot of input anyway. . . . I do a lot of mentoring. Maybe more people's jobs will become a little bit more like mine" (Interview HTN1). Future change was predicted, "I have not seen a change so far. I had thought it would be quite different. It is just getting started. In the future there will be a lot more changes than we have experienced this year so far" (Interview JTN4).
Though perceptions differed, the teachers, as a group, perceived that their jobs would change with the implementation of SBDM. Having more input into campus decisions, having more responsibility, accountability, and flexibility to develop programs and courses, and more communication were the themes of perceived changes. One teacher expressed the possibility for a teacher's job to change. "It can if you want it to" (Interview ETN3).

Additional Information, Question 3

Do you have any closing comments that you would like to make?

With the opportunity to issue closing comments respondents were provided an open ended forum to freely express their perceptions and opinions. These perceptions and opinions were as varied as the personalities and were scattered across topics.

Principals' perceptions concerned the origin of SBDM. "When you had the one teacher school, four teacher school, it was totally site based management because every decision had to come out of that campus. Nobody else was going to make the decisions. But as we grew larger and we got the central office, we got bigger buildings. We got more staff. Somebody decided they better write curriculum, they better do this, and they better do that. Then, over time, that doesn't become effective. So now we turn it all back
to the people it started with and say, 'Hey, you do something with it'" (Interview EP7).

"The intent of SBDM, from the state level, was that, at one point, they decided to dictate every single thing you did. House Bill 72 and House Bill 246 detailed how many minutes we would spend teaching each individual subject in the elementary schools. . . . That was not producing results. Their desire now is to say, 'We're just going to tell you where we want you to go and make it your responsibility and accountability to see to it that you get there at a specific time'" (Interview EP8).

"We got into this SBDM because the state mandates and all the wisdom has not changed achievement a lot. So, therefore, the idea came back, 'All right, Mr. Principal, if you think you can do any better, let's see you try.' So I just hope it stays around long enough to actually get a chance to succeed" (Interview EP7).

Role changes also occupied the thoughts of principals. "The role of administration, staff, teachers, parents will be changing in the future. . . . It's going to be a more collaborative effort. . . . I think we're past the dictatorial type of decisions, one person makes them and that's the way it's going to be. . . . With people working together, students will receive the ultimate benefit and that's the purpose of the SBDM plan in the beginning" (Interview EP2).
"Sometimes there are conflicting feelings about those role changes because the principal is effective by knowing the people he's working with and knowing the kids in his school. But the role is changing so much that it's a dilemma. . . . The day of just running your school and staying in your building and keeping things running, managing, keeping the status quo, you'll be eaten alive today trying to do that. The sharks will be on you" (Interview JP2).

Ownership was emphasized again: "I think each school is going to have a different degree of success. It's going to depend on the makeup of that committee and the leadership capacity of the people involved. . . . This is not something that we can plug out of a computer, a left brain type thing. It's going to be really critical to how well you can get people to buy into this" (Interview EP6).

The necessity for teamwork and communication resurfaced. "We should work as a group, the community, the teachers, the principals, the head office, to ensure that our children have a good education" (Interview ETN2). The perception that teamwork requires communication was expressed. "I could see where this SBDM would work if you had the right communication. . . . Communication is the whole key to it all, communication between central office to the principals and the principals to the teachers" (Interview JTN5).
The actual decision making process was perceived in terms of uncertainty. "Whenever you get down to the questions of who is actually responsible for it, this is a very interesting scenario" (Interview HP3). "We have to remember that there is more than one site and depending upon what type of decision is to be made determines what arena it's going to fall within. . . . I think there are going to be decisions that central office is the site for that decision to be made. There are the decisions that fall within the arena of the individual campus. But, by the same token, neither party can make decisions independent of the yoke" (Interview JP5).

As discussions of SBDM continued, several problems were perceived. "Some of the problems that I personally have come up against are some of the ideas that people bring forward into the SBDM committee which I know that I am opposed to and really don't know of a situation in which I would agree with a certain concept. Working through that is still something that concerns me. . . . How do you come to a successful resolution or a consensus when you oppose the idea initially?" (Interview HP1).

Another problem arose when a teacher questioned ownership. "When its teachers deciding among themselves and the decision is made, are people going to accept that or will there be some resentment there?" (Interview JTN4).
The problem of misplaced empowerment was expressed. "I do like the concept of site base. I don't like the concept of site base management as I have heard occurred in other states and in other cities where it did not work. There was too much empowerment given to, a lot more given to, the community than I thought really should have been given to the community" (Interview ETC3).

