THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AS CHANGE AGENT:

AN EXPLANATORY CASE STUDY

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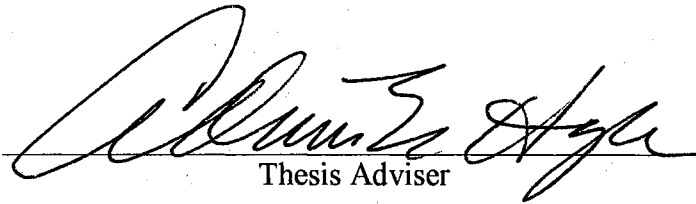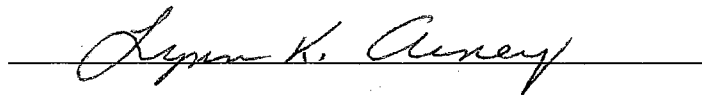the Degree of
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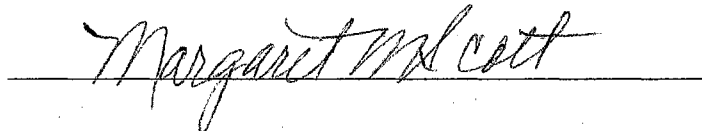
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my parents, Don and Shirley Warden, thank you for your constant understanding, support and encouragement. Your patience, your inspiration and your love have given me the strength to achieve my goals. I will always be grateful.

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CHAPTER I

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The concept of "leadership" is a common phenomenon in today's literature on school improvement. Terms such as "shared vision," "empowerment," and "collaboration" abound within the context of school renewal, thus emphasizing the need for the principal to involve stakeholders in the decision-making process (Barth, 1990; Burns, 1978; Fullan, 1991; Glickman, 1993; Golarz & Golarz, 1995; Schlechty, 1990). Particularly, frequent requests are made for teachers to have increased decision-making capacity. This reflects a significant change from the way schools have traditionally operated (Barth, 1990; Sarason, 1996).

The concepts of "educational change" and "school reform" are popular as well. Scores of theories exist with regard to best practices for promoting effective change in schools. The focus of each theory is nearly as diverse as the number of theories in print. Some theories focus on the development of community (Barth, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1995), while others posit that the articulation of core values lies at the heart of effective school reform (Glickman, 1993; Hitt, 1990); still others center on a more specific concept, such as brain-based learning (Caine & Caine, 1997) or an emphasis on results (Schmoker, 1996). A common denominator is the importance of recognizing the significance of school culture in shaping meaningful change.

School culture includes values, symbols, beliefs, and shared meanings of parents, students, teachers, and others conceived as a group or community. Culture governs what is of worth for this group and how members should think, feel, and behave. The "stuff" of culture includes a school's customs and traditions; historical accounts; stated and unstated understandings, habits, norms, and expectations, common meanings; and shared assumptions. (Sergiovanni, 1995, p. 89)

Principals are recognized as being instrumental to the success or failure of change within individual schools. Fullan (1991) states that the principal is the one person most likely to control success factors such as "the development of shared goals, collaborative work structures and climates, and procedures for monitoring results" (p. 76). Likewise, Schmoker (1996) lists three necessary ingredients for substantial school improvement: teamwork, goal-setting, and data use. Specifically, teachers work better in collective settings rather than in isolation; goals provide the basis for cohesive decision-making and definitive ways to measure success; and we must use the data at hand to determine the effectiveness of our implementation of change. If shared decision making in schools is desirable, there should be a direct correlation between this collaborative style of leadership and positive results for teachers and students.

At the same time, the significance of individual teacher reaction to change and the collaborative process cannot be discounted. Fullan (1991, p. 77) acknowledges that "both individual teacher characteristics and collective or collegial factors play roles in determining implementation . . . . It also seems to be the case that the culture or climate of the school can shape an individual's psychological state for better or for worse."

Every school, every culture, is comprised of individuals with unique perspectives, attitudes, experiences, and opinions.

<div align="center">Statement of the Problem</div>

There is a pervasive call for reform and improvement in today's schools. The educational literature of the past 30 years has provided a wealth of models and theoretical frameworks on the implementation of effective and successful change (Ainscow, Hargreaves, Hopkins, Balshaw, & Black-Hawkins, 1994; Fullan, 1991; Schmoker, 1996; Southwest Educational Development Laboratory {SEDL}, 1996). Despite this focus on school improvement through change, the overall structure and process of the American educational system remains much the same as it has for decades (Fullan, 1997; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Tyack and Cuban (1995) posit that the "basic grammar of schooling" has remained stable, and little actual change has taken place in the major constructs of school such as classroom organization, subject-area instruction, and assignment of grades as indicators of content mastery. Like Tyack and Cuban, Fullan (1997) also notes that "despite the consistency and specificity of research findings on the impact of collaborative work cultures and professional learning communities, we do not seem to be gaining ground on educational reform" (p. 227).

Is it possible that leaders of educational change do not place enough emphasis on the individual change process before delving into collective issues? Newman (1998) explores this possibility in the following narrative:

> When I consider the kind of fundamental reform I'm interested in, I can think
> about teachers, but only one by one, not as a collective, not as a school staff. That

is because change doesn't happen to collectives; only individuals change. And I can't change them; they must change themselves.

I can't bring about education reform as long as I keep thinking about education as an institution. I can't get there from here. But there are bridges that can be built and crossed; individual teachers and administrators can be helped to think about the nature of their work. Together, we can slowly change who we are as individuals and hereby change the collective. It's not something we can do quickly; there are no neat recipes for reforming the institution of schooling. Fundamental change simply doesn't happen that way. (p. 288)

Educational change is a very complex process. Because change occurs first within the individual, the culture of a school is difficult to change. Schools are composed of many individuals with differing perspectives and at different stages of concern. The focus of change should originate at the interpersonal level; the unit of analysis needs to change from the "system" to the "individual" (Fullan, 1991; Schön, 1987; SEDL, 1995).

Purpose of the Study

This study was designed to investigate, from the perspectives of faculty and staff, how a principal approaches the change process. Specifically, the study examined the ways in which the principal considers the individual needs of faculty members when promoting a particular change.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. How does the principal create a context for change? Is school culture openly acknowledged as an integral consideration?

2. In what ways does the principal address individuals before considering the system as a whole?

3. What other realities, if any, are revealed by this study?

Orienting Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

Fullan (1991) defines "change in practice" within a multidimensional context. Innovation may take the form of new or revised materials, teaching approaches, or alteration of beliefs (p. 37). They conclude that all three areas are necessary in order for effective change to take place.

SEDL (1995) has developed a six-part framework for facilitating successful change in schools. The first component, creating a context for change, incorporates consideration for cultural factors such as attitudes and beliefs, norms, and relationships. Attitudes and beliefs are defined as value statements that are either positive, negative, or neutral; these are based on personal perceptions. Norms are the actual representation of these beliefs, or what usually happens in practice. Relationships are identified as the personification of the norms, or personal interactions that occur as a result of the implementation of norms. Fullan (1991) also notes that "the principal is central, especially to changes in the culture of the school" (p. 145).

Fullan (1991) stresses the importance of the individual when implementing successful change, whether the person is the initiator or the recipient of the change: "Assume that any significant innovation, if it is to result in change, requires individual implementers to work out their own meaning" (p. 106). They acknowledge that "in the final analysis each individual must decide on a course of action for herself or himself"

(p. xii). Change must occur at the individual level first; "there is no evidence that

widespread involvement at the initiation stage is either feasible or effective" (p. 91).

The role of principal as change facilitator requires self-reflection. Fullan (1991)

notes that "the starting point from the individual principal's point of view should be a

reflection on whether his or her own *conception* of the role of principal has built-in

limitations regarding change" (p. 167). They caution that a principal's developed

meaning about change and the change process also will affect the entire organization and

determine whether the principal will work for or against the proposed changes. "The

starting point for improvement is not system change, not change in others around us, but

change in ourselves" (p. 167). Fullan (1991) encourages principals to talk with teachers

about their views and critically reflect on their position.

Schön (1987) speaks of dialogue within the context of a "professional practice."

When practitioners share commonalties such as media, languages, tools, institutions,

units of activity, and a common body of professional knowledge, they are members of a

practitioner community. This analogy could be likened to a school setting. Within the

school community, principals may be the "coaches" and teachers the "students." Schön

summarizes the coaching task as a threefold activity: addressing the problems of the

task, tailoring actions to the particular student, and relationship-building so that learning

may take place. This is the basis of a "reflective practicum."

> The reflective practicum should include ways in which competent practitioners
>
> cope with the constraints of their organizational settings. . . . And here a
>
> constructionist perspective is critically important; for the phenomena of practice
>
> in organizations are crucially determined by the kinds of reality individuals create

for themselves, the ways they frame and shape their worlds – and what happens

when people with similar and different ways of framing reality come into

collision. (p. 322)

<div align="center">Procedures</div>

Qualitative methods were used in this study. As stated in Lincoln and Guba

(1985),

The naturalist elects qualitative methods over quantitative (although not

exclusively) because they are more adaptable to dealing with multiple (and less

aggregatable) realities; because such methods expose more directly the nature of

the transaction between investigator and respondent (or object) and hence make

easier an assessment of the extent to which the phenomenon is described in terms

of (is biased by) the investigator's own posture; and because qualitative methods

are more sensitive to and adaptable to the many mutually shaping influences and

value patterns that may be encountered. (p. 40)

Biographical information and methodological implications are outlined in the

following section. This information is included to provide the reader with the

background for recognition of potential biases as well as reasons for selecting this

research topic. Specific data needs and sources are delineated within a qualitative

framework. Methods of data collection and analysis are described as well.

<u>Researcher</u>

I began my doctoral studies in the spring of 1995, one semester before I was

appointed as assistant elementary principal in a small suburban school district. This

district was experiencing a rapid rate of growth and change, and I observed that many

persons within the community (school board members, patrons, teachers and administrators) regularly made negative remarks about the growth rate with the increased levels of racial and socioeconomic diversity that followed. My appointment as assistant principal was announced by the local board of education with the plan that I would assume the role of elementary principal the following year, to coincide with the opening of a newly-constructed elementary school site.

The opening of the new elementary school symbolized a number of significant changes for the school district. This marked the first time that a school would be located away from the main campus - five miles away. Neighborhood lines for elementary school attendance were drawn; previously, all elementary students attended the only elementary school, on the main campus, which had been established for 75 years. The existing elementary faculty, some of whom had spent their entire professional career in this one facility, would be divided between the two school sites. Additional tension prevailed over the division of materials and supplies due to the limited funds available for equipping the new school.

Early in the course of my doctoral studies, I was introduced to the works of Seymour Sarason. His book The Creation of Settings and the Future Societies (Sarason, 1972) provided some particularly relevant insights into the opening of this new school and my role as the administrator. Subsequently, I found that his book Revisiting "The Culture of The School and The Problem of Change" (Sarason, 1996) served as a poignant tool for self-reflection. The critical point is illustrated by this quotation (p. 147):

I can summarize our observations and experiences by saying that by the end of the first year, life in the new school is remarkably similar to that in old ones:

what children experience in classrooms; the quality of relationships among teachers and between them and the principal; the relationship among parents, community, and the school; the criteria by which everyone judges themselves and others - in none of these can one discuss a difference that makes a difference.

In the fall of 1996, with the opening of the new elementary school scheduled for December, I enrolled in a course entitled "Planning and Educational Change" with Dr. Adrienne Hyle as the instructor. Dr. Hyle introduced me to the work of Michael Fullan. Fullan (1991) examined the change process from the premise that the principal must lead changes in the culture of the school, with feedback from and collaboration with teachers. As a course project, I formulated a plan for change within our school. This plan was preceded by the articulation of my personal theory of practice. I found this exercise to be a critical step in effective implementation of the plan. Following are excerpts from my theory of practice. I include this section to provide the reader with insights on my reasons for selection of this research topic as well as to acknowledge any potential biases that may exist.

The issue of dealing with planned change in school administration is a complex one. I believe that communication is the key to facilitating effective change as an administrator. This communication component is vital in dealing with every individual in the system: students, faculty and staff, parents, colleagues, and other community members.

My personal rationale for change is basic to my overall philosophy of education. What is our purpose as educators? What "makes me tick" as a teacher and an administrator? I hold the belief that educators need to make a firm commitment to

continual growth and improvement. We expect this of our students, therefore we should be their primary role model in this process. This may take on a very different look with regard to individual preferences. For example, some educators prefer to continue their formal education at the university level, while others tend to concentrate on specific staff development opportunities. Others may prefer to network with colleagues in the development of new projects, focus upon observation of key teachers for ideas regarding improvement of teaching techniques, or take other personal opportunities to reflect upon professional efficacy (perhaps through reading, writing, or research). I believe that this is important for every person in our school family, including support personnel. I already take every opportunity to communicate this expectation to all staff members (and to students!). As individuals, we set professional goals in writing at the beginning of the school year. These goals are continually discussed and reviewed on a one-to-one basis (in personal conferences) at least two or three times throughout the school year; we discuss progress, revisions, reflections, etc. I participate in this process as well and share my progress with others.

I have discussed my educational philosophies with the faculty, including what I believe to be important as we all participate in the decision-making process for our school. I encourage teachers to agree or disagree with me, with one basic "rule:" if you have a passionate opinion about a certain issue, openly discuss your position and be prepared to ground it in "verifiable" ways; that is, don't simply agree/disagree and stop there. Be prepared to defend your position; you need to know why you take a particular stand. This may be grounded in research, experience, etc., but it must be communicated on a conscious level. In discussing change and making decisions as a group, we

brainstorm ways to look at all aspects of the issue: who is affected and in what ways? How high are the stakes? Who else should be involved? How do we best communicate with each other regarding the issue? Where do we go from there? Also, we must make sure that we continually revisit the issue on a regular basis to analyze effectiveness: what is working/not working? How can we improve? What might we plan to do differently or the same? This attention to continual assessment and readjustment is part of the realization that change and improvement is an ongoing process. Above all, we must look at each decision we make in light of what is best for our students. As an administrator, I have grounded these beliefs in the research on leadership.

What are my "limits?" Where is my "threshold" regarding this process? Again, I believe that effective communication is the key. Each person must take responsibility for communicating with others. We must articulate the purpose for the proposed change, brainstorm regarding procedures for implementation, and plan for continual reflection and improvement. We must actively and meaningfully involve those affected at every possible stage of the process, allowing as much time as possible for assimilation at each step. I believe so strongly in the participatory aspect that I am willing to take a firm stand with my supervisors who may or may not fully share these views. I believe that this can be done in a positive, respectful way if careful consideration and communication is employed.

As part of the consideration that change is an ongoing process, I must apply these same principles to other arenas. I must constantly engage "personal checks" to see if I am consistently employing these strategies in my interactions with others. I believe that

this operational theory holds true for nearly every aspect of the change process within the context of my role as a school administrator.

Methodological Implications

To address potential biases, procedural safeguards were employed within the research design. Detailed fieldnotes included consistent, open-ended interview questions, verbatim transcriptions of interview sessions, written accounts of onsite observations, and official documents obtained from the school principal.

Fieldnotes can provide any study with a personal log that helps the researcher to keep track of the development of the project, to visualize how the research plan has been affected by the data collected, and to remain self-conscious of how he or she has been influenced by the data. (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 107)

In addition, triangulation was employed by using multiple sources of data collection. A reflexive journal was maintained, and peer debriefing provided another method for reflection, interpretation and verification of the data collected (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Data Needs

Since the purpose of this study was to examine the change process by investigating various perspectives of how the principal considered individual faculty needs within the cultural context of the school, specific types of data were necessary for inclusion within the single-case study framework. The site chosen for this study needed to be a school where the principal was recognized by faculty as being a successful facilitator of effective change. Information was needed from the school principal and teachers to determine the attention given to individuals during the change process. Data

were also needed regarding cultural factors and the context of the actual changes being implemented within the school.

Data Sources

The research site for this case study was an elementary school located in an urban school district in the Midwestern United States. Access to the site was easily gained because I was acquainted with many administrators throughout the school district by means of professional affiliations and previous interactions in my capacity as a former special education consultant. Numerous informal conversations with other district employees reiterated the belief that this principal had been instrumental in improving the overall capacity for faculty to work collectively on a number of school improvement initiatives.

Permission was granted from the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board to include the use of human subjects in this research project (see Appendix A). Respondents were assured that confidentiality would be maintained by securing all documents and through the use of codes and pseudonyms to maintain anonymity (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Erlandson et al., 1993); Appendix B contains the oral solicitation form containing these assurances. Each participant signed a consent form (see Appendix C) prior to participating in this study.

Data sources consisted primarily of information gained from the school principal, faculty and staff members. Interview prompts were designed to address the research issues; generally, open-ended questions were formulated to examine various perspectives on how the principal had successfully facilitated the change process among faculty members. Short interviews with members of the staff and faculty were conducted as a

cross-check of the principal's comments; "purposeful sampling of individuals and the inclusion of conflicting, as well as complementary, accounts strengthens an ethnographic description" (Crabtree & Miller, 1992, p. 87).

Observations of faculty and grade-level meetings with the principal were recorded and coded. In addition, documents were examined to gain further insight into the school culture and types/levels of interaction among participants. Documents included items such as memorandums to teachers, agendas from faculty meetings, and school handbooks. Artifacts (objects within the physical setting) were also examined and incorporated into observational notes to give insight into cultural beliefs and attitudes. "Detailed studies of artifacts are necessary if a researcher is to explore the systematic relationship between people and their physical environment" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 100).

Data Collection

Fullan (1991) cites the need for gathering data as a critical part of the change process. "Gathering data on implementation issues is also crucial. The success of implementation is highly dependent on the establishment of effective ways of getting information on how well or poorly a change is going in the classroom and school" (p. 87).

Multiple sources of data were gathered in order to employ triangulation techniques for establishment of trustworthiness. Interviews, observations, and document reviews were the primary types of data collected.

Onsite visitations were conducted in the fall of 1999. Visits ranged in length from 30 minutes to eight hours. Three separate interview sessions were conducted with the

building principal, with each session lasting approximately 90 minutes. Interviews with selected teachers were generally less than 30 minutes in length. Observations were conducted periodically throughout the same semester; a total of eight observation sessions were recorded and coded. Observations included formal gatherings such as faculty and committee meetings as well as notations of events and communications that occurred as part of the day-to-day school routine. Interviews and document reviews were conducted within school hours at the school building. The principal's office was the location for interview sessions with the principal; likewise, teacher interviews were conducted in a conference room at the school.

Prior to interview sessions with the principal, basic biographical data were collected (see Appendix D). This data included educational training, years of teaching experience, years of administrative experience, and location of teaching/administrative experiences. Similarly, preliminary data were gathered on teachers participating in the interview process. Teachers provided information on years of teaching experience, types and locations of teaching assignments, and number of years at the present site.

Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format; questions, probes, and prompts were written in the form of a flexible interview guide (Crabtree & Miller, 1992; see Appendix E). Interview sessions were audio tape-recorded to provide a verbatim account of participant responses for subsequent transcription and analysis. I chose to transcribe the interviews myself to provide further accountability for the data and also for use of the tapes as an auditory aid in recording observational notes following each interview session.

Observations were recorded of both formal and informal events occurring at the school site. Generally, observations were conducted while at the site for an otherwise "scheduled" appointment such as an interview or attendance at a faculty meeting. Since it was not unusual for me to be seen in the teacher's lounge or other common gathering places while at the site, data for observations was gathered in a natural, ongoing fashion throughout the semester. To guard against obtrusion, entries in the field experience diary were written immediately upon leaving the school site (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995).

Observations, interviews, and document reviews were conducted until a level of "informational redundancy" was reached; that is, sampling and data collection continued until saturation of information occurred (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Seidman, 1991). An audit trail was maintained by means of interview notes/transcriptions, coded fieldnotes, and daily journal entries (Erlandson et al., 1993).

Data Analyses

Data analysis was ongoing/cyclical as related to findings. "The analysis of the data gathered in a naturalistic inquiry begins the first day the researcher arrives at the setting. The collection and analysis of the data obtained go hand-in-hand as theories and themes emerge during the study" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 111). Initial interview questions for the principal were based on the original theoretical proposition and research questions. These initial interview sessions were immediately transcribed and coded; interim findings served as a guide for development of follow-up interview questions. In like fashion, observational fieldnotes were summarized and coded according to emergent

themes. "Thick description" (Crabtree & Miller, 1992, p. 178) was used to describe observations within a contextual framework relevant to the research focus.

In coding and analyzing data, multiple lenses of analysis were used, based on the results of a review of the literature. General categories for coding were developed in the following areas, with primary focus on the principal as a central figure in the change process (Fullan, 1991): (1) creating a context for change (SEDL, 1995), recognizing the role of culture as it affects the change process within a particular setting (Fullan, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1995); and (2) devoting sufficient attention to the individual's needs prior to the needs of the group as a whole (Fullan, 1991), using techniques similar to those found in Stages of Concern (Hall & Hord, 1987) and reflective practice (Schön, 1987).

Analysis of the data consisted of verification of findings with the original theoretical proposition. Results were reported using a linear-analytic structure of problem statement, methodology, summary of findings, and conclusions/implications (Yin, 1984).

Multiple documentation strategies were employed as part of the audit trail (Erlandson et al., 1993). A reflexive journal was maintained, with journal entries recorded immediately following each visitation to the school site. At the conclusion of site visits, the journal continued to serve as a vehicle for recording reflections on the process of data analysis and conclusions. "The reflexive journal supports not only the credibility but also the transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 143). As part of the process of formulating journal entries, there was a continual recognition of the need to analyze discrepant findings in an effort to avoid bias and consider other possibilities not explained by the theoretical proposition. In

addition, contact summary sheets and interim site summaries provided a structure for recording general categories of data which had been collected and served as a reminder of issues that remained yet to be explored (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Peer debriefing was employed as an additional tool for establishing confirmability (Erlandson et al., 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

<div align="center">Significance of the Study</div>

According to Hoy and Miskel (1991), research must meet three criteria in order to be significant: (1) add to the knowledge base; (2) have an impact on practice; and (3) clarify or add to existing theory. The ways in which this explanatory case study met these criteria are outlined in this section.

<u>Research</u>

Although multiple theories exist with regard to successful implementation of the change process, few studies focus specifically on the individual as the unit of analysis. Models for successful change that include individual considerations have not examined the issue within a real-life context. The SEDL framework for successful change incorporates the issue of creating a context for the change. This explanatory case study is designed to add to the knowledge base by exploring an actual setting where successful change has been implemented. "In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (Yin, 1984, p. 13). Fullan (1998) also has voiced the need for case studies to examine contextually how change occurs.

Practice

As Fullan (1991) has stated, "What the principal should do *specifically* to manage change at the school level is a complex affair for which the principal has little preparation" (p. 77). This study provides additional insight into the planning of future reform movements regarding successful implementation of school change. Implications exist for administrators of principal preparation programs as well as for school administrators already in the field.

Theory

This study examines the SEDL framework of managing change (1995), and the degree to which consideration of individual Stages of Concern (Hall & Hord, 1987) impact the successful implementation of change initiatives. Fullan (1991) also stresses the importance of the individual when implementing successful change, and the need for self-reflection regarding the change process. Schön (1987) describes ways in which a reflective approach can enhance professional practice. Conclusions drawn from findings of this case study will build on existing theory by combining multiple frames of reference to support the speculative proposition.

Summary

The purpose of this research project was to analyze faculty and staff perspectives regarding the principal's approach to individual teachers when implementing schoolwide change. It was proposed that most existing models for change focus too heavily on a "systems" approach rather than considering the needs of individuals affected by the change.

Using an explanatory case study approach, data were gathered from the principal and teachers in a school where successful change reportedly had been implemented. Data collection was based on interviews, observations, and review of documents and other artifacts. Analysis of the findings was cast through the lens of SEDL's (1995) models of creating a context for change and suggestions for dealing with Hall and Hord's (1987) individual Stages of Concern, Fullan's (1991) theories of the principal as key change agent and a need to focus upon the individual, and Schön's (1987) approach to reflective practice in action.

Reporting

A review of the literature is provided in Chapter II. Chapter III presents the evidence collected as the case study, with an analysis of the case in Chapter IV. The final chapter includes a summary of findings, discussion, conclusions, and implications/recommendations for further research, with a closing commentary.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter will summarize the literature regarding focus of change strategies,

characteristics of change, and the principal as change agent. Lastly, to provide a

background for the lenses of analysis used in this case study, an overview of change

models with a focus on the individual will be presented.

Focus of Change Strategies

The focus of a particular educational change strategy can be grouped into one of

three main areas: structure/systems, culture/group, and individual. This section

examines the predominant change models in each respective category.

Structure/Systems

Organizational change models use a global perspective in approaching the task of

promoting effective change. The social systems model promoted by Getzels and Guba

(1957) incorporates two basic elements: the institutional, which is defined as that aspect

involving roles and expectations for goal attainment, and the individual, which takes into

account the behavior and personality of those persons within the organization. Hoy and

Miskel (1991) suggest that human behavior within an organization can be understood

more clearly by analyzing the interaction of these two main factors. Although there is

acknowledgment of the individual person within this framework, the basic unit of change

is the organization as a whole.

