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OF
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PART-ONE SETTING THE STAGE

FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES

- 1. If you were/are a central school administrator responsible for improving a school (or set of schools) how would you proceed?**

A central school administrator looks to identify issues that arise as part of a feedback loop that intentionally provides information about a system. Once an issue or problem is identified, stakeholders should be involved in identifying the problem and in the planning process (Deming, 1990). The School Board would most likely initiate the reform effort. If they did not, the school board should be included in the process to obtain their approval to move forward. Ultimately, the Board will have to fund any reform effort, so it is best to have them involved as early as possible. Clarence Stone (2003) argues that problems are best addressed when the civic capacity of the greater community is optimized to pool all available resources. Community groups such as business and education partners, PTA organizations and others should have a forum to have input in the process. This would serve to improve the sustainability of the efforts. Senge (1991) would seek to look at the system for alignment. Are all groups working together to achieve a common goal? Schein (2004) would encourage us to look at the culture before proceeding. Surveying the staff, parents and students to gain initial insight into existing culture and conditions would provide useful information during the planning phase. Comer (2001) and Epstein (2002) support the idea that parental

involvement is a critical feature of any school improvement plan. Plans to improve parental involvement often fail because school leaders and personnel are not adequately trained to relate to parents in this type of role. Once the stakeholders are in place and forums for participation exist, it is the role of school leaders to facilitate efforts that focus on sustainable improvement of student achievement.

2. What are the promises and the perils involved in collaborative efforts, especially between school systems and universities colleges?

When looking at collaborate efforts between school systems and universities there can be promises as well as perils involved. Some promises include increased communication between stakeholders, better relationships fostering collaboration, and an increase in student preparedness when transitioning from high school to college. Some perils may include varying viewpoints regarding student expectations as well as lack of sufficient training for educators.

Both Clarence Stone (2003) and Frank Smith (2008) stress the importance of collaboration and communication between stakeholders. If a successful partnership is to be created between the school systems and universities, open channels of communication need to be maintained.

#3. What would you predict to be the obstacles to completing a successful school design process in an urban setting? What strategies would you adopt in response?

Obstacles:

Based on the reporting of Kozol in *Shame of the Nation* (2005) and *Savage Inequalities* (1991), the first obstacles to the successful completion of an urban school design process would relate to issues of segregation and equality of funding which result in high drop-out rates. In addition, Kozol demonstrates how the curriculum for the urban poor is one of Taylor's efficiency model, rather than a humanistic, social-emotional undertaking. The Campaign for Fiscal Equity is a case in point for New York City. Kozol reports similar issues of inadequate funding throughout the fifty states in poor urban communities. New Jersey's urban poor, however, have been the beneficiaries of a court ruling which now provides adequate funding for its urban schools, and in addition, offers pre-school and full day kindergarten to its urban youngsters. *There is hope.*

Strategies:

In terms of strategies, it would be best to appeal to the state and to business partners for proper funding and to gather political and social capital in order to create a strategic plan. The plan would include the goal of implementing a humanistic curriculum that promotes meaningful, active, hands-on learning – preferably outside the four walls of the ill-maintained urban school setting. Project-based learning and apprenticeships (Gardner, 1983, 1993) at the secondary level would engage students and afford them the likelihood of graduating and being properly prepared for college or the world of work. Ruby Payne (2005) would suggest that a culturally sensitive curriculum be employed, while Wehlage (1999) reminds us that mentorships can successfully support at-risk students. Using the Smith ADC Model, it would be essential to address instruction,

organization, governance and accountability concomitantly and to build social capital (Comer, 2001) (Smith, 2008) (C. Stone, 2003) in the new design of an urban school. In Comer's model, social capital strengthens the community, and all the children belong to everyone in the community. Using a Site-Based Management Team approach, data would be shared to provide a clear understanding of the goals to be set as well as the intended outcomes.

4. If there were three sets of players in the school change process: the college/university design team, the school's central administration, the schools involved in the process: What assets and liabilities do each bring to the table?

College/University

Assets:

- Closer partnership may enable students to be better prepared and successful when transitioning to post-high school studies.
 - Knowledge of what students need to be successful in college.

Liabilities:

- Lack the day to day understanding of how a school is organized.
 - Theory may be lacking

Central Administration

Assets:

- Have a more global K-12 view of education

- Able to access data to document progress across the spectrum
- Access to funds/resources needed to implement effective change

Liabilities:

- Not directly involved in the day to day workings of the school (having little direct contact with students).

Schools

Assets:

- Have direct contact with students as well as university personnel.

Liabilities:

- Each school has its own identity and at times collaboration can be difficult

IN-DEPTH REVIEW

1. **Have you experienced or witnessed “bad school stories” shared by teachers and others in the district? Why do these stories take place? What can be done about them?**

“Bad school stories” exist for many reasons. Schein (2004) speaks about underlying assumptions that group members must follow to gain and maintain membership.

Maslow also discusses the need for belonging. This may serve to explain the existence of

these stories as a rite of passage into the group. To confront this cultural norm, one may use McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y framework which explains how the setup of an organization can restrict the growth of individuals within the organization and thus, the organization itself. Cook and Yanow (1993) suggest an approach to organizational learning that would promote growth of both the individuals and the organization as a whole. When individuals in an organization experience personal growth they will be less likely to resort to sharing "bad stories" to maintain group membership.

2. What kinds of issues face your school?

The issues that face our schools are economic downturn, low achievement, high drop-out rates, and disciplinary problems. Many school leaders face the challenge of transforming their schools into learning organizations. The recent economic downturn has forced schools to make difficult choices which include reducing or cutting academic programs. Often, academic programs are cut because school leaders and Board members fear the political backlash associated with making cuts to nonacademic programs.

3. What are the dynamics between the Superintendent and School Boards?

The superintendent is hired and employed by the School Board. He or she is responsible for carrying out the long term vision of the school board. Often, the vision of the superintendent and the school board can be at odds with each other. For example, they might disagree on where to cut spending. This is where the political nature of school governance often comes to the surface. A skillful superintendent will collaborate with a school board in crafting a vision and developing a plan that meets the long term educational goals of the district while being mindful of the short term needs of the community, including fiscal responsibility.

4. Your Superintendent emphatically refers to two kinds of home settings: one advantaged and one disadvantaged. What is s/he trying to say about education and change? How do her/his views compare with Jonathan Kozol's *Savage Inequalities*?

Here the superintendent is making a value judgment about the impact of the home on the innate ability of the students. One can interpret this as his view on education and change. That is, it will not matter what change takes place in our schools, instead the only change that will matter needs to occur in the homes of our students. Kozol states "A polarization of this issue, whereby some insist upon the primacy of school, others upon the primacy of family and neighborhood, obscures the fact that both are elemental forces in the lives of children." (p.123) He adds that the government (school) is not responsible for the inequalities of family background, but it is responsible for inequalities in public education.

5. Would you want to be on this superintendent's team? Why? Why not?

We would if the superintendent intends to work to address the inequality that exists in society. If the superintendent feels that this is an excuse to explain student outcomes as "It's just the way it is," then we would not be on his/her team. This is discussed by Deborah Stone (2002) in her notion of stories that blame the victim. It can be a cause for inaction instead of a cause for action as should be the case.

6. A local politico raises the underlying question of whether school board governance needs to be changed. What is your view? Explain.

This is a local issue for this local politico, but the change would require legislative action. Our experience has been that a Board who understands the clear delineation of its role in the operation of a school district and goes through great lengths to minimize personal influence in decisions can have a very positive impact on student achievement. On the other hand, many of us have experienced Board members who let personal bias blur the lines of typical Board governance and, as a result, have negatively impacted the operation of these districts. We would prefer stricter guidelines on Board member training as described in The Key Work of School Boards by The National School Boards Association, utilizing the seven key elements, rather than changing the governance structure.

7. Someone talks about “Yellow Light People.” What does this person mean? How do we, as educational leaders, deal with “yellow light people”?