The problem of whole school vision or not looking "outside the box" (Interview EP5) was expressed. "I'm really afraid that in the future you may have a lot of central or empowered little niches or little groups and they'll lose focus of the big picture" (Interview ETC3).

The concern with the lack of time remained on the minds of respondents. "I don't know how in the world they're going to do all this. . . . I'm not on the site base team. . . . I'm department chair. I teach. . . . I have a family. If I had to do all these responsibilities that the team is going to wind up having to do, they're not going to have any free time at all. None at all" (Interview HTN2).

Two possible solutions to the time problem were expressed. "If we go real big site base, it's going to be a lot more work for teachers and they don't have the time. Maybe they need to add more to their school year so that their departments are together so many days out of the school year to do planning" (Interview HTN1). The second solution recognized the need to move cautiously, slowly,
and try to keep communication open as the move is made (Interview EP4).

The other side of the advice to move cautiously and slowly, was the perception that not much is happening. "I feel a little bit disappointed that more has not happened this year with the SBDM committee... I do hope a lot more is going to come out of it than everything basically staying the same" (Interview JTN4).

Respondents identified the existence of a problem without local resolution. "I think until the State of Texas releases their legislature and the TEA releases goals and content of subject areas and lets up on the purse strings, that we're going to be directed by the results of tests.... The end result is going to be for that student to do well on TAAS" (Interview HTN3).

An honest, guarded response expressed great doubt. When asked if he had any closing comment, a principal said, "None that I would want to give you" (Interview JP6).

The benefits of SBDM did not go undocumented. "I think it will benefit teachers.... Teachers just want to be heard. It makes them feel better. They feel like somebody cares. They're not just in the trenches by themselves" (Interview JTC1).

"It allows people who are in the classroom to have serious input about what is being done.... Morale will improve, definitely among teachers. Right now I don't see
SBDM having a lot of power, but it is going to build to that. . . . Empowerment for teachers is a good thing. . . . They are all educated people. Let them do something. Let them use that knowledge. We have a wealth of ideas floating around here and we just have not used them in the past. Now we can" (Interview HTC2).

"Initially, when we first started talking about SBDM, it was a little frightening. . . . The more I've gotten into it, the more I realize it is probably something that should have been here all along" (Interview EP1).

In the closing comments from respondents, concerns outnumbered benefits. Many issues remain to be resolved. Only by implementing SBDM and going through the process will these concerns be answered, alleviated, or avoided. The solutions come with experience. "Some things will work out as SBDM is used" (Interview JP6).

Interpretation of Data

Statements by respondents may have been influenced by their exposure to or knowledge of SBDM. All principals had been informed of the impending implementation of SBDM. Their understanding of this impending implementation varied considerably. A small group of the principals served on the district SBDM planning team. As a result, they were aware of the direction and function of SBDM. Other principals had been given little, if any, direction in the
application of SBDM. Principals’ responses may have also been tempered by their perception of the usefulness of SBDM. Those principals who perceived SBDM as a time consuming loss of power responded accordingly. The principals who had worked through committees previously and had solicited input from a variety of sources responded in a more positive manner to the survey questions.

Teachers on the committee were less informed about SBDM than principals. Some campuses had already begun the implementation process giving their teachers an opportunity to visualize the potential. Some teachers, hearing that SBDM was to be implemented, assumed that a group of campus teachers and administrators would make many decisions related to their campus. Some teachers assumed that the SBDM committee would run the local campus. Other teachers were waiting to see the full impact of the implementation of SBDM. Most responses from teachers on the committee were positive in nature. Though willing to participate on the committee, several teachers expressed questions about the actual sharing of decision making. These teachers were taking a wait-and-see posture.

Teachers not on the committee were the least informed group of respondents. Several of these teachers had not heard anything other than that something called SBDM was being utilized in the school district. Those teachers who were aware that their campus had a SBDM committee knew
little about the responsibilities carried by the committee. As a group these teachers were uncertain of the impact SBDM would have. They were carrying out their teaching responsibilities the same as they had previously and had difficulty anticipating change.

The varied knowledge of and training in the philosophy and practicality of SBDM may have accounted for the diversity in responses. Also influencing the responses may have been the self-asked questions: What will I get out of it? or What will it cost me? and Is this another cyclic fad that will soon pass?

Even with the differences in understanding and training in the SBDM process, answers to most questions were relatively similar. This similarity may have emanated from respondents' experiences in education previous to this time or from imagination or wishful thinking.

