

**THE IMPACT OF SUPERINTENDENT BEHAVIOR ON
SCHOOL CLIMATE IN TWO SCHOOL DISTRICTS
EXPERIENCING A TRANSITION
IN LEADERSHIP**

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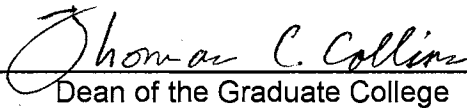
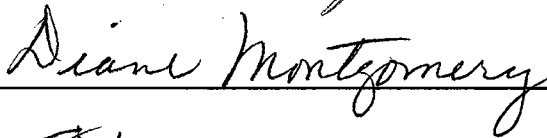
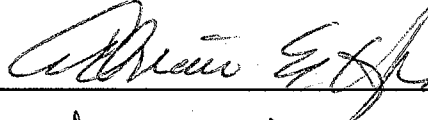
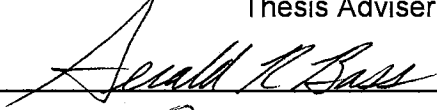
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

We're all concerned about losing so much knowledge and dedication. This is a real changing of the guard.

This observation by the executive director of a midwestern state association of school administrators underscores the thinking of many concerning what is seen as a mass exodus of experienced public school administrators. Predictions indicate that at least 75% of all superintendents in the United States will be eligible to retire by 1994, and more than 50% of these superintendents plan to retire during this decade (Glass, 1992; Kinnert & Augenstein, 1990). Richard D. Miller (1992), Executive Director of the American Association of School Administrators, postulated that ". . . this fact alone will mean a loss of talent and years of experience" (p. vii).

During the past year there were numerous superintendents in this state who left their positions. Of particular note was the retirement of those in several of the state's largest school districts. In these districts, the retiring superintendents had tenure in the position of superintendent ranging from 9 to 17 years. It is no wonder there is concern that such loss of administrative knowledge will be difficult, if not impossible, to replace.

The perceptions of those affected by the "changing of the guard" in these respective school districts becomes important. In issues of succession, there is tension between continuity and change, resulting in the management of these two forces becoming a major task for the new leadership (Vancil, 1987). Since some degree of conflict is reflected in any complex organization, the incoming school leaders' preparedness to deal with the human factor becomes vital (Pellicer, 1992). Miklos

(1988) alluded to the underlying assumption that the change in school leaders is of critical impact to the organization. However, Gupta (1987), in her review of research concerning succession, found conflicting views as to the impact of leaders on organizations. In these school districts, as in other organizations, the impact of the change in leadership may not be similarly experienced by all individuals.

Sergiovanni and Starrat (1988) noted that although superintendents are viewed as major figures in school districts, actually very little is known about them. They further stated that what is known is largely a result of survey information, and there is a need for descriptive studies of various facets of the superintendency. Miller (1992) noted the contemporary superintendency has not been studied in depth and that research concerning the superintendency is sparse. This study can add insight concerning the importance of newly appointed superintendents' knowledge and philosophies by affording a candid portrayal of two school districts which are undergoing a transition in leadership. It can expand upon and further clarify the literature on administrator succession and its relationship to school climate. The methodology used in this study was chosen to provide a holistic view of what these men do and the evolution of the responses, reactions to, and perceptions of those with whom they interact in the school community.

Statement of the Problem

Projections from the American Association of School Administrators indicated that during the 1990's there will continue to be numerous changes in school district leadership. It is undetermined how, or if, these position changes will affect the individual overall districts. There is a need to investigate districts with newly-appointed superintendents to determine what effects, if any, the change of leadership has on the school district climate and to identify those principles that are perceived as more successful for the district. The resulting insights will have value to aspiring superintendents

in terms of how particular actions are perceived, which strategies seem to be most successful for the district, and specific practices that one might avoid.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to describe the impact, if any, of the newly appointed superintendents on school climate in two school districts which are experiencing a transition in leadership and to compare and contrast their actions, strategies and practices.

Research Questions

The specific research questions to be addressed in this study were the following:

1. What are the patterns of behavior that characterize the climate of each school district?
2. What is the general attitude of teachers, administrators, and parents toward the district? Why?
3. What is the general attitude of teachers, administrators, and parents toward the superintendent? Why?
4. What are the perceived linkages between the superintendent and district climate?