“Yellow light people” refers to people who have difficulty making decisions. They “sit on the fence” and don’t look to go one way or the other. Involving these people in a collaborative decision making process where ideas are shared, discussed and revised can provide them with the sense of security they need to feel comfortable with decisions. They know that they do not shoulder the full responsibility for the decision, and they will be more likely to become involved in the process in the future. Frank Smith’s ADC model is one example of this process as it relates to school reform.

8. Another person says that the “kids are just not getting their just due.” What is this person referring to? Are such observations valid in large urban school systems? What primary strategies might more nearly get kids “their just due?”

This person is referring to an equitable allocation of resources. These observations are valid in large urban school systems as pointed out in Kozol’s *Savage Inequalities* (1991). It is clear that the system whereby schools generate revenue is not fair and this impacts the quality of the urban schools. There needs to be real reform in this area. This will require a shift in thinking on the part of urban, suburban, and rural political and

educational leaders. Once fiscal equity reform is accomplished, urban school leaders will then be faced with the challenges of allocating resources in a way that will greatly improve teaching and learning in their schools as discussed in *Reallocating Resources* (Odden & Archibald, 2001) .

9. **Another person says that “we all get comfortable with how things used to be, and have trouble with change.” To what degree do you feel this is true? What do we do, as educational leaders, to deal with that?**

We agree that this exists to the extent that underlying assumptions exist in any organization’s culture and that any notion that violates those assumptions causes anxiety in the group. People do not tend to question the existence or purpose of rituals. Schein (2004) argues that leaders need to present the group with discomforting data that creates survival anxiety, and then create psychological safety. Deming (1990) argues that leaders need to deal with this by driving out fear.

10. **Someone else points out that the typical complaint that “school boards are the problem” would not apply in your instance. In your view, does this mean the superintendent has free rein? How do authority relations and issue arenas change? What does this mean for the role of the superintendent?**

We do not feel that this means that the superintendent has free rein. A good relationship is based on collaboration and trust between the superintendent and the Board. A good relationship also has as one of its main components, a forum for open discourse. This can include conflict and debate. This may occur outside of a public arena, but it is productive in nature. The results of conflict and debate are mutually agreed upon and carried out in the best interest of the school district. This concept is discussed in The Work of School Boards published by the National School Boards Association.

11. Would the desire to seize the opportunity “to go down in history” be a motive for you to get involved with a specific school situation? Describe the situation.

Motivation should be based on effectiveness as an educator with little to no concern with, “going down in history.” In a school system the primary goal should be what is in the best interest of the children. Following Maslow’s belief that recognition should not be the primary motivator, educators should strive to foster a child centered vision. If a situation arose where effective school change could take place, a team of educators working collaboratively and committed to a shared vision would be the markers. Recognition should not be the primary concern, but if it would occur, such recognition would be accepted humbly.

12. Frank Smith calls schools technical, traditional, bureaucratized, and fragmented. He refers to an underlying culture and basic assumptions. Is it important for educators (and non-educators) to deal with these underlying assumptions? How is this done? How successful can one be in challenging assumptions?

Underlying culture and basic assumptions can paralyze a school's progress. A school's survival anxiety must be greater than its learning anxiety. Educators (and non-educators) must remain focused on moving the school in a positive forward direction. Schein (2004) emphasizes that you must talk to the people keeping them involved in shared interest. A cognitive restructuring and refreezing is a way to stabilize and confirm new beliefs and values in turn challenging these basic assumptions.

13. A researcher refers to the school design process as “by its nature, political.” To you, what does that mean? Who are the leading politicians? What are the implications for school change?

The school design process is political by nature, involving many stakeholders/special interest groups with individual visions. Deborah Stone stresses that we do not live in a market society where individuals can act independently, but live in a polis where individual actions affect one another. The leading politicians in the school design process would include the superintendent, central administration, parents, teachers, school board, school administrators, community members/leaders, and informal

leaders (inside and outside of school). In accordance with Clarence Stone's writings on Civic Capacity, for effective school change to occur, all stakeholders must need to get involved and work together for school improvement.

14. One teacher looks back on the influences in her life and lashes out against “top down leadership.” Why? To what degree do you feel that people in schools want the authority to be responsible for school performance? Are people comfortable “being bossed?”

Most teachers want to feel as though they have been included in the decision making process that is going on in the school. Teachers at times feel that since they are “on the front lines” every day working with the students, they know what would be best for them and would like being part of a collaborative effort in decision making. Senge (1990) talks about a Systems Thinking approach as the cornerstone of the learning organizations, encouraging the use of ‘systems maps’ – diagrams that show the key elements of systems and how they connect. Once the policies have been explained using a wider lens, people can be more supportive. Senge (1990) states that in learning organization, leaders are designers, stewards and teachers. They are responsible for *building organizations* where people continually expand their capabilities to attain personal mastery, improve share mental models, build shared vision and engage in team learning. (Senge, 1990).

15. Another teacher talks about “team spiritedness” and everyone “having a piece of the pie” Are these important factors? How does one promote this willingness to take responsibility and to show initiative?

“Team spiritedness” and everyone “having a piece of the pie” are important factors when fostering a successful and positive school culture and climate. Possible ways to promote a willingness to take responsibility and show initiative would be by continual follow-through on suggestions, to reward and recognize initiative given, encourage collaboration and to listen, being open to others’ viewpoints. Ouchi expressed that one will see greater success when teachers are able to take ownership of the change being implemented.

16. One person cites the African proverb, “It takes a whole village to educate a child.” To you, what does that mean? How does it apply to the effort to create change?

This proverb implies that every single person in the community (no matter how large or small a role) contributes to educating the children of the community. If this task is neglected by any member, you are depriving the child of that special knowledge.

Epstein (2002), C. Stone (2003) and Comer (2001) explain that parent and community involvement are essential in the successes of our youth. All stakeholders need to be involved, having the entire community working together to impact student achievement and create an environment of change.

17. James Comer comments that the school design process is “a messy muddling through.” What image does that connote for you? Is that an accurate or fair way to describe school design?

The image it conjures for some is a set of plans, with edits, changes, cross outs, new arrows and corrections. You try to have a plan, but you cannot anticipate all of the needs, events, and roadblocks. To some extent, it is a fair way to describe school design. On the other hand, you do need some type of plan, even if it evolves and changes. The various political and social aspects of school design often compete against what is best for children and their learning, fiscal constraints, equity of resources, system of governance, classroom design, design of school day, length of school year, etc. Deborah Stone (2002) states that the stakeholders all have their own viewpoints of where they're going and they don't always come together. Comer asserts that it can get “messy” when many viewpoints come together and stresses that a leader must emerge as a guide and facilitator.

18. What process and rationales would you say have been used for the most part in the past for designing schools? What can be borrowed from these earlier efforts? How would the rationale and process be different now?

In the past, the school system had a strong and single-minded focus on “reading, writing and arithmetic.” In the early days, the needs of society education reserved education for

white males; very few women were given educational opportunities. In early school system designs, there was a top down management authoritative style to leadership. Reflecting on the past, one cannot help but think that there is not much that can be borrowed from this approach to education. One thing that could be taken is the idea to not let history repeat itself; take the past's single-minded approach and learn and grow from it. Today we now have a better systems thinking, ecological and holistic viewpoint on education. Today we can no longer view the school design as a sole entity, but rather as one that encompasses both internal and external factors.

19. Frank Smith contends that “education is not a profession based on ignorance.” Do you agree? How might you challenge that statement? What are its implications for school design efforts? Can anyone just wander in “off the street” to create a school? Should teachers be empowered to redesign schools?

We subscribe to Frank Smith's view that the school design process should not be based on ignorance if education is going to be successful. Often people with little to no educational background “wander in off the streets” and make policy decisions that impact our schools, giving little regard to the stakeholders. Teachers and community members should be empowered to be part of the school design process. In following Smith's Advocacy Design Model, all members in the core design group should be

carefully selected and there should be significant training for all involved in the process so they are better able to make decisions that will yield a positive result.

20. Your superintendent stressed that the new design for school change has to be more than “just principals making decisions for their schools.” What is involved in principals’ accepting this new type of role?