According to Cuban (1990), organizational change may be categorized into two major areas. First-order changes are those that focus on issues of efficiency and effectiveness, without basically disturbing the ways in which people perform their duties. During most of the 20th century, educational interventions involved first-order changes. Cuban (1990) defines second-order changes as efforts to alter the fundamental framework of an organization, such as goals, structure, and roles. He notes that "three decades of federal and state intervention have been heavily loaded toward first-order changes that have strengthened the existing structures of schooling" (p. 74). In other words, second-order reforms have not made a lasting impact on the overall organization of our present educational system. Hannay and Ross (1997) conclude that structure has shaped the norms and culture of organizations, resulting in constrained patterns of interaction and fragmented outcomes.

Schlechty (1990) contends that systems change is needed for reforms to have a lasting effect. He speaks of the need for leaders to be mindful of organizational history and patterns of power. "To bring about change in such deeply ingrained structures, leaders must think beyond individual personalities, beyond change agents, and beyond personal actions. Leaders must think of inventing change systems" (p. 96).

Culture/Group

Much of the literature on educational change incorporates the cultural aspect of schools. Definitions of "culture" include references to shared beliefs, attitudes, orientations, norms, values, skills, practices, and structures (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Fullan, 1991; Hoy & Miskel, 1991). Fullan (1991) contends that change efforts continue to fail because they do not impact the school's culture. In like fashion, Sirotnik (1999)

states that leaders sometimes forget that organizations are made up of people. He concludes that organizational change theories are ineffective because they overlook "the deep ecology of organizational living" (p. 607). Hannay and Ross (1997) stress that "it is no longer sufficient to change the structure of schools without involving those who work and learn within these structures" (p. 578). Glickman (1993) and Meier (1995) also conclude that a strong school culture must allow decisions to be made by those who are directly responsible for their implementation.

Other scholars have referenced various aspects of school culture that are critical for leaders to recognize, such as "reculturing" within the areas of professional community, pedagogical practice, and student assessment (Fullan, 1998); commitment to a purpose and a common vision (Schlechty, 1990); and "tribal stories" that are told and re-told by school communities to provide "metaphors of life" (Burlingame, 1984, p. 298). Foster maintains that "working with students, staff, and community is working with culture" (1986, p. 196). To understand the culture of a particular school setting, Sagor (1997) recommends that one simply listen to discussions that take place in both formal and informal settings to learn about prevailing norms and values. Bruner (1996) states that "a culture seems to be a shared network of communal 'standings for' . . . we form our allegiances and construct our communities around this sharing" (p. 164). He claims that "the balance between individuality and group effectiveness gets worked out within the culture of the group" (p. 81).

The notion of "community," then, implies another group perspective. As Duke summarizes,

It is not always clear, though, what is really meant by 'community.' For some,

the term seems to suggest similarity of interests, beliefs, and aspirations. For

others, community implies unity amidst diversity - the commitment of individuals

with different interests, beliefs, and aspirations to a basic set of values governing

how they will relate to one another. (1998, p. 692)

Within a school setting, "learning communities" imply that members of such

groups value learning and collegiality, shared problem-solving and critical thinking

(Barth, 1990; Bruner, 1996; Glickman, 1993; Lambert, 1998). Nathan and Myatt (1998)

recommend that school leaders cultivate a diverse population of teachers within a school.

Such a mix of veteran and new teachers, demographically and culturally diverse, will

heighten the possibility that problem-solving and critical review of teaching practices will

abound.

Throughout the literature pertaining to group organization within schools, there is

acknowledgment of the need to consider the individual and to recognize the relationships

involved therein. Sergiovanni states that "becoming a community of learners is an

adventure not only in learning but in shared leadership and in authentic relationships"

(1994, p. xviii). Within a listing of school community characteristics, he notes that

"individual circumstances count" (1995, p. 73). Sarason (1996) admits that "it is

extremely difficult, if not impossible, to look at and describe settings independent of the

personalities of people... in fact, most of what we know about the school culture derives

from what is explicitly or implicitly an individual psychology" (p. 119). He posits that

change in classrooms involves a change in power relationships, which "involves no less

than a basic change in the culture of the school" (p. 219). In his description of two basic types of change within schools, "Type A" (power relationships) and "Type B" ("things" such as methods, materials or programs), Sarason takes the position that "Type A" changes are more important; substantive change does not occur unless it impacts those relationships. Also noted is a caution to guard against restricting individual growth in the name of preserving culture.

As John Goodlad summarized in an interview with Marsh and Marsh (1999), " . . . both educators and educational institutions find themselves enmeshed in a net that determines and restricts their daily behavior. Much of this culture is unwritten, but the rules are internalized, nonetheless - and one succeeds individually in large part by observing these rules" (p. 37). Brouilette issues a similar cautionary statement (1997):

> Insensitivity to how the structure and culture of schools affects the professional and personal growth of teachers can have the effect, over time, of powerfully undercutting the motivation, creativity, and professional-intellectual growth of those very people upon whose energy, skill, and commitment educational quality depends. (p. 563)

Individual

There are numerous sources of literature that support the premise of approaching educational change at the individual level. Schlechty contends "ideas begin with individual women and men; they do not begin with groups. Groups do not think anything" (1990, p. 50). In like fashion, Foster (1986) states that "the organization is made up of people, each of whom helps to construct a particular social reality that, in turn, is objectified. Change should therefore be aimed not at the organization but at the

people in it" (p. 164). Fullan (1991) acknowledges that change occurs at the individual level, considering the multiple realities of people, with change being a highly personal experience.

Murphy (1998) concludes that school has been the traditional unit of change, and stresses that there should be much more emphasis on the individual. Hannay and Ross (1997) agree that "individuals - not school buildings - change" (p. 593). Newman (1998) makes numerous compelling references to the individual as the critical unit of change:

Talking about 'school reform' makes no sense, for there is no such thing as 'school' reform. Schools are made of bricks and steel, and they don't reform themselves. It's the people, the teachers and administrators who live and work in school, who change or don't change . . .

I can't change education; I can't change schools. I can only converse with individual teachers about the things they care about - about problem students, about staff conflicts, about ways of dealing with nonsupportive administrators, about how to comply with new government policies without seriously harming students. (p. 296)

Schools are so different from one another that they need to construct their own "personalized" systems of dealing with change. Tomlinson (1999) addresses this concept within the framework of differentiated instruction: "Different schools and various teachers have differing readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles. They will need to develop the process of differentiation on different time tables, through different routes, and with differing forms of assistance" (p. 111). Sarason (1996) also notes that "a school district is not a single, centrally directed, coherent system that can, upon a

decision, change direction. It consists of many units and individuals with different needs, interests, and opinions" (p. 87).

These individual needs, perspectives, and perceptions are important to acknowledge when dealing with individuals as the unit of change. Sergiovanni (1995) explains that individual "needs, values, beliefs, and levels of readiness are important. Before most teachers are able to examine the worth of a proposed new idea for improving teaching and learning, they are apt to view this idea selfishly" (p. 282). "Sometimes teachers are faced with levels of challenge that far exceed their skills, with the result being feelings of anxiety" (p. 259). Chion-Kenney (1994) arrives at a similar conclusion: "Predictably, when consensus on the ideal is reached, the plan starts to break down in the details of personal change. 'What? You mean I will have to move to another room?' Members then slow down their initial enthusiasm for bold change . . ." (p. 59). A number of other researchers also have concluded that individual considerations are crucial when promoting change. "Individuals shape the roles that they occupy with their own styles of behavior . . . individuals have a complex set of needs and desires that cause them to behave differently within similar situations" (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p. 34). "First, realize that people do vary. It is dangerous to assume that everyone should see the world in the same way, communicate in the same way, and have the same level of enthusiasm" (Glickman, 1993, p. 89). "Heroic systems approach resistance with a new mindset. They view change as a highly personal process in which people assess with their minds and hearts whether the proposed change is aligned with their own values and beliefs . . ." (Brown & Moffett, 1999, p. 135). Marzano (2000) uses the concept of constructivism to

illustrate that teachers and students as learners use their own prior knowledge to construct their individual understanding of new concepts.

From a leadership perspective, principals are encouraged to consider each individual teacher's position on issues involving change. Sarason (1996) notes that, as he discussed the various aspects of classroom life with individual teachers, he became aware "that these teachers thought about children in precisely the same way that teachers say that school administrators think about teachers: that is, administrators do not discuss matters with teachers, they do not act as if the opinions of teachers were important . . . " (p. 217). Fullan (1997) applies this line of thought for both initiators and recipients of change. "I start with a brief summary of the seemingly intractable problems of change - which could easily lead one to give up. I then rebuild the argument on a different premise starting first with the individual, and then moving to the group and the organization . . . " (p. 217).

Smith (1999) acknowledges that "effective leaders for simultaneous renewal work diligently to be inclusive, inviting resisters as well as supporters to take part in conversations and informative meetings" (p. 603). Additionally, Leithwood, Leonard and Sharratt (1998) stress the need for the principal to provide individualized support. Within three individual studies of 14 school sites, they found that "providing moral support was mentioned by many teachers in almost all schools" (p. 265). Glickman (1993) encourages the practice of putting oneself in the other person's perspective: "Instead of seeing the behavior as symptomatic of the person's dysfunction, see it as a reflection of how the person has been included, communicated with, and treated by the group . . . "

(p. 146). In another study of 11 school sites, Bakkenes, de Brabander and Imants (1999) concluded:

> This study illustrates the significance of distinguishing the individual and the
> school level when teachers' workplace conditions are analyzed. Our results
> regarding the relationship between degree of network participation and task
> perception suggest that efforts to stimulate collegial interaction might be
> ineffective when they build on an offensive perspective on isolation and reflect a
> one-sided school-oriented approach. For example, because task perception
> declines as tasks become further removed from actual work with students, it will
> probably be ineffective to conduct meetings on school policy to be attended by
> the entire staff. (p. 195)

References to interactions within the school setting underscore the importance of the principal-teacher relationship. "My experience suggests that as it goes between teacher and principal so shall it go in the other relationships . . . The relationship between teacher and principal seems to have an extraordinary amplifying effect. It models what all relationships will be" (Barth, 1990, p. 18). Sarason (1996) acknowledges that "the one thing we can be sure of is that the teacher's picture of the role of the principal is primarily determined by their relationship" (p. 143). Farson (1996) concludes that "the best way to deal with individuals may be to improve relationships" (p. 91). Lambert (1998) repeatedly gives examples that note the importance of building trust within relationships in order to promote an atmosphere of respect and mutual understanding. Burns' (1978) premise that leadership is a relationship is summarized in his statement that "the vast preponderance of personal influence is exerted quietly and subtly in

everyday relationships" (p. 442). Kouzes and Posner (1993) also support the idea that leadership is a relationship. They note that "leadership is a reciprocal relationship between those who choose to lead and those who decide to follow. It is meaningless to talk about leadership unless we believe that individuals can make a difference in the lives of others" (p. 27).

As revealed in these citations, several authors make a strong statement for the importance of considering the individual when promoting change: "What is at issue, but rarely clearly stated, is how the change process can enable the teacher to perceive his or her role differently; that is, to perceive the role not as threatened or derogated but as expanded in scope and importance" (Sarason, 1996, p. 195). "There is a connection between who we are as persons and who we are as learners and educators . . . our own practical thrust continues to be the reciprocal professional and personal development of the person" (Caine & Caine, 1997, p. 257). "Comprehensive, top-down school reform has never worked before and will not work now. We can improve education only one teacher and one classroom at a time" (Gough, 1998, p. 258).

Characteristics of Change

"'The more things change, the more they stay the same.' That sentence seems to sum up the history of curriculum change over the past 50 years" (Glatthorn & Jailall, 2000, p. 97). Many authors of works on school reform have made similar statements to this effect (Caine & Caine, 1997; Clinchy, 1998; Cuban, 1990; Fullan, 1997; Glickman, 1993, 1998; Golarz & Golarz, 1995; Marsh, 1999; Newman, 1998; Sarason, 1996; Sergiovanni, 1995; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

The Static Nature of the Educational System

Certain factors exist that perpetuate conformation within the educational system; among these are the graded classes, Carnegie units, textbooks, testing, sequenced courses, and self-contained classrooms (Schlechty, 1990; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). "We still assume that a child of a given age is enough like all other children of the same age that he or she should traverse the same curriculum in the same fashion with all other students of that age" (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 22). Certain beliefs and norms contribute to the persistence of such conformities: "The culture of most schools is characterized by norms of privatism and isolation, which keep teachers apart" (Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 88). "We suggest that the 'establishment' that has held the grammar of schooling in place is not so much a conscious conservatism as it is unexamined institutional habits and widespread cultural beliefs about what constitutes a 'real school'" (Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p. 88). The notion of a "real school" also is illustrated by Meier (1995):

> The habits of schooling are deep, powerful, and hard to budge. No institution is more deeply entrenched in our habitual behavior than schools. For good reason. Aside from our many years of direct experience of being students, we have books, movies, TV shows, ads, games (remember Go to the Head of the Class?) and symbols that reinforce our view of what school is 'spozed to be.' Our everyday language and metaphors are built upon a kind of prototype of schoolhouse and classroom, with all its authoritarian, filling-up-the-empty-vessel, rote-learning assumptions. It's precisely such 'routines' that schools have been expected to pass on to the young. (p. 141)

Teachers have tended to take a dim view of most changes that are externally imposed. "In the top-down process of advocating and implementing technology, teachers were rarely consulted, though it was mainly their job to make it work in the classroom" (Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p. 121). "Teachers have found that generalizations guided by empiricism don't attend to issues faced in 'my' classroom with 'my' students. They tend to discount the belief that policies and practices rooted in research can be disseminated to schools and adopted whole" (Lieberman & Miller, 2000, p. 49). Marsh and Marsh (1999) note that "when change is considered, everything to be initiated exists in the minds and time of participants as regularities in addition to, rather than replacing, regularities already established. Consequently, there is quick burnout" (p. 37). Goodlad (1999) states this another way:

> What becomes apparent in studying schools is that the islands of innovation some
>
> individuals and groups of teachers manage to create are surrounded by
>
> inhospitable seas. The three or four teachers who return from a conference or
>
> workshop fired up with ideas they want to implement as soon as possible find
>
> themselves back in an environment in which they must buck long-standing
>
> conventions. If the tension between traditional and progressive beliefs has
>
> changed since my colleagues and I studied 1,350 elementary, junior high, and
>
> senior high school teachers in the early 1980s, my guess is that it has increased.
>
> Significant numbers of the teachers we studied held what we classified as
>
> progressive views regarding student learning and pedagogy, but circumstances,
>
> such as the classroom boxes they shared with students each day, turned their

practice toward more traditional views of teacher dominance and student compliance. (p. 573)

Teachers have developed their own ways of dealing with the multiplicity of change initiatives that have continued to surface. In their book <u>Tinkering Toward Utopia</u>, Tyack and Cuban (1995) make several references to teachers' reactions to proposed reforms:

When educators view reform demands as inappropriate, they are skilled in finding ways to temper or evade their effects. (p. 79)

The best way to live with new mandates from distant legislators and administrative agencies is to adapt innovations to local circumstance, or comply in minimal ways, or sabotage unwanted reforms. (p. 61)

Because teachers retained a fair degree of autonomy once the classroom door was closed, they could, if they chose, comply only symbolically or fitfully or not at all... or teachers could respond to reforms by hybridizing them, blending the old and new by selecting those parts that made their job more efficient or satisfying. (pp. 9-10)

In summary, Glickman (1993) contends that "most ideas in education derive from power, popularity, or novelty. These ideas temporarily hold sway, but within a few years they pass away and become tried innovations that failed. Then critics have yet another field day with the failure of the public schools" (p. 23). Meier (1995) voices hope for the future of school reform:

If the expectations others have of us as well as those we have of ourselves, our habits of teaching and schooling, are so deeply rooted, is there any hope for the

kind of school reform that would create very different institutions than those we've grown accustomed to? The answer will depend on how serious we are about the need to fundamentally change our expectations and on how long we're willing to stick with it. (p. 140)

<u>The Complexity of Change</u>

The complexity of attempts to change existing educational systems is analyzed from a number of perspectives in current literary references. Hargreaves (1997) contends that "the basic problem is that fundamental educational change is even more difficult, complex, and controversial than the change literature has acknowledged so far" (p. ix).

Fragmentation and lack of focus are listed as reasons that change is unsuccessful (Fullan, 1997). Foster (1986) states that "change, then, is a complex factor for educational administrators and other school people. It is best considered as a multilayered and interactive set of elements, not all of which need to be considered simultaneously" (p. 163). Tomlinson (1999) queries,

How do you convert into organized language the massive, simultaneous onslaught of complex individual and institutional behavior that bombards school practitioners each day? Schoolpeople have ready access to an extraordinary source of rich data, but few have at hand organizing principles that allow them to collect, organize, and find meaning in an overabundance of apparently random information. (p. 89)

It is also noted in the literature that change initiatives often contradict one another. Tyack and Cuban (1995) note that "Americans have wanted schools to serve different and often contradictory purposes for their own children (p. 43). . . . Were any kinds of

reforms implemented smoothly" (p. 57)? Fullan (1991) details some of these contradictions:

> Change is difficult because it is riddled with dilemmas, ambivalences, and
> paradoxes. It combines steps that do not seem to go together: to have a clear
> vision and be open-minded; to take initiative and empower others; to provide
> support and pressure; to start small and think big; to expect results and be patient
> and persistent; to have a plan and be flexible; to use top-down and bottom-up
> strategies; to experience uncertainty and satisfaction. (p. 350)

Not only is change paradoxical, it is entwined with the agendas of other societal entities. Bruner (1996) marvels over the complexity of the "institutional anthropology of schooling," noting that little attention has been given to this phenomenon in spite of its interplay with changes in society and the economy. "Its relation to the family, to the economy, to religious institutions, even to the labor market, is only vaguely understood" (p. 33). Tyack and Cuban (1995) note that educational reform often meant changes that were intended to correct "perceived social and educational problems" (p. 4). They also conclude that the whole notion of educational reform stems from the competition between various interest groups to secure their position and express their values within the institution of public schooling. Brown and Moffett (1999) also contend that "Change in educational systems is a complex political, social, and personal process" (p. 53).

What about the role of teachers and administrators in managing effective change that is so complex? Tyack and Cuban (1995) agree that this is where the focus of change should originate. "Outsiders who tried to reinvent schooling rarely understood the everyday lives of teachers, their practices, beliefs, and sources of frustration and

satisfaction" (p. 114). They support educational reform "by working from the inside out, especially by enlisting the support and skills of teachers as key actors in reform" (p. 9). "Teachers cannot do the job alone. They need resources of time and money, practical designs for change, and collegial support" (p. 10).

Likewise, Lightfoot (1983) supports the notion that teachers generally have the sense to reject changes they do not believe their students need, or those changes that are perceived to be passing fads. She believes they initiate their own trial-and-error techniques that align what they contend to be best for their students. McLaughlin (1998) cites "multiple, embedded contexts" (p. 74) that permeate teachers' worklives, not the least of which include grade level, subject matter, department, school, principal, district policies, community, and students' academic abilities, needs, interests, and backgrounds. And, Deal and Peterson (1999) posit:

> Change always threatens a culture. People form strong attachments to heroes, legends, the rituals of daily life, the hoopla or extravaganzas and the ceremonies - all the symbols of the workplace . . . . Change strips down these relationships and leaves employees confused, insecure, and often angry. (p. 52)

Yet, keeping all of these variables in mind, Marsh (1999) reminds us that "administrators and teachers alike must be patient and realize that reform is a process and that culture changes only with the passage of time" (p. 199).

In keeping with this recognition of the complexity of change, one is reminded that there are no clear and simple guides to managing the educational change process. Tyack and Cuban (1995) warn that reformers who are overly rational in planning reforms, whether it be through top-down approaches, longevity, or carefully designed policies,

only add to the complexity of the situation. They stress that "schools are not wax to be imprinted" (p. 83). Sergiovanni (1992) agrees that "in this idiosyncratic world, one-best-way approaches and cookie cutter strategies do not work very well. Instead, diversity will likely be the norm as principals practice" (p. 308). Fullan (1991) recognizes the value of accounting for the uniqueness of each situation: "There can be no one recipe for change, because unlike ingredients for a cake, people are not standard to begin with, and they change as you work with them in response to their experiences and their perceptions" (p. 214).

Tyack and Cuban (1995) also note that progress within a specific educational setting will be slow and viewed in relative context. "Notions of progress or regress in education and society are, or course, highly debatable, though at any one time they may seem self-evidently true or false . . . . A sense of progress is always relative - now compared with then, one group compared with others" (p. 14). They contend that beyond the sequential stages of "policy talk" and "policy action" comes the stage of "implementation:" "Actual implementation of planned change in schools, putting reforms into practice, is yet another stage, often much slower and more complex than the first two" (p. 40). In addition, they state that reforms should be customized to the specific setting in which they are to be implemented. "But rarely have start-from-scratch reformers with their prefabricated innovations really understood the tenacity of the grammar or schooling or the need to adapt change to local knowledge and needs" (p. 132). Also, "reforms should be designed to be hybridized, adapted by educators working together to take advantage of their knowledge of their own diverse students and communities and supporting each other in new ways of teaching" (p. 135). They

conclude that "unless practitioners are also enlisted in defining problems and devising solutions adapted to their own varied circumstances and local knowledge, lasting improvements will probably not occur in classrooms" (pp. 136-137).

The Principal as Change Agent

A number of authors and researchers in the field of educational reform cite the role of the principal as the key to effective implementation of any change process. Barth (1990) makes this point clear:

Today, the individual school is increasingly recognized as the promising unit for analysis and the critical force for change and improvement of pupil performance. One finding that consistently emerges from the recent wave of studies is the importance within the school of the principal. The words vary but the message is the same:

- The principal is the key to a good school. The quality of the educational program depends on the school principal.

- The principal is the most important reason why teachers grow- or are stifled on the job.

- The principal is the most potent factor in determining school climate.

- Show me a good school, and I'll show you a good principal.

There seems to be agreement that with strong leadership by the principal, a school is likely to be effective; without capable leadership, it is not. (p. 63)

A number of research studies conclude that the principal is the key to promoting successful change in schools (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Boyer, 1983; Louis & Miles, 1990). Bennis and Nanus (1985) sum it up from a total leadership perspective by

stating, "In no one case did one of our effective leaders delegate the task of shaping social architecture to anyone else. Nor did we find one effective leader whose activities, when it comes to influencing the social architecture, ever run down or abate" (p. 150).

Other authors ground this same position from a theoretical standpoint. "We begin with the principal because any kind of system change puts him or her in the role of implementing the change in one's school" (Sarason, 1996, p. 140). Likewise, Fullan (1991) contends, "as long as we have schools and principals, if the principal does not lead changes in the culture of the school, or if he or she leaves it to others, it normally will not get done. That is, improvement will not happen" (p. 169). Hilliard (February, 2000, invited conference presentation) disagrees with the notion that school leadership is usually thought of in terms of the principal, although it has often been said that our principals don't have the capacity to change the system. He argues his point, concluding that "nothing could be further from the truth."

Within the theory of principal as change agent, there are references to the principal as lead teacher. In one particular study, "referent power" is defined as "the perceived similarity of one person to another based in part on like experiences and background and the desire of that person to be like the other" (Rinehart, Short, Short, & Eckley, 1998, p. 632). The results of this study underscore the importance for principals to consider the teachers' perceptions of referent power. "Based on these findings, principals may want to communicate a genuine concern and empathy for the welfare of their faculty, as well as support for teachers' work" (p. 645).

Other authors also cite the significance of teachers' identification with the principal as a key educator. Glickman (1993) notes that "principals should not be

disenfranchised from the educational operations of teacher-run schools; instead, they should be seen as faculty members who have made the same career commitment as other faculty to improve education for students" (p. 36). Siskin (1997) cites a case study where this notion was personified:

> Through repeated statements, she [the principal] emphasized the importance of instruction and the implications for her own role - one in which she blurs the line between teaching and administration. "I am a teacher . . . but I've found that administrators, good administrators have to be teachers first. So I had to really understand that, that one never really leaves the field. If you're going to do the job, you must have instruction as the most important thing that the job calls for. Whether or not you are actually in the classroom or not, you are still very much a part of that.' Being still 'a part of' teaching is conveyed through her actions, as well, for she frequently *is* in the classroom. (p. 617)

> R. Caine (personal communication, January 27, 2000) has stated that the key to change is self-efficacy of teachers, just as she reminds seminar participants that real change for students in the classroom will occur if teachers nurture self-efficacy in students. As part of self-efficacy, there must be mutual trust. Meier (1995) has recorded her thoughts as a principal when confronting difficult situations as an educational leader: "I fell back on what I had learned as a teacher. When I felt trusted, I was more likely to seek advice, discuss my concerns, and, in time, arrive at the solutions that fit us best" (p. 130).

As leaders of the educational change process, principals are charged with creating a context for change. The next section describes the framework for implementing this process.