Operational Definitions

The following are operational definitions used in this study:

1. School climate: Lindelow and Mazarella (1989) suggested that school climate is the "feel" an individual gets from his or her experiences within a school's social system. By expanding Anderson's (1982) school climate model to encompass the dimensions of culture, milieu, ecology and social system, the basis for a school climate

definition is determined. School climate relates to the “feel” an individual gets from his or her experiences within the school district, encompassing the dimensions of ecology, milieu, social system, and culture.

2. Ecology dimension: Relates to physical and material aspects external to participants in a school district setting.

3. Milieu: Aspects that represent characteristics of individuals in the school district.

4. Social system: Reflects the structures of relationships (patterns of operating and interacting) within the school district setting.

5. Culture: Involves the norms, beliefs systems, values, cognitive structures, and meanings of persons within the school district setting.

Definitions of the following terms are taken from Lincoln and Guba (1985):

6. Naturalistic inquiry: An alternative paradigm for research which assumes there are multiple constructed realities that can be studied only in a holistic manner; that inquiry into these multiple realities will result in divergent information; however, some level of understanding can be achieved.

7. Trustworthiness: The determination that the findings of a naturalistic inquiry are authentic and reliable. The four major elements of trustworthiness are: credibility (truth value); transferability (applicability); dependability (consistency); and confirmability (neutrality).

8. Credibility: The assurance that the findings and interpretations of the inquiry are perceived as accurate by the human subjects of the inquiry.

9. Transferability: A condition that must be assessed in each instance where transfer of findings is proposed. The applicability of a working hypothesis developed in one context to another context is a direct function of the congruence between the two contexts.

10. Dependability: The establishment, through an inquiry audit, that the processes by which the inquiry was conducted are consistent.

11. Confirmability: The assurance, through an inquiry audit, that the products of the inquiry can be traced to their sources and are supported by the inquiry.

12. Thick description: The presentation of an appropriate base of information concerning the context in which the inquiry occurred so that one may make a judgment as to the transferability of the working hypothesis to another context.

13. Triangulation: A technique for enhancing the probability that the findings of the inquiry will be deemed credible by using multiple methods of data collection to validate each unit.

14. Grounded theory: Theory that emerges from data rather than preceding data which seeks to explain a large number of phenomena and how they are related.

Assumption

It is not only that qualitative research uses 'the person' as the research tool, the perceiver, the selector, the interpreter. . .it is also that one's personal style, temperament, and modes of interaction are central ingredients of successful work (Lightfoot, 1983, p. 370).

Limitation

Working hypotheses may be developed which may have transferability to similar contexts as determined by the reader or user of the study (Cronbach, 1975; Merriam, 1988).

Significance of the Study

The world of educational administration has grown exceedingly complex, and efforts to measure administrative "qualities" in quantitative terms can limit the scope of the inquiry to those issues which are more narrowly defined. Qualitative research has

the potential to accurately describe and analyze what is happening in a particular setting and is unsurpassed in research on educational administration for obtaining construct validity (Everhart, 1988). Earlier qualitative studies have focused on superintendent behaviors from a historical viewpoint (Firestone, 1990; Murray, 1991; Wardlow, 1992; Young, 1988). This study adds to the body of knowledge concerning educational administration by providing a qualitative investigation of the impact of newly appointed school superintendents on climate in two stable school districts and the ramifications of the change in leadership through focusing on the first year of superintendent transition. The resulting thick description that developed from this study will help provide insights into contemporary educational administration and may develop working hypotheses concerning this area.

Contents of the Dissertation

This study contains seven chapters. The first contains an introduction, statement of the problem, significance of the study, research questions, operational definitions, assumptions, and limitations. Chapter II contains a review of pertinent literature. Chapter III contains the methodology and procedures. Chapters IV and V contains case study reports of the two school districts being examined. Chapter VI contains an analysis of the course of school climate during one school year in two stable school districts and the ramifications of the change in leadership. Chapter VII contains comments, conclusions, implications, suggestions, and the researcher's critique of the process and outcome of this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review includes current literature relating to school climate, the emerging role of the superintendency, the impact of succession and transition in a superintendency, and the relationship of superintendents' actions to change and climate. Contemporary research offers insights as to the direction for school district leadership.