Effect of Respondents' Experience

Because the experience of the respondents could have affected their perceptions of site based decision making and its impact on IISD, it is important to understand whether experience affected perception. To determine how experience influenced perceptions, respondents were divided into nine groups as shown in Table 7.
Table 7

Respondents' Positions

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>High School Principal</td>
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<td>Junior High School Principal</td>
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<td>Elementary School Principal</td>
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Table 8 details the respondents' experience in education. Each group represented a diversity of experience in education and employment in the IISD. This table compares the years of experience in education, years of employment in the IISD, and, for principals, the years as a building principal.

The junior high school principals were the category with the highest average of experience in education, 27.2 years, and most years in Irving, 21.7 years. Of all principals, the high school principals had the least
### Table 8

**Respondents' Years of Experience in Education**

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average experience in education, 21.3 years, but the elementary principals had the lowest average for number of years in Irving, 18.4.

For teachers in the sample, the high school teachers who were not on the SBDM committee had the highest average of experience in education, 22.6 years, and most years in Irving, 18.6 years. Of all teachers, the junior high school teachers who were not on the SBDM committee had the least average experience in education, 12 years, but the elementary school teachers who were not on the site based decision making committee had the lowest average number of years in Irving, 10.7 years.

For all teachers in the sample, the teachers who were on the core committee of their SBDM team averaged 18.6 years of experience in education and 11.2 years in Irving. The teachers who were not on the SBDM committee averaged 16.3 years of experience in education and 13.4 years in Irving. In total, all respondents averaged 20.9 years in education and 15.4 years in the IISD.

Listing all respondents' total experience in education (see Table 9), revealed two naturally occurring gaps. A seven year gap occurs between forty-one years experience and thirty-four years experience. A six year gap occurs between fourteen years experience and eight years experience. Using this last gap and segregating, as a sub-sample, the five respondents with eight years or less
Table 9

Chronological Listing of Respondents' Years of Experience

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experience, a study was made to determine if the years of experience affected responses (see Table 10).

Responses from the sub-sample, teachers with eight years' experience or less, differed from the total sample response on only four questions. On questions 12 and 19, the sub-sample did not reach consensus. The total sample perceived question 12—identifying and prioritizing curriculum problems—as a function of SBDM, while question 19—evaluating school level curriculum—was not perceived as a function of SBDM. Responses from the sub-sample also differed from the total sample response on questions 20 and 26 which dealt with ensuring that a new curriculum is implemented and planning district wide staff development. The total sample did not perceive these as functions of SBDM whereas the sub-sample did perceive these as functions of SBDM.
Table 10

Determination of SBDM Function Comparing Total Sample To Teachers with Eight Years Experience

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<th>JTN\textsuperscript{d}</th>
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Note. Questions 3, 4, 5, 5, & 11 not applicable.  
^a eight years experience.  ^bfive years.  ^cseven years.  ^d one year.  
^eone year.  ^ffrequency count eight years or less.  
^gDetermination of SBDM function by sub-sample.  
^hDetermination of SBDM function by total sample.  ^iFrequency count for total sample.  ^jAgreement between total sample and sub-sample.

Responses Influenced by Experience

Interview Question 12

Who will be responsible for identifying and prioritizing curriculum problems to be solved? How is this different from previous practice?

The identifying and prioritizing of curriculum problems was perceived by the total sample to be the responsibility
of campus personnel and a function of SBDM. The sub-sample also perceived this to be the responsibility of campus personnel, but did not reach consensus as to SBDM function. Those who perceived SBDM involvement perceived that the SBDM committee would identify and prioritize problems then work through the principal and departments or grade levels to solve these problems. Those who did not perceive SBDM involvement listed the principal, teachers, and curriculum consultants as responsible. One teacher did not know.

**Interview Question 19**

Who will be responsible for evaluating curriculum at the school level and using evaluative data to identify school level problems?

Evaluating curriculum at the school level and using evaluative data to identify school level problems was perceived by the total sample to be the responsibility of campus personnel but not a function of SBDM. The sub-sample also perceived this to be the responsibility of campus personnel but did not reach consensus as to SBDM function. Those who perceived SBDM involvement perceived that the SBDM committee will look at test scores, discuss curriculum changes needed to improve scores, and evaluate the overall program. Those who did not perceive SBDM involvement listed teachers and curriculum consultants as responsible. One teacher did not know.
Interview Question 20
Who will be responsible for ensuring that a new curriculum is implemented after it is developed?