It is necessary for principals to learn through study, training, conversations, and theorists just why the superintendent is stressing this and what is meant by it.

Principals will need examples of how things can be better if they engage their faculty in the decision-making process so that they come to believe it. If they do not believe it, their faculties will not believe them. To accomplish this type of shift, it would require redefining priorities of principals. Several of the following would need to be given careful consideration:

- Principals need to utilize professional development
- Creating a learning organization.
- Visit model schools
- Reaching out to other organizations

21. It has been suggested that successful schools create for themselves a “special” identity and character.” To you, what does that mean? Has that

been part of your own experience with schools? How does one foster the development of such a special character/identity?

Examining the culture of the school will provide the necessary details regarding opportunities for success. Before true change can successfully take place, the culture must be prepared for transition. Trust and collaboration lead the way. Bryk & Schneider (2002) equate the degree of relational trust directly to the ability to impact the school environment and to improve teaching and learning.

Both Deborah Stone (2002) and Edgar Schein (2004) tell us that “who is in, and who is out” reveals a great deal about the organization, as well as its politics and identity.

Bolman and Deal (2003) define four organizational frames by which to identify the values, beliefs, assumptions, perceptions and behavioral norms that constitute the organization’s (school’s) culture: Political, Structural, Symbolic, and Human Resources.

The type of teachers hired (Human Resources) may create a special identity within a school. If one hired very creative, or very technically savvy staff, that would create a specific type of culture in the school with a certain set of values and beliefs about what students should learn and how that will happen. Fullan (1996) helps us understand that building collaborative cultures takes time and that “it is individuals and small groups of teachers and principals who must create the school and professional culture they want.”

(p. 107) In this way, moral purpose and coherence are developed and enhanced. Both Schein and Fullan believe that to create or change a culture, you must work on the artifacts, basic assumptions, as well as the values and beliefs at the same time.

22. The school change process calls for looking at four design concerns – instruction, organization, governance, and accountability. Why is it essential to look at all four? Which (if any) of the four should drive the others? Are there other essential elements?

Perhaps the most essential element of the ADC Model is *public discourse*. The four design concerns are meant to create a holistic view of the school in terms of its instructional practices, its organizational qualities, its governance structures and its patterns of accountability. The 29 questions in the model are intended to create discourse in order to determine and refine the type of reform that is best suited to the school. One cannot look at an area in isolation, since all are interdependent to the whole. The two areas that are sometimes favored are Instruction and Governance, though in this model, they do not stand on their own. Clearly, however, the Organization, Governance and Accountability features exist to enhance the instructional features.

23. Frank Smith refers to your school district by using the term “culture of failure.” He further adds that teachers might have convinced themselves that “they can’t teach kids.” What contributes to such a conclusion by teachers? How typical/atypical is this attitude? What is to be done about it?

Smith's use of the term "culture of failure" signals his belief that those within the school district cannot see themselves as successful in their instructional roles. Unfortunately, too many of us have witnessed such school cultures. Sometimes, it is blatant, and at other times, masked. All too often, generational poverty pervades the educational system in a manner that creates paralysis. Teachers begin to feel that they cannot positively affect the learning environment and give up. In such a situation, where the teaching staff feels ineffective, there needs to be a culture shift. This is no easy task; it takes a strong leader with a clear focus. Schein would have us examine the artifacts, assumptions and beliefs inherent in the system. Smith, in his Constructivist schema, espouses his four elements: Instruction, Organization, Governance and Accountability to tease out the areas in which reform is needed. Sergiovanni (1996), C. Stone (2003) and Comer (1997) would suggest that we examine the district in terms of its moral purpose and capacity and build on the social capital that does exist in the system.

24. Your superintendent takes pride in developing an instrument to measure the effectiveness of schools. What risks does s/he take in doing that? What should be in such an instrument if you were designing one? How would you use such an instrument? What would you do with the information?

Risk exists if the instrument is developed in isolation, or if distrust clouds the leader's purpose in using this instrument to gather information about her/his district. It would be best if the instrument were first tested on other populations to build credibility. An

essential design element of such an instrument might be its ability to gather data regarding students' self-assessments about their own learning. Such results would shed authentic information about the perceived learning on the part of students. This information could be compared to other formative and summative data, as well as input from teachers and parents. Ultimately, the data gleaned from the instrument must be shared with all stakeholder groups.

Frank Smith's ADC Model (2006) is based on an instrument consisting of 29 questions that provide data for the four areas of concern: Instruction, Organization, Governance, and Accountability. The descriptive, comparative and summative information gleaned from this instrument can be used to compare schools to a set standard as well as to one another, and to determine overall results in a district.

25. Ideally, groups of teachers and parents would come forward with a wish to redesign their schools. What, if anything, could the superintendent do to promote such a development? How do state mandated time lines impact school design strategies?

If there is relational trust (Bryck & Schneider, 2002) teachers and parents may indeed seek the redesign of their schools. This is not typical, however, perhaps because of the merry-go-round of superintendents that most districts experience. Train all who come to the table as the CORE group, to be able to speak in terms of IOGA. Comer (2001), C. Stone (2003), F. Smith (2008), and to a lesser extent, Epstein (2002), all speak to the

need to involve stakeholders in the process of redesigning schools. Superintendents need to create forums for the exchange of information and to install a vehicle for building transparency and trust in the system. They must extend themselves to the staff and community in new and open ways if they are to garner information that will help transform schools. Unfortunately, most often, state time lines greatly impede the school redesign process, since such change takes time and planning. State time lines are linear and are unforgiving in their deadlines. Therefore, school design teams must find time outside the school day in order to meet deadlines that may significantly assist in financing school reform efforts.

26. Your teachers ask for reasons why their schools are “labeled as failures.” These reasons are not presented. What does it mean to be asking for these reasons? What model of education are they signaling? Should the reasons be given? How should this be handled?

This teacher illustration is indicative of Popkewitz’s (1982) model of a technical/illusory school. Here, teachers look to a top-down authority to make meaning for them about what they are doing on a daily basis. It would seem only fair that these teachers be given the brutal facts, along with the opportunity to participate in the interpretation and in building a plan for improvement. This technical model of knowing is quite foreign from the Constructivist model in which students and teachers together build meaning in their work. In the latter model, the relationship between teacher and administrator is more collaborative, and it would not be expected that teachers would need to have

administration interpret for them whether or not they are succeeding. In the Constructivist model, if indeed teachers were to request such information, which is unlikely, administration would give them the data to examine and allow them to come to some conclusions on their own.

27. Frank Smith's response to the request for "reasons for failure" was to say that it is "more important to talk about where we are going, not where we have been." What risk is involved in such a response? Do you agree?

It would be futile to pretend to ignore the practices and history that led to the current dilemma. Nonetheless, as Senge (1990, 2006) would declare, the problem is in the system, not with the people. In this sense, Smith (2006) is avoiding a deficit (technical) model of blame and focusing on future success. Senge (1990) believes that "what you focus on grows," so it is indeed best to focus on a path forward rather than on past mistakes. It is more important to confront the brutal facts and take disciplined action (Collins, 2001). According to Bolman and Deal (2002), culture is a "mixture of the past and the renewal of the present and future" which shapes an organization.

28. A professor is brought into the equation as an additional faculty resource. What role should professors play in these kinds of efforts?

What is the “right balance” between the roles of graduate students and of professors?

Professors as outside consultants, or as community partners, may have an important role in helping the school or district see what it may otherwise be impossible for insiders to recognize in the organizational setting. Professors lend legitimacy to the effort, they bring the theory to support or further the changes, and they can orchestrate the collection of data and further the research. The role of the professors/graduates may be to provide a theory, framework or design model with which to examine the system or to provide intellectual resources. Schein would purport looking at the organization from the inside. Outside consultants as “extra eyes and ears” may examine the larger issues and share objective information that the schools can use to improve themselves from within, as Roland Barth espouses. Ultimately, the results of this resource may be the provision that makes the organization “uncomfortable” enough to produce the change that is needed (Schein, 2004). The professor who is leading the work within the schools must coordinate the efforts of graduate students so that there is one voice emanating from the university partnership in lieu of multiple voices.