Emerging Role of the Superintendency

My point is that the superintendency today, if it is to be an effective office, must be conceived of in political terms, if by that we mean the ability of the incumbent to work with a wide array of conflicting forces so as to maintain the delicate balance upon which the vitality of school life depends The perspective of the school superintendency . . . emphasizes the humanity of the position, not its technology (Blumberg & Blumberg, 1985, pp. 30-31).

Blumberg and Blumberg's (1985) assessment of the contemporary role of the superintendency is not a singular view. Kinnert and Augenstein (1990) referred to the highly political role of the superintendency that calls for the school district leader to have excellent communication and negotiation skills. The executive leadership of the American Association of School Administrators speaks to the necessity of inclusive leadership and calls attention to the many contingencies that a superintendent must serve, including: parents and patrons, the board of education, state offices, the community, and employee groups (Glass, 1992). Rist (1992), spoke of the "new breed of activist superintendents" who recognize the fundamental power of their constituents and have the human relations skills necessary to activate this power into support for their schools (p. 31).

Noted contemporary superintendents appear to embrace this responsibility to the many conflicting forces and are recognized for their skills in relating to and interacting with various groups. Peter McWalters, a practicing superintendent in New York state, sees his role as one that empowers his public by placing decision-making authority in the hands of principals, teachers, parents and students (Rist, 1989). In discussing his role as an urban superintendent in Maryland, Hunter (1990) included shared power and decision making as important components. In describing the superintendency of Joe Fernandez in a large and diverse county in Florida, Reecer (1989) spoke to the evolution of shared power and shared decision making. Jorgensen (1992), a superintendent from Alaska posited, "Education is a human-service profession . . . education exists to serve people" (p. 48).

The role of the superintendency is one that is often compared to that of a chief executive officer in the business world. Kanter (1983) argued that successful business organizations are those in which top leadership understands the highly politicized nature of their roles and the need for very different management strategies. Business leaders now serve several constituencies, including their customers, their employees, the community, and the shareholders. These executives are no longer exclusively concerned with the technical matters of management, but emphasize the human element in their organizations, while adeptly handling corporate relations outside their organizations. Kanter (1983) explained this political role: "Management of critical boundary spanning issues is the task of the top: developing strategies, tactics, and structural mechanisms for functioning and triumphing in a turbulent and highly politicized environment" (p. 49).

There are further indications of the changing role of chief executive officers in the business sector. Semler (1989) spoke of his company's success, which is based on major changes in the management system: employee involvement, sharing information, and making all important decisions collegially. Senge (1990) stated that the

traditional view of leaders as those who set direction and make major decisions has been replaced by new roles in what he terms "learning" organizations (p.8). Leaders are seen as designers, teachers, and stewards, with the responsibility of building their organizations through providing opportunities for their people to continually "expand their capabilities" (p. 8). He sees management development focusing on these roles and skills. It becomes clear that both the school superintendency and the chief executive officer positions to which superintendents are often compared are undergoing rapid role transition both involving a highly politicized context.

The 1992 Study of the American School Superintendency (Glass, 1992) indicated that contemporary superintendents are aware of the emerging role of the school executive. The report indicated that the success of a district depends on outside support and a desire to involve citizens in decision-making activities. The need for community involvement is perceived as more important than it was a decade ago. The primary expectation from school board members responding to the survey was that the superintendent be a general manager of the district. Ranked second was that the superintendent have skills in human relations, with community relations and planning seen as crucial skills (Glass, 1992).

In summary, successful contemporary school district leaders appear to be those who acknowledge the political nature of the superintendency and welcome the opportunity to serve many constituencies. They are proactive in seeking support of the varied groups in the school community and have the human relations skills necessary to garner this support. The concepts of shared power and shared decision making are embraced as basic tenets of their profession. The changing role of the school superintendent continues to parallel the changing role of successful business executives, with less emphasis on technical management skills and more emphasis on the development of the human factor.

What is School Climate?