<u>Creating a Context for Change</u>

According to SEDL (1995), leaders of successful change create a context for change by reducing isolation, developing staff capacity, providing a caring, productive environment, and promoting increased quality. The functions of each context follow: (a) reduce isolation through schedules and structures that reduce isolation, policies that foster collaboration, policies that provide effective communication, collegial relationships among teachers, and a sense of community in the school; (b) increase staff capacity with policies that provide greater autonomy, policies and structures that provide for staff development, availability of resources, and involvement in decision-making; (c) provide a caring, productive environment through positive teachers attitudes toward schooling, students, and change; students' heightened interest and engagement with learning; supportive community attitudes; positive, caring student-teacher-administrator relationships; and parents and community members as partners and allies; and (d) promote increased quality through widely shared vision or sense of purpose, a norm of continuous critical inquiry, and a norm of continuous improvement.

Other authors/researchers have underscored the importance of many of these same aspects of context. With regard to collegial relationships, Lambert (1998) acknowledges that "among the more important tasks for the principal is to establish collegial relationships in an environment that may previously have fostered dependency relationships" (p. 24). Lambert also notes that increasing and developing staff capacity

requires specific leadership skills from the principal. "It is more difficult to build leadership capacity among colleagues than to tell colleagues what to do. It is more difficult to be full partners with other adults engaged in hard work than to evaluate and supervise subordinates" (1998, p. 24). A caring, productive environment has several distinguishing features. "In this approach, developing new ways of working and thinking, and creating new roles and relationships, are important. This work requires a fundamental rethinking of the organization and practice of teaching" (Lieberman & Miller, 2000, p. 49). Also, "'good' principal leadership has been frequently associated with improved student learning" (Bryk, Camburn, & Louis, 1999, p. 757). Barth (1990) concurs with this association by noting that "attention in recent years has shifted to the school principal because an able principal has the capacity to create conditions that elicit the best from most students, teachers, and parents most of the time . . . . And principals have the capacity to stimulate both learning and community" (p. 63). Additionally, McQuillan (1997) notes that "The administrator can also be the person who reminds the community that success is dependent on cooperation and interaction; not to say that conflicts won't arise, but that differences must be resolved in ways that don't undermine the school's ability to operate collectively" (p. 659). Lastly, increased quality is promoted through norms. "If the principal is not constantly confronting one's self and others, and if others cannot confront the principal with the world of competing ideas and values shaping life in a school, he or she is an educational administrator and not an educational leader" (Sarason, 1996, p. 177).

In similar fashion, Wagner (1998) stresses that "like a good teacher in a constructivist classroom, a leader of a change effort must pose engaging challenges, help

people understand the importance of the challenges, ask tough questions, monitor progress, and give constant feedback - both praise and criticism" (p. 513). He also acknowledges that there will be no change without "dialogue and rigorous inquiry." Like Wagner, Sergiovanni (1992) notes that principals must nurture a normative climate where support and encouragement for innovative professional activities is abundant.

Within an educational context of change, Fullan (1991) states:

Innovation is multidimensional. There are at least three components or dimensions at stake in implementing any new program or policy: (a) the possible use of new or revised materials (direct instructional resources such as curriculum materials or technologies), (b) the possible use of new teaching approaches (i.e., new teaching strategies or activities), and (c) the possible alteration of beliefs (e.g., pedagogical assumptions and theories underlying particular new policies or programs). All three aspects of change are necessary because together they represent the means of achieving a particular educational goal or set of goals. Whether or not they do achieve the goal is another question depending on the quality and appropriateness of the change for the task at hand. (p. 37)

Barth (1990) sums up the importance of context for individual schools in this way: "I think that the greater promise for school reform - and sufficient resources to achieve it - now resides from within the schools. Changes in schools may be initiated from without, but the most important and most lasting changes will come from within" (p. 159).

Educational Change Models: A Focus on the Individual

Two particular change models with a focus on the individual are outlined as the

lenses of analysis in this case study. These models are the Stages of Concern (Hall &

Hord, 1987) and the concept of reflective practice as described by Schön (1987).

Stages of Concern

Glickman (1993) notes that "those who have studied the change literature have

noted that the demise of many reforms has been due to a failure to account for the

specific stages of participants' concerns" (p. 76). "In most schools, teachers have

multiple levels of concern with educational approaches" (p. 79).

Hall and Hord (1987) developed six stages of concern about school innovations

that recognize that change is an ongoing process, and not everyone will be at the same

stage at the same time. Principals must learn of individual teachers' concerns, and then

know how to respond to those concerns with appropriate interventions.

Expanding on the original work of Frances Fuller (1969) regarding teacher

concerns, the initial level (Stage Zero), or the Awareness stage, is "unrelated to the

experiences of the individual" (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 1995, p. 428); the

individual does not have concerns about the innovation.

The next two stages, Informational and Personal, are likened to Fuller's "self"

stage, where the individual's self-efficacy is of greatest concern. At Stage One,

Informational, the person does not show personal concerns about the innovation but may

express a basic desire to know more about the innovation itself. Stage Two, Personal,

manifests with the individual beginning to develop an interest in how the innovation will

affect her/him on a personal level in such areas as role/demands, compensation/rewards, decision-making, and status.

In Stage Three, Management concerns, the parallel is drawn to Fuller's concern with task. Issues of "use" such as how to implement the activities, where to find resources, time management, and organizational techniques are the prime focus. The center of concern is with operational factors and the mechanics of implementation.

The final stages are grouped within Fuller's category of "impact." These levels, in sequential order, are the more advanced stages of concern. Stage Four, Consequence, shows a concern with the impact on students. The individual questions the outcomes in terms of student performance. In Stage Five, Collaboration, the individual questions her/his role in implementing the change with other teachers and how to coordinate this task in collaborative ways. Finally, in Stage Six, Refocusing, the individual has moved beyond the specific change at hand and is thinking of ways to implement the innovations in yet more improved ways. The focus is not so much on the innovation itself but with the universal benefits.

The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL, 1995) also has provided suggested interventions for change agents to consider when dealing with individuals at various stages of concern. Following is a listing of these suggestions at each associated stage:

Stage 0 (Awareness Concerns): involve teachers in discussions and decisions; share information, but not to an overwhelming degree; respectfully address any concerns about a lack of knowledge; encourage discussion with colleagues who are knowledgeable about the innovation; and minimize gossip and inaccurate information sharing.

Stage 1 (Informational Concerns): provide accurate information; share information in a variety of forms to individuals and groups; promote sharing of information with others who have implemented the innovations in other settings; help teachers compare and contrast the innovations to their current practices; be enthusiastic about the changes and promote others who do the same.

Stage 2 (Personal Concerns): Acknowledge personal concerns; provide support and encouragement by means of personal notes and conversations; link concerned individuals with others who have worked through this personal level; project expectations that are attainable in steps instead of all at one time; and maintain expectations in a supportive manner while avoiding the impression of being "pushy."

Stage 3 (Management Concerns): Clarify the innovation, using a step-by-step approach; provide information that will address the small, procedural issues; suggest practical solutions to logistical concerns; assist in the establishment of specific strategies and timelines; and attend to immediate demands.

Stage 4 (Consequence Concerns): Promote staff development by means of visits to other settings or participation in conferences; provide positive support and feedback; enhance opportunities for individuals to share their skills with others; and continue to share specific information pertaining to the change.

Stage 5 (Collaborative Concerns): Provide opportunities for collaboration with others; bring persons together who are interested in collaborative efforts; help participants set guidelines for collaboration; use collaborators as resources to others; encourage collaborators without forcing others who are not ready.

Stage 6 (Refocusing Concerns): Respect individuals' ideas for improvement;

assist them to use their ideas in productive ways; encourage them to act on their ideas;

provide needed resources; and be receptive to the possibility that innovations may be

modified or replaced.

"These stages and phases can give further understanding of the complexities of

school change and, when accounted for, can help give schools criteria for determining

overall plans" (Glickman, 1993, p. 79). He also notes that "the reason to strive for

schoolwide implementation, even when it is partial, is that this gives reluctant people a

chance to try the change and gives more enthusiastic people the opportunity to forge

ahead" (p. 99). Sergiovanni (1995) agrees that "Principals and others who are interested

in promoting change can use the concern-based model as a general framework for

evaluating where various individuals are with respect to change concerns and for

matching their own strategies to these levels" (p. 283).

Reflective Practice

The major tenets of this section are derived from Schön's work on reflective

practice (1987). A reflective practitioner is defined as "one who observes, does, critically

evaluates his/her own product, makes adjustments, and continues the process (p. 19).

The following excerpts from Schön's book, Educating the Reflective Practitioner (1987),

are listed to provide a summary of the concept:

> The gradual passage to convergence of meaning is mediated - when it occurs - by
>
> a distinctive dialogue of student and coach in which description of practice is
>
> interwoven with performance. (p. 20)

But they also share a common body of explicit, more or less

systematically organized professional knowledge and what Geoffrey Vickers has

called an 'appreciative system' - the set of values, preferences and norms in terms

of which they make sense of practice situations, formulate goals and directions

for action, and determine what constitutes acceptable professional conduct . . . . A

professional's knowing-in-action is embedded in the socially and institutionally

structured context shared by a community of practitioners. (p. 32)

Schön (1987) describes his theory of "reflection-in-action" as a learning process

that takes place within the practice of a craft of profession. He notes:

This kind of reflection-in-action is central to the artistry in which   practitioners

sometimes make new sense of uncertain, unique, or conflicted situations. In such

cases, the practitioner experiences a surprise that leads her to rethink her

knowing-in-action in ways that go beyond available rules, facts, theories, and

operations. She responds to the unexpected or anomalous by restructuring

some of her strategies of action, theories of phenomena, or ways of framing the

problem; and she invents on-the-spot experiments to put her new

understandings to the test . . . . Underlying this view of the practitioner's

reflection-in-action is a *constructionist* view of the reality with which the

practitioner deals - a view that leads us to see the practitioner as constructing

situations of his practice, not only in the exercises of professional artistry but also

in all other modes of professional competence. (p. 35)

If we focus on the kinds of reflection-in-action through which

practitioners sometimes make new sense of uncertain, unique or conflicted

situations of practice, then we will assume neither that existing professional knowledge fits every case nor that every problem has a right answer. (p. 39)

To illustrate his point, Schön (1987) uses the example of a master in an architectural design studio who gives his students a set of design specifications. Each student is to develop his/her own version of the design. The master holds regular design review meetings with each student throughout the course of instruction:

From his observation of the students' performance, the studio master realizes that at first they do not understand the essential things. He sees, further, that he cannot explain these things with any hope of being understood, at least at the outset, because they can be grasped only through the experience of actual designing . . . . She seeks to learn it, moreover, in the sense of coming to know it *in action*. Yet, at the beginning, she can neither do it nor recognize it when she sees it. Hence, she is caught up in a self-contradiction: 'looking for something' implies a capacity to recognize the thing one looks for, but the student lacks at first the capacity to recognize the object of her search. The instructor is caught up in the same paradox: he cannot tell the student what she needs to know, even if he has words for it, because the student would not at that point understand him. (pp. 82-83)

Swimming in unfamiliar waters, the student risks the loss of his senses of competence, control, and confidence. He must temporarily abandon much that he already values. If he comes to the studio with knowledge he considers useful, he may be asked to unlearn it. If he comes with a perspective on what is valuable for design, he may be asked to put it aside. Later in his studio education, or after it,

he may judge for himself what he wishes to keep, discard, or combine, but he is at

first unable to make such a judgment. And he may fear that, by a kind of

insidious coercion, he may permanently lose what he already knows and values.

(p. 94)

Schön (1987) posits that an ongoing dialogue between student and coach is

essential. He states:

Their dialogue has three essential features: it takes place in the context of the

student's attempts to design; it makes use of actions as well as words; and it

depends on reciprocal reflection-in-action. (p. 101)

A successful dialogue of student and coach need not end in the student's

compliance with the coach's intentions. (p. 116)

The coach must address students' individual concerns . . . . he must

particularize his demonstrations and descriptions. Demonstrations must be suited

to this student's momentary confusions, questions, difficulties, or potentials . . . .

In this process, the coach must be able to travel freely on the ladder of reflection,

shifting, as the situation requires, from designing to description of designing or

from description to reflection on description and back again to designing. (p.

163)

In conclusion, he acknowledges:

There is no single 'right' contract or relationship. Different ones may be equally

effective, depending on particular features of project, student, coach and

organizational context. (p. 167)

Throughout this review of Schön's (1987) conceptualization of reflective practice, the school principal may be likened to the "coach," and the "student" may be used to represent the teachers within the school. Using this analogy, similar references to reflective practice are found within the educational literature pertaining to public schools.

Sergiovanni (1992) likens the concept of reflective practice to "riding the wave of the pattern of teaching." He notes that teachers need to create *knowledge in use* as they practice" (p. 35). Like Schön (1987), Smith (1999) also acknowledges that dialogue is essential to this process:

> Dialogue is a critical part of reflective practice. " . . . faculty members of colleges and schools engage in sometimes painful introspection, examining their own practices in light of the mission of simultaneous renewal. Such dialogue and reflection are central to renewal. They become major activities in the leader's critical role as a *change agent*" (p. 602).

However, Sprague (1992) notes that the volume of teachers' work, combined with the fast pace of school life, make opportunities for reflection a rare occurrence in most schools. In addition, Marsh (1999) cites the isolation of most teachers' work with respect to the curriculum, concluding that the existing structure of the school prevents teachers from being individually or collectively reflective. Barth (1990) also laments that teachers and principals rarely talk about their work in substantive ways. He envisions a school where educators continually ask "why" questions. "Nothing is more important to building a culture of inquiry and a community of learners . . . . I think it is possible to set up mechanisms in schools that allow us to continuously examine and question our embedded, routinized ways of doing things" (p. 169). To counteract these barriers to

dialogue, Oakes (1992) calls for school-based inquiry, "characterized by open communication, reflection, experimentation, risk-taking, and trust among the diverse members of that school's community" (p. 25). Sergiovanni (1994) observes that "inquiring together requires true reflection and authentic dialogue . . . . Neither reflection nor dialogue is possible when principals tell and teachers listen, when principals teach and teachers do what is learned" (p. 154). Lambert (1998) outlines the skills necessary for such an interactive process:

> This hard work requires that principals and teachers alike serve as reflective, inquiring practitioners who can sustain real dialogue and can seek outside feedback to assist with self-analysis. These learning processes required finely honed skills in communication, group process facilitation, inquiry, conflict mediation, and dialogue. Further, these skills are generally not the focus of many preparation programs and must be refined on the job. (p. 24)

Little (1981, p. 31) notes that collegiality is a vital part of school improvement and sharing "craft knowledge" in schools. She cites four specific components as critical to this process: (a) frequent, precise *talk* about practice; (b) adults *observing each other* in practices of teaching and administration; (c) adults *working on curriculum* together, in all aspects of design, implementation and evaluation; and (d) *teaching each other* what is known about educating and leading.

Such in-depth, critical aspects of reflective practice take time. Sergiovanni (1992) notes that "The school schedule must be arranged to encourage rather than impede opportunities for teachers to interact. The pace of teaching must be modified, to permit reflection" (p. 87). Likewise, Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) study of creative individuals

from a variety of fields reveals that creative people do not rush to conclusions; rather, they take a considerable amount of time to examine the situation, test hypotheses, and reformulate the solution if the situation warrants.

Self-reflection is another concept noted in the literature. Meier (1995) mentions "a self-conscious reflectiveness about how they themselves learn and (maybe even more) about how and when they *don't* learn" as a desirable quality for prospective teachers (p. 142). She notes that the school should devise a "critical study process . . . . so that critical thinking, generating, consuming, and action become the norms of the organization" (p. 51). Caine and Caine (1997) make a number of references to this notion:

> Real change is also extremely difficult because it challenges
>
> traditional and personal beliefs and asks us to revisit and reinterpret
>
> our own experiences and our own sense of self. (p. 23)

Much like the Stages of Concern and similar to the theory of reflective practice, Caine and Caine (1997) note that differing reactions to change are to be expected:

> . . . people will interpret the situation differently. Some will confront change.
>
> Some will retreat and seek to barricade themselves. Some will welcome change.
>
> Different ways of doing all of the above are possible. All involved, however, will
>
> interpret the situation in terms of their deep beliefs and values, their mental
>
> models of how the world and education should work. (p. 247)

Within their own case study experiences, Caine and Caine (1997) found a common linkage among successful groups that were working on implementing some type of change:

Every group that 'worked' engaged in self-reflection . . . . This ability includes being aware of the nature of your responses to what others are saying and being aware of what drives your responses. What people find is that a realm of unconscious processing is present. Most of us are not aware of it, and yet the unconscious processing can be quite emotional. (pp. 249-250)

Another important aspect of reflective practice within a school setting is to involve students as well as teachers in the process. Glickman (1993) notes that "educators cannot teach students how to gain entry into the knowledge and power of the profound discussions of a democracy unless they themselves have gained entry into the knowledge and power of the profound discussions of their schools" (p. 28). Sarason (1996) states it this way: "If my experience with school children - in fact, with all levels of students, from elementary through graduate school - is any guide, that large part of a teacher's 'thinking about thinking,' which is never made public, is precisely what the children are interested in and excited by on those rare occasions when it becomes public" (p. 226). Bruner (1996) also acknowledges that "the child no less than the adult is seen as capable of thinking about her own thinking . . . . The child, in a word, is seen as an epistemologist as well as a learner" (p. 57). Meier (1995) agrees that "only if schools are run as places of reflective experimentation can we teach both children and their teachers simultaneously" (p. 140).

A number of authors mention reflective practice as an essential component of leadership skills (Blase & Blase, 1999; Chion-Kenney, 1994; Leithwood & Stager, 1986). "Reflection, combined within personal vision and an internal system of values, becomes the basis of leadership strategies and actions" (Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 7). Barth (1990)

also notes that "new leadership skills and, indeed, new conceptions of leadership are urgently needed so that principals may effectively contribute to schools. Support is needed to assist principals in acquiring these skills, and in becoming 'reflective practitioners,' capable of learning as they lead" (p. 67). Hitt (1990) concurs that "the effective leader is a good coach. In fact, they evaluate their own performance on the basis of how much their people are learning, growing, and expanding in job responsibilities" (pp. 164-165). Bennis (1989) sums it up by saying, "all organizations, especially those that are growing, walk a tightrope between stability and change, tradition and revision. Therefore they must have some means for reflecting on their own experiences and offering reflective structures to their employees" (p. 185).

Effective leadership skills include the ability to capably employ supervision techniques. In the school setting, reflective supervision is a concept noted in the literature as well. Foster (1996) suggests that "Empowerment can occur in a number of ways; one might be the institutionalization of a critical inquiry process in school through the use of a reflective, clinical supervision. Clinical supervision could develop critical and reflective capabilities among schoolpeople" (p. 191). Sergiovanni (1995) also mentions the need for reflective supervision:

Teachers, like students, are unique in their learning styles and the ways in which they solve problems. A reflective supervisory program would take note of these differences and seek to accommodate them in assigning teachers to supervisory options and in providing appropriate supervisory styles within options. (p. 237)

Supervisory options and styles should respond to these differences among teachers, for such responsiveness makes it easier for work goals to be realized. In

this sense, supervision is little more than a system of help for teachers as they achieve goals that they consider important. Principals are needed to provide help as this process unfolds. (p. 243)

Newman (1998) summarizes the concept in this way, sharing his own reflections on how teachers can continue to develop skills necessary for reflective practice:

In the end, I have come to realize that we simply can't get there from here - at least not by means of institutional actions. Undaunted, however, I continue to listen to the voices of teachers and to think about how we might shape the education of both new and experienced teachers. I know from firsthand experience that it is possible to help people become reflective practitioners.

Summary

The literature review in this chapter summarizes the various foci of change strategies from three major categories: structure/systems change, group change (including culture, community, and relationships), and individual (which incorporates needs, perspectives, and perceptions).

The static nature and the complexity of change also is examined. Despite the multiplicity of change strategies and abundance of prescribed methods for implementation of effective reform, much of the framework of traditional schools has remained unchanged for decades. Students are still categorized by age and grade within classrooms, textbooks and sequenced courses comprise the common curriculum, and test scores remain the primary gauge of student success. Specific beliefs, routines, and norms pervade the notion of schooling and restrict the views and subsequent actions of many

teachers. Change is described by many researchers as fragmented, paradoxical, and entwined within social, economic and political processes. The literature supports the premise that there are no "cookbook" remedies and that school reform initiatives should be customized to meet the individual needs of every school as a distinct community.

The principal is recognized as a central figure to the success of any substantive change initiative. "Referent power" is important in this respect, for teachers need to view the principal as a leader who identifies with their role of educating students as the most significant work of the school. The principal must create a context for change by developing capacity, providing an environment conducive to change, and fostering collegial relationships that promote norms of continuous improvement and self-reflection (SEDL, 1995).

Two particular change models with a focus on the individual are outlined as the lenses of analysis in this case study. Hall and Hord (1987) developed the Stages of Concern to assist principals in recognizing teachers' various stages of concern regarding change. Principals must respond appropriately to teachers' levels of acceptance on an individual basis. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory's (1995) suggested interventions for dealing with the various stages of concern are a practical guide for principals in interacting with teachers while promoting change.

The second individually-based change model is that of reflective practice. The work of Schön (1987) primarily is used to illustrate the major components of dialogue between coach (known as the principal, in this instance) and student (that is, the teachers). Reflection-in-action is described in detail and provides the framework for

educators to make sense of unique situations that arise within the "studio" of the school and the contexts of change that are pertinent to an individual setting.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

The purpose of this study was to examine various perspectives of how a principal approaches the change process, with specific attention to the ways in which the principal considers the individual needs of faculty members when promoting a particular change. A single-case study design was employed, using multiple sources of evidence as the basis of data collection (Yin, 1989).

Procedures

This section will outline the procedures used for site selection and define the various sources of evidence used in data collection. A detailed description of the actual research site and selected participants also is included.

<u>Site Selection</u>

The site chosen for this study was an urban elementary school located in the Midwestern United States. Access to the study site was gained by requesting permission from one of the district's assistant superintendents. I had been acquainted with this district-level administrator for a number of years and she was familiar with my need to study a school where the principal was seen as an effective facilitator of educational change. An initial meeting was held with the principal to explain the need for site access and to describe the data collection procedures. The ultimate decision to allow the study to be conducted at this school site was left to the discretion of the principal; she readily

accepted my request and I was immediately welcomed to initiate the study at my

convenience. Although every attempt was made to schedule site visitations in advance,

the principal stressed repeatedly that advance notice of visitations was not necessary and

I was welcome to visit the school at any time and to attend any/all school events and

activities.

Sources of Empirical Evidence

According to Yin (1989), sources of evidence collected for case studies may be

categorized into six areas: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct

observations, participant-observation, and physical artifacts. Five of these six areas were

used in this case study and are described below.

The first type, documentation, may take a variety of forms (Yin, 1989). These

include communiqués, agendas or minutes of meetings, administrative documents, formal

studies or evaluations, and news clippings. For purposes of this study, the documents

examined consisted of meeting agendas, e-mail correspondence, newspaper articles, and

district/site profile reports. These documents were obtained in a number of ways, from

my presence at various meetings to Internet searches of newspaper archives and

documents available for public review at web sites of various state educational agencies.

Archival records may consist of service records, organizational records, maps and

charts, lists, survey data, and personal records such as diaries or calendars (Yin, 1989).

Site-specific archival records reviewed included the school's parent handbook, the

faculty roster, a map of the school building, class schedules, and a descriptive listing of

the school's parent committees sponsored by the local Parent-Teacher Association

(PTA). These documents were obtained by requesting copies from the school principal and/or site secretaries.

The third type of data collected was information obtained from focused interviews (Yin, 1989). Respondents were interviewed for a short period of time, following a semi-structured format using prompts outlined in a flexible interview guide (Crabtree & Miller, 1992; see Appendix E). Interview sessions were audio tape-recorded to provide a verbatim account of participant responses for subsequent transcription and analysis. Interview sessions with the principal served as a key source of data collection in this area. The initial interview session with the principal was based on the interview guide; subsequent interviews were conducted on a more informal basis as the need for clarification of observed events occurred throughout the course of the semester. Eight other interviews with a sampling of staff and faculty members also were conducted. Faculty and staff were purposively selected for interviews to gain a diverse representation of individuals from various educational backgrounds and experience. All respondents were interviewed at the school site, during school hours, based on their willingness to devote 15-30 minutes to the interview process during planning periods or lunch breaks. Prior to all interview sessions, respondents completed a demographic data form that provided information on educational background and employment history, including number of years employed at the present site (see Appendix D). Although a pattern of "informational redundancy" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Seidman, 1991) was already emergent after conducting the first two interview sessions, other respondents were encouraged to participate in the interview process throughout the course of the semester.

Direct observation was another source of evidence reported in this case study. Eight visitations were made to the school site over a two-month period, totaling more than 32 clock hours of on-site observation combined with interview sessions. Observations were recorded by taking hand-written notes on observed phenomena; these notes were developed immediately following departure from the school site. Both formal and informal events were observed such as faculty and grade-level meetings, classroom instruction, and routine interactions in the main office, lunchroom, playground, hallways, and faculty lounge. The majority of observational time was spent in "shadowing" the principal as she went about her day-to-day activities.