Ensuring that a new curriculum is implemented after it is developed was perceived by the total sample to be the responsibility of campus personnel but not a function of SBDM. The sub-sample also perceived this to be the responsibility of campus personnel and also a function of SBDM. Those who perceived SBDM involvement perceived more teacher input and the SBDM committee as overseeing the implementation to see that it is done and done correctly. The one teacher who did not perceive SBDM involvement listed the principal and teachers as responsible and stated that this is no change. One teacher did not know.

Interview Question 26
Who will plan district-wide staff development programs required by curriculum change?

Planning district-wide staff development programs was perceived by the total sample to be the responsibility of central administration and not a function of SBDM. The responses of the sub-sample were somewhat confusing. Three respondents listed central administration as responsible but stated that SBDM would be involved because teachers would provide more input and more teachers would be involved in the staff development. One teacher perceived
that the principal would be responsible, that this is a change from central administration, and SBDM caused this change. One teacher perceived that staff development would move from the district level to the campus even if the staff development were district wide in scope. This move was perceived to be the result of the implementation of SBDM and teachers and the SBDM committee were perceived as responsible.

For the remaining twenty-four questions, the responses of the total sample and the sub-sample were in agreement. The experience of respondents was of no significance in this study.

**Summary**

Respondents perceived that curriculum roles at the district level and curriculum roles and responsibilities at the individual school or campus level would change with the implementation of SBDM. These changes envisioned district and campus personnel as being more receptive to input as decisions are made and allowing more freedom to campuses and teachers in determining how best to meet their students' needs. Curriculum responsibilities at the campus level were perceived as moving away from administrators and toward teachers. Key terms such as responsibility, accountability, ownership, communication, and empowerment were voiced throughout participants' responses.
Respondents did not perceive curriculum responsibilities at the district level to be changing with the implementation of SBDM. In the past, the school district has supplied a framework for curriculum at each campus and provided monetary support for this curriculum. These responsibilities were perceived to be continuing. Perceptions were that the district must continue to provide leadership and guidance as each campus is allowed more leeway for self-direction.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to legislative mandate, (SB 1 May 1991 and HB 2885 June 1990) school districts throughout the State of Texas have implemented site based decision making (SBDM). Though the law required SBDM and its application in (a) goal setting, (b) curriculum, (c) budgeting, (d) staffing patterns, and (e) school organization, flexibility was given to districts as they developed their own SBDM implementation plan. Within the frameworks given by the state and local school districts, individual schools have worked to implement SBDM on their own campuses.

The study was conducted in one school district, the Irving Independent School District (IISD), serving 25,000 students on twenty-eight campuses, three high schools, six junior high schools, seventeen elementary schools, and one alternative education school. The city of Irving and its school district are located in Dallas County. Irving is a western suburb of Dallas situated between Dallas and Fort Worth, but in greater proximity to Dallas.

As each campus' SBDM committee worked together, many questions have arisen. Who is responsible for what? Who
will make which decisions? Will district roles change? Will campus roles change? How will district and campus responsibilities be affected?

This study sought to discover perceptions of curriculum change that would occur with the implementation of SBDM. Three questions guided this study:

1. How were curriculum roles within the Irving Independent School District changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

2. How were curriculum responsibilities within the Irving Independent School District changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

3. How were curriculum roles and responsibilities within an individual school changed with the implementation of site based decision making?

By September 1, 1992, school districts had to submit an SBDM implementation plan to the commissioner of education. Campuses then began to elect their committees and initiate the SBDM process. In March of that same school year, the first interviews for this study were conducted. Three months later, a second interview was held. (See Appendices B and C for interview questions.) Within nine months of the inauguration of SBDM in the State of Texas, responses to the two interviews were gathered and categorized. The data from these interviews constitute the results of this study.
To address the research questions, thirty-nine respondents representing nine groups were selected to be interviewed. Respondents included three high school principals, six junior high school principals, and eight elementary school principals. Eleven respondents were selected from campus SBDM committees. These included three high school teachers, four junior high school teachers, and four elementary school teachers. Eleven respondents were also selected from teachers who were not on their campus SBDM committee. These respondents included three high school teachers, four junior high school teachers, and four elementary school teachers.