A major problem with the concept of school climate is that it seems to have no set boundaries or definition. The term "school climate" is used both definitively and metaphorically. Hoy and Miskel (1982) identified organization climate as "The set of internal characteristics that distinguishes one school from another and influences the behavior of people in it" (p. 185). Sergiovanni and Starrat (1988) used the metaphor of a barometer to describe school climate, "Climate provides a reading of how things are going in the school on the one hand and a basis for predicting school consequences and outcomes on the other" (p. 83).

Several have made efforts to measure school climate through the use of survey instruments and questionnaires. Probably the most well-known measurement of school climate was developed by Halpin and Croft (1963). The Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) consists of eight climate factors, four of which deal with teacher relationships and attitudes. The other four deal with principal-teacher relations. The OCDQ is usually administered to the total faculty of a school. The climate of a school is determined in a quantitative manner based on the average score of the faculty on the eight climate factors, which assumes that the overall climate of the school can be reflected in a numerical average. However, their conceptualization of climate is based on teacher relationships and attitudes and the quality of faculty-principal relations. Anderson (1982) pointed out that one value of the instrument is that it ". . . has promoted a broad-based interest in school climate within elementary and secondary education."

Likert (1967) developed a climate measurement instrument based on his conceptualization of four types of managerial systems and eight major organizational characteristics. Members of the organization respond to items describing eight characteristics or processes: leadership, motivational forces, communication, interaction-influence, decision-making, goal setting, control and performance goals, and

training. The organization's score is calculated quantitatively and is used to determine where the organization falls on the continuum of management systems: exploitive-authoritative, benevolent-authoritative, consultative, and participative.

The Organizational Climate Index was developed for use in measuring organizational climate (Stern, 1970). Teacher responses to 300 items are quantitatively reduced to two factors: development press and control press. The first describes a climate that places importance on intellectual activity, achievement, practicality, respect for individual integrity, and concern for order. The second describes a climate that emphasizes restriction and constraint.

Although climate instruments have been widely used to attempt to measure and describe school climate, there are arguments that these instruments have shortcomings. In most instances they are simply determining an "average" of respondents' perceptions to determine school climate. Lindelow and Mazzarella (1989) concluded that ". . . no analysis of data derived from a school climate measurement instrument can provide the 'feel' for what is happening in a school that comes from directly observing students, teachers, and administrators in action" (p. 174).

Anderson (1982), in her review of school climate literature, noted that there are two perspectives in the study of school climate. One is the study of school climate as organizational climate and the other is the study of the effects of school-level characteristics on student performance. This variation in approach and the ranging variety of school characteristics that have been described as components of school climate have led to a good deal of confusion among researchers and practitioners as to what actually constitutes school climate.

Anderson (1982) noted three theoretical bases which researchers tend to use in school climate research, including input-output, sociological, and ecological. The input-output theory focuses on inputs such as time, money, and teaching methods that are processed by schools into outputs such as academic achievement, skills, and social

behaviors. Coleman's (1966) well-known study reflects the input-output theoretical base. Sociological theory focuses on relationships among the members of the school community as the basis for the school climate. The previously mentioned works of Halpin and Croft (1963) and Likert (1967), which focused on the relationships of administrators and their staffs, falls within this area. Ecological theory encompasses both sociological and input-output factors in exploring school climate. The school effects research of Edmonds (1982), Brookover (1979), and others with their findings that various interrelated components and interactions combine to produce either an effective or ineffective school climate have their base in this theoretical approach.

Tagiuri (1968) posited that climate relates to the total environmental quality within an organization. Climate includes four dimensions: ecology, milieu, social system, and culture. Anderson (1982) further defined these areas in relation to a school climate model. The ecology dimension relates to physical and material aspects in a school setting. The background characteristics or particular attributes of groups or individuals within the school setting are aspects of milieu. Social system reflects the structures of relationships within the school setting. Culture involves the norms, beliefs, and values of people within the school setting.

Miskel and Ogawa (1988) cautioned that most school climate research in educational administration is limited to the social system dimension. They argued that the dimensions of ecology, milieu, and culture are fertile ground for information to assist in explaining organizational behavior.

Lindelow and Mazarella (1989) and others have suggested that school climate is the "feel" an individual gets from his or her experiences within a school's social system. By expanding into Anderson's (1982) school climate model to encompass the areas of ecology, milieu, and culture, the basis for a school climate definition is determined. School climate relates to the "feel" an individual gets from his or her

experiences within the school district encompassing the dimensions of ecology, milieu, social system, and culture.