The fifth and final source of evidence used in this study was that of artifacts. Erlandson et al. (1993) defines artifacts as physical evidence "that give(s) insight into the culture's technology, social interaction, and physical environment" (p. 100). Observational notes of artifacts within the school setting detailed such items as bulletin board displays, photographs on the walls of the faculty lounge, computer terminal displays, furniture arrangements within offices and classrooms, and ornamental articles contained on shelves in the principal's office. Notes on these items were scribed following site visitations.

Permission was obtained from the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board to conduct this research project (refer to Appendix A). Respondents were given a written document describing the research process (see Appendix B); each participant was informed that confidentiality would be maintained and pseudonyms would be assigned to protect the individual's true identity.

<u>Site Description</u>

The fictitious name of Apple Valley Elementary School was given to the site of this case study. Apple Valley was one of 13 elementary schools located in an upper middle class, urban school district of more than 68,000 students. Racial distribution within the school was representative of the district as a whole, with approximately 87% Caucasian, 6% African American, and the remaining 7% being an even distribution of Asian, Hispanic, and Native American. Approximately 450 students in kindergarten though fifth grade attended this school and there were 27 full-time certified staff assigned to Apple Valley during the 1999-2000 school year. The average years of experience of regular classroom teachers at Apple Valley was 7.6. This was the newest school site in the district, having been opened in the fall of 1994.

It is important to note a series of events that have taken place at this school site since 1997. Numerous references to these circumstances were made by the case study participants, particularly during interview sessions. The chronicle of events referenced herein was compiled from a review of 12 newspaper articles published between July, 1997, and September, 1998. (The name of the newspaper is not reported because it contains the name of the town in which the school is located.)

In July of 1997, two parents of Apple Valley students obtained the scores from the state-mandated achievement test of the school's third grade students. The test had been administered in the spring of 1997; results indicated that the average composite score from Apple Valley was 20 points below the combined average for the district's 13 elementary schools. These parents photocopied the test results and distributed them door to door throughout the neighborhoods of Apple Valley. Soon thereafter, parents from the

school held a series of meetings with district officials and the school principal to discuss their concerns. Parents voiced complaints about lack of homework, students not being challenged by the curriculum, minimal communication with parents, and workbooks less than half completed by the end of the previous school year.

Other members of the community became involved in the discussions, including a state representative whose grandchildren were enrolled at Apple Valley. He and other school patrons challenged administrators to improve the school's scores. The school principal countered the challenge by stating that test scores were only one measure of student success. She also stated that the steady drop in test scores since the school's opening possibly could be attributed to the presence of five apartment complexes located within the Apple Valley attendance area and the associated high mobility rate of children from apartment-dwelling families. Discussion continued into the opening weeks of the 1997-1998 school year, culminating in an hour-long exchange at the district's board of education meeting in August, 1997. District administrators and the school principal announced a number of initiatives to improve test scores, including the development of monthly curriculum guides for parents, standardization of district curriculum, and increased professional development efforts. The district also pledged to conduct an in-depth analysis of test scores to aid in the implementation of other improvement efforts.

In late August, 1997, the Apple Valley principal announced that her retirement would become effective on October 2 of that year. She was quoted as saying that she delayed this public announcement to ensure a smooth start to the school year. The principal denied any correlation between her retirement and the ongoing unrest regarding low standardized test scores by the school's third graders. In September of 1997, the

board of education appointed a replacement. This successor, who began her first principalship upon the effective resignation date of her predecessor at Apple Valley, was still serving in her capacity as principal at the time of this case study.

The series of local newspaper articles came to an end with the final two references published in May and September of 1998. Both articles reported an increase in test scores among Apple Valley third, fourth and fifth graders and a reversal of the pattern of declining scores. The newspaper reporter noted that the scores were "dramatically better," concluding that "the issue [had] cooled" since its initial inception.

<u>Participants</u>

Interview questions were presented to nine faculty and staff members of Apple Valley, including the principal. Three of the participants were support personnel, one was the school counselor, and four were classroom teachers. Years of experience in education ranged from two to 20 years, with four of the participants having all of their educational experience in this same school district. Two of the respondents were employed at Apple Valley at the time of its opening, and four individuals were employed at the school during the tenure of the former principal. Two participants were hired by the present principal within the past year and a half. Pseudonyms were assigned to all participants; each respondent was given the name of a former president of the United States. Table 1 summarizes the demographics for this group.

Table 1

<u>Background Data of Participants</u>

Name	Position	Gender	Age	Race	Highest degree held
Lincoln	Principal	F	50	W	M.Ed.
Johnson	Counselor	F	41	W	M.Ed.
Cleveland	Teacher	F	32	W	B.S.
Kennedy	Teacher	F	59	W	M.A.
Monroe	Teacher	F	32	W	M.Ed.
Taft	Teacher	F	38	NA	B.S.
Hamilton	Secretary	F	43	W	High School Diploma
Buchanan	Secretary	F	40	W	High School Diploma
Washington	Custodian	M	40	AA	High School Diploma

Name	Years in education	Years in this district	Years at this site	Years with previous principal	Hired by present principal
Lincoln	20	20	1.5	-	N/A
Johnson	4	3	1.5	-	N
Cleveland	9	8	1.5	-	N
Kennedy	19	10	3.5	3	N
Monroe	8	.5	.5	-	Y
Taft	15	5	4.5	3	N
Hamilton	3	3	2.5	1	N
Buchanan	2	2	1.5	-	Y
Washington	5	5	4.5	3	N

The principal, Ms. Lincoln, was a 50 year old white female. She held a Masters of Education degree from a local university. This was her first assignment as a school principal. The entirety of Ms. Lincoln's 20 year career in education had been in the same school district, with 14 years as a teacher and five years as an assistant principal. She was named as principal of Apple Valley Elementary at the time of the resignation of the former principal in October of 1997.

The school counselor, Ms. Johnson, was a 41 year old white female. She obtained a Masters of Education degree from a state university and began her career as a school counselor four years ago. Three of these four years had been as an employee of this same school district. Apple Valley is the first school where she has spent more than one year at the same school site. Ms. Johnson came to Apple Valley Elementary at the beginning of the 1998-1999 school year.

Ms. Cleveland, a 32 year old white female, was one of three special education teachers at Apple Valley. She held a Bachelor of Science degree from a local university. She had spent seven of her eight and one half years as a teacher in this same school district. Ms. Cleveland had been at another district elementary site for seven years prior to her transfer to Apple Valley in the fall of 1998.

Ms. Kennedy was a 59 year old white female; she also taught special education at Apple Valley, having been transferred there in 1995. She obtained her Master of Arts degree from a state university and had taught kindergarten and preschool classes in two other states prior to her arrival in this district. Of her 19 years of experience in education, ten years had been in this same school district. Ms. Kennedy served as a special

education teacher at Apple Valley for three years under the supervision of the previous principal.

Ms. Monroe, a 32 year old white female, was teaching third grade at Apple Valley at the time of this study. Her past experience included seven years in another school district as an elementary teacher. She obtained a Masters in Education degree from a local university in July of 1999 and was interested in pursuing a career in educational administration. Ms. Monroe was hired by the current Apple Valley principal at the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year.

Ms. Taft was a 38 year old Native American female. She obtained her Bachelor of Science degree from a local university and had 15 years of teaching experience, with five of these years in the present school district. Ms. Taft had been teaching second grade at Apple Valley since its opening in 1994.

Ms. Hamilton was one of two full-time secretaries at Apple Valley. She was a 43 year old white female who had been hired by the previous school principal in 1996. She had no experience as a public school employee prior to her tenure at Apple Valley. Her main responsibilities at the school were to maintain financial records as well as to serve as a backup secretary in the main office.

Ms. Buchanan was a 43 year old white female who functioned as Apple Valley's secretary/receptionist. She was hired by the present principal, Ms. Lincoln, in the fall of 1997. Prior to her employment at Apple Valley, Ms. Buchanan had served in a clerical capacity for several agencies in another state. She had not been employed outside the home for 16 years prior to her tenure at Apple Valley.

Mr. Washington was the head custodian at Apple Valley Elementary. He was a 40 year old African American male who had served in this capacity since the 1995-1996 school year. For one year prior to coming to Apple Valley, he had been the assistant head custodian at another school site within the district. Mr. Washington was known for his frequent editorial contributions to the local newspaper on the subject of parental responsibility and other issues of concern to educators.

Data

Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously as emergent themes were noted throughout the study (Erlandson et al., 1993). Using the process of coding and categorizing emergent themes from interviews, observations, and document reviews, the data sets emerged into two main categories: processes and perceptions.

The first data set, processes, included respondents' summations of how change was executed at the school level. Participant responses were grouped according to the individual's capacity at the school: counselor/teachers, support staff, and the principal. The focus was directed on the overall change process, not toward any specific change as perceived by the individual respondent.

The second data set, that of perceptions, was divided into three main categories:

1. The role of the individual in the change process. This category included perceptions of the individual as to the part he/she played in changes that were implemented at Apple Valley.

2. The role of the principal in the change process. Respondents tended to frame this issue in two distinct ways: general characteristics of any principal who wished to

implement change, and specific traits exhibited by the present principal in promoting successful change.

3. Factors that contributed to successful change at Apple Valley Elementary. Respondents were asked to explain why they thought change was successful at this school site. Participants listed factors attributed to the present principal as well as those associated with the faculty and staff as a whole.

Processes

Ms. Lincoln was observed as she interacted with teachers during a faculty meeting. The meeting was held in the media center; Ms. Lincoln played soft instrumental music in the background on a compact disk player and gave away door prize gifts. When a male faculty member drew one of the winning numbers for a nightgown, Ms. Lincoln stated, "It's a girl thing; let's draw again." The meeting agenda was very brief and listed key points of discussion. Ms. Lincoln facilitated a discussion regarding textbook selection. She noted, "Apple Valley teachers think as a whole, so there's no division about textbook choice. The other schools aren't like that. We tend to forget that; we are lucky. It's an Apple Valley decision, not individual teachers. It's great."

A grade-level meeting was observed between the third grade teachers; the topic of discussion was a plan for remediating students' reading deficiencies. Ms. Lincoln was observed to ask the group several times, "What do you think?"

In the teachers' lounge, there was a collage of teachers' photographs accompanied by quotations citing what each teacher would do as a career if she/he were not a teacher. On the same wall was a display that profiled each teacher's birthday.

Ms. Lincoln was observed to wave casually at the groups of university practicum students that visited the school each week to tutor young students in reading; she also greeted the university professor and allowed them to go on their way.

When asked how change gets done at Apple Valley, Ms. Johnson questioned whether the change had originated from the central office administration or from the site level. She made a distinction between the two sources:

I think it's all similar, but it would make a difference between if it came from teachers or if it came from the administration. . . . If it's not mandated from the central office, I feel like we all have a voice. From my perspective, I think that's very helpful because we feel like we have ownership in what happens. . . . But we have procedures pretty similar every time, you know, too with Abby, to get the teachers' input, and looks for options, and just a standard matter of negotiation, really. . . . I believe she's very careful in giving teachers input when they can.

Ms. Johnson continued by describing how the principal, Ms. Abby Lincoln, went about implementing the change process. She stated,

Well, it depends on the situation. Sometimes she will ask all the teachers across the board, you know, 'If you have input on this, if you would like to tell me.' Sometimes, you have to curtail that a little bit, because it might be - if it's a situation between teaching styles or something like that, you might not want everyone's input. I think with the teachers, I think we have a lot of input in terms of change, and potential changes. I believe she's very careful in giving the teachers input when they can. And if she has to own it, she does often, I think, let

them feel like they have ownership. And sometimes, for times' sake, you know, for small matters, she just has to, you know, schedule it and tell them what's gonna be, because, you know, it's not practical to talk about everything. And, as far as I know, I think people are happy with that . . .

She elaborated on how Ms. Lincoln obtained input:

Abby meets with the grade-level people, and then we have our different committees, and stuff on e-mail, and then we have staff meeting, and everything. And her door is always open and we can always go in there and talk to her and I think that's, you know, very important. You feel like you are welcome to do that.

Ms. Cleveland, a special education teacher, concurred that the principal obtained input from teachers in the change process. "Abby's just real good about sharing the information, and it's typically a group process that we all do it - and we all do it together and have, in making those decisions for any of the changes that have gone on."

Ms. Kennedy, another special education teacher, also commented that there was wide-scale involvement in the change process. She mused,

Well, I think it's handled really well, because I think the whole school is involved with the change. And I think that's what makes it work well. Even though we have a principal and she's our leader, it's like we're all a part of the school and we're all equal. I think that's what makes this school work the way it does and why it's such a good school.

Ms. Monroe, a third grade teacher, noted that there has to be a need for change before the change process can begin. She summarized,

Well, first, there's a need for change, you have to approach it with understanding

there is a need and why there's a need for change. . . . our largest change is

brought about from the need to improve scores. . . . Stressing that this is school-

wide, this is something we all need to look at, to see how we can improve in all

areas. . . . and it takes the compliance of many individuals to be able to

understand the change that's needed and why it's needed, and incorporated - not

just one.

She also described the change process at Apple Valley Elementary as one where the

principal acts as a facilitator who shares information. She said,

When that information is shared, which is important that it is shared, with all who

are involved in the process, then change is brought about. . . . I think the main job

of our principal here, organizes - is able to organize the curriculum brought from

each level and meet, discuss it, talk about improvement. . . . Just send it back and

let the teachers work on it. I think - I'm certain that - as a principal, that you

trust, or you allow the teachers enough time that they know that they are

professional enough to take care of this process. And it's not a 'beat 'em with a

stick' and demand that this process gets done, but it's more of a caring, hovering

'do this; I appreciate your ideas;' it's more of a shared process.

Ms. Taft, a second grade teacher, summarized the change process at Apple Valley

in terms of the present principal.

In this school, it's really wonderful. The first three years, we had a wonderful

principal - and the last three years - however long Abby's been here - I guess it's

been three years, she just fit right in and she's just really great. She's really great.

Instead of bossing us around like so many principals do, they want that power, she makes it fun, and is very concerned about each of us, and our personal life, too, if we want to share, and is just really a personable person.

Ms. Taft also summarized the school climate by noting that " . . . our school is really unusual. Everybody works together, and there's no backbiting. Everybody encourages one another, and that's very unusual, too."

Ms. Hamilton, a secretary who was hired by the previous principal, summarized the change process in terms of what she observed the principal as doing:

. . . when Abby first came in, she didn't really try to change much right away. She kind of went along with the way we had always done, and kind of sat back and watched. . . . Abby tends to let everybody kind of make those decisions in a while. They pretty much, maybe without knowing it, tell her. In their own way. . . . And she just kind of goes from there, you know, without sitting down and saying, 'We're going to change things.' It happens in an 'under the carpet' kind of way . . . She makes all the transitions easy. I think it happens real, kind of in the background. Without people being aware of it, it's less frightening that way, because change sometimes is frightening for people.

. . . I think she tries to keep us out of the teacher loop a lot, which is a good thing; otherwise, you end up with even more - trying to do too much. But she does a pretty good job of trying to keep us out of that. Trying to let   some of us do our own thing.

The other secretary, Ms. Buchanan, took a more matter-of-fact approach. She stated, " First of all, if there needs to be something changed, it's changed. We look at it, and if it

needs to be done, we do it." The head custodian, Mr. Washington, also spoke of doing whatever it takes to get the job done:

Overall, most of the time, if it doesn't have anything to do with custodial, I have very little input until things are said and done. . . . But anything that's in my field, in my area, I try to know so that if it does come to me then I won't drop the ball. . . . I make sure that everybody has what they need to get done what they need to get done.

The principal, Abby Lincoln, offered multiple perspectives on how the change process occurs at Apple Valley Elementary. Her comments on the change process were framed entirely around the incident with low test scores at the third grade level at the time she became principal. She stated,

It happens slowly for us. It really does. When I first came, we had to make some changes immediately. Because we were under fire. And so, we revamped and relooked. I took basically third grade. Because that was where we really had our problems. We talked about it, and why we needed to do it, and different things, and they seemed to be fine. . . . It's just that when you're under the microscope, sometimes you do things different. And so we started with the third grade and looked at how we were testing, how we were preparing, when we were teaching things. And when we realized that a lot of things that were on the test, we weren't teaching before the test. And so, we revamped some timed things, we also put in place some things that we hadn't tried before so that kids weren't stressed out, they were more used to, you know, we put desks in rows, sometimes from January first on, we would do that, like once a week, or once every two

weeks. They did things where the children couldn't ask questions, because they aren't used to that - I mean, that *is* our job. So, we really looked at doing some of those things, and we started slowly, and then, after we kind of got that in place we started looking at second grade, and first grade, and I didn't come in with guns blazing, that we had to change it right then. We had to make some changes. But they knew that. They knew my coming in was going to involve that. So they were prepared for it. But - I didn't come in and say, 'Do this and do that.' We really talked about it. And looked at what we were doing, and what we thought we could do, and got input, and we sat down as a team and did it. And so I think they seemed comfortable with that, we didn't make any huge changes, school-wide, you know, we just started in looking at 'If we're down here, then that needs to be included in site improvement in what we're going to do.'

So we looked at it school-wide, but I really started in meeting with grade levels to do the more intricate part of it, how we're gonna change things. . . . So they knew they had to do some things. So at least they were aware of it. It would be a whole different thing if you were going into a school that wasn't aware that they needed to make changes. They knew that changes were going to have to be made. It was just how are we going to do it. . . . I think, helping them understand why we have to change. . . . As long as they understand it, and understand the need for it; fortunately, they're open - to understanding. They don't just close it up.

I sat down with the grade levels. And said, you know, 'What do you see that we're doing that's right? What do you see that we need to improve on? What are your concerns? And it made a difference, the concerns.

Ms. Lincoln also reflected on the status of the school when she was appointed principal:

I came in October and it was in August that 'IT' had hit. . . until we got test results at the end of that year, it was pretty hard teaching. But, I think, it also bonded the faculty. Because they felt so alone, like - you know, it could have happened to anyone, but it didn't - it happened to us. And so, they were really feeling, uh - down on themselves, and so they were really trying to pick each other up. . . . I think that helped - was that we were all in the same boat. It wasn't one teacher sticking out here and one teacher sticking out there. Everyone was in it together. And we looked at it that way. That it wasn't a third grade problem, you know. It was all our problem, and so we were all in it together.

Ms. Smith [previous principal] had put some things in place. It wasn't like she just threw her hands up and said, 'I'm not doing this.' That wasn't really it. She really put some things in place, had some accountability there that was rolling, those things were rolling when I got here. So that was good. They had already done some self-examining, and those kinds of things.

But we did talk about it at faculty meetings also. You know, 'We're looking at some things different, and we need to make sure that first and second grade is really on target, that you're helping third grade get where they need to be,

because they can't do it in third grade. They can't teach them everything they need to know.

Even at that point, they were still a positive faculty. And I think that made a big difference. . . . Because they *are* professional.

<u>Perceptions</u>

Respondents' perceptions were divided into three main categories with respect to the change process: the role of the individual, the role of the principal, and factors attributed to successful change at this school site. The data in each of these areas consisted primarily of comments made during interview sessions as well as comments that were noted during periods of observation.

<u>Role of the Individual in the Change Process.</u> Data collected in this area tended to be smaller in scope (i.e., shorter responses) than in the other categories. Respondents generally framed their responses in terms of their relationship to the principal as the main change facilitator.

Ms. Johnson described her counselor's role as one of a "clarifier:"

I'm in kind of a funny position because I'm really not administration, but since Abby doesn't have a vice-principal, . . . it's a gray area there. . . . I think that my role is, it might be one of clarification; that is, if somebody's come to me and told me a concern, that I might be able to just give a different viewpoint to those things that maybe an administrator would not have the opportunity to have. . . .

Ms. Cleveland, a teacher, spoke of changes that pertained to her specific special education program. In her words,

If it involves me, just informing and teaching everybody about the changes. The changes that I have seen, being a special ed. teacher, the major change that I have seen is us coming to this building. The special ed. program was moved to this building. And that is one of the things that we felt like we needed to really do, is teach everyone else about us and our program and who we were, and what our expectations were. And how we would like to the school to treat us and welcome us, and we were able to do that in faculty meetings, and going around with the teachers and visiting with them and sharing the information that we had that we feel is important for our programs and our kids.

In contrast, Ms. Kennedy, also a special education teacher, was unsure of her role in the change process:

"Ummmm [pause] - I don't know. I don't know how I see myself in the change. Because I'm a different kind of faculty member. You know, I'm really not a first grade teacher or a second grade teacher or a third grade teacher or whatever. You know, it's kind of a little bit different place; uh, I really don't know how I see myself as changing - me as part of the change in the school. I'd really have to think about that to come up with an answer on that.

Ms. Monroe, another teacher, described her role as a helper. "I don't mind helping in change process, I think change is inevitable - but, as a teacher, I don't mind helping, as long as I know what's going to be asked. At least give me that much information. And then I'll buy into the topic." Although Ms. Taft, another teacher, did not directly address her specific role in the change process, she referenced her role as a committee member charged with making suggestions on how to improve test scores. She

said, " . . . our committee outlined some things that we thought that our school could do. And we've done quite a few of them. We haven't done everything that we wanted to do yet, but I'm sure we will in the next one or two years."

Support staff (secretaries and the custodian) tended to view change as something that was usually discovered after the principal and teachers had decided that change was necessary. Ms. Hamilton phrased it in this way:

> Well, as far as at the school, because I'm not at any of the teacher meetings or anything, so if I do find out about a lot of it, it's in a roundabout way, and maybe even changes happen that some of us are expected to know but we don't, because we miss out on that part of it, but it kind of just happens a lot for us. The teachers and Abby go about making the changes and then you kind of find out about them on the backside sometimes.

Ms. Buchanan responded to this question in the same matter-of-fact way that she answered all queries:

> Well, I guess if there's something that needs to be changed, I'll say it quicker than anybody else. That it needs to be, you know, looked at too. . . . I'm one of those who will say, 'Abby, this need to be looked into' - and she usually does. I mean, you know, we're fast.

Mr. Washington also noted that he felt as though he was sometimes the last to know about a particular change, but he limited his perceived role in the change process to those aspects of the school that involved duties contained within his job description. He stated,

Well, some change I know about, or halfway, and some changes, they come as a bit of a surprise, but I usually try to keep abreast of things, so that some surprises are good, some surprises are bad. . . . If it's just a slight change in the schedule or something, it's, you know, not a problem. . . . Last-minute changes, surprises, can be a little bit hairy when you're trying to get everything thrown together for a program or something. . .

. . . My main responsibilities are to make sure that the bathrooms are clean, trash taken out, it's warm, the environment is suitable for, you know, habitation. But I don't have a lot of say so. I have enough to where I think it makes a difference when they do come and ask me things.

Ms. Lincoln perceived her greatest role in the change process as being that of a communicator of the need for change. She described her charge as

. . . helping them to understand why we need to do it, and talking about it with them, and getting input from them. I'm not going to do this - I can't do it - myself. It wouldn't work. So we spend a lot of time - in the lounge, or in grade-level or faculty meetings, or in my office - you know, just talking about things that we need to do. Or how we can improve this - or have we thought about this - they're pretty innovative, and willing - to do a lot of things. . . . they're just willing to do things - as long as they understand it.

One particular incident was observed that appeared to have a significant impact on the faculty and staff members of the school. This incident occurred while Ms. Lincoln was away from the building at a meeting with the assistant superintendent. During the lunch hour, a teacher slipped and fell in the cafeteria and hit her head. Ms. Hamilton and

I rushed to the area and found support staff, teachers, and students assisting the teacher as she struggled to maintain consciousness. The teacher's husband was called and he quickly transported her to her physician. When Ms. Lincoln returned to the school, she explained to me that everyone had been so concerned about this teacher for the past several years because she had battled breast cancer. Ms. Hamilton spent much of the afternoon discussing the incident with other concerned faculty members, fighting back tears each time she recalled the details of the accident.

Role of the Principal in the Change Process. Respondents tended to frame their responses to these questions in terms of two distinct capacities: characteristics of any principal (in generic terms), and those characteristics exhibited by Ms. Lincoln, the present principal of Apple Valley Elementary.

In generic terms, Ms. Johnson spoke of the following character qualities:

. . . it does depend on procedure but it also depends on the character of people you're dealing with. . . . I think, having someone in charge who is competent, who feels good about themselves, and is confident they're competent, is the ultimate. Because if you have someone who is not competent, and they're feeling insecure, that changes things totally. So, from my viewpoint as a counselor, I think it depends on if you have integrity and if you are competent and confident about what you do, but not overly confident. . . . I have seen administrators where, people who are so overwhelmed or they're insecure or whatever, and they won't or can't, look at things because it's too threatening. . .

Ms. Monroe cited the importance of treating teachers as professionals when implementing a change: "I think it's very important that principals, administrators,

understand that teachers appreciate being treated as professionals and therefore will respond as professionals, given those opportunities." She also talked about how information must be shared. "If you don't share the information, they don't understand why they're having to do this; you get a resentment, a feeling that now it'll fall through."