Summary of Findings

Respondents' perceptions of the implementation of SBDM produced varying degrees of consistency. Perceptions of responsibilities as either central administration or individual site produced agreement for twenty-two of the twenty-three identified responsibilities. Decisions requiring SBDM involvement produced agreement in twenty of twenty-five areas. Campus roles were perceived to be changing by thirty-five of the thirty-nine respondents. Principals perceived district role changes differently from teachers on the committee and teachers not on the committee. However, when considered individually, twenty-three respondents perceived district roles to be changing while eleven did not.
Curriculum roles within the school district were perceived as changing with the implementation of SBDM. These role changes were perceived to impact: (a) school board, (b) central administration, (c) principals, (d) teachers, (e) parents, and (f) community. Gains in authority or power were perceived for principals and teachers with parents and community entering with an increased voice in decision making. The school board and central administration were perceived as needing to listen more and become more accepting of campus conceived changes. Central administration was perceived as moving from a legislative, law-giving role to a judicial, interpretive, supportive role. School district roles were believed to be changing and respondents perceived these to be changes for the better.

Curriculum responsibilities within a school district were not perceived to be changing with the implementation of SBDM. The responsibilities held by the state, school board, central administration, and curriculum consultants were perceived to be continuing. Respondents expressed the need for these responsibilities to be performed with an openness and sensitivity toward the needs of individual districts and campuses. As districts and campuses make decisions to meet the needs of their students, respondents perceived the necessity for decision making freedom. Though recognizing the requirement for coordination,
consistent standards, and an overall view of education which only state or district personnel can achieve, respondents perceived an increasing individual freedom to work within established frameworks.

Curriculum roles within individual schools were perceived to be changing with the implementation of SBDM. These role changes were perceived to impact principals, teachers, and department chair persons. As they represent SBDM consensus, principals were perceived to be gaining power at the district level. Yet at the campus level, principals were perceived to be losing power or needing to give up the unilateral decision making authority. Perceptions were that principals must listen more to teachers and be more receptive to input from teachers, parents, and community. Teachers were perceived to be gaining power at all levels. By originating ideas, providing input before decisions are made, and having flexibility in developing and executing curriculum, teachers were perceived to be undergoing the greatest role change. Department chair persons were also perceived to be gaining in power as principals utilize their leadership and expertise. The changes in curriculum roles were perceived to be generating much more interaction. Respondents believed communication between all levels to be the key factor as these role changes occur.
Curriculum responsibilities within individual schools were perceived to be changing with the implementation of SBDM. Only four responsibilities were perceived to be functions of SBDM: (a) developing the campus curriculum budget, (b) identifying and prioritizing campus curriculum problems, (c) determining who participates in curriculum planning, and (d) implementing campus staff development. These four responsibilities represent a small percentage of the possible responsibilities. However, with the formal SBDM process itself, the increased input from teachers, parents, and community, and the increased participation through subcommittees, the perception was created that curriculum responsibilities within individual school would change with the implementation of SBDM. These changes extended to the SBDM committee as they gather, process, and communicate information to their campus personnel.

The variation in educational experience did not prove to be a significant factor in the respondents' perceptions. The sub-sample, comprised of respondents with less than eight years of experience, answered directly opposite to the total sample on two questions. The sub-sample perceived ensuring the implementation of a new curriculum and planning district-wide staff development as functions of SBDM while the total sample did not. On two other questions, identifying and prioritizing campus curriculum problems and evaluating campus curriculum and using
evaluative data to identify campus problems, the sub-sample
did not reach consensus while the total sample perceived
identifying and prioritizing campuses' curriculum as a
function of SBDM, but evaluating campus curriculum and
using such data to identify campus problems was not to be a
function of SBDM. On twenty-four questions the sub-sample
and the total sample were in agreement.

The time required to effectively implement SBDM was
perceived to be three years. This amount of time was
perceived as needed for personnel to become familiar with
the process and to overcome the major obstacles: (a)
communication, (b) defining the roles and purpose of SBDM,
(c) lack of time, (d) lack of experience, (e) developing
teamwork, and (f) administration releasing their hold on
decision making. Three years was perceived as necessary to
precipitate effective changes in curriculum delivery and
meeting the needs of students. The consensus perception
was that SBDM has been effectively implemented in the
IISD. However, perceptions existed that if the role and
purpose of SBDM had been defined, and with better
communication, and more training in the SBDM process, the
implementation of SBDM would have been enhanced.

SBDM was not perceived as a proximate cause of student
achievement. Rather, the implementation of SBDM was
perceived as leading to ownership, proximity, access,
teamwork, and focus. These derivatives of SBDM might then lead to improved student achievement.

Improvements in student achievement as a result of SBDM did not go unquestioned. The perception that SBDM is not an incantation for success was expressed. Problems in students' homes and in society at large cannot be addressed by SBDM.

Perceptions of the respondents' jobs changing and the inducing of teacher empowerment as a result of the implementation of SBDM brought expressions of previously addressed themes. Principals sharing more in the decision making process, accepting more input, and being responsible and accountable to meet set standards were restated. Teachers having more input, being more responsible and accountable, and having more flexibility to develop programs and courses were restated. Communication was again perceived as a key factor in the SBDM process.