29. Both Frank Smith and the superintendent talk about the importance of all stakeholders contributing their competencies to the school design process. What are the risks in creating a process that “brings together this type of energy?”

Clarence Stone (2003) helps us understand the need for all stakeholders to have a voice in the design process. That does not mean that all sit at the decision-making table. It is important to have representative voices in the able decision-makers who comprise the team charged with the ultimate responsibility to make change. It is important, then, to train those who will participate in the direct process so that a common focus and a clear process can be maintained. The risks in this inclusiveness outweigh the consequences in that the stage is set for “buy-in” (Ouchi, 1991). In Deborah Stone’s “polis,” we were cautioned that “who’s in and who’s out” can have a profound effect on the results. Thus, it is necessary to first set the stage in building trust, political and social capital, as well as common language, before sitting at the table if true reform is to succeed. This is a time-consuming process that must be shepherded by a patient and skilled leader.

30. *How prevalent in schools is the willingness to rehearse and request feedback about the change design before one’s peers? Why? Why not?*

The change design process is sketchy, if not nonexistent, in most school systems. Schools are less collaborative and more isolated, with teachers coalescing around common grade levels or departments. It is surely true that many colleagues in today’s high schools know each other only by name. This isolation can be replaced by creating learning organizations in which all members understand that they are a part of the whole, and that regardless of content specialty, they ultimately share common goals for their students. This type of Systems Thinking (Senge, 1990, 2006) replaces blame-setting and opens the organization to the learning how to improve from within. This model, counter to the deficit model, uses meaningful conversations built on active

listening to get at the heart of what people care about, change mental models and then begin to change practice. It is a different model that has much promise for educational reform. It focuses on change from within the system, the only place where truly sustainable improvements can occur (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006).

Probing Further

1. If you were to present 3-4 design models, how would you approach the task? What would you emphasize, how, and why?

1. First, one would want to analyze and identify the issues (define the problem)
2. Next, create an improvement team to further investigate the best model for the school
3. Then research all school design models, investigating how effective these models have been in other schools.
4. Finally, select the model that would best suit the issue at hand.

Fostering a sense of collaboration and team spiritedness would be essential when finally implementing this new design.

2. What have been the most recent trends regarding conflicts between urban school superintendents and school boards? What efforts are being made to foster better relationships and to reduce the 'revolving door' nature of superintendencies?

Despite poverty and immense obstacles, urban superintendents are expected to increase student achievement and raise graduation rates, but frequently Boards of Education get in their own way and kill any chance for the superintendent to succeed. Most often, the superintendent is given insufficient time to turn the situation around. Moreover, boards all too frequently get caught up in political infighting and positioning and cause the superintendents' best efforts to be derailed. A case in point is the Blue Ribbon Initiative in Memphis, wherein all the progress that had been made toward improving the system came undone when political posturing and maligning of the superintendent overturned an initiative that was apparently yielding results for the district's students.

New York State has supported leadership academies aimed at renewing the pool of potential superintendents. There have been greater efforts to mentor new superintendents and to create opportunities for collegial sharing. New York State School Boards Association has added a requirement that new Board of Education members attend training. This is an important step towards helping these public servants better understand their roles and responsibilities to the public, to the student body and to the superintendent. In its Guidebook, *The Key Work of School Boards*, the National School Boards Association (Gemberling, Smith & Villani, 2000) provides a template for achieving powerful superintendent-board partnerships that achieve results.

3. How has school design been approached? What are the leading views about planning and “the change process?” To what degree are these latest research findings being applied to school design efforts?

Current research underscores the need for the entire school community, that is, all stakeholders, to be parties in the school design process. F. Smith (2006) outlines a plan for such reform in his Advocacy Design Center process. Other reform efforts, such as that espoused for our nation's high schools in *Breaking Ranks II* (NASSP, 2004) call for collaboration and broad-based support from the community. In his foreword to the document, Ted Sizer calls attention to the three touchstones that comprise this well-placed and widely employed reform effort in secondary schools: collaborative leadership and effective learning communities, personalization, and curriculum, instruction and assessment.

PART TWO: BRINGING THE CHANGE PROCESS TO YOUR SCHOOL

Fundamental Issues: Think about these larger issues and return to them after completing the in-depth review.

1. How is the planning of new or restructured schools typically conducted? How does an interactive view of planning differ?

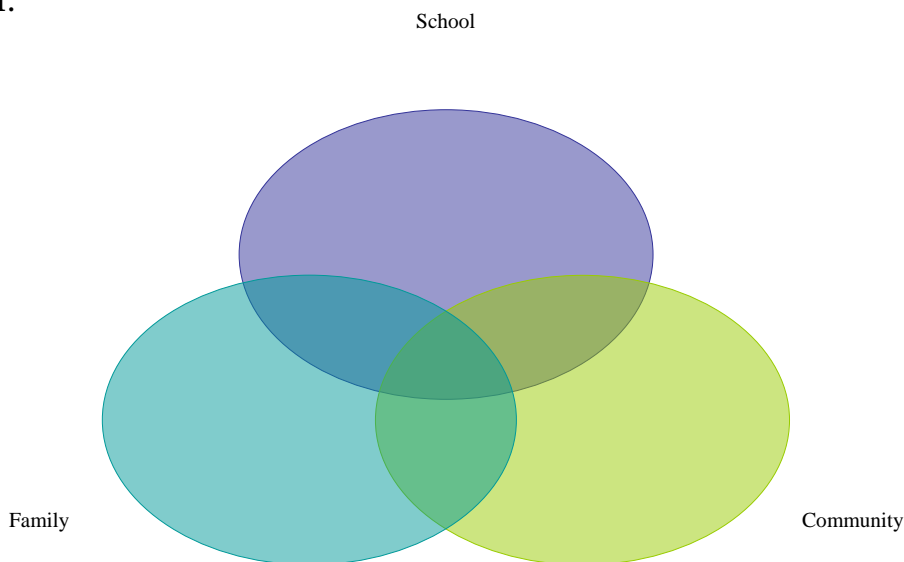
Typically, the planning of new or restructured schools is conducted by the Board of Education with input from the Superintendent. In an interactive plan, the opportunity for other groups to participate is included. These groups or stakeholders can include the surrounding community, business and families that would be directly or indirectly

impacted by the school, its location and population, thereby providing greater communication and access to all involved in the process.

2. In what ways does reliance on public discourse create community through the construction of shared meaning? Is there some better way(s) to promote community building other than the use of a common frame of reference?

Public discourse helps to identify problems, set goals, and create solutions. Epstein's model (Figure 1) for building home, school, and community partnerships locates the student at the center of this discourse. The partnerships are designed to build a caring community around students to help them be successful in school and later in life. Her model of these three "overlapping spheres of influence" with the student at the center, provide the basis for shared responsibility for student learning and development.

Figure 1.



3. Can a strategy of defining elements of school culture by focusing on coherent models transfer a way of thinking about school reform and design? Can a design advocate create a school community discourse about school culture?

A strategy of defining elements can certainly define a framework for a productive discussion, if the school and the community are committed and are willing to take the time and effort necessary to engage in the transformative discourse. Frank Smith's ADC model, utilizing the 29 IOGA questions, if implemented with thought and guidance, can help a school community to better understand not only what they do, but what needs to come next.

Comer's nine element framework (described in detail in Question #12 in the In-depth Review section below) and Epstein's framework for school, community, and parent partnerships also can lead to transformative thinking, if given time, commitment, and sufficient training for stakeholders.

Edgar Schein's model for changing an organization's culture (described in detail in Question #13 in the In-depth Review section below) can also be a tool for creating community discourse about school culture.

4. Is a sense of conflict or struggle inevitable in planning? Is that a good or a bad thing? How should one handle that?

Conflict helps to identify problems and can lead to effective problem solving. Handled diplomatically, and not personally, conflict and/or struggle in planning can be a very positive force. It is the conflict and the ongoing discourse that helps to define the

problem and ultimately brings us together. In Stone's model of the polis, the community struggles between self-interest and the public's interest and it is through this struggle that problems are solved and the best interests of the community are served. Problem solving is a function of both collective will and collective effort (D. Stone, 1997).