Furthermore, Ms. Monroe stressed the significance of having a principal who is a sincere listener:

> ... listening is very important. Even if you don't have the answer, at least let us know. And then, secondly, to be sincere. Not to just try to appease people, but to actually be sincere, and know that you understand there's going to be confrontation, there's going to be conflict, but handle it in the most positive way possible. . . if you see something that could blow up, that could be irate, try to nip it in the bud before something happens. Don't let it get to that point. And if you're asking teachers for advice, then listen to them, and they'll do whatever you ask.

Speaking from the perspective of a teacher who had a number of changes in the principalship at a previous school site, Ms. Monroe reported,

> This is my eighth year to teach. . . in five years of teaching, I had four different administrators at the same building. So, it was constant change, and, you know, just different leadership styles. It was different when someone else would come in, shaking the stick, and someone else would come in, too 'hands-off,' and you know, you need to have that balanced. Also, to be a part of the process, but also to know when to step back and let your teachers take care of that. Otherwise, I don't think you're going to get a professional response. And, it's sad to say, but I

think that your teachers will act professional, given the fact, if they are treated

that way. I can think of one principal in particular that would never share the

information on why this needs to be done, it's none of your business. You know,

you just do it because I want you to do. There was more resentment, that was

why it backfired on her.

The majority of comments regarding the role of the principal in the change

process were specific references to the traits of the present principal, Ms. Lincoln.

Ms. Johnson summarized the process in terms of standard procedures:

> . . . I think we have procedures pretty similar every time, too, with Abby, to get
>
> the teachers' input, and looks for options, and just a standard matter of
>
> negotiation, really. . . . Because only Abby knows what she is hearing from this
>
> person and that person, and it's a balancing act.

She also stated her belief that Ms. Lincoln did not have to involve her in every decision

or inform her of every single piece of information obtained from teachers. She said,

> I think people do feel comfortable with going to her, and I know she must hear a
>
> lot of the things that never come across my desk, and she doesn't tell me
>
> everything, which is kind of a luxury for me. But I don't have to know
>
> everything. Because I feel like, I know enough, and I don't have to know
>
> everything. I think she's pretty good about deciding what to tell me and what not
>
> to tell me, but sometimes to protect me, because I have so much on my desk, she
>
> doesn't tell me, and sometimes that might be helpful. . . . She tries not to overload
>
> people with information. . . . It's ok with me, I hear enough of things. . . . I think

that it is because she has integrity. And there's no substitute for that. And so I think because there are so many judgment calls. . .

Ms. Johnson also spoke of the ways in which Ms. Lincoln communicated positive expectations:

> She definitely is vocal about it. You know, 'Let's be thankful for what we have, let's keep this,' and plus she does something that I tend to do, to have high expectations. . . . if you treat your staff as 'They can do this and they will,' and if you have confidence in them, they will, and to take care of issues on a personal level, not make those public if they don't need to be made public. You know, just deal with them, and deal with them and move on, and not dwell on them. I think really, to me, having someone in charge who has integrity. . . . She has high expectations and she also affirms the good things, and reaffirms those. . .

> You really have to have a model. She will do the right thing, within the right context, as much as she can. You know, and I appreciate as a counselor how she supports the children. She will say very professionally, you know, 'You might need to lighten up on this child. He needs to play more.'

Following the interview, Ms. Johnson continued to discuss Ms. Lincoln's positive traits. She repeatedly referenced that Ms. Lincoln had a "great sense of humor" and how she thought that was important. The faculty had participated in an informal personality survey at a faculty meeting where color words were attributed to four different personality types. Throughout the course of the interviews, several participants mentioned that Ms. Lincoln was "orange" (primarily a fun-loving individual). Ms.

Johnson also stated her opinion that Ms. Lincoln "has a lot of blue, whether she sees it or not." (Blue is primarily a caring person.)

One point of discussion at a faculty meeting pertained to the ways in which district-wide curriculum specialists could increase their services to individual schools. Ms. Lincoln wrote all suggestions from teachers on a large chart and indicated that she would share these thoughts at the next district administrators' meeting. The final discussion topic was related to the use of copy machine paper. Ms. Lincoln had noted on the agenda that each teacher would receive two boxes of paper and the other two would be kept near the copy machine. After much discussion, it was apparent that the teachers were not in agreement with this decision; Ms. Lincoln amended her decision and informed everyone that only one box of paper per teacher would be held for the copier and teachers would be allowed to keep three boxes for classroom use.

Ms. Lincoln frequently used her e-mail to communicate with central office administration and other educators. On one occasion when I had e-mailed Ms. Lincoln in advance of a hastily-planned observation, she replied: "It's 7:45 a.m. and I just got your message about coming this morning. Works for me. I'm not sure you'll get this before you come - if not, I'm glad you came and I had a swell time." She responded to my e-mail request for approval of a proposed observation time by saying:

Lisa - those dates and times look fine. I'll be doing some observations, you'll hit

a faculty meeting and a grade level meeting. There is some 'down time' due to

teachers avoiding observations at holiday time - I can relate. See you next

Tuesday. It will be very low key, so if something comes up, just call.

On one particular occasion I observed a conference between Ms. Lincoln and Ms. Taft, who was preparing for an interview as an assistant principal at another district elementary school. Ms. Lincoln gave Ms. Taft specific feedback on how to organize her resume, prepare her portfolio and respond to standard interview questions.

One afternoon, Ms. Lincoln returned from a district-wide principals' meeting with central office administration. She reported that they had just finished Linda Lambert's book, Building Leadership Capacity in Schools (1998). She also commented that "I come back from district-wide administrators' meetings and I love to come back and just walk around. I appreciate this faculty so much."

Several times during the course of observational visits, Ms. Lincoln referenced a particular incident that she recalled with obvious pleasure. A particular teacher had inadvertently worn a mismatched set of earrings to school one day; she had reacted with horror when Ms. Lincoln had brought it to her attention. The next day, Ms. Lincoln and the secretaries wore mismatched sets of earrings. The teacher did not notice the joke at first, until the secretaries and the principal all "flaunted" their mismatched earrings at the same time. Ms. Lincoln commented that "we all had a good laugh; you know, we really like to have fun here."

On the day of my first scheduled visit to the school to explain my research proposal to Ms. Lincoln, students and teachers were participating in "Wacky Hair Day" as a part of Safe and Drug-Free Schools Week. Ms. Lincoln had her hair tied up in small clusters with many pieces of red yarn.

On another occasion, Ms. Lincoln showed me an animated computer game called "Elfbowl." She offered to forward it to my home computer and she was observed playing this game from time to time as the school day came to a close in the afternoon.

Ms. Cleveland spoke of the way that Ms. Lincoln made teachers comfortable to approach her with problems. She said,

Abby has that type of personality that you're not intimidated to go talk to her. If you have a problem, you can go talk to her and she will give you some suggestions or pull the person in to talk about the problems or suggestions, and that's just always been really helpful to have that, and you know, she's just - everybody's just real open.

During an informal conversation with Ms. Cleveland at another time, she reminisced about her move to Apple Valley from another elementary school in the district. The move was precipitated by the need to offer a class for students with mental retardation at this site. Ms. Cleveland noted that she was reluctant to make the move:

I was sad at first; I cried; but it ended up being the best thing I ever did. It's wonderful here. There's not a lot of people here that are burnt out - they're still excited about doing what they're doing and still really wanting to be here and do what they're doing. . . . that's always been real smooth that the people welcomed in here worked really well together. . . . It's just a very open school.

Ms. Kennedy expressed uncertainty about how Ms. Lincoln communicated effectively with teachers, although she had previously concluded that the whole school was involved in change processes. She stated,

I don't know how she does it. . . . she can get onto us or get angry with us or let us

know that we've done something wrong, but it's - it's never as a superior. It's

always as an equal, and I think that's how she communicates with us, that she's

one of us, and that we're all part of it. So that's what she does really well.

Following the formal interview, Ms. Kennedy also noted that her move to Apple Valley

was involuntary. She noted her belief that her transfer to Apple Valley was "politically

motivated" due to her close friendship with another teacher at her previous school. Like

Ms. Cleveland, Ms. Kennedy stated that although she had not wanted to leave her

previous school, "it ended up being a wonderful thing." She commented that she had told

some of the younger teachers who have only worked exclusively at Apple Valley that

they need to be aware that "it's not this good at all schools." She also commented that

she believed that Ms. Lincoln was so successful in dealing with teachers "because she has

never forgotten what it's like to be a teacher."

Following a grade-level meeting, while conversing with Ms. Lincoln in her office,

she referenced the meeting by saying, "I just laid it in their laps. I have a meeting with

the assistant superintendent and I want to be able to tell her what our plan is." Ms.

Lincoln canceled another grade-level meeting scheduled for the following week because

"teachers were very busy with Christmas parties in their classrooms."

On the wall of the faculty lounge, there were groups of photographs that had been

taken at an overnight retreat: teachers were grouped together in cabins, and everyone

was dressed in large T-shirts and pajamas, some with their hair in rollers. Ms. Lincoln

was pictured with her hair in rollers and cold cream on her face as she interacted with

teachers before bedtime.

Ms. Lincoln ordered business cards for all the teachers as a Christmas gift. She had selected the title "Professional Educator" for each teacher. She had commented, "There are times when you need these."

Ms. Monroe cited various aspects of Ms. Lincoln's personality and leadership style that she believed were factors in Ms. Lincoln's success with the faculty:

> She's not - laissez-faire; she's hands-on enough to know that 'this is what I
>
> expect, now I have some expectations here,' and I help her meet them, but it gives
>
> you enough room to offer creativity. . . . and Abby has been really good about
>
> sharing that information, and I think that's why she gets a good response from us.
>
> . . . That, and just basically giving you the opportunity to think about it, to get
>
> with your groups and discuss it and just allowing you to help.

Informally after the taped interview, Ms. Monroe commented that some principals have lots of students and teachers "lined up at their door all the time" and that Ms. Lincoln does not; "She lets others take care of it and she trusts you and expects it."

Ms. Taft also concluded that Ms. Lincoln solicited the input from teachers as part of the change process:

> . . . she does ask our - you know, she doesn't ask our advice but she asks our
>
> opinion. . . and then we have lots of committees, including parents on our
>
> committees, and lots of teachers on our committees. . . . last year I was on a
>
> committee, and she even gave us a day off to go someplace else to decide what
>
> we were going to do for our school . . . how to help the school and bring up our
>
> scores, and that kind of thing. . . .

Following the taped interview, Ms. Taft continued her comments about how much she appreciated Ms. Lincoln:

> I have worked with five different principals and they aren't all like this. The last two have been great. I think it might have something to do with these last two being women. They look at things differently and our building of teachers is mostly women, too. I told my last entry-year teacher, 'It's not like this in all buildings. If you ever leave here, you may be in for a shock.' She is very concerned about each of us, and our personal life, too, if we want to share, and is just really a personable person.

Ms. Hamilton spoke of some of the things she had observed about Ms. Lincoln since her appointment as Apple Valley principal. She noted,

> . . . her office used to be back where our conference room is now. She felt like she really wanted to sit where she could see and be seen, and hear, where the kids come through and the parents come through. And be more in the center of things, so she moved up here.

With regard to some of the changes she had observed Ms. Lincoln make, Ms. Hamilton said,

> Not a lot about the way that I do my job, but, you know, I think a lot in the way the teachers interact with the children. . . even for the kids to feel comfortable with her, and feel like they can talk to her, and they aren't intimidated by her; but yet at the same time, I think they realize that if they're sent to her for discipline, it still carries the weight it should, but at the same time, she's someone that they can feel comfortable. . . . When it comes to that, she just has a way about her that

makes everybody feel comfortable with her being in the chair - the position she's in.

The other secretary, Ms. Buchanan, stated similar feelings.

I've worked other places, and she just makes you feel at home. . . . And they're not scared to say, 'Hey - we need to do this.' Because of the way you know she'll handle it. She's always there for you - through the good and the bad.

Ms. Lincoln frequently discussed circumstances regarding individual teachers. She introduced me to one teacher who "went through some tough times when the previous principal left." Reportedly, this teacher had spoken to the media when the previous principal left Apple Valley and she had considered the resulting newspaper article to seriously misrepresent her original statements. Ms. Lincoln noted that this teacher was "very cautious now." Regarding her secretary, Ms. Buchanan, Ms. Lincoln spoke of how "protective of the principal" she is and that some people "misread her as being harsh." She went on to contrast the individual differences in personalities between the two secretaries and how much she appreciated them. Because one teacher had undergone extensive treatment for breast cancer, Ms. Lincoln reported that a large number of the faculty regularly attended a local university's annual fund-raiser for breast cancer research. She said, "We go the night before, decorate our tent, sleep there overnight, and have lots of fun."

Factors Attributed to Successful Change. Every one of the eight respondents directly attributed the success of the changes implemented at Apple Valley Elementary to the leadership of the present principal, Ms. Lincoln. They cited such characteristics as promoting a positive climate, gaining the input of teachers as professionals, and allowing

for consideration of teachers as individuals. Although Ms. Lincoln did not attribute
successful change to her leadership, she also cited such factors as encouraging a healthy
climate, soliciting information from all persons involved, and tending to the individual
needs of teachers.

When asked why change at Apple Valley Elementary was perceived to be
successful, Ms. Johnson replied that " . . . not that everyone is the same and that we don't
have differences of opinion, but I think that our administration has a lot of integrity. I
think Abby is competent, but she's open to look at those issues that need to be looked at."
She also noted that the principal promotes a positive environment and provides
encouragement to teachers. Ms. Johnson said of the principal,

> She'll tell us individually, she tells us at a faculty meeting, she'll say, 'I'm so
>
> proud of you guys. . . . I hear of things going on in the business, and I'm so lucky
>
> I don't have that to deal with; I'm so grateful.' We all support each other and we
>
> don't expect each other to be perfect; we live together and I think it's a team
>
> effort. . .

Ms. Johnson also spoke of Ms. Lincoln's awareness of teacher needs, such as having a
private place to confer with parents.

> There are things about getting funds for the pods for the teachers, knowing that
>
> they have to have a private place to talk. That is something that I'm sure costs
>
> money but I think it's essential. And to give teachers as many tools as you can to
>
> be professional and do their job; and to me that's not a small thing. . . that to me
>
> is just so important, and things like that take an effort to happen, and I think
>
> teachers appreciate those little things like that. I think she's aware of those needs.

It makes you feel like you have support. . . . To know we all have needs as moms and parents and spouses, and to know that family comes first here. And I don't think she does it so that they'll take care of her, I think that she does it because it's the right thing to do.

. . . I think it's the little things. . . if I need to go to a doctor's appointment, and I need to take a couple of hours for lunch, I come to school a week early, you know, without pay, and I know she knows that. . . . I'd rather come a week early and I don't have to, but she tells me how great that is, . . . and you know, it's a give-and-take thing. If you establish that, then people will give you more than they take when they need to.

All you can do is what you can do, and you have to know that that has to be good enough. If you have a boss that thinks that you should be able to do more than you physically can, you know, there might be a bad distribution of power, but if you have . . . an administrator who's willing to do her homework, but not too much homework. To find out what's really going on, and let people save face while you're doing that so you get the information that you need. . . . I think there's a way to do that and not everyone can do that - it's a balance.

Ms. Johnson also referenced the focus on the children at Apple Valley and the "team" attitude that prevailed. She noted,

I think first of all the children come first. . . . I think above all, we have our eyes on the kids. And I think we have that common goal. And I told Abby that one thing that I loved about coming here that is refreshing to me is that I can go into the teachers' lounge and you know the feeling when you walk into the teachers'

lounge and you hear quiet? Um, instant quiet in the conversation and that type of

thing - I'm sure we have that type of thing here but I think it's minimal. I think

that is huge. That we all support each other and that we don't expect each other

to be perfect. . . . I think it's a team effort. We all have a voice. . . we have

ownership in what happens. And I think we try to live by example; we don't talk

down to another teacher about another teacher, and I know that Abby doesn't do

that. And I think the teachers are very professional. Whatever happens, we deal

with it before it becomes a problem.

We have a team effort in focusing on the children. I think we have a

common interest. We do focus on the school as a home. . . People have to feel

comfortable and appreciated, to not feel like they have to promote themselves, I

think. You know,, you have to have - if you have a boss that appreciates you, or

you feel like you are getting feedback - you need to have feedback on what you're

doing, because if you don't, you're wondering if you're doing it wrong, if you're

doing it right. You might feel like you're doing it right but you don't know unless

you have someone affirm that. . . . that keeps people focused on what they're here

to do, and that's teach the kids.

Ms. Johnson's comments also focused on Ms. Lincoln's ability to recognize the personal

needs of teachers. She reported,

To know that we all have needs as moms and parents and spouses, and to know

that family comes first here. We had a teacher whose baby was in the hospital

and she was a new teacher, and you could just tell she was so tired. I watched

Abby go to her and say, 'You shouldn't be here.' (pause) 'You know, your family comes first.'

Ms. Cleveland also spoke of the positive, open climate that existed at Apple Valley and the way that Ms. Lincoln promoted this attitude among teachers. She said,

I feel like it's because everybody's so open. There no one that is talking bad about everybody else, there's no one that is trying to look better than the next person, everybody is willing to work and they want to do good - they want to do what they're doing. . . Other schools I've been at, there's been cliques, where there's a group of teachers that are, you know, four or five teachers that are right together, and you can't approach them with any suggestions or information, or even request help from them because they're so - sheltered in their little area, and that doesn't go on here. It's just a very open school.

. . . She's said before that she hires people that she feels like, you know that feels like the personality and the way their interviews go and the way things go are gonna meet these needs. . . . it's definitely Abby, the way she approaches it. . .

She's mentioned before in faculty meetings that she feels so blessed when she goes to administrators' meetings and everybody's saying, 'Well, my faculty wants this and they want this and they want this,' and she says, 'I don't have that because I have an open door.' 'You guys can come in and tell me what you need or what you want, and where we need to go, and we can either do it or we can't, and that's the end of it and you're not standing off in a corner as a group, talking about me, and coming in defensive and upset.

When speaking of her own personal needs, Ms. Cleveland acknowledged Ms. Lincoln's attentiveness to these needs:

At the beginning, it was such a chaotic time, the beginning of school, I had just had a baby, I was really stressed about everything that was going on, and I had been at North Elementary [another site in the district] for so long and they were so used to us being there. I was just concerned that when we did come over here, I had teachers coming up to me, not having any idea what 'MR' meant. And I just went in and visited with Abby and she said, 'That's great. We'll do whatever you need.' So she was open to those suggestions. If we had any problems, or anything that we've needed, she's always been very open and willing to listen and has good ideas of sharing of where to go and make it work and get it taken care of . . . If you have a problem you can go talk to her and she will give you some suggestions or pull the person in to talk about the problems or suggestions. . .

Ms. Kennedy succinctly summarized her feelings about successful change at Apple Valley, attributing success to the principal:

I really think it's because of the principal. I really think that it is, and if you asked the other faculty, they would feel the same way. I think that she makes it - she just makes it a comfortable setting for everyone. Not just for the faculty, but for the kids, too. And I think that that's real important. So, I really think it's her leadership.

I appreciate the fact that she continues to be a teacher. She's not - she doesn't put herself above us, but she continues to be one of us and I think that's

how she communicates with us. Even though we have a principal and she's our

leader, it's like we're all a part of the school and we're all equal.

Ms. Lincoln planned a faculty meeting on a day not normally reserved for one,

due to the need to discuss logistics for the faculty Christmas party to be held at her home

on the following Saturday. She commented,

> We decided no spouses; they generally don't know each other, and it's not
>
> relaxing for them. We just want to get together for a couple of hours in the
>
> morning, in our sweatsuits, and have breakfast before most of us get our
>
> Christmas shopping underway. We like having our party early in the season so it
>
> doesn't conflict with all the other personal obligations we have.

Ms. Monroe stressed that this was her first year at Apple Valley. She stated,

therefore, that she was unable to compare Ms. Lincoln's leadership with that of the

previous principal.

> I've only seen her instruction and her administration here. But in comparison to
>
> others, I seen a great difference and again, I think it's in the personality, the style
>
> of leadership, the treatment of your employees. . . 'do unto others as you would
>
> have them do unto you' and I think that's how we see her. . . . Then there's the
>
> parents, the community is a big plus. Abby seems to have a good rapport. I've
>
> been in other places where there wasn't a relationship between the community
>
> and the school. I don't know - it's just a whole different scheme of things.
>
> Different skills to match the teacher's personality.

Ms. Monroe also appeared to be greatly impressed by the principal's ability to identify

with the role of teachers in the day-to-day school environment:

I feel very important here. It's very frustrating as a teacher to approach an administrator and to feel that you haven't been heard. And then you have to live with the resentment that they just don't care, or forgotten how it is to be a teacher.

One thing about Abby that I liked a lot - during our interview, which impressed me, she said, 'I don't believe that once you become an administrator, you forget what it was like to be a teacher. That you don't take off that hat, and switch hats.' She still remembers what it's like, when you don't get a rest room break during the day, or when you can't get to a phone; she mentioned that during the interview and that, you know, was pretty impressive because, to a lot of people, those things can be seen as just teacher complaints, or just that that teacher is just being negative, but I appreciated that in her. . .I think it's important to remember what the classrooms are like. If anything, it will spark the interest that she has in children to know more - and she does that.

I think it's very important that principals, administrators understand that teachers appreciate being treated as professionals. . . . She still remembers what it's like. . . I think it's important, as a principal in the classroom, not just from the observation process but also from the teaching process, just to remember - and she does that.

Like most, Ms. Taft summarized the success of the change process at Apple Valley by attributing it to Ms. Lincoln:

Once again, like I said, our principal makes it easier. Whatever kind of leadership you have, they can either, like I said, be power-hungry and they make the decisions themselves; they can be - I had one principal that would embarrass

teachers in front of each other, and the thing that's so - that makes change successful - is your leadership. And that kind of person there. And also, the teachers in the school - my son is four, and I was telling some of my friends that if he got any teacher in this school - in *this* school - I would be very pleased. It wouldn't matter which one. So, she has really hired a lot of really neat people.

Ms. Hamilton also arrived at the conclusion that Ms. Lincoln made it easy for the change process to be successful at Apple Valley. She concluded,

> I think because she does make it so easy, where it's not such a big deal. You know, when she doesn't just put it up and go, 'This is the way it was and this is the way it's gonna be. You know, we're gonna make this change.' It just happens. Without people really, a lot of times being aware that it's happening. That makes it easy. . . . you know, she was in the classroom yesterday, teaching, and she makes it so easy.

Ms. Buchanan also mentioned the virtues of Ms. Lincoln and the ease with which she negotiated the change process.

> We have a great boss. We have fun. It's - you know - we're serious, but we still have fun. The whole school's all on one level. I think we all get along. Because she's that good at it. And I think once you have a good boss, it all just falls into place. . . . I've worked other places, and she just makes you feel at home. I think it's just Abby. I mean, Abby makes it so easy. You know, others just kind of look at you - she gives you the time of day. Other people - some don't. And she's always there for you - through the good and the bad. And you know that. Everybody knows that.

Although Mr. Washington did not mention specific qualities of Ms. Lincoln that contributed to successful change, he agreed with other respondents that there was a positive school climate and a focus on the students that was fostered by the principal:

I think it's with our leadership. I think that people get along; they work as a team. Any little differences or things that maybe would, in other places, keep them from doing their work together, here we work together, for the most part. Because our primary function is for the kids - to have a good, safe learning environment for them. So we have to put aside those other things that might hinder that process.

I think the main thing is that we try to work as a team. And we put those other differences aside - and we can discuss those later. And I think that's why things run smoothly here at this school. . . The tone is set from the top - from the principal on down.

Mr. Washington had written two editorials to the local newspaper. The need was emphasized for parents to get involved in their children's education. He noted,

Working as a team can make all the difference and keep kids on the road to becoming someone who can be a productive citizen. My hat is off to anyone who wants to be a teacher. So many things have changed. It is always worth shaping and molding young minds. The young minds that are now being formed are our future.

Mr. Washington's office was decorated in a way that exemplified his focus on children. Seasonal decorations were found along with drawings and other artwork from students to "Mr. W."

Ms. Lincoln was observed to begin each morning with a routine school-wide opening ceremony involving the students. Every day, five different students would enter her office and she would give them an assigned part to read over the intercom to the student body: the Pledge of Allegiance, lunch menu, daily weather, quote of the day, and the school creed. When students were sent to her office for discipline infractions, Mr. Lincoln would listen to their version of the incident, encourage them to take responsibility for the problem, and brainstorm with them on possible solutions.

The parent handbook was reviewed. The mission statement was composed with the first letters of the school's name; each letter was an acronym for part of the overall statement. The major beliefs of the school emphasized brotherhood, individuality, and opportunity. The school motto was, "As individuals, we all grow together to form a better home, school, and community." Also noted in the school handbook was a statement that although corporal punishment was permitted by school district policy, it would not be used at this site.