In closing comments respondents expressed concerns and discussed the benefits of SBDM, with concerns outnumbering benefits. One major concern dealt with the issue of student achievement. If student achievement does not improve, or if different campuses vary in the degree of student achievement, the unknown result was of concern to respondents. Additional concerns were: (a) determining who really is responsible, (b) gaining consensus, (c) countering resentment, (d) misplacing empowerment, (e)
gaining a whole-school concept, and (f) achieving a release from the state in the areas of curriculum goals and content. A blanket concern covering all areas was the lack of time to adequately address the issues in such a way that real changes could occur. Benefits listed included: (a) the collaborative effort creating a better idea, (b) students benefitting, (c) teachers benefitting, (d) ownership, (e) teamwork, and (f) communication. Throughout all discussions recurring themes of communication, ownership, teamwork, meeting students' needs, time concerns, responsibility, and accountability were expressed.

District curriculum responsibilities were not perceived to be changing with the implementation of SBDM. District curriculum roles, campus curriculum roles, and campus curriculum responsibilities were perceived to be changing with the implementation of SBDM. Yet, a loss of power from the state, school board, and central administration was perceived as necessary for these changes to take place. However, this power belongs to those same entities who would lose power if SBDM were effectively implemented. Will the state, local school boards, and central administration yield decision making freedom to campuses? This remains an acute question in the minds of respondents.

Respondents' perceptions related to roles, budget, programs, instruction, and staff development can be summarized and may then be further delineated to determine
the specific responsibilities perceived to be those of the SBDM committee.

Roles

1. Central administration would remain as the ultimate decision maker.

2. Central administration's function would change from an originating, mandating posture to one of support, assistance, and interpretation.

3. Central administration must allow schools to experiment.

4. Principals were perceived as gaining power at the district level but losing power at the campus level.

5. Department chair persons were perceived as gaining power.

6. Teachers were perceived as gaining power at all levels.

Budget

1. Central administration would remain responsible for developing and monitoring the district curriculum budget.

2. Personnel at the local campus would develop the campus curriculum budget but the principal would monitor that budget.

3. The entire budgeting process would: (a) receive much more input from teachers, parents, and non-parents;
(b) vary from campus to campus; (c) receive more scrutiny; and (d) force priorities to be set prior to the building of the budget.

Programs

1. Central administration would remain responsible for ensuring curriculum continuity between elementary and secondary schools.

2. Personnel at the local campus would be responsible for: (a) identifying and prioritizing campus curriculum problems; (b) determining who participates in curriculum planning; (c) developing the goals of the subject matter; (d) determining the content of the subject matter; (e) ensuring that important skills that cut across disciplines are appropriately taught and reinforced; (f) ensuring the written curriculum is taught and tested; (g) evaluating curriculum at the school level and using the data to identify school level problems; and (h) ensuring that a new curriculum is implemented.

Instruction

1. Central administration would remain responsible for: (a) purchasing textbooks, and (b) determining the minimum level of competence required of students.

2. Personnel at the local campus would be responsible for: (a) assisting teachers in developing instructional
plans; (b) selecting textbooks, computer software, and library materials; and (c) helping teachers use student evaluation results to make needed modifications in the curriculum.

**Staff Development**

1. Central administration would remain responsible for planning district wide and K-12 staff development.

2. Personnel at the local campus would be responsible for implementing school-site staff development.

**SBDM Function**

Four responsibilities were perceived as functions of the SBDM committee: (a) developing the campus curriculum budget; (b) identifying and prioritizing campus curriculum problems; (c) determining who participates in curriculum planning; and (d) implementing school-site staff development.

**Conclusions**

Throughout the first interview, participants' responses were interestingly similar. This seemed to indicate an agreement in the role and responsibility changes inherent to SBDM. Upon further analysis, the responses indicated more of a campus/central administration determination. Once that distinction was made, a SBDM function could be
evaluated. Many of the individual responses indicated SBDM involvement in decisions beyond the state's requirements. The responses of principals and teachers on the committee were also uniform throughout the study. Responses of the teachers not on the committee varied from the others' responses only slightly, but enough to reinforce the need for better communication. In addition, the second interview further revealed the uncertainty of purpose of SBDM and other obstacles to effective implementation as well as methods by which the implementation of SBDM could have been improved.