5. Planning involves power. To what degree are typical power-holders (e.g. principal or teachers' union head) willing to share their power with other stakeholders? How can this be facilitated?

In order for a principal or union head to feel compelled to share power it is imperative for either of these individuals to feel secure in his/her own position so that sharing of their power will not diminish their value to those stakeholders they represent, (teachers, school staff and union members respectively). One possible way to accomplish this is to have the principal and union head present a joint meeting where their willingness to compromise on some issues in an open supportive format with the goal of increasing student performance and academic markers of success. Stone (2002) discusses the effect the polis values enter into policy design and implementation and how equity, efficiency, security and liberty need to enter into the decision making process and the inclusion of all stakeholders.

6. Why do attempts at school reform seem to come and go as if they were passing fads? How might the effort be different?

School reform seems to come and go due to the lack of sustainable leadership.

According to Hargreaves and Fink, leadership needs to be sustainable in order for the

system to be effective. Another reason for the lack of sustainable leadership is the attrition of key stakeholders and leaders. Leaders should be cultivated from within the organization. Change and reform take time; there is no instant gratification. Therefore, leadership needs to sustain the efforts. Revolving door administrators contribute to the problem in addition to resistance from staff, such as teachers and other administrators.

7. What are the positive features of -- and drawbacks to -- action research?

Lewin (1947), first coined the term “action research” as a reflective process of progressive problem solving led by individuals working with others in teams or as part of a “community of practice” to improve the way they address issues and solve problems. Action research can also be undertaken by schools, assisted or guided by professional researchers, with the aim of improving their strategies, practices, and knowledge of the environments within which they practice. As designers and stakeholders, researchers work with others to propose a new course of action to help their community improve its work practices. Lewin describes action research as “a comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action and research leading to social action” that uses “a spiral of steps, each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action, and fact-finding about the result of the action.” A definite positive feature would be direct involvement of various stakeholders in the process. A potential negative would be the slowing effect numerous opinions and ideas may have on completion of such a program if time restraints are a factor.

8. How does one take into account timelines? Is there such a thing as too little time set aside for planning (e.g. A new school model) or too much time? What criteria might be used in setting the right balance?

Timelines need to be fluid, but they must also provide structure and an impetus for setting aside time for planning. There is frequently too little time for cooperative planning, but it is a reality that needs to be dealt with appropriately. If there is too much time, it may delay action. The right people matter more than time. What you do with the time and how it is spent is more important than the actual quantity of time. Administrators should set goals and have action plans where there is discipline and focus. According to Schein (2004), when people differ in their experience of time, tremendous communication and relationship problems typically emerge.

IN-DEPTH REVIEW

1. Someone argues that although “the template” might be the same in all schools, how it is delivered “should be the call of the ones on site.” Why would someone have such a view? What does that comment reveal about an understanding of community building?

Using the concept of a template being a basic concept that all schools strive to achieve to the “highest standards” one must consider each school community both within and outside of each facility as the needs of the students and the families may be diverse, not only from an adjacent district or town but from school to school and as such the needs of

each program may need to be adjusted for the betterment of the students, families, and the community it represents.

Such an endeavor can only bring positive feedback and support in the realm of community building. This concept was covered in depth by the theorist Sergiovanni (1984).

2. Someone argues that “people implementing the program must be invested.” What does it mean to invest?

In order for any program to potentially achieve success, it is imperative for all stakeholders to “buy into” the program. Ouchi (1981) wrote about the need to trust, wherein decision making is consensual and participative. Consensual decisions provide direct values of information and signal the commitment of the organization to those values. If stakeholders are not “invested” in the program, the potential for direct or indirect sabotage is high, along with the failure that will most likely ensue.

3. A leader laments that no one was invested in his previous effort to bring about change. From a leadership perspective, what is the paradoxical nature of his statement?

If a leader feels that no one was invested in his previous effort, it may be the result of his attempt to dictate his ideas with little input or consensus from other members of the planning process.

Ouchi's *Theory Z* proposes a holistic approach whereby employees at all levels deal with one another as complete human beings. In addition, as a result de-personalization is impossible; oppression is unlikely and open communication, and trust and commitment are common. Based on the aforementioned statement of the leader, s/he did not apply the principles of a Z organization, apparently resulting in little or no support of past decisions made.

4. Someone says that long ago she gave up the notion that we can educate by “merely plopping students at the school’s doorstep.” How realistic is to involve parents and families? If it is such a wise strategy, why is it infrequently practiced? What needs to happen to make it more commonplace?

The advent of today's society with two parent incomes, as well as two (and sometimes three) jobs, scheduling parent involvement can become an uphill battle that requires an ongoing and concerted effort by all school staff to open and maintain effective lines of communication.

A realistic attempt can be successful if flexibility is used in involving parents and families. This may include meeting or communicating with families at times convenient for them, not for just for teachers and school personnel. Lewin proposed that “*behavior is a function of the person and his or her environment*” (Lewin, 1936).

As the environment includes the family and home, schools cannot operate in a vacuum without involvement and active participation of all concerned parties in the success of each student.

5. There is a call for Core Groups to act as functional teams, with all team members being treated equally. In schools that you know from your personal experience, how easy or hard would it be for teachers and administrators to accept an “equal role” for non-teaching staff, parents, and community representatives?

It would be difficult, especially for administrators, because there is always somebody ready to cast blame on them, and they are ultimately responsible for decisions that are made. Thus, it is difficult to treat people equally when the blame is not generally distributed equally.

In Comer Schools, there is a planning and management team that incorporates no-fault problem-solving which puts the emphasis on finding solutions to problems, not assigning blame. Collaborative solutions and consensus building provide the basis for accountability (2004).

Epstein's model of Action Teams for Partnerships (ATP) are site-based teams of parents, educators and community members that work together to improve plans and practices of family and community involvement (Epstein, 2009).

6. A professor, in talking about reform, argues that it needs to be more than “just doing the old stuff better.” To what degree have reform efforts that you have witnessed or experienced merely been “doing the old stuff better?” Why has that typically been the case? How can all the knowledge you have acquired, including the theorists you have read, impact the situation?

Failed reform has often been the case due to lack of leadership, lack of ownership, lack of buy-in, as well as limited resources. As an example, No Child Left Behind as a reform effort has been about doing old stuff better. The notion behind NCLB has been to perform better, or else, and NCLB has been the unsuccessful due to monetary reasons, press reasons, time constraints, along with its punitive agenda. Are we producing functional citizens or just better test takers? This reform effort should not be about test scores; instead, it should be about people, relationships, students, families, and community.

C. Stone (2003) tells us we need to build Civic Capacity if reform is to succeed. D. Stone (2002) advises that we reject the public policy model and encourage public discourse. Advocacy Design Centers can be used to transform failing schools (F. Smith,

2008). Nonetheless, administrators may try to “do the old stuff better” out of fear of not wanting to lose their jobs or lack of approval.

7. *The superintendent returns to his theme of two separate societies - “those who have and those who have not.” He urges us not to accept second hand anything for kids in schools. Is this societal split inevitable? How does this relate to the notion of advocacy?*

In the notion of advocacy it is imperative that there must be equity for all students. As all students are deserving of a quality education, the superintendent must advocate for each and every student. The responsibility ultimately lies in the decisions that the superintendent makes. Kozol (1991) regards inequalities as savage that needs to stop. There is no room for a class system in a school system. Payne (2005) also addresses generational poverty as an area of magnitude. The potential for a societal split may not be inevitable if a society of caring and compassion exists.

8. *Someone talks about the typically isolated nature of our profession, about the fact that “normally we do not talk very much with each other.” How true have you found this to be? How do we impact this situation?*

The structured organization of schools today allows for staff members to “*know their role*” to a large extent but the consequence for this association allows for little time for school members to interact with each other during the school day. For administrators,

this dilemma is only compounded by the numerous day- to-day responsibilities of a school leader, with unexpected situations occurring n a daily basis.