Like several other respondents, Ms. Lincoln attributed the success of the change process at Apple Valley to positive traits exhibited by faculty members as a whole:

This faculty doesn't have a lot of nit-picking going on. They really don't. There's just not time for it. And I think they take great pride in that. . . But, we're unique. And we do have compliments from without the district. . . And, I think it's a plus for them. Because, you know, one person's not going to drive the boat - they do. . . They do feel good about the reputation that they have as a faculty. Even though they've just gone through - you know, a horrible thing, their

reputation as teachers - and it being a close faculty, and not a negative faculty,

being positive, and a good place to work, makes them proud.

When asked to elaborate about how she promoted the concept of teamwork, if she

specifically spoke to the faculty about being positive, she replied,

> All the time. I really do. I say that a lot to them. Because that is so important to
>
> me. I try to. I don't think I do it to the extent that I should individually; I do a lot
>
> as a group. I try to do it as much as I can, but, you know, I know that I don't do it
>
> as much. I could be bragging on each one of them every day - the things that I see
>
> them do that are so wonderful - and there just wouldn't be enough time to do it.
>
> But - it's there. It really is. And their willingness. And openness. And caring
>
> about each other. [She paused; her eyes were filled with tears.]
>
> I talk about it with any interviews I do - that this faculty doesn't have a lot
>
> of nit-picking going on. That is the death of a school - I mean, you can deal with
>
> low test scores, but when you get that - mindset going in a school, where they're
>
> against each other, you're just in for a terrible time. So, I do. I come back after
>
> almost every administrators' meeting or vertical team meeting and say, 'I am so
>
> glad to be here with you all.' And I am. I mean, I am. I really mean it. Because
>
> they are so - positive, and fun, and up, and doing what's right for kids, and I
>
> think we see it in our kids. I just think it - because the teachers are up, and they
>
> like doing what they do, our kids are happy - and, you know, we have 'stuff' -
>
> every school has 'stuff' - but we don't have a lot of it. And we don't have,
>
> because I think our kids do pick up on it. That they're cared about, that the

teachers care about what happens to them, and I think our teachers express that in their teaching to those kids.

Ms. Lincoln also described in detail the ways in which faculty members support each other:

You know, I don't think you ever consider the workplace your family, because I don't think anything takes the place of your family, but I think they consider each other as definitely great friends, not just in a working relationship, but they know that there are others here for them. And they've set up a prayer chain within the school, and I think that's a real support to a lot of them.

They've set up a prayer chain within the school, and I think that's a real support to a lot of them. . . . our teachers asked if they could start a prayer chain after I got here, and I said, 'Yeah.' And it doesn't take away from teaching time, but if someone's really struggling with something in their family, or with a relative, or with a child, well, they have a little prayer chain, and those who choose to be on it are on it, and I'm on it - but the teachers understand that, you know, if there's a concern about me, it doesn't come to me - unless they set that up with the person who organizes it. because there could be times that they're stressing over an evaluation, or over this or over that, and they need to feel that they can go and use the prayer chain for that, too, without it coming to me. And that's guaranteed. But otherwise, if it's a bad thing in their world, it comes to me too. I just think - those are things that bind a faculty. And they - they need that, and they want that. That was their thing.

There's one person that sets it up, and then, it's chained. Like, she will send it - she just puts a little note in one of the boxes, and it's very discreet, so, you know, you have a choice if you want to be on it, and no one knows who all is on it, and who's not, so that you don't get a list of everyone on it. So, that it's like, 'Ewww . . . somebody's not on it.' So, you know, it's very non-threatening, non-anything, but I think it has - it's proven to really - they use it. They really do use it. What has really come about, I think because of that, too, is the fact that I have seen my teachers - when one of them - and we know that there is some 'stuff' going on within a family, or whatever, or, they may be really stressed about a parent, or whatever, I'll see them ducking into a classroom and praying together. I mean, there's no one there, it's their time, and it's that long [snaps her fingers], but you know, 'The way things are, I just need you right now.' And they do that. And - and - I'm glad. And so - I just think there's a strength there. You don't see that that often. . . .

I just think there's a lot of positive things here, that are from a lot of inner strength of others. And we do a lot of kidding. We do a lot of playing and I think that's a real key here, too. They like to play. They do.

At this point in the interview, Ms. Lincoln wiped tears from her eyes and the audio tape-recorder was stopped.

In the principal's office, there were two chairs on the front side of Ms. Lincoln's desk. Her desk was positioned at an angle so that she was visible from the front reception area in the outer office. Ms. Lincoln kept the main coffee pot inside her office; a pot of flavored coffee was constantly available. Staff members circulated freely in and out of

her office to fill their coffee cups. A number of mementos and other ornamental articles filled the shelves and end tables, including pictures of her grandchildren.

Within the hallways of the school, colorful banners were displayed that offered words of encouragement and positive messages to students. Bulletin boards were designed by various grade level teachers, and newspaper articles featuring the school's students and faculty were posted prominently.

Ms. Lincoln commented, "Lounge talk is generally positive; we don't have teachers in there numbering the days until retirement." Ms. Lincoln stated her belief that the teachers at Apple Valley will always be good to each other. "They're pretty innovative, and willing - to do a lot of things. I don't know that it's so much their age with them this young or it's just their personalities. I think they'll be that way after they've been teaching 20 years." She also noted that the district superintendent was respected and trusted by administrators, teachers, and school board members. She commented, "People would jump off cliffs for him." At the close of school one afternoon, Ms. Lincoln announced over the intercom that she was excited that all the teachers were planning to wear their new school windsuits the following day.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Five sources of data were presented in this chapter: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, and artifacts. Data sets emerged as follows: processes, or how change is implemented; perceptions of the role of the individual in the change process, the role of the principal, and factors that contribute to successful change.

Table 2 (pp. 108-109) presents a summary of participant responses regarding the change process. Questions presented during structured interviews provided the outline

for areas categorized in this table. All responses that were voiced by more than one participant were included in the summary. It is important to note that all but one respondent (a secretary) noted that changes took place by using a team approach (i.e., "We are all in this together."). In addition, when viewing the factors that contributed to successful change, the only individual who did not cite the principal as the reason for success was the principal herself. Other responses made by the majority of participants were that the principal encourages others and promotes a positive, open environment; the principal shows care and concern for teachers as individuals; the principal gains input from others, communicates a need for change, shares information; and listens to others; and that individuals participate in dialogue about the changes that are to take place.

Table 2

Summary of Participant Responses (N = 9)

Area	Number of respondents
Change Process	
Done as a team	8
Principal communicates need/shares information	5
Principal gains input	5
Role of the Individual	
Facilitate/participate in dialogue	6
Helper	3
General Role of the Principal	
Listens	6
Shares information	5
Treats teachers as professionals	3

Table 2 (continued)

Area	Number of respondents
Specific Principal Traits	
Shows care/concern for teachers as individuals	6
Treats teachers as equals/remembers what it's like to teach	3
Holds high expectations	2
Factors of Successful Change	
The principal	8
Principal encourages others/promotes positive, open environment	7
Faculty focuses on students	4
Principal is easygoing/flexible	4
Principal remains aware of teachers' needs	3

An analysis of the data is presented in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The data presented in Chapter III were analyzed in four ways. First, using the

focus of the principal as a primary figure in the change process, an analysis was

conducted in terms of what the principal actually did and what respondents perceived that

she did. Second, an analysis of contextual factors was conducted, with an emphasis on

school culture (SEDL, 1995). Finally, the data were cast in terms of the original research

propositions, using Hall and Hord's (1987) Stages of Concern and Schön's (1987) model

of reflective practice as lenses of analysis.

Role of the Principal in the Change Process

The role of the principal in the change process was viewed as crucial by every

respondent. This section will highlight specific actions taken by the principal in

negotiating effective change. In addition, the principal's comments and actual observed

behaviors will be compared to respondents' perceptions of what the principal did to

facilitate the change process.

Actions Taken by the Principal

Ms. Lincoln employed a number of strategies that could be recognized as

effective ways to promote change. Among these were: communicating a need for

change, gaining input from teachers, promoting teamwork, fostering a positive, open

environment, showing care and concern for teachers as individuals, encouraging others,

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remaining flexible and easy-going, maintaining a sense of humor, and focusing on the students. Examples of each of these traits are described as follows.

Ms. Lincoln stated that she articulated a need for change to take place. Her comments were framed within the context of the low test scores that were publicized prior to her taking the principalship at Apple Valley. She commented, "We talked about it, and why we needed to do it, and different things, and they seemed to be fine. . . . It's just that when you're under the microscope, sometimes you do things different." Once the need was established, dialogue ensued. She summarized by saying,

> So we looked at it school-wide, but I really started in meeting with grade levels to do the more intricate part of it, how we're gonna change things. . . . So they knew they had to do some things. So at least they were aware of it. It would be a whole different thing if you were going into a school that wasn't aware that they needed to make changes. They knew that changes were going to have to be made. It was just how are we going to do it. . . . I think, helping them understand why we have to change. . . . As long as they understand it, and understand the need for it; fortunately, they're open - to understanding. They don't just close it up.

Ms. Lincoln was observed to gain input on issues that were of concern to the teachers. At the faculty meeting, during a discussion of how the district curriculum specialists could be of more service at the site level, Ms. Lincoln queried teachers on their ideas and wrote them on a large sheet of chart paper. She informed the teachers that she would share these thoughts at the next district administrators' meeting. At the same faculty meeting, when Ms. Lincoln announced that copy paper would be distributed differently, she met with opposition from some of the teachers. After considerable

discussion, Ms. Lincoln altered her original decision and reached a compromise on the amount of copy paper that would be maintained by the office.

Ms. Lincoln promoted a sense of togetherness and teamwork within the faculty. She mentioned this on several occasions, along with the need to encourage a positive, open environment. Referencing the test scores once again, Ms. Lincoln commented,

I think that helped, that we were all in the same boat. It wasn't one teacher

sticking out here and one teacher sticking out there. Everyone was in it together.

And we looked at it that way. That it wasn't a third grade problem. You know.

It was all our problem, and so we were all in it together. . . . But we did talk about

it at faculty meetings also. You know, 'We're looking at some things different,

and we need to make sure that first and second grade is really on target, that

you're helping third grade get where they need to be, because they can't do it in

third grade. They can't teach them everything they need to know.

Even at that point, they were still a positive faculty. And I think that made

a big difference. . . . This faculty doesn't have a lot of nit-picking going on. . .and

I think they take great pride in that. . . . They do feel good about the reputation

that they have as a faculty. . . . being positive, and a good place to work, makes

them proud. . . . Because they *are* professional.

On another occasion, she commented, "We are a team. I stress this in interviews." Ms. Lincoln frequently made comments that evidenced her attention to fostering a positive, open environment. Regarding "lounge talk," she stated, "It is generally positive. We don't have teachers in there, numbering the days until retirement." Also, during a faculty meeting, one teacher commented that another district elementary school had

difficulty coming to consensus regarding a choice of textbooks. Ms. Lincoln reminded the faculty that Apple Valley teachers "think as a whole." She said, "The other schools aren't like that. We tend to forget that; we are lucky. It's an Apple Valley decision, not individual teachers. It's great."

On the afternoon before the last day of school prior to Christmas break, Ms. Lincoln expressed excitement about receiving the shipment of jogging suits for the faculty, complete with the school logo. She announced this over the school intercom after the students had left for the day, reminding all faculty members to wear them to school the next morning.

Ms. Lincoln expressed genuine care and concern for the individual needs of teachers. On more than one occasion, she referenced individual circumstances of teachers, such as the media director who had felt betrayed by the press when she was interviewed about the previous principal's departure; she acknowledged that this teacher "went through some tough times when the previous principal left." She also spent a considerable amount of individual time with a third grade teacher who was interested in pursuing an opening at another district elementary school for an assistant principalship. Ms. Lincoln reviewed her portfolio, gave her specific tips on improving her resume, and discussed topics that might prepare her for the interview process.

When acknowledging the positive traits in teachers, Ms. Lincoln replied,

I try to. I don't think I do it to the extent that I should individually; I do a lot as a group. I try to do it as much as I can, but, you know, I know that I don't do it as much. I could be bragging on each one of them every day - the things that I see them do that are so wonderful - and there just wouldn't be enough time to do it.

But - it's there. It really is. And their willingness. And openness. And caring about each other. [She paused; her eyes were filled with tears.] You know, I don't think you ever consider the workplace your family, because I don't think anything takes the place of your family, but I think they consider each other as definitely great friends, not just in a working relationship, but they know that there are others here for them. And they've set up a prayer chain within the school, and I think that's a real support to a lot of them.

Ms. Lincoln's ability to remain flexible and easy-going was evident on a number of occasions. She responded to my e-mail request for approval of a proposed observation time as follows:

Lisa - those dates and times look fine. I'll be doing some observations, you'll hit a faculty meeting and a grade level meeting. There is some 'down time' due to teachers avoiding observations at holiday time - I can relate. See you next Tuesday. It will be very low key, so if something comes up, just call.

Regarding her attendance at grade level meetings, Ms. Lincoln stated that she only sat in as needed; she commended that "I'm flexible on this." She referenced the faculty Christmas party as a relaxing time. "We just want to get together for a couple of hours in the morning, in our sweatsuits, and have breakfast before most of us get our Christmas shopping underway." Ms. Lincoln was observed to wave casually at the groups of university practicum students that visited the school each week to tutor young students in reading; she also greeted the university professor and allowed them to go on their way.

Ms. Lincoln's fun-loving personality and sense of humor were observed as she shared her "Elfbowl" animated computer game with me. She started each faculty

meeting with soft music in the background and a door prize drawing; when a male faculty member drew one of the winning numbers for a nightgown, she stated, "It's a girl thing; let's draw again." She mentioned the annual faculty participation in a local event for breast cancer awareness, where a group of the teachers went to the site the night before the event, decorated their tent, and "had lots of fun." On "Wacky Hair Day," Ms. Lincoln tied her hair in small clumps with red yarn all over her head.

Ms. Lincoln made other references to her fun-loving attitude. She commented on an occasion where a teacher had inadvertently worn a set of mismatched earrings to school, so she and the secretaries all did the same thing on the following day. She stated, "We do a lot of kidding. We do a lot of playing, and I think that's a real key here, too. They like to play. They do."

Ms. Lincoln talked about how she focused on student achievement as she encouraged the changes that needed to take place. She said,

> And so we started with the third grade and looked at how we were testing, how we were preparing, when we were teaching things. And what we realized that a lot of the things that were on the test, we weren't teaching before the test. And so, we revamped some timed things, we also put in place some things that we hadn't tried before so that kids weren't stressed out, they were more used to; you know, we put desks in rows, sometimes from January 1st on, we would do that, once a week, or once every two weeks. They did things where the children couldn't ask questions, because they aren't used to that - I mean, that *is* our job.

She also referenced the positive attitude of teachers and its impact on the students. She commented,

"Because they are so positive, and fun, and up, and doing what's right for kids, and I think we see it in our kids. I just think because the teachers are up, and they like doing what they do, our kids are happy. . . . That they're cared about, that the teachers care about what happens to them, and I think our teachers express that in their teaching. To those kids.

Ms. Lincoln was observed to begin each morning with a routine school-wide opening ceremony involving the students. When students were sent to her office for discipline infractions, Ms. Lincoln would listen to their version of the incident, encourage them to take responsibility for the problem, and brainstorm with them on possible solutions.

Respondents' Perceptions of the Principal

The actions of the principal were compared to the voiced perceptions of each interviewed respondent. Several participants reiterated their belief that the principal should articulate a need for change. Ms. Monroe stated,

Well, first, there's a need for change, you have to approach it with understanding there's a need and why there's a need for change. . . . our largest change is brought about from the need to improve scores. . . . Stressing that this is school-wide, this is something we all need to look at, to see how we can improve in all areas.

Ms. Buchanan summed it up in this way: "First of all, if there needs to be something changed, it's changed. We look at it, and if it needs to be done, we do it."

The importance of dialogue and gaining input was mentioned by several teachers. Ms. Johnson commented,

I feel like we all have a voice. From my perspective, I think that's very helpful

because we feel like we have ownership in what happens. . . . But we have

procedures pretty similar every time, you know, too with Abby, to get the

teachers' input, and looks for options, and just a standard matter of negotiation,

really. . . . I believe she's very careful in giving teachers input when they can.

Ms. Cleveland commented that "Abby's just real good about sharing the information."

Ms. Monroe reiterated, "When that information is shared, which is important that it is

shared, with all who are involved in the process, then change is brought about. . . . I think

the main job of our principal here, is to. . . meet, discuss it, talk about improvement. . . "

Ms. Taft stated that Ms. Lincoln "doesn't ask our advice but she asks our opinion." Ms.

Buchanan stated her way of giving input: "I'm one of those who will say, 'Abby, this

needs to be looked into' - and she usually does."

Teachers also supported the premise that Ms. Lincoln promoted teamwork and a

positive, open environment. Ms. Johnson reported,

We all support each other and we don't expect each other to be perfect; we live

together. I think it's a team effort . . . She definitely is vocal about it. You know,

let's be thankful for what we have. . . . She'll tell us individually, she tells us at a

faculty meeting, she'll say, 'I'm so proud of you guys, . . . I hear of things going

on in the business, and I'm so lucky I don't have that to deal with; I'm so

grateful.'

Ms. Cleveland reported similar sentiments:

She's mentioned before in faculty meetings that she feels so blessed when she

goes to administrators' meetings and everybody's saying, 'Well, my faculty wants

this,' and she says, 'I don't have that because I have an open door; you guys can come in and tell me what you need or what you want. . . and you're not standing off in a corner as a group, talking about me, and coming in defensive and upset. . . With regard to teamwork, Ms. Kennedy also commented, "I think it's handled really well, because I think the whole school is involved with the change. And I think that's what makes it work well." Ms. Monroe echoed these sentiments: "It takes the compliance of many individuals to be able to understand the change that's needed and why it's needed, and incorporated - not just one." Ms. Taft agreed: "Everybody works together, and there's no backbiting. Everybody encourages one another, and that's very unusual, too." Ms. Buchanan reported, "The whole school's all on one level. I think we all get along." Even the custodian, Mr. Washington, stated,

> I think the main thing is that we try to work as a team. And we put those other differences aside - and we can discuss those later. And I think that's why things run smoothly here at this school. . . The tone is set from the top - from the principal on down.

Several teachers commented that Ms. Lincoln treats teachers as professionals and that all are seen as "equals." It was interesting to note that all respondents except the custodian consistently referred to the principal by her first name. Ms. Johnson noted, "I think we live by example; we don't talk down to another teacher about another teacher, and I know that Abby doesn't do that. And I think we try to live by example and the teachers are very professional." Ms. Kennedy said, "Even though we have a principal and she's our leader, it's like we're all a part of the school and we're all equal." Ms. Monroe commented,

I think it's very important that principals, administrators understand that teachers appreciate being treated as professionals. . . . She still remembers what it's like. . . I think it's important, as a principal in the classroom, not just from the observation process but also from the teaching process, just to remember - and she does that.

Ms. Lincoln's concern for individual teachers and their needs, along with her encouragement of others, was reinforced by the responses of several participants. Ms. Johnson commented,

There are things about getting funds for the pods for the teachers, knowing that they have to have a private place to talk. . . . I think teachers appreciate those little things like that. I think she's aware of those needs. It makes you feel like you have support. . . . To know we all have needs as moms and parents and spouses, and to know that family comes first here. And I don't think she does it so that they'll take care of her, I think that she does it because it's the right thing to do.

Ms. Cleveland referenced the time she first came to Apple Valley:

At the beginning, it was such a chaotic time, the beginning of school, I had just had a baby, I was really stressed about everything that was going on. . . . and I just went in and visited with Abby, and she said, 'That's great. We'll do whatever you need.'

Ms. Taft stated that Ms. Lincoln "is very concerned about each of us, and our personal life, too, if we want to share, and is just really a personable person." Ms. Buchanan stated, "She's always there for you - through the good and the bad."

Ms. Lincoln's easy-going attitude and flexibility were mentioned by teachers and staff alike. Ms. Johnson commented, "I think people do feel comfortable with going to her." Ms. Taft reported that change is so successful at Apple Valley because "our principal makes it easier." Ms. Hamilton mentioned the way that Ms. Lincoln approached the situation when she first became the principal:

> She kind of went along with the way we had always done, and kind of sat back and watched . . . And she just kinda goes from there, you know, without sitting down and saying, 'We're going to change things.' It kinda happens in an 'under the carpet' kind of way. . . She makes all the transitions easy.

Ms. Buchanan reported, "I've worked other places, and she just makes you feel at home. . . . Abby makes it so easy. You know, others just kind of look at you - she gives you the time of day."

Teachers also made reference to Ms. Lincoln's sense of humor and ability to have fun. Ms. Buchanan mentioned that "We have fun. It's - you know - we're serious, but we still have fun." With regard to the color analysis activity that was conducted at a faculty meeting, Ms. Hamilton, Ms. Cleveland and Ms. Johnson agreed that Ms. Lincoln was an "orange" [fun-loving] person. Ms. Johnson and Ms. Buchanan also commented that the faculty had fun and that was important.

Finally, Ms. Lincoln's focus on students and high expectations for students and teachers alike was reiterated by respondents. Ms. Johnson stated,

> I think that it is because she has integrity. . . . but I think first of all the children come first. . . I think above all, we have our eyes on the kids. And I think we have that common goal. . . . to have a team effort in focusing on the children. . . .

She has high expectations and she also affirms the good things, and reaffirms those.

Mr. Washington also commented, "I think it's with our leadership. . . . Because our primary function is for the kids - to have a good, safe learning environment for them." In his editorial to the local newspaper, he stated, "Working as a team can make all the difference and keep kids on the road to becoming someone who can be a productive citizen."

In summary, all categories of participant responses noted in Table 2 (pp. 108-109) were supported by observations of the principal's actual day-to-day mode of operation. In addition, many of these same respondent areas were reinforced by actual comments made by the principal, both in structured interviews and informal conversations regarding how she negotiated the change process.

<center>Contextual Factors</center>

This study focused on how the principal creates a context for change, with particular emphasis on whether school culture is openly acknowledged as an integral consideration. As a function of creating a context for change, the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL, 1995) developed a listing of factors to be considered when cultivating a context for change. This listing has been used as one of the lenses of analysis for data collected in this case study. Four primary functions of context are noted, along with specific characteristics of each function. These specific characteristics have been compared to relevant data obtained in this case study from documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, and physical artifacts. Table 3 summarizes the results of this comparison.

Table 3

Functions of Context

Area	Confirmed data types				
	D	R	I	O	A
Reducing isolation					
Schedules and structures that reduce isolation		X	X	X	X
Policies that foster collaboration	X	X	X		
Policies that provide effective communication	X	X	X	X	X
Collegial relationships among teachers			X	X	X
A sense of community in the school	X	X	X	X	
Increasing staff capacity					
Policies that provide greater autonomy			X	X	
Policies and structures that provide for staff development			X		X
Availability of resources			X	X	
Involvement in decision-making	X		X	X	
Providing a caring, productive environment					
Positive teacher attitudes toward schooling, students and change			X		
Students' heightened interest and engagement with learning				X	
Supportive community attitudes	X		X		
Positive, caring student-teacher-administrator relationships			X	X	
Parents and community members as partners and allies		X	X	X	

(table continues)

Table 3 (continued)

Area	Confirmed data types				
	D	R	I	O	A
Promoting increased quality					
Widely shared vision or sense of purpose			X		
Norm of continuous critical inquiry			X		
Norm of continuous improvement			X		

Note. D = documentation; R = archival records; I = interviews; O = direct observations;

A = artifacts.

At Apple Valley Elementary, it was obvious that the first function of context, that of reducing isolation, was implemented in a variety of ways. Faculty meeting agendas, e-mail correspondence and district profile reports evidenced that teachers were encouraged to provide input on school wide issues. The physical layout of the school building and the location of teacher classrooms and grade level "communication pods" were organized to promote communication among teachers, especially within grade levels. Even the location of the principal's office to the front of the office complex and the location of the coffee pot fostered frequent, welcomed interchanges between members of the faculty. As cited by Bowditch and Buono (1991),

> People also surround themselves with various symbols that can communicate information to others. . . An arrangement of the administrator's office with a center for informal conversations, a display of personal memorabilia and decorations, and a relatively close distance between the chairs and desk, for instance, represents a nonverbal symbolic mode of communication that transmits powerful messages to visitors. (pp. 85-86)

Other archival records such as the parent handbook and PTA committee listings also conveyed the notion that a sense of community was pervasive throughout the school. Interview participants, including the principal, repeatedly noted that teamwork and collegiality was very much a part of the central operating framework of Apple Valley. This belief was further reinforced by direct observations of interactions among faculty members and review of other artifacts such as photographs of staff retreats and pictorial collages on the walls of the faculty lounge. From my first day at Apple Valley, the faculty and staff was characterized by their easy-going, trusting, warm and welcoming

attitude regarding my presence. The pervasive climate was one of unified beliefs: "We are a team; we are professionals, with a leader who treats us as her equal; we all focus on the students." Westhimer (1999) has observed similar phenomena within the context of a single-site case study and notes that such characteristics are "exceptional. . . because of their marked contrast to research that has consistently demonstrated the persistence of an ethic of privacy, autonomy, and lack of unity among faculty in many similarly organized schools" (p. 83).