Under the old concept, education was thought of as a "process and system, effort and intention, investment and hope. To improve education meant to try harder, to engage in more activity, to magnify one's plans, to give people more services, and to become more efficient in delivering them. [Under the new concept, education is the] result achieved, the learning that takes root when the process has been effective. Only if the process succeeds and learning occurs will we say that education happened" (Finn, 1990, p. 586).

Results, not methodology should be considered in determining whether education has been improved (Neal, 1991). In the absence of "evidence of such a result, there is no education--however many attempts have been made, resources deployed, or energies expended. This new concept
of education goes far deeper than what has sometimes been described . . . as a change in emphasis from educational inputs to outcomes. . . . It fundamentally changes the ways in which they are viewed [and] the theories by which they are explained" (Finn, 1990, p. 586).

Recommendations for the Implementation of SBDM

Recommendations to school districts and schools as they implement SBDM revolve around two core issues: training and communication. Both are essential for the rapid, effective implementation of SBDM.

Training

Differentiated training for every employee in the school district would enhance the implementation of SBDM. The school board, central office personnel, principals, and the campus SBDM committees need extensive training in the use of SBDM. This training would incorporate seven areas. These areas are:

1. The state's definition of SBDM would start the training.

2. The purpose of SBDM is to improve student achievement. Training in this purpose would include expected outcome of SBDM as detailed by the Commissioner of Education, Lionel Meno (see Chapter 2).
3. The function of SBDM would present goal setting, curriculum, budget, staffing patterns, and school organization as the major areas to be addressed by the SBDM committees. Each area must be understood by all persons in this training.

4. The process of SBDM would include training in problem analysis, decision making responsibility, team building, consensus building, and staff development. These are the actual tools the SBDM committees will be using as they meet to discuss campus priorities and propose changes.

5. State standards would be illustrated.

6. District standards would be illustrated.

7. Instructional variations would be modeled and encouraged. This step is necessary to counter the lecture-only format observed by Goodlad and promote innovations to reach into the classroom (Goodlad, 1984).

These seven areas give district leadership the training to begin instructing campus personnel. All teachers in the school district should receive the same training as the SBDM committee members with the exception of SBDM process. Though important, the training in problem analysis, consensus building, and other topics in this section are not essential for non-committee members as SBDM is being implemented. The other training would equip teachers with an understanding of state and district standards as well as SBDM's purpose and function. This understanding would
allow teachers to participate in the procedures without being burdened with the process to be utilized in committee discussions.

District paraprofessional staff, maintenance staff, operations staff, and all other district employees would receive training in: (a) SBDM definition, (b) SBDM purpose, (c) state standards, and (d) district standards. This would make noncertified personnel aware of SBDM and emphasize the importance of the proceedings.

This differentiated training would complete the initial training sequence. All employees in the school district would be trained. In this manner all employees understand the SBDM purpose and the direction in which the school district is headed.

Communication

Communication during the implementation and throughout the application of SBDM is essential. Two communication lines should be created. First, two formal two-way communication processes should be established. The first formal two-way communication process would transport information, questions, answers, and concerns between the central administration and the campus SBDM committees. Campuses would know the formal procedures to follow for accomplishing their decisions or to process waivers to mandated guidelines. The central administration would have
a formal procedure to provide support and encouragement to campuses and to notify campuses of acceptance or denial of waivers.

The second formal two-way communication process would connect the central administration with the Chamber of Commerce in the city or town, the newspaper or newspapers, campus PTAs, and any other group that serves the greater community. In this communication, the central administration could keep citizens informed of campus decisions and directions. This communication would provide the avenue to inform the public of the definition, purpose, and function of SBDM. The citizens could, in turn, express priorities for school consideration. Local campuses should be encouraged to make a similar communication connection between their campus and the citizens within their school boundaries.

In addition to the establishment of the formal communication lines, an informal two-way communication plan should be created. This plan would give central administration and campus SBDM committees the opportunity to dialog without formalities slowing the process. Information, questions, answers, support, and encouragement could flow easily through informal lines of communication. Informal discussions would allow districts and campuses the opportunity to more easily network with other districts and
campuses. The informal communications would encourage an environment more conducive to risk taking and innovation.

Together, training for all school district employees and the structuring of formal and informal lines of communication would improve the initial implementation of SBDM. Questions of responsibility or roles could quickly be resolved allowing for a smooth transition into the collaborative process.

Recommendations for Further Study

Based upon the findings of this study, recommendations for further study include:

1. Because this study was conducted within the first nine months of the initial implementation of SBDM in the IISD—and if, as respondents perceived, three years are required to effectively implement SBDM—a follow-up study of individuals' perceptions of district and campus roles and responsibilities after a three year time period could be utilized to compare with the initial perceptions.