In his research on “Z Organizations,” Ouchi speaks of the need for organizations to interact as *clans* to foster close interchange between work and social life. Although such an endeavor would require creative scheduling, the benefit would be the ability for communication to increase between all levels of school personnel. Ouchi (1981) states that “Organizations are social organisms and, like any social creations, are profoundly shaped by the social environment in which they exist.” In increasing our social contact with other members of the school environment, one can hope to expect the lines of communication and positive interaction to gain strength.

9. What educational value does the use of metaphor have in urban schools?

Metaphors help students and all others to see something other than the reality of their situation, strategic representation (D. Stone), something to strive for, empowerment to change the future:

- Leave no child behind (James Comer)
- Success for all/ Roots and Wings (Slavin) -All students are entitled to greatness
- Live by rubrics; die by any accidental dip in yearly scores (Fullan, 2007).

10. What roles and responsibilities should be assigned to Core Groups?

What competencies do they need to succeed? How do they get these competencies?

Core groups should be responsible for identifying school-based problems, creating goals, involving parents and the community, and recommending solutions to important issues. In Frank Smith's ADC model, the focus on self-inquiry by a core group of stakeholders leads to self-awareness and direction through self-assessment.

Core Groups require training in a specific framework and require specific guidelines, such as Comer's no-fault problem solving. Leaders need to recognize that they gain power by sharing power, and that their role becomes more that of a facilitator (Comer, 2004). Core Groups also need to develop action plans for building family and community partnerships (Epstein, 2009) and provide numerous opportunities for practicing competencies.

11. A professor declares that the problem with schools is not a matter of individual competency or interest, but that "It's the community that doesn't work." How would you interpret that view? Do you agree? In what ways can a sense of community exist? How does the use of models address his concern?

Our interpretation is that "It takes a village to raise a child," and everyone in the village must work together. Therefore, it is essential to build civic capacity (C. Stone, 2003).

In Frank Smith's ADC model, all stakeholders need to have a voice in the process.

Epstein's model of creating a caring community around students and having overlapping spheres of influence also engenders participation of the whole community. Likewise, Comer's School Development Program incorporates the community.

12. To what degree do you accept the idea that a psychiatrist (like James Comer) can have relevant views about how schools should operate? What are the highlights of the Comer School Development Program?

We easily accept that a psychiatrist might have a concept of the whole child, an understanding of human behavior, of child development and of human interactions. The School Development Program (SDP) focuses on the whole child and the six developmental paths (physical, cognitive, psychological, linguistic, social and ethical).

The SDP framework identifies three mechanisms:

- A government and management team (SPMT)
- A parent team
- A mental health team (student and staff support team)

The SDP framework identifies three operations:

- A comprehensive school plan
- Staff development
- Assessment and modification

The SDP framework identifies three guidelines:

- No-fault problem solving

- Consensus decision-making
- Collaboration and no paralysis

Through the mechanisms, operations and guidelines, the framework enables staff and parents to manage three critical areas of work:

- Governance and management
- Student and adult development
- Teaching and learning (Comer, 2004)

13. How do we as educators facilitate “buying in?”

Schein’s model for culture change facilitates buying in (Schein, 2004) through:

- Disconfirmation/Unfreezing (Wake-up call)
- Discomforting data that show the organization that some goals are not being met – create disequilibrium
- Create survival anxiety or guilt
- Create psychological safety-must unlearn something as well as feel safe in learning something new (and feel that it is achievable)
- Need a compelling positive vision, formal training, involvement of the learner, informal training of groups and teams, practice, positive role models, support groups, reward and discipline system
- Cognitive Restructuring
- Learn new concepts and new meanings for old concepts (job functions, rewards, standards, etc)
- Provide role models and training OR develop own solutions

- Refreezing
- Produce confirming data to stabilize new beliefs and values

14. In your view, how hard or easy is it for central office administrators to truly support site-based decision-making? How critical is the support of the central office?

It can be difficult for central office administrators to truly allow decision-making by site-based teams because of the perceived loss of control and centralization of power, since most school districts continue to operate as bureaucracies (Weber, 1922).

Central Office support is critical as the site-based teams need to know that they will be heard, and that their decisions will not be discarded. It is also critical that site-based teams receive financial resources for their decisions. Without central office support, the effectiveness of the site-based team would be enormously diminished.

15. What is the value of presenting a model developed by the current participants? Any drawbacks?

Current participants need to be part of the decision-making process since they are on the frontlines and have first-hand experience. Different opinions and viewpoints are important when designing a model. The Advocacy Design Center model offers that different facets of society are important in the decision making process (F. Smith, 2008).

Drawbacks could be the choices teams make. For example, decisions may not be well thought or sufficiently researched. When dealing with the polis, there may be individual political agendas (D. Stone, 2002). If reform is to be enacted, this may not be the best model.

16. What are the salient features of the Constructivist-Inclusion model?

What about this model appeals to you? What does the model reveal about the complexities involved in the transfer of knowledge about school cultures?

- Stakeholders are an integral part of the learning process
- Critical and creative thinking are essential
- Allows for a deeper and richer educational and reform experience
- Students think critically and are thus more prepared to deal with an ever - changing society
- What it means to know, to work and the method of authority (Popkewitz, 1982) is non-technical and meaning-centered
- Creating a shared community (Smith, 2008)
- One must buy in to others' values and beliefs (Schein, 2004)
- The model reveals that current models of public schooling do not engage in this complex community-building meaning-centered process.

17. Teachers are given the option of designing an eclectic model. The superintendent is a particular advocate of this type of approach. What warnings would you cite regarding an eclectic model of change? Would you, personally, be challenged by or intimidated by the possibility of an eclectic model?

An eclectic model allows for a multi-varied approach in school operation. In such an approach one is not “*tied*” to any one way of a typical traditional system. A likely problem with such an approach is to ignore the positive factors that successful established methods have previously accomplished and the research that validates these methods.

In using an eclectic model, one need not feel intimidated but challenged in finding the right balance of each constructive and positive approach that brings positive student outcomes. Frank Smith writes of “whole school models” where there are frequent redefined roles and patterns of organization. In such an approach “there is less attention to narrowly defined roles and greater attention to broad roles and integrated work” (Smith: *Advocacy Design Study Guide*, St. John’s University).

An eclectic approach can yield results that sustain a holistic and integrated method of success.

Probing Further

1. A number of different factors are cited as the change process is launched.

Among these are:

- a) The district's concurrent decisions to reconfigure their schools (e.g. consider the creation of a separate middle school)***
- b) Setting a deadline for model decisions to be made***
- c) Responding to pressures from the state to produce results***
- d) Getting people to be comfortable with change***
- e) Dealing with the perception that staffs as a whole are voting on what model to adopt for their schools***

In your view, which of these factors would have the most negative influence on a successful process?

Any of the above factors have the ability to be negative or positive, depending on who is in charge and how they go about it. However, “responding to pressures from the state to produce results” seems to have the most negative influence on a successful purpose for various reasons. Some of these include teaching to the test and forfeiting valuable teaching time due to state mandates and pressures. In addition, pressures from the state often dictate the nature of the results and threaten repercussions, which do not help the process. Resources may be depleted and actually can dictate and influence all other factors.

How would you handle each?

- a) Prioritize and perhaps have sub-committees on each

- Reporting back

- Timeline

- Idea or vision

- b) Set a deadline but be able to adjust as necessary; have contingent plans
- c) Focus on the issue but try to understand what the real issues are; dig deeper and seek to reallocate resources if possible
- d) Give people reasons to be uncomfortable with status quo and reduce learning anxiety

- Run a transparent and inclusive process

- Get people to buy in (Schein)

- e) It's all in the approach; set up site-based or collaborative teams

- Try to avoid the problem

- Make the process more clear from the start

- Site-based teams will provide input and are shape the process

- Make the process more transparent

2. Throughout this change process there are many references to “community building.” How has that term been defined by leading educational researchers and reformers? Which of the views comes closest to your own? What does it mean for leadership?