The second function of context, that of increasing staff capacity, was confirmed primarily through participant interviews. Respondents spoke of the principal in terms of how she involved teachers in decision-making processes, provided resources to meet individual and group needs, and fostered staff development. These characteristics were supported by evidence of implementation by means of faculty meeting agendas and observations of interactions between the principal and various faculty members.

The third function of context is that of promoting a caring, productive environment. Perceptions of supportive community attitudes were documented within the school site's academic profile report. Specific evidence of community support was seen in the school's partnership with the local university in providing practicum students as tutors for children with reading deficits. Interview data was most prevalent within the subcategories of positive teacher attitudes and caring student-teacher-administrator relationships

The fourth and final function, promoting increased quality, was less apparent than the previous three areas in terms of data collected. Documented responses from structured interviews indicated that a number of participants recognized a shared sense of

purpose. Norms of continuous critical inquiry and continuous improvement were mentioned exclusively by the principal.

Analysis of Concerns

SEDL (1995) has taken Hall and Hord's (1987) seven Stages of Concern and provided a listing of interventions for responding to concerns at each level. These suggested interventions were used as another lens of analysis of the data collected at Apple Valley. Although there was no specific categorization of individual teacher levels of concern manifested at this school site, the principal's use of many of these same strategies was evidenced by direct observation and participant responses throughout the course of the study. A summary of the comparison is presented in Table 4. Within this table, items without an "x" indicate a lack of evidence of implementation. This does not imply that the implementation did not exist; rather, it was not observed during the time that this research was conducted. It should also be noted that there was no specific identification of a singular innovation being implemented at Apple Valley. Participants were queried about the change process in general, and each individual's responses were based on whatever perceived change they so desired.

Table 4

Suggested Interventions for Stages of Concern

Strategy	Confirmed data types				
	D	R	I	O	A
Stage 0: awareness concerns					
Involve teachers in discussions and decisions	X		X	X	
Share information appropriately (not too much)	X	X	X		
Acknowledge lack of awareness/knowledge					
Encourage discussions with knowledgeable colleagues					
Minimize gossip and inaccurate information sharing	X	X	X	X	
Stage 1: informational concerns					
Provide accurate information	X	X		X	X
Use variety of ways to share information with individuals and groups	X	X	X	X	X
Arrange visits with others who have implemented the innovation in other settings					
Point out innovation links to teachers' current practice					
Be enthusiastic and recognize the enthusiasm of others			X	X	
Stage 2: personal concerns					
Legitimize expressions of personal concerns	X	X	X	X	
Support personal adequacy via notes and conversations	X		X	X	
Connect teachers with other supporters					

(table continues)

Table 4 (continued)

Strategy	Confirmed data types				
	D	R	I	O	A
Illustrate sequential steps and convey attainable expectations		X	X	X	
Encourage and support innovation without pushing to excess			X	X	
Stage 3: management concerns					
Clarify steps/components of innovation			X		
Provide information on small, "how-to" issues		X	X		
Suggest practical solutions to logistical concerns	X	X	X	X	
Help establish specific strategies and timelines	X		X		
Attend to immediate demands	X	X	X	X	
Stage 4: consequence concerns					
Promote staff development (visit other settings, attend conferences)					
Provide positive support and feedback		X	X		
Find opportunities for individuals to share their skills with others		X	X		
Continue to share specific information relative to the change		X	X		
Stage 5: collaborative concerns					
Supply opportunities for collaboration with others		X	X	X	X
Bring persons together who are interested in collaboration					

(table continues)

Table 4 (continued)

Strategy	Confirmed data types				
	D	R	I	O	A
Use collaborators as resources to others					
Encourage collaboration without forcing others			X	X	
Stage 6: refocusing concerns					
Respect individuals' ideas for improvement		X	X	X	
Assist teachers to use ideas/energy productively					
Encourage action on ideas			X		
Provide needed resources			X	X	
Be receptive to changes or replacement of innovations			X	X	

Note. D = documentation; R = archival records; I = interviews; O = direct observations;

A = artifacts.

Within Stage 0, Awareness Concerns, Ms. Lincoln was observed to involve teachers in discussions and decisions. She facilitated discussions at faculty meetings, and several teachers mentioned during the interview process that Ms. Lincoln enabled teachers to assist in the decision-making process. As stated by Ms. Johnson, "We all have a voice. . . we have ownership in what happens." Ms. Lincoln also appeared to share just the right amount of information so as to not overwhelm participants. Ms. Johnson reported, "She tries not to overload people with information." Ms. Lincoln also minimized gossip and inaccurate information sharing, according to the comments made by her and several other respondents. Ms. Johnson described how refreshing it was to go into the teachers' lounge and not hear negative talk or gossip about another faculty member. In describing the principal's methods, Ms. Monroe concurred, ". . . if you see something that could blow up, that could be irate, try to nip it in the bud before something happens. Don't let it get to that point." Ms. Lincoln also emphasized, "that [nit-picking] is the death of a school. I mean, you can deal with low test scores, but when you get that mind set going in a school, where they're against each other, you're just in for a terrible time."

With regard to Stage 1, Informational Concerns, Ms. Lincoln provided accurate information and used a variety of ways to share information with individuals and groups. Ms. Johnson reported that "then, Abby meets with the grade level people, and then we have our different committees, and stuff on e-mail, and then we have staff meeting, and everything. And her door is always open and we can always go in there and talk to her." As stated by Ms. Cleveland, "Abby's just real good about sharing the information, and it's typically a group process. . . " Ms. Monroe commented, "if you don't share the

information, they don't understand why they're having to do this, you get a resentment, a

feeling that now it'll fall through.. . . That, and just basically giving you the opportunity

to think about it, to get with your groups and discuss it and just allowing you to help."

Ms. Lincoln noted these same methods throughout several interviews: "I sat down with

the grade levels. . . . But we did talk about it at faculty meetings also. . . So we looked at

it school-wide, but I really started in meeting with grade levels to do the more intricate

part of it, how we're gonna change things." Ms. Lincoln also was reported to be

enthusiastic and recognize the enthusiasm of others. Ms. Johnson said, "she definitely is

vocal about it. . . . if you treat your staff as they can do this and they will, and if you have

confidence in them, they will. . . " Ms. Cleveland stated that "there's not a lot of people

here that are burnt out - they're still excited about doing what they're doing and still

really wanting to be here and do what they're doing. . . " Ms. Taft commented,

"everybody encourages one another, and that's very unusual, too." Ms. Lincoln herself

reported, "because they [teachers] are so - positive, and fun, and up, and doing what's

right for kids, and I think we see it in our kids. I just think it - because the teachers are

up, and they like doing what they do, our kids are happy. . . I just think there's a lot of

positive things here, that are from a lot of inner strength of others."

Regarding Stage 2, Personal Concerns, Ms. Lincoln was reported to legitimize

expressions of personal concerns while supporting personal adequacy via notes and

conversations. Ms. Cleveland spoke of coming to Apple Valley:

At the beginning, it was such a chaotic time, the beginning of school, I had just

had a baby, I was really stressed about everything that was going on, and I had

been at North Elementary for so long and they were so used to us being there, I

was just concerned that when we did come over here, that, I mean, I had teachers

coming up to me, not having any idea what 'MR' meant. And, I just went in and

visited with Abby and she said, 'That's great. We'll do whatever you need.'

Ms. Taft also noted, ". . . she is very concerned about each of us, and our personal life,

too, if we want to share, and is just really a personable person." The secretary, Ms.

Buchanan, stated, ". . . others just kind of look at you - she gives you the time of day.

Other people - some don't. And she's always there for you - through the good and the

bad." Within an e-mail communication, Ms. Lincoln commented, "There is some down

time due to teachers avoiding observations at holiday time - I can relate." She also was

reported to convey attainable expectations while encouraging and supporting innovation

without pushing to excess. Ms. Johnson noted,

> She has high expectations and she also affirms the good things, and reaffirms
>
> those. . . .All you can do is what you can do, and you have to know that that has to
>
> be good enough. If you have a boss that thinks that you should be able to do more
>
> than you physically can, you know, there might be a bad distribution of power. . .
>
> I think there's a way to do that and not everyone can do that, it's a balance.

Ms. Monroe also noted this quality in Ms. Lincoln, stating, "She's hands-on enough to

know that 'this is what I expect, now I have some expectations here,' and I help her meet

them, but it's not - it gives you enough room to offer creativity." The secretary, Ms.

Hamilton, offered a different perspective: "She just kinda goes from there, you know,

without sitting down and saying, 'We're going to change things.' I think it happens real,

kind of in the background. Without people being aware of it, it's less frightening that

way, because change sometimes is frightening for people." She continued by saying, "I

think she tries to keep us out of the teacher loop a lot, which is a good thing, otherwise you - I think you end up with even more - trying to do too much." Ms. Lincoln addressed her approach in this way: "I didn't come in with guns blazing, that we had to change it right then. We had to make some changes. But they knew that. They knew my coming in was going to involve that. So they were prepared for it."

From an overall perspective, components of Stage 3 strategies were addressed primarily by comments from the principal. This stage, Management Concerns, included such strategies as clarifying steps/components of the information and providing information on small, "how-to" issues. Ms. Lincoln described the process of improving test scores in the following way:

> And so we started with the third grade and looked at how we were testing, how we were preparing, when we were teaching things. And what we realized that a lot of things that were on the test, we weren't teaching before the test. And so, we revamped some timed things, we also put in place some things that we hadn't tried before so that kids weren't stressed out, they were more used to, you know, we put desks in rows, sometimes from January first on, we would do that, like once a week, or once every two weeks, they did things where the children couldn't ask questions. . .

Ms. Cleveland noted that Ms. Lincoln demonstrated the ability to suggest practical solutions to logistical concerns. She said, "if you have a problem you can go talk to her and she will give you some suggestions or pull the person in to talk about the problems or suggestions, and that's just always been really helpful to have that. . ." The principal and a secretary both affirmed the principal's ability to help establish specific strategies and

timelines, and also to attend to immediate demands. Ms. Buchanan reported, "I guess

that if there's something that needs to be changed, I'll say it quicker than anybody else. . .

I'm one of those who will say, 'Abby, this needs to be looked into' - and she usually

does. I mean, you know, we're fast." Ms. Lincoln demonstrated the ability to

situationally determine timelines for change. She stated,

> When I first came, we had to make some changes immediately. Because we were
>
> under fire. And so, we revamped and relooked. I took basically third grade. . . .
>
> after we kind of got that in place we started looking at second grade, and first
>
> grade. . . . we just started in looking at 'If we're down here, then that needs to be
>
> included in site improvement in what we're going to do.'

Three of the four strategies in Stage 4, Consequence Concerns, showed evidence

of implementation at Apple Valley. Several respondents noted that Ms. Lincoln provided

positive support and feedback while finding opportunities for individuals to share their

skills with others and continuing to share specific information relative to the change. Ms.

Johnson reported,

> People have to feel comfortable and appreciated, to not feel like they have to
>
> promote themselves, I think. You know, you have to have - if you have a boss
>
> that appreciates you, or you feel like you are getting feedback - you need to have
>
> feedback on what you're doing, because if you don't, you're wondering if you're
>
> doing it wrong, if you're doing it right. You might feel like you're doing it right
>
> but you don't know unless you have someone affirm that. . . . And I think she
>
> does that, too. She has high expectations and she also affirms the good things,

and reaffirms those. . . . I come to school a week early, without pay, and I know

she knows that. . . she tells me how great that is. . .

Ms. Taft noted,

> We have lots of committees, and including parents on our committees, and lots of
>
> teachers on our committees, and last year I was on a committee, that, she even
>
> gave us a day off to go someplace else to decide what we were gonna do for our
>
> school - how to help the school and bring up our scores, and that kind of thing,
>
> and our committee outlined some things that we thought that our school could do.
>
> And we've done quite a few of them. We haven't done everything that we
>
> wanted to do yet, but I'm sure we will in the next one or two years.

Ms. Lincoln reflected,

> So we spend a lot of time - in the lounge, or in grade level or faculty meetings, or
>
> in my office - you know, just talking about things that we need to do. Or how we
>
> can improve this - or have we thought about this - they're pretty innovative, and
>
> willing - to do a lot of things. . . . I could be bragging on each one of them every
>
> day - the things that I see them do that are so wonderful. . . but it's there. . . and
>
> their willingness, and openness.

Stage 5, Collaborative Concerns, was evidenced at Apple Valley in two of the

four strategy areas. Respondents acknowledged that Ms. Lincoln supplied opportunities

for collaboration with others, encouraging collaboration without forcing others. Ms.

Johnson stated, ". . . what we wanted to do is kind of a collective effort." Ms. Cleveland

said, ". . . that's always been real smooth that the people welcomed in here worked really

well together. . . . It's just a very open school." Ms. Monroe noted,

I think the main job of our principal here, organizes . . . meet, discuss it, talk

about improvement, . . . Just send it back and let the teachers work on it. I think -

I'm certain that, as a principal, that you trust, or you allow the teachers enough

time that they know that they are professional enough to take care of the process.

And it's not a 'beat 'em up with a stick and demand that process gets done, but

it's more of a caring, hovering 'do this'. . .

Ms. Taft concurred that "everybody encourages one another, and that's very unusual,

too." Ms. Hamilton noted, "Abby tends to let everybody kind of make those decisions in

a while. . . . And she just kinda goes from there, you know, without sitting down and

saying, 'We're going to change things.' Ms. Lincoln herself said, "but - I didn't come in

and say, 'Do this and do that.' We really talked about it. And looked at what we were

doing, and what we thought we could do, and got input, and we sat down as a team and

did it."

The final stage, Refocusing Concerns, was recognized to be present at Apple

Valley through four of the five strategies. Ms. Lincoln was acknowledged as respecting

individuals' ideas for improvement and encouraging action on ideas while providing

needed resources, yet showing receptivity to changes or replacement of innovations. Ms.

Johnson mused, ". . . not that everyone is the same and that we don't have differences of

opinion, but I think that our administration has a lot of integrity. . . . I think Abby is

competent, but she's open to look at those issues that need to be looked at." Ms.

Cleveland reported Ms. Lincoln as saying, "'You guys can come in and tell me what you

need or want, and where we need to go, and we can either do it or we can't, and that's the

end of it and you're not standing off in a corner as a group, talking about me, and coming

in defensive and upset. . . . ' Yeah, it's definitely Abby, the way she approaches it." Ms. Monroe affirmed that Ms. Lincoln's approach by saying, ". . . it's more of a caring, hovering 'Do this; I appreciate your ideas;' it's more of a shared process. . ." Ms. Taft stated, "Our principal makes it easier. Whatever kind of leadership you have, they can be power-hungry and they make the decisions themselves; the thing that makes change successful is your leadership. . . . So, she has really hired a lot of really neat people." The secretary, Ms. Buchanan, reported that she felt as if her suggestions were heeded. She said, "I'm one of those who will say, 'Abby, this needs to be looked into' - and she usually does. . . . Abby makes it so easy. But, you know, others just kind of look at you - she gives you the time of day." Ms. Johnson spoke of the merits of Ms. Lincoln providing the necessary resources:

> There are things about getting funds for the pods for the teachers, knowing that they have to have a private place to talk. That is something that I'm sure costs money but I think it's essential. And to give teachers as many tools as you can to be professional and do their job; and to me that's not a small thing. . . that to me is just so important, and things like that take an effort to happen, and I think teachers appreciate those little things like that. . . .

Ms. Lincoln emphasized, "I'm not going to do this - I can't do it myself. It wouldn't work. . . . Because, you know, one person's not going to drive the boat - they do." Ms Lincoln demonstrated her receptivity to changes of innovations when, during the faculty meeting, discussion ensued regarding the amount of copy paper retained by the office; she immediately altered her original proposal when several teachers voiced a concern.

In summary, SEDL (1995) lists 33 suggestions for intervention at various stages of concern. An analysis of the data collected at Apple Valley revealed evidence of implementation of 24 of these strategies. Thus, approximately 73% of the total strategies were observed to be used by the principal in facilitating the change process.

<div align="center">Analysis of Reflective Practice</div>

Schön (1987) refers to reflective practice as a "socially and institutionally structured context shared by a community of practitioners" (p. 32). He calls this "a world with its own culture, including its own language, norms, and rituals" (p. 170). Within this culture, practitioners formulate opportunities for practice, clearly develop directions and action goals, and define acceptable professional conduct. Within the context of the culture at Apple Valley Elementary, a number of examples of these types of behaviors were found. Throughout the course of the case study, it became clear that a focus on the students was the predominant driving force behind the work of the faculty and staff. Ms. Johnson noted that ". . . first of all the children come first. . . . I think above all, we have our eyes on the kids. And I think we have that common goal." Ms. Cleveland spoke of how Ms. Lincoln facilitated the move of the MR program to Apple Valley, allowing the special education teachers to go about "sharing the information that we had that we feel is important for our programs and our kids." Ms. Kennedy referenced Ms. Lincoln's ability to ". . . make it a comfortable setting for everyone. Not just for the faculty, but for the kids, too. And I think that's real important." Ms. Monroe mentioned Ms. Lincoln's quality of keeping in touch with the students by being in the classrooms: "If anything, it will spark the interest that she has in children to know more - and she does that." When Ms. Hamilton was asked what kind of changes she had seen Ms. Lincoln make, she

replied, ". . . I think a lot in the way the teachers interact with the children. . ." Mr. Washington commented that . . . "our primary function is for the kids - to have a good, safe learning environment for them." Ms. Lincoln referred to the faculty's ability to maintain a positive attitude: "That they're [students] cared about, that the teachers care about what happens to them, and I think our teachers - express that in their teaching. To those kids."

The opportunity to make sense of practice situations was referenced by Ms. Lincoln when she noted that teachers began to utilize methods in their classrooms that simulated the procedures implemented for state-mandated testing. She reported how they began to practice test-taking scenarios as early as January when the tests were not conducted until April. Since low test scores had been a problem area in the past, teachers were encouraged to practice such situations as placing the students' desks in rows instead of groups, and to help the students become comfortable with not being able to ask questions during practice test sessions. This exemplifies Schön's (1987) "constructionist" view of education, or formulating new ways to approach unique situations (p. 36).

Ms. Lincoln also mentioned how she and the faculty formulated goals and directions for action. She noted, "We really talked about it. And looked at what we were doing, and what we thought we could do, and got input, and we sat down as a team and did it." She also discussed how she asked the teachers to help her shape these goals: "What do you see that we're doing that's right? What do you see that we need to improve on? What are your concerns?" Ms. Lincoln acknowledged that everyone at Apple Valley spent "a lot of time . . . just talking about things that we need to do - or how

we can improve this - or have we thought about this. . ." Ms. Johnson reinforced this by

saying, "I think with the teachers, I think we have a lot of input in terms of change, and

potential changes." Ms. Taft cited a particular instance in relation to the low test scores

and the need for change: "She even gave us a day off to go someplace else to decide

what we were gonna do for our school - how to help the school and bring up our scores,

and our committee outlined some things that we thought that our school could do. And

we've done quite a few of them."

It was apparent that Ms. Lincoln had outlined expectations for what was to

constitute professional conduct. She noted several times throughout interview sessions

and in casual conversations that she did expected faculty members to speak positively

about one another and to communicate in a professional manner. She stated, "I talk about

it with any interviews I do - that this faculty doesn't have a lot of nit-picking going on . . .

That is the death of a school . . . When you get that mind set going in a school, where

they're against each other, you're just in for a terrible time." She also referenced the

faculty's willing attitude: "They're pretty innovative, and willing - to do a lot of things.

I don't know that it's so much their age with them this young or it's just their

personalities. I think they'll be that way after they've been teaching 20 years." Ms.

Johnson supported this belief when she stated, "I think that we live by example, we don't

talk down to another teacher about another teacher, and I know that Abby doesn't do that.

And I think the teachers are very professional. Whatever happens, we deal with it before

it becomes a problem." Ms. Cleveland also summarized these same qualities of the

faculty: ". . . everybody's so open. There's no one that is talking bad about everybody

else, there's not one that is trying to look better than the next person, everybody is willing to work and they want to do good - they want to do what they're doing."

Schön (1987) discusses how a coach must "particularize" her demonstrations and descriptions, fitting each circumstance to the student's individual concerns or situations (p. 163). In explaining the dialogue between coach and student, Schön reports that the coach must communicate at times by showing, and at other times by telling. In telling, the coach may mention new aspects of the situation, give concrete instructions, or make a judgment about the student's readiness to hear specific information based on her "reading" of a particular student. Showing most often involves the art of demonstration.

These "particularized" aspects of reflective practice were observed to be in place at Apple Valley Elementary. Ms. Johnson acknowledged that "only Abby knows what she is hearing from this person and that person, and it's a balancing act." She recalled a particular incident where a teacher had just had a baby with a disability, and Ms. Lincoln reportedly went to the teacher and said, "You shouldn't be here." She cited another instance where Ms. Lincoln said to a teacher, "You need to lighten up on this child. He needs to play more." She summarized by stating, "You really have to have a model." Ms. Cleveland reported that Ms. Lincoln is "willing to listen and has good ideas of sharing of where to go and make it work and get it taken care of . . . If you have a problem you can go talk to her and she will give you some suggestions or pull the person in to talk about the problems or suggestions. . . " Ms. Kennedy said, "I appreciate the fact that she continues to be a teacher. She doesn't put herself above us, but she continues to be one of us and I think that's how she communicates with us." Ms. Monroe, in discussing Ms. Lincoln's manner of instruction and administration,

mentioned that Ms. Lincoln utilized "different skills to match the teacher's personality."

Ms. Hamilton mentioned that Ms. Lincoln "was in the classroom yesterday, teaching, and

she makes it so easy."

Summary

In analyzing the data presented in Chapter III, it was found that a majority of the

respondents viewed the change process as a team effort, with the principal as a facilitator

of dialogue and teachers as communicative participants. Faculty generally perceived the

principal to be an effective communicator who showed care and concern for teachers as

individuals while fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and positive support for

colleagues. These perceptions were supported by observations of the principal's actions

and interview responses regarding her own beliefs and practices on a day-to-day basis.

Using SEDL's (1995) context frame, Hall and Hord's (1987) Stages of Concern,

and Schön's (1987) model of reflective practice as the lenses of analysis, the original

research propositions were examined. Every respondent viewed the principal as the

central figure in the change process, and school culture was paramount in the shaping of

contextual factors for successful change. Within the data types collected, at least one

instance of every dimension of SEDL's (1995) Functions of Context were found to be

present. Regarding the principal's attention to individual needs, a majority of

respondents mentioned this factor as a trait exemplified by their principal. This belief

was supported by the finding that 73% of the total strategies for individual intervention of

Hall and Hord's (1987) Stages of Concern (SEDL, 1995) were utilized. Data analysis

revealed that techniques generally outlined in Schön's (1987) model of reflective practice

were used by the principal as well. No evidence existed to suggest that individual

interventions were exclusively implemented prior to addressing the needs of the group as a whole.

Given the data, four distinct findings emerged:

- The principal was recognized as the key change agent by all involved in the change process;

- The principal purposively did create a context for change;

- Although no one change was identified by all respondents and the principal did not acknowledge a specific awareness of varying levels of individual teacher concern, there was evidence of implementation of suggested interventions for all stages of concern; and

- In dealing with individuals, the characteristics of reflective practice were less predominant than was the practice of interacting with teachers at various stages of concern.

Chapter V presents a summary of the findings and conclusions. Recommendations for further research and implications for practice are also included in the final chapter, with a closing commentary regarding the outcomes of this case study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

AND IMPLICATIONS, AND COMMENTARY

This chapter contains a summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations and

implications derived from the data collected in this case study. Finally, a commentary

includes personal reflections regarding my research experiences.

Summary

The purpose of this explanatory case study was to investigate faculty and staff

perspectives of how a principal approaches the change process. Specifically, the study

examined the ways in which the principal considers the individual needs of faculty

members when promoting a particular change. This purpose was accomplished by:

- Data collection from a selected elementary public school site using the

  sources of documentation, archival records, focused interviews, direct

  observations, and artifacts.

- Data presentation into (1) processes and (2) perceptions.

- Data analysis: (1) the role of the principal in the change process, (2)

  contextual factors, including cultural aspects (SEDL, 1995), (3) use of

  Hall and Hord's (1987) Stages of Concern, and (4) Schön's (1987) model

  of reflective practice as lenses of analysis.

Data Needs

Data from a school where the principal was recognized as a successful change facilitator were needed to achieve the purpose of this study. I needed to interview the school principal, teachers and staff members to determine the attention given to individuals during the change process. I also needed to observe the school's cultural aspects (beliefs, attitudes, and norms) to determine if culture was a key consideration regarding changes being implemented within this site.

Data Sources

Data sources within this single school site consisted of extended interviews and observations of the school principal and overall observations of the school setting. Focused interviews of teachers and support personnel and review of documentation, archival records, and physical artifacts also served as sources of data. All of the participants were willing to participate in the study; most respondents could be described as eager participants in the interview process.