2. According to the State legislature, improved student achievement could be the ultimate change accelerated by the implementation of SBDM. A study comparing student achievement prior to the implementation of SBDM with student achievement after a three year time period would indicate the success or lack of success the
implementation of SBDM has had in regard to student achievement.

3. The Texas Legislature mandated that SBDM committees address five areas. A study to determine which of the five areas has been most addressed by SBDM committees would indicate priorities of educators. This would also indicate if an ancillary category has been addressed as much or more than one or more of the primary categories.

4. Respondents indicated that the key figure in the utilization of SBDM is the principal. One respondent believed that a principal's leadership style would determine the effectiveness and direction of that SBDM committee. A study correlating principals' leadership styles with topics addressed and effectiveness of SBDM committees would reveal if a correlation exists.
APPENDIX A

PERMIT LETTERS
Larry Watson  
1004 Old Mill  
Irving, TX 75061  
March 23, 1993  

Mr. ...  
... Elementary  
Irving, TX ...  

Dear Mr. ...  

This letter is to inform you that a study is being conducted on the implementation of site based decision making in the Irving Independent School District. This study is necessary for the collection of data required to complete a doctoral dissertation. Your experience and position in our school district make you the ideal participant for this study.  

This study will require you to be interviewed on two occasions, one to be scheduled as soon as possible and one at a later date. The interview questions for both interviews will be the same and they are short answer in format.  

All information gathered will be kept confidential.  

This study may help our school district and similar school districts implement site based decision making. I would very much appreciate your cooperation and participation.  

A phone call to schedule the initial interview will be forthcoming. Thank you.  

Sincerely  

Larry Watson  

Enclosure
February 3, 1993

TO: Larry Watson  
Vice-Principal, MacArthur HS

FROM: Jerry Christian  
Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Administration

RE: Research for Dissertation

Your request to interview certain Irving ISD staff members related to the implementation of Site Based Decision Making is hereby approved.

Best wishes on completing the work.
QUESTIONNAIRE: FIRST INTERVIEW

1. Are curriculum roles within the school district changing with the implementation of SBDM? If so, which roles are changing and how are they changing?

2. Are curriculum roles within individual schools changing with the implementation of SBDM? If so, which roles are changing and how are they changing?

3. How will these role changes be accepted by the persons directly involved? By those not directly involved?

4. What will be the greatest positive impact in the area of role change?

5. What will be the greatest negative impact in the area of role change?

6. How will the resolution of conflicts between the principals (schools) and the central office differ from previous resolution procedures?

7. Who will be responsible at the district level for developing the curriculum budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?

8. Who will monitor the district budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?
9. Who will be responsible at the individual school level for developing the curriculum budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?

10. Who will monitor the individual school's budget? Is this a deviation from previous practice? If so, how?

11. How will the entire budgeting process differ with SBDM?

12. Who will be responsible for identifying and prioritizing curriculum problems to be solved? How is this different from previous practice?

13. Who will determine who participates in curriculum planning?

14. Who will develop the goals of the subject matter?

15. Who will determine the content of the subject matter?

16. Who will ensure the curriculum continuity between elementary and secondary schools?

17. Who will be responsible for ensuring that important skills that cut across the disciplines are appropriately taught and reinforced in those disciplines?

18. Who will be responsible for ensuring that the written curriculum is the curriculum that is taught and tested?

19. Who will be responsible for evaluating curriculum at the school level and using evaluative data to identify school level problems?
20. Who will be responsible for ensuring that a new
   curriculum is implemented after it is developed?

21. Who will assist teachers in developing instructional
   plans based upon curriculum guides?


23. Who will purchase textbooks

24. Who will help teachers use student evaluation
   results to make needed modifications in the curriculum?

25. Who will determine the minimum level of competence
   required of students?

26. Who will plan district-wide staff development
   programs required by curriculum change?

27. Who will implement K-12 staff development programs
   for a specific area of the curriculum?

28. Who will implement school-site staff development
   required by curriculum change?
APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE: SECOND INTERVIEW
QUESTIONNAIRE: SECOND INTERVIEW

1. How long will it take for SBDM to be effectively implemented in the IISD?

2. With the implementation of SBDM, where will major curriculum changes occur?

3. What are the major obstacles that must be overcome for SBDM to be effective?

4. How could the implementation of SBDM in Irving have been more effectively achieved?

5. How will student achievement be improved through the implementation of SBDM?
REFERENCES