Comer's SDP framework promotes collaboration of schools, parents and communities by focusing on the whole child. The Comer process supports student development from

birth to maturity. It is a nine-element model that enables staff and parents to work collaboratively to problem solve and plan for student development. Epstein's framework is based on a belief that certain goals, such as student academic success, are of interest to schools, families and communities (overlapping spheres of influence) alike and are best achieved through cooperative action and support (Epstein, 2009). Epstein identifies six types of involvement as being parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. Both Comer and Epstein's frameworks for building partnerships require leaders to think differently about power, responsibility, and relationships. Parents and the community would actually be partners, not outside influences. The frameworks require collaborative self-assessment, as does Smith's ADC model. For any framework to be successfully implemented, there would need to be a strong commitment on the part of school leaders, as sustainable change takes time and energy.

3. Imagine that you have been asked to develop a handbook for the training of Core Groups. What would you include in that handbook? What specific research would you cite as you trained these teams and endeavored to shape them as bonded and functional teams?

Admission to Core Groups is by special invitation and with it comes certain responsibilities. These responsibilities include making important decisions as to the specific dynamics expected of its members. Dedication to the needs of the organization and other Core Group members is essential. Accountability is provided by mutual

solutions and consensus within the group (Comer, 2004). A planning and management team will place its greatest emphasis on problem solving issues where no one person is ostracized and held solely accountable, as Comer discusses in his concept of social, emotional and academic outcomes. The handbook would include all components of IOGA, and may include the 29 questions of Smith's ADC model.

4. Based on what you have learned about site-based management (literature reviews, presentations, etc) what seems to be the factors that impede the success of this approach? That facilitates success? Based upon this research, what suggestions would you give to others who would attempt this process?

Although the concept discusses the absence of individual blame, it is human nature to assign blame when some members are not “pulling their weight.” Yet, in this scenario, it is not the administrator's role to “pull the weight” of other team members. The process can be met with greatest success with full involvement from all stakeholders including community members, families, teachers and all educational staff working in a collaborated effort for a unified goal. Lewin (1946) wrote of the need and expectations of teachers, parents and the community as part of a “community of practice” to improve the way concerned parties address issues and solve problems.

In Frank Smith's IOGA model , Smith states, *“The elements of a successful autonomous school are so integrated and coherent that distinctions among the four elements*

(Instruction, Organization, Governance and Accountability) are difficult to find."

(Advocacy Design Study Guide, St. John's University) Thus, in order to succeed in site-based management, one should realize and accept that the above concepts are related and not to be seen as autonomous entities.

PART THREE: DECIDING UPON A SCHOOL MODEL

Fundamental Issues: Think about these larger issues and return to them after completing the in-depth review.

1. What does school-based management and site-based decision-making mean to you? What are its benefits and drawbacks? How does it redefine the distribution of authority in the system?

School-based management is a governance policy intended to improve education by means of transferring important decision-making authority from district offices to individual schools. "School-based decision making is one aspect of systemic school reform -- an approach to improving schools that also includes changing instruction, curriculum, and the institutional web that surrounds the schools to achieve an integrated focus on the outcomes of education" (Wohlstetter and Mohrman, 1994).

- **Advantages:** The staff and larger school community are involved in the decision making process. This increases their commitment to and

accountability for the decisions they make (Cohen, 1989). It also leads to improved morale in that the staff feels they have more control over their work environment, and parents feel more connected to the school. Furthermore, the community is engaged in a meaningful way and can often bring resources and outside knowledge to the decision making process.

- *Drawbacks:* SBM increases the planning time needed to implement decisions; extensive time and commitment are required in order to participate in committees and other planning groups. It can at times be difficult to get buy-in from stakeholders outside the SBM team for its initiatives, or it may be necessary to modify or adapt goals or plans to win broad acceptance.

“Site-based decision-making brings the responsibility for decisions as close as possible to the school . . . defining how school staff can work collaboratively to make these decisions. . . creating ownership for those responsible for carrying out decisions by involving them directly in the decision-making process and by trusting their abilities and judgments” (Harrison and colleagues, 1989). Decisions usually fall within 3 areas: budget, personnel and staffing, and curriculum/programs (Clune & White, 1988).

- *Advantages:* Its focus is on supporting student achievement. Ideally, staff and all stakeholders are committed to teaching and learning from one

another and involving all stakeholders in the decision-making that promotes and enhance educational democracy.

- ***Drawbacks:*** The complexity of the increasing amount of work that requires teamwork in the rapidly changing environment. Factors such as stakeholder resistance, institutional barriers, lack of focus on student achievement, limited school authority, and concentration of authority vested in administrators, and deficiencies in resources have limited the impact of site-based management on educational outcomes (Drury, 1999). In addition, school board members and administration may view site-based management as a threat to their own authority and therefore may wish to limit school-level decision making. Site-based decision-making shifts authority away from the district administrative hierarchy into the hands of school groups that are more closely connected to the school and, theoretically, better equipped to meet the specialized needs of students.

2. If one is moving to site-based management, what kind of preparation needs to be made? What kind of support and monitoring are necessary? How would you introduce it?

(a) What kind of preparation needs to be made?

On the school district level, an oversight committee is formed. The committee should consist of district-level staff, union representatives, and

school board members. The district must demonstrate strong support for site-based management (Dolan, 1994). The committee introduces the plan and ultimately is responsible for its implementation. Members' responsibilities would include:

- Developing guidelines that support site-based management, and establishing parameters and a waiver process, if needed.
- Reviewing schools' site plans and governing documents before submitting them to the superintendent and school board for approval.
- Finding ways to provide resources, training, and support for the school teams.
- Developing a system for communication and sharing among the district, schools and the community.
- Evaluating the procedures and making changes as necessary to ensure success of site-based management efforts (Dolan, 1994).

(b) What kind of support and monitoring are necessary?

- Develop a vision: In preparing to move into site-based management, it is paramount that all stakeholders are on board, including administrators, school members, teachers and teachers' unions, parents and communities. Buy-in of all stakeholders from the onset is essential. Central Office must provide organizational support by sharing and applauding the good work of each school team.

- Plan: Site-based management should not be done in one school alone, but should be done throughout the entire school district. This is a long-term commitment. “The entire system is one, and to change a school is to change a district, its union, board, and management.... Anything else will be short-lived and false” (Dolan, 1994).
- Review: Help schools to develop procedures to evaluate and modify their site-based management and school improvement plans through an ongoing review of program activities and their effects (Cotton, 1992).

(c) How would you introduce it?

After the district oversight committee completes its site-based management guide, this new policy is introduced to the individual schools in the district. At each school, there is the option to create school-site councils, usually consisting of school principal, teachers, parents, and community members, and sometimes, students (David, 1996).

3. Who are the stakeholders in a site-based design process? What does it mean for a participant to represent a constituent stakeholder? How does one establish reciprocal influences between a representative and a constituency?

The entire school, and ultimately, the school district and its community, comprise the stakeholders in the design process of site-based management. When a participant represents a constituent, s/he speaks on the behalf of the stakeholder group, conveying the group's wishes to and through the participant to the committee. Establishing reciprocal influences between a representative and constituency requires that everyone work together through continued participation in the decision-making process and ongoing professional development .

4. To what degrees are schools the product of their leadership? How does a school design process impact different patterns of leadership?

Schools create leadership by their structure of organization. Top down leadership is characterized by its restrictive nature. The school design process is designed to share decision-making throughout the organization and the community. This design is evident in the ADC model and in Comer's model, as well as in site-based management.

5. How would "success" be measured in your district and at the school level? Draw up a list of criteria.

Improved student achievement is the most important barometer of success. Success is measured when the majority of schools in the district agree to participate. This is substantiated (a) When shared decision-making transforms conventional school organizations into learning communities by giving local site participants the power

to improve teaching and learning. (b) When shared decision-making supports and values high levels of involvement throughout the learning communities. (c) When the site leadership team has a primary role in communicating with the learning community. (d) When all shareholders recognize that the shared decision-making process is ongoing and recurring in nature.

6. How can you use action research to learn from this cycle of change?

How would you conduct the action research?

Action research identifies the successes and failures of an endeavor (site-based management) over a period of time.