Data Collection

Data collected for this case study was derived from five areas of categorization, according to Yin (1989). These five sources of evidence were: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, and physical artifacts. Observations of the school setting were summarized in hand-written fieldnotes as recommended by Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995). Associated records and artifacts were examined to gain a perspective of the school's organizational structure and cultural history. Focused interviews were conducted using a flexible interview guide (Crabtree & Miller, 1992). Interview questions focused on approaches to the change process within this school site.

All interviews were conducted during the school day, on school premises, at a location of the participant's choosing.

Data Presentation

Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously as emergent themes were noted throughout the study (Erlandson et al., 1993). Using the process of coding and categorizing emergent themes from interviews, observations, and document reviews, the data sets emerged into two main categories: processes and perceptions.

Processes. Processes included respondents' summations of how change was executed at the school level. Respondents generally reported change as something that was facilitated by the school principal. These perspectives support the findings of multiple researchers who note that the principal is the key to promoting successful change in schools (Barth, 1990; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Boyer, 1983; Fullan, 1991; Louis & Miles, 1990; Sarason, 1996). Both certified and support staff concluded that first there must be a need for change to occur. This is congruent with the SEDL model for successful change (1995), in creating a context for change by promoting a norm of continuous improvement.

Teachers agreed that the principal was aware of the need for them to have ownership in the change process. First, teachers reported that the principal informed the faculty of any proposed changes and recommended procedures for change. Next, teachers noted that the principal solicited input on how the change should actually take place. This was done on both an individual and a group level, with the general consensus that the principal was open to suggestions. Lastly, change was seen as a shared process

that involved everyone within the school. These findings also were supported in the literature (Glickman, 1993; Hannay & Ross, 1997; Meier, 1995; Smith, 1999).

Perceptions. Perceptions were respondents' thoughts about the role of individuals in the change process. Such perceptions included the participants' beliefs about the role the principal played in the change process as well. Also included in this area were respondents' opinions about why change was successful at their school.

In the area of Role of the Individual, participants tended to frame their responses in terms of their relationship to the principal. Teachers viewed their roles as those of clarifier, helper, and suggestion-maker. Teachers saw that it was necessary for them to assist in informing and teaching others about the changes, but that the principal played the key role. These norms of shared problem-solving, collegiality, critical thinking and recognizing the support and skills of teachers as key players are supported in the findings of Barth (1990), Bruner (1996), Glickman (1993), Lambert (1998) and Tyack and Cuban (1995).

Regarding the Role of the Principal, participants cited many characteristics. The key components included gaining input (listening), informing teachers of relevant information, communicating high expectations, and giving positive feedback. Such characteristics are noted in the literature (Leithwood et al., 1998; Smith, 1999; Wagner, 1998). Also mentioned was a focus on the students, a great sense of humor (fun-loving), and caring about others. These characteristics are also cited in the literature as key components (Bruner, 1996; Leiberman & Miller, 2000; Sagor, 1997; Sergiovanni, 1995; SEDL, 1995). The principal at this case study site also was seen as a person who communicated with the teachers on their level, treating them as equals to herself and

identifying with the daily needs of the teachers. These traits support findings by a number of researchers (Glickman, 1993; Hoy & Miskel, 1991; Rinehart et al., 1998; Siskin, 1997).

The principal herself reiterated many of these same characteristics, making particular mention of the need to promote teamwork and shared responsibility. The literature supports these areas of attention (McQuillan, 1997; SEDL, 1995). At the same time, she made numerous references to the individual circumstances and personality characteristics of faculty members. Her office area was arranged in a manner that promoted regular opportunities for interaction with teachers and other staff members. All of these considerations involving relationships are discussed in the research of Barth (1990), Farson (1996), and Kouzes and Posner (1993).

In the area of Factors Attributed to Successful Change, all eight faculty and staff respondents directly attributed the success of the changes implemented at this site to the present principal. Many of the participants' specific responses overlapped with the comments they made regarding the role of the principal as described previously in this section. Of particular note were the majority perceptions that the principal encouraged others and promoted a positive, open environment. Participants also frequently mentioned that there was a primary focus on the students. These perceptions largely deal with culture and are supported by the works of Bruner (1996), Duke (1998), Sagor (1997) and SEDL (1995).

Analysis

The role of the principal in the change process was analyzed by comparing the principal's actual comments and observed behaviors to respondents' perceptions of what

the principal did to facilitate change initiatives. Data also were examined to analyze

contextual factors for change (SEDL, 1995). Finally, data were compared to Hall and

Hord's (1987) Stages of Concern and to Schön's (1987) model of reflective practice.

<u>Findings</u>

Given the data, four findings emerged:

- The principal was recognized as the key change agent by all involved in

  the change process;

- The principal purposively did create a context for change;

- Although no one change was identified by all respondents and the

  principal did not acknowledge a specific awareness of varying levels of

  individual teacher concern, there was evidence of implementation of

  suggested interventions for all stages of concern; and

- In dealing with individuals, the characteristics of reflective practice were

  less predominant than was the practice of interacting with teachers at

  various stages of concern.

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

This study was guided by three main research questions. Based on the findings,

the answers to the research questions serve as the framework for the conclusions that

follow.

<u>How does the principal create a context</u>

<u>for change? Is school culture openly</u>

<u>acknowledged as an integral consideration?</u>

Given the findings of this case study, it could be concluded that creating a context

for change is a critical factor in successfully navigating the change process. Goal-setting gives focus to the need for change, provides the principal with vehicles for establishing norms for collaboration, and establishes the basis for measuring success. The principal can create a context for change by using the underlying cultural beliefs, attitudes and norms of the school to support the need for change. To do so, the principal must model his/her expectations through frequent and open communication and information-sharing, while frequently conveying expectations of mutual respect and collaboration for all involved. Within the context of this particular case study, the principal took a proactive stance in promoting positive attitudes and the notion that everyone should support everyone else within the school setting. She openly addressed conflict and used such events as an opportunity to resolve differences and promote unity.

School culture was openly acknowledged as a critical factor in the change process. Beliefs, attitudes and norms surfaced as "common threads" voiced by participants: "We are a team;" "Teachers are professionals;" "We care about one another;" and "We focus on the students." The climate was one of open communication and respect for one another, yet many respondents emphasized the need to have fun as well as to focus on continuous improvement.

In what ways does the principal address

individuals before considering the system

as a whole?

Based on the results of this case study, it could be concluded that there is no distinct sequence for addressing the needs of individuals or the group when managing change. Rather, the needs of both individuals and the school as a whole should be

considered at all times throughout the change process. There are multiple factors to consider in rising to the challenge of adequately attending to both the individual and group dimensions. As a leader, one must simultaneously promote teamwork and collaboration, communicate information to all involved, convey an attitude of caring and concern, provide encouragement, maintain the ability to be flexible and open to suggestions, treat teachers as professionals, and continue to focus on the students. Within this case study, the principal stressed teamwork and collaboration from the very beginning, to avoid divisiveness, but addressed individual dimensions of need at the same time. The principal demonstrated a capability to merge the personal and professional, yet she could also distinguish between the two in deference to teachers' individual needs. She strove to be accessible to the teachers, and was observed to confer with specific teachers or groups if needs or concerns were evident. It is significant to note that all of these factors may be conveyed in both individual and group contexts.

<u>What other realities, if any, are</u>

<u>revealed by this study?</u>

It may be concluded that the although the frameworks of SEDL (1995), Hall and Hord (1987), and Schön (1987) are valuable in providing guidance to leaders in promoting successful change, they present only a partial picture of what is necessary. Within the context of this school site, focusing on this school principal, there is an ethos that these frameworks did not reveal. The principal's sense of justice and equity and her ways of caring for teachers and students are evident throughout the course of this case study. Yet, the selected frameworks led me away from focusing on this principal as an individual.

It was observed that, within the context of this individual case study, the principal established a common identity with the teachers. She conveyed the message that "I am also a teacher; I understand the daily challenges you face, and I will give you the tools to make your job easier." Sarason (1996) notes that "The experience of first being a teacher in no way truly prepares one to deal with the multiplicity of issues and human dynamics encountered in the principalship" (p. 143). A true conclusion, perhaps, yet a number of teachers in this case study mentioned this as being an important trait in the principal, in that she had not forgotten what it was like to be a teacher.

In addition, the principal in this case study displayed a strong sense of humor and was described as being fun-loving by several respondents. Barth (1990) concluded that

> Humor is sorely lacking in this profession, in textbooks and educational writing, in research, in state departments, in universities - and in schools. Yet, humor, like risk taking and diversity, is highly related to learning and development of intelligence, not to mention quality of life. And humor can be a glue that binds an assorted group of individuals into a community. People learn and grow and survive through humor. We should make an effort to elicit and cultivate it, rather than ignore, thwart, or merely tolerate it. (p. 170)

The conclusion is possible that humor plays a larger role in the development of culture and community with regard to the change process than has been emphasized to date in the available literature.

The Concerns-Based Adoption Model assumes that interventions must be related to the people first and to the innovation second (SEDL, 1995). It can be concluded from this study that such may not always be the case. Although no one particular change was

identified by all participants, the majority of respondents cited the need to improve test scores as the greatest need for change within their school. This need for change was initially voiced by parents and district administrators. The focus of change may be dependent upon the origin of the recommendation for change itself, whether internally developed or externally imposed.

<div align="center">Recommendations and Implications</div>

According to Hoy and Miskel (1991), research must meet three criteria in order to be significant: (1) clarify or add to existing theory; (2) add to the knowledge base; and (3) have an impact on practice. The ways in which this explanatory case study satisfied each of these criteria are outlined in this section.

<u>Theory</u>

This explanatory case study explored the ways in which an elementary principal addressed individual teacher needs when implementing change, using the SEDL framework of managing change (1995), Hall and Hord's Stages of Concern (1987), and the basic premises of reflective practice (Schön, 1987).

Lotto (1981) discusses the merits of using alternative lenses of analysis in organizational studies:

> The unit (or level) of analysis chosen by the inquirer is the frame used to order and understand the data. A narrow, highly focused frame enlarges detail; a broad, diffuse frame highlights patterns and relationships not visible with a smaller frame. By concentrating on the order revealed by a single frame of reference, organizational researchers have systematically excluded frames now shown to be useful in comprehending organizations. (p. 23)

Lotto also addresses the limitations of reliance on a narrow focus of data from a single source:

> Our picture of an organization will vary with the source of data used to study it.
> Secondary source data yield a different image of the organization than primary
> data. Looking at what people do is quite different from asking them what they do
> or what they think others do. The picture surely varies depending upon the
> hierarchical level tapped within the organization: a parent's perception of a
> school seldom matches that of an individual teacher, or the principal, or a
> custodian. (p. 23)

This study has built on existing theory by combining multiple frames of reference and reliance on a wide variety of data sources, including primary and secondary sources, from individuals at all levels of employment within the school. In addition, the explanatory nature of this case study and subsequent data analysis eliminated the possibility that a priori assumptions would limit the scope of findings. The conclusions drawn from this case study added to the existing knowledge base by outlining the specific strategies used in promoting effective change at both the individual and group level within a school setting. Delineation of such strategies is helpful in designing effective professional development, both at the preservice and inservice levels for teachers and administrators alike.

The next study addressing the question of how principals manage the change process might examine principals who specifically promote reflective practice with teachers. How does this happen, especially since the structure of the typical school day does not encourage teachers to be reflective individually or with other professionals

(Marsh, 1999)? Does such practice result in improved interactions with students, and successful change at the classroom level? G. Caine (personal communication, January 27, 2000) agreed that there needs to be more time spent with teachers and that the principal as leader is the key to teachers' comfort level in implementing real change in the classroom. He also stated that you must nurture community at the same time you nurture the individual through the change process. Additional research in this area might address the specific theory-practice links that are needed to assist principals in promoting reflective practice while simultaneously addressing the needs of both individual and group participants.

Research

A review of the literature has revealed that few case studies have focused specifically on the individual as the unit of analysis with regard to successful implementation of the change process (Bakkenes, de Brabander & Imants, 1999; Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt, 1998). Models for change that include individual considerations have not examined the issue extensively within a real-life context. Fullan (1998) has also voiced the need for case studies to examine contextually how change occurs. This explanatory case study has added to the knowledge base by exploring an actual setting where successful change has been implemented. Although no specific change was identified by all participants, analysis of the data revealed that a majority of the respondents identified the same characteristics of the principal as reasons that effective change was possible at this selected school site. Even though participants were not asked to identify a single change initiative and it was obvious that different respondents had different changes in mind, a sufficient level of informational redundancy

was reached in a relatively short period of time at the case study site. Additional prolonged visitations to the school site served to further affirm the beliefs that the principal was the key change agent and that she employed certain identified strategies both at the individual and group level in order to promote successful change.

Lotto (1981) extols the merits of the case study process:

Ethnomethodology is the study of the methods of people and should not be confused with the techniques of ethnography. . . Because the ethnomethodologist believes in a consensual basis for knowledge, statistical analysis and comparative studies are less appropriate to the interpretive tasks of inquiry. Instead, in-depth case studies and personal reporting are the preferred modes of inquiry and analysis. The meaning of any given data set is ultimately determined through the interaction of the inquirer and the subject. (p. 24)

Barth (1990) also recognizes the value of working within a single-site case study construct:

Research frequently provides a broad view, badly needed in schools. Yet, the data base is, in many respects, thin. Researchers pay brief visits to many schools, asking few questions of a large sample, frequently with all the effect of a tea bag swished through a bathtub. The visions of schoolpeople, by contrast, stem from many years' experience in perhaps only one or two school settings. I agree with the researcher who said, 'Believable answers to important questions can be generated with N=1.' I find that virtually everyone who works in a school 190 days a year for several years develops extraordinary practical knowledge about such matters as the curriculum, child development, discipline, leadership,

desegregation, and parent involvement. And these rich insights, hammered out of

years of practice, give richness and credibility to visions schoolpeople hold about

good education. Strong tea indeed. (p. 150)

Therefore, further research in this area should take an in-depth case study approach to

examine these same phenomena within the context of schools with a differing

organizational structure, such as those at the secondary level, magnet schools, or charter

schools. Since the focus of this particular case study involved a principal in the second

year of her initial principalship, further studies might explore if similar strategies are

implemented by principals who have held similar positions at more than one school site

throughout their educational careers. Other variations in examining similar research

questions might be explored in sites where the researcher focuses on a specific change as

the common denominator among respondents. Comparative case studies might focus on

schools implementing an internally-developed innovation, while another study may

examine the characteristics of mandated change where the impetus is externally imposed.

Practice

Given the data from the respondents in this study, the actions of the principal are

critical to recognizing successful change within the school setting. Attention must be

given to certain aspects of individual and group needs in order to successfully maneuver

the course of change. These conclusions hold powerful implications of practice for

developers of leadership preparation programs as well as for school administrators

already in the field.

Hoy and Miskel (1991) posit that theory is refined through research, and when

applied to individual action, it becomes practice. However, Sprague (1992) calls for a

more direct linkage between theorists and practitioners:

> Work that is too densely theoretical and too laden with the voices of university-
> level intellectuals does not capture the lived experience of teachers. The
> ethnographic studies and extended observational studies already cited go a long
> way toward honoring the daily experiences of teachers. Recently, scholars have
> been experimenting with forms of gathering and reporting data that are genuinely
> collaborative . . . These new trends in educational research amount to nothing less
> than a radical rethinking of the relationship between theory and practice. (p. 202)

Additionally, Barth (1990) addresses the value of combining research methods with
actual practice in the field:

> Not one but two tributaries flow into the knowledge base for improving schools:
> the social science research literature from the academic community and the craft
> knowledge and vision from the school community. The former is often a mile
> wide but only an inch deep; the latter is often only an inch wide but a mile deep.
> Together, they offer remarkable depth and breadth and a fertile meeting place for
> considering school improvement. (p. 177)

Additional studies in this area might attempt to more directly link the basic
premises of leadership and change theory with actual practice in the area of school
leadership characteristics that support effective implementation of change. Currently, the
best research and case studies of effective practice are not widely known by practitioners.
Fullan (1991) also states that the crucial nature of gathering data should focus on
effective ways of getting information on how well or how poorly change is progressing in
the school or the classroom. Implementation of integrated research/practice models

would serve the dual benefit of providing researchers with more substantive data as well as providing rich information to practitioners regarding the process of effective leadership and successful implementation of change.

These conclusions suggest that school administrators should carefully consider both individual and group needs of faculty members when promoting a particular change. All who are affected by the change process must be aware of the need for change and remain informed and involved as shared participants. Cultural factors such as shared beliefs, attitudes and norms should be openly acknowledged as integral to the change process.

<p align="center">Commentary</p>

When I first began my doctoral studies, I was the assistant principal at an elementary school in a suburban setting. Nearly five years later, as I complete this endeavor, I am the assistant superintendent of an urban school district. In the time that has ensued between these career changes, I have also served as an elementary principal of a new school and subsequently as a director of special services in a different district. Each of these new job opportunities has brought with it an ever-evolving perspective on the change process. However, I still hold firm to the basic tenets of my personal theory of practice. Now, more than ever, I believe that communication is the key to facilitating effective change as an administrator. I have had the opportunity to witness firsthand the virtual havoc than can result from ineffective communication. Similarly, I have observed the renewed energy within a school that comes from the belief in a positive, open climate fostered by a community of learners. After completing this study, I now believe that a

focus on group and individual concerns must be simultaneous and interwoven for successful change to be fully implemented.

As I reflect on my experiences lived within the context of this case study at a particular school site, I marvel at the ways in which the principal and the faculty openly welcomed me and afforded me generous access to the day-to-day happenings of their world. Could this spirit of open, communicative trust be the very reason that change in this school is embraced and successfully managed as well?

From another perspective, one could question whether change truly has occurred at this site. Has the new principal really changed things very much? Apple Valley is still operating under the same basic "grammar of schooling" that permeates most other typical elementary schools in middle-class, midwestern America. Yet, within their own perception that they have changed in some significant ways, there has been an indisputable jump in student achievement. Perhaps the self-fulfilling prophecy rings true in the high expectations that were communicated to Apple Valley teachers and students alike.

Peer debriefing provided another method for reflection, interpretation and verification of the data collected in this case study. With peer reviewers, I was able to openly voice my own reservations and confusions as well as benefit from their multiple perspectives. It was brought to my attention that valuable insights from the principal in this case study could be gained regarding desirable leadership qualities. Upon further introspection, I have concluded that what might be labeled as effective leadership may truly be the ability to foster trusting alliances and marshal the best qualities of each individual in order to benefit the community as a whole.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Date: October 29, 1999   IRB #:   ED-00-167

Proposal Title: "THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AS CHANGE AGENT: AN EXPLANATORY
                  STUDY"

Principal   Adrienne Hyle
Investigator(s): Lisa McLaughlin

Reviewed and
Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s):   Approved

Signature:

Carol Olson, Director of University Research Compliance   October 29, 1999

Carol Olson, Director of University Research Compliance   Date

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any
modification to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval with the advisor's signature.
The IRB office MUST be notified in writing when a project is complete. Approved projects are subject to monitoring
by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.

APPENDIX B

ORAL SOLICITATION

Oral Solicitation

My name is Lisa McLaughlin and I am a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University. I am writing a dissertation investigating how principals approach the change process. This research will present a holistic picture of the contextual nature of successful change.

I need your help to document how this process is perceived. I want to be as accurate as possible and include as many viewpoints as possible.

Each participant will be asked to engage in an interview session, an observation, or both. All interviews will be tape recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. All audiotapes will be destroyed after transcription. Notes taken following observation periods will be coded, analyzed, and subsequently destroyed. Pseudonyms will be used after transcription as well. I, as researcher, will have the only copy of the real names with the pseudonyms; this master copy also will be destroyed following completion of the research project. Your identity will be protected with complete anonymity. You do not have to respond to any question that you choose not to answer. You may also stop the interview/observation session at any time.

I am available to meet with you before school, after school, during school hours, and on weekends. Please provide me with a time and date that is most convenient for you. My contact information will be given to you in writing, to include my work phone, home phone, and address. Feel free to contact me for any additional information. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM

Consent Form
"The School Principal as Change Agent:
An Explanatory Case Study"

General Information

You have been asked by a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University working on a research project (dissertation) to be interviewed and/or observed about your position as an elementary administrator or teacher and how the change process has affected you and your school.

The interview and/or observation serves two purposes: (1) information collected in the interview and/or observation will be used by the researcher to prepare a scholarly paper (dissertation) about how school leaders approach the change process, and (2) information collected by the doctoral student may be used in scholarly publications of the student and/or the project director (dissertation advisor).

The interview should last from one-half to two hours and will be tape-recorded. The questions asked will be developed by the doctoral student. All participants will be asked the same general questions. Prior to the interview, participants will be asked to complete a brief biographical questionnaire to provide data on educational training and experience. The researcher will type transcripts of the interview for analysis. The project director (dissertation advisor) may review these transcripts. All tapes and transcripts are treated as confidential materials. These tapes and transcripts will be kept under lock and key for a period of three years and then destroyed. Only the project director (dissertation advisor) and researcher will have access to these tape recordings and transcripts during this three year period.

The observations will be conducted during scheduled faculty or grade-level committee meetings. Notes will be taken by the researcher. The project director may also review these notes. All notes are treated as confidential materials. Only the project director (dissertation advisor) and researcher will have access to these notes during the three years they are maintained under lock and key, after which time they will be destroyed.

Pseudonyms will be assigned for each person interviewed and/or observed. These pseudonyms will be used in all discussions and in all written materials dealing with interviews and observations. Lastly, no interview or observation will be accepted or used by the researcher unless this consent form has been signed by all parties. The form will be filed and retained for at least two years by the project director (dissertation advisor).

The concept of educational change is a popular, yet complex phenomenon in today's public schools. Research in this area could provide valuable information for principal preparation programs as well as for teachers and administrators already in the field.

Understanding

Although no questions of a personal or intrusive nature are intended, some questions may cause discomfort. I understand that participation in this interview and/or observation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty after notifying the project director (dissertation advisor).

I understand that the interview and/or observation will be conducted according to commonly accepted research procedures and that information taken from the interview will be recorded in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

I understand the interview and/or observation will not cover topics that could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subject's financial standing or employability or deal with sensitive aspects of the subject's own behavior such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior or use of alcohol.

I may contact the project director (dissertation advisor) advisor, Dr. Adrienne Hyle, at (405) 744-9893 or the researcher, Lisa McLaughlin, at (405) 745-6300. I may also contact Sharon Bacher, IRB Executive Secretary, 203 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078; telephone number (405) 744-5700.

I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

DATE: _____ TIME: _____A.M./P.M.

SIGNED: _____
(Signature of Subject)

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the subject before requesting the subject to sign it and provided the subject with a copy of this form.

DATE: _____ TIME: _____A.M./P.M.

SIGNED: _____
(Signature of Researcher)

FILED:

INITIALS OF DISSERTATION ADVISOR _____ DATE: _____

APPENDIX D

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Demographic Data

Name _____ **Date** _____

Age _____ **Race** _____ **Gender** _____

Educational Background:

School/College/University	Location	Degree/Area	Dates
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Educational Employment History: (List Present Employer First)

Title/Position	Location (site & district)	Dates
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

1. How does change get done here?

2. What part do you play in change?

3. Why is change successful?

VITA

Lisa Marie McLaughlin

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AS CHANGE AGENT: AN EXPLANATORY
CASE STUDY

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Sioux City, Iowa.

Education: Graduated from Bishop Heelan High School, Sioux City, Iowa;
received Bachelor of Science degree in Education with a major in Special
Education from the University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, Oklahoma, in
December, 1978; received Masters of Education degree with a major in
Reading from the University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, Oklahoma, in
May, 1982; completed the requirements for Elementary School Principal and
School Superintendent from Oklahoma State University in May, 1996;
completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma
State University in July, 2000.

Experience: Taught Special Education, Learning Disabilities and Visually
Impaired in Putnam City Schools in Oklahoma City; practiced as a
Developmental Therapist for Children's Hospital of Oklahoma in Oklahoma
City; practiced as a self-employed Educational Consultant in Oklahoma City;
served as a Regional Program Specialist, the Special Education Data
Consultant, the Technical Assistance Officer, and the Assistant State
Director of Special Services, Oklahoma State Department of Education,
Oklahoma City; practiced as a self-employed Educational Consultant in
Oklahoma City; practiced as an Educational Consultant for the Visually
Impaired for Edmond Public Schools in Edmond, Oklahoma; served as
Director of Federal/Special Programs, Assistant Elementary Principal, and

Elementary Principal at Deer Creek Public Schools in Edmond, Oklahoma; practiced as Director of Special Services at Western Heights Public Schools; currently Assistant Superintendent, Western Heights Public Schools, responsible for Federal Programs and Special Services, Oklahoma City.

Professional Memberships: Advocates and Parents of Oklahoma's Sight Impaired, Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administration, Council for Exceptional Children, Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, Kappa Delta Pi, Oklahoma Association of School Administrators, Oklahoma Council of the Blind, Oklahoma Directors of Special Services, Oklahomans for Special Library Services, Phi Kappa Phi, Prevent Blindness Oklahoma, Prevent Blindness America, University of Central Oklahoma Alumni Association, Western Heights Public School Foundation.