- Setup a process for determining the success of site-based management efforts based on predetermined goals that reflect the district's vision.
- Help schools to develop procedures to evaluate and modify their site-based management and school improvement plans through an ongoing review of program activities and their effects (Cotton, 1992).
- Setup parameters to guide schools through what they can and cannot change (for example, federal and state laws, collective bargaining agreements, and state standards and assessment practices).
- Compile a knowledge base of data and research on site-based management and use it as a basis for decision making (Else, 1997).

- Ensure that all administrators and the school board have genuine acceptance of the shared decision-making process and create a safe environment for the process to work.
- Rethink the use of educational resource possibilities; i.e. personnel, services, time, equipment and supplies, and money and redirect them in more productive way.
- Decentralize financing by instituting school-based budgeting so that each school can determine the most effective use of funds at its own site.
- Ensure that all stakeholders understand the need to restructure their time and other activities. (Dolan, Else).
- Develop a site leadership team-training model so that newly elected site leaders have a basis for their work during the first three years of site-based management.
- Develop a training program
- Continue to provide necessary support for teams throughout the site-based management process and to meet needs as they arise. Administrators, central office administrators, teachers, school staff, and community members who are taking on new roles will need support and information to make those changes.

7. What lessons might the systems learn? How can these “lessons learned” be used to strengthen the school process?

The systems can learn alternative ways in managing schools. The former top down management structure is no longer relevant in serving or meeting the needs of constituents. The decentralization of the school's structure presents opportunity for all stakeholders to be represented and actively participate in the decision making process.

Managing school change and improvement is one of the most complex tasks of school leadership. As Fullan (1993) advises, school leaders need to understand the change efforts effectively. They must learn to overcome barriers and cope with the chaos that naturally exists during the complex process of change (Fullan & Miles, 1992). Principals and other key school leaders should help teachers and other stakeholders build effective teams by developing new organizational structures and creating a shared vision that focuses on authentic student learning (Newmann, 1993; Maeroff, 1993). Such inspired and informed leadership is critical to the success of schools.

8. What strategic representations would you make about change?

Change is a “messy muddling through.” (Comer, 2001)

“Change is a double-edged sword.” (Fullan, 2007)

“Reculturing is a contact sport that involves hard, labor-intensive work.” (Fullan, 2007)

“Change is the leader’s friend.” (Fullan, 2007)

“It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory.” (Deming, 1990)

“You can't force commitment, what you can do... You nudge a little here, inspire a little there, and provide a role model. Your primary influence is the environment you

create” (Senge, 1990).

IN-DEPTH REVIEW

1. Someone talks about "buy-in being done down the road." What does this seem to mean? How does one facilitate buy-in?

“Buy-in” is an in-depth strategic planning or comprehensive planning procedure. It is a long-term commitment process to be continually evaluated. Consequently, when someone speaks about “buy-in down the road,” s/he is not fully committed to the process.

In order to facilitate a “buy-in,” planning is essential. It is important to bring together stakeholders who share the goal. Develop a vision and mission statement involving all stakeholders. This is a good opportunity to determine the strengths and weaknesses of each stakeholder and decide whether they are in alignment with the stated objectives (Collins, 2001) .

2. The Design Team provides data to the schools in the districts, giving them a sense of staffs’ initial reactions to each model. How should the data be displayed and presented? In what ways can this be helpful? In what ways can it present a problem or obstacle? How might it be used?

Data should be displayed in the form of facts or figures obtained from testing, surveys and other sources and is used as a basis for making calculations or drawing conclusions.

This data should be presented to all stakeholders. This enables everyone on the team to remain focused on the objective, and gives clear direction to all team members.

Conversely, data can have an adverse effect on the stakeholders, if the stated goals are not being met; there could be a decrease in motivation among the stakeholders and some may begin to question their ability to accomplish the goals put forth by the DT.

3. If you were a principal leading your staff and Core Group through this process, how would you proceed? Explain.

We would begin with identifying key stakeholders for the Core Group. We would then work collaboratively to answer the 29 questions from Smith's (2008) Advocacy Design Center model. We would analyze the answers by identifying patterns, themes, and discrepancies. The next step would be to share the information with stakeholders and determine a course of action, by prioritizing areas of focus. We would continually assess progress, monitor growth, and adjust the plan when indicated.

4. Someone states that she still has the feeling that “staffs are looking for principals to take the lead.” How do you explain this role expectation? How should a principal in change process respond to this expectation?

Managing school change and improvement is one of the most complex tasks of school leadership (Fullan, 1993). Principals need to understand the change

process in order to lead and manage change and improvement efforts effectively. Principals should help teachers and other stakeholders understand the change process by building effective teams, developing new organizational structures and creating a shared vision that focuses on authentic student learning. Principals are catalysts for change. Change is a process; it is not done in a day. It is constant and ever in flux.

Because school principals are no longer in the business of telling the individual schools what to do, the principals are moving toward helping their school's accomplish, through their site committees, what is best for their schools. The principals may now find themselves as members of councils that contain a majority of teachers or a majority of members who are not professional educators (parents and community representatives). The makeup of the council, and who chairs it, may put the principal at dis-ease. Ultimately, the decisions that are made may not represent the principal's closely held views, but the principal is still responsible for the outcomes. The process is one of consensus.

Probing Further

1. Leadership in schools has often been cited as a critical factor.

Sergiovanni presents a thesis about substitution for leadership.

How could his thesis be applied to the change process?

Sergiovanni's thesis (2007) about substitution for leadership asserts: "Improving schools is difficult because we give too much attention to direct leadership. We focus almost exclusively on leadership as something forceful, direct, and interpersonal, instead of paying at least equal attention to providing substitutes for leadership. The more successful we are in providing these substitutes, the more likely it is that teachers and others will become self-managing."

Site-based management and site-based decision-making are substitutions for formal leadership. SBM and SBDM is a way to structure relationships between districts and school sites in a manner that places more power, authority, and accountability in the school. Teachers and other stakeholders would more likely become self-managing, and principals will be able to spend more time on issues of substance (Sergiovanni,1992).

2. Action research is a form of inquiry. How should a Core Group make use of action research? How should their research relate to the change process?

Action research can help the Core Group learn from and improve upon those initial SBM/SBDM plans. Change takes place when there is (a) Purpose: Revisit initial purposes or objectives for organizing; (b) Research: additional facts or new information always emerges in the process of reaching a goal; (c) Plan: be prepared to modify objectives because the environment is in constant flux; (d) Follow through with

amended plans, knowing that even the amended plans can, and most likely will, change again before objectives are realized.

3. What criteria should be used for measuring the effectiveness of schools?

Summarize some of the criteria most commonly used.

Measuring a school's effectiveness requires multiple indicators, including the following:

- A clear, strong, and collectively held educational vision and institutional mission
- A strong, committed professional community within the school
- A learning environment that promotes high standards for student achievement
- Professional development to improve learning
- Successful partnerships with parents, health and human service agencies, businesses, universities, and other community organizations

A collective vision helps focus attention on what is important. It motivates staff and students, and increases the sense of shared responsibility for student learning. For teams to work successfully together, a strong sense of commitment is necessary from each stakeholder. The elements that are paramount in making a successful team are individuals working together, mutual accountability and access to needed resources and skills. As school vision and mission should focus on student learning, team building, team planning, and team development should be directed toward improving student outcomes.

4. How might video be used in a school design process?

Technology is the new classroom...used to connect students to the world. High Tech High is a prime example of the use of video in school design. The following is a brief glimpse into how technology can change the way schools educate:

<http://www.hightechhigh.org/dc/index.php>)

The roots of the High Tech High program and curriculum lie in earlier work of Larry Rosenstock and colleagues in the New Urban High School Project (NUHS), an initiative of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 1996-99. The program includes at its core forms of field work, as a lever for whole-school change. Facilities are tailored to individual and small-group learning, including networked wireless laptops, project rooms for hands-on activities and exhibition spaces for individual work.

Videos and other technologies can be used to share information, model teaching and coaching sessions, and to confer with other sites. This is especially useful as a design process tool. Video technology has considerable utility as a learning tool.

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