Superintendent and School District Climate

"Through the leader's actions and deeds, he/she creates excitement, shares visions, sets leadership styles, rewards risk-taking, prizes dreaming, sanctions crying, and develops the human side of the organization" (Marks, 1981, p. 257).

More than a decade ago this practicing school superintendent described the changing expectation that school district administrators would affect the human side of their organizations. He further underscored this view regarding the capability of the school leader to effect the school organization by emphasizing his belief that the superintendent actually has the responsibility for setting the tone and personality of the school system. His perspective as to the school district leader having a primary effect on school district climate is shared by others. Contemporary superintendents who participated in the study conducted by the American Association of School Administrators indicated that the establishment of organizational climate is an important part of their duties (Glass, 1992). In Bryan's (1990) study of school improvement, major changes in the school district's climate were noted, and the leadership of the superintendent was viewed positively. Lindelow and Mazzarella (1989, p. 185) characterized the superintendent as a leader ". . . whose actions can shape (and improve) the attitudes of staff, students, and community". Shaheen and Pedrick (1974) maintained that the superintendent is the most powerful person in the district when it comes to improving organizational climate.

In their exploratory study of instructionally effective school districts, Murphy and Hallinger (1988) noted that the beliefs, expectations and practices of school district leaders had effect on climate factors. The superintendents were seen as playing an important role in the establishment and maintenance of the organizational cultures in

these instructionally effective schools. Squires (1983), in his research-based perspective on effective schools, noted that administrators use feedback to build a positive school climate. Sergiovanni and Starrat (1988) discussed the importance of a healthy climate and called attention to the fact that it often fails to receive adequate attention from school leaders. They spoke to the important connection between the leader's beliefs, actions, and school climate. Osborne and Cochran (1990), contemporary school district leaders, emphasized that improvement in the organization ultimately can be obtained by first focusing on improvement of the climate.

Information as to how a school leader might change or affect school climate is plentiful. Leithwood (1992), in his discussion of transformational leadership, advised that school administrators create conditions to enable their school staffs so that they "... find their own directions" (p. 8). The need for superintendents to carefully consider the history of the school district through the study of the "stories" of the community to discover deeper meanings of what goes on in school districts is addressed by Burlingame (1986, p. 305): "... we should expect that the particular climate of the times (the preferred stories) and the sophistication of administrators (their grasp of the depth and complexity of stories) should deeply influence actions taken." Lindelow and Mazzarella (1989) equated changing the climate with changing the "organizational norms" (p. 177). The school leader must interrupt the cycle of established standards and create new norms for the organization. In addition, Lindelow and Mazzarella advised that once the new organizational norms are established, these norms will self-perpetuate. Beare, Caldwell, and Millikan (1989), in advising how to create an excellent school, noted that because of the conflicting context a school leader faces, one must have diverse insights and approaches.

In their review of recent literature concerning school leadership, Mazzarella and Grundy (1989) indicated that successful superintendents have direct interest in their people, possess excellent human relations skills, and participate widely in their

communities. These leaders rely a good deal on direct person-to-person contact for building rapport. Webster (1988) described high-performing leaders as those who stay in touch with the people in the organization, participate in collegial decision-making, and are aware of the social, cultural, and political aspects of their organizations.

Kanter (1983) noted that the ultimate responsibility for success in building flexible, caring, integrative organizations that have concern for the human element within that organization lies with the leader of the organization. Other organizational members often model the behaviors of the leader. Deal, (cited in Blendinger & Jones, 1988), in discussing the responsibility of the school leader in creating a healthy school culture, noted the importance of the leader modeling what he professes to believe. He commented, "Every person who is in a leadership position is 'on stage' all the time--no one listens to what you say, they watch what you do" (p. 26).

Findings in Hayden's (1989) dissertation examining how principal belief systems regarding superintendents' behaviors in their roles affect the role expectations for principals indicated that principals identify their roles and their belief-systems through a socialization process originating from the superintendent. The importance of school district leaders modeling what they expect from members of the organization is underscored.

Ferrera (1992), a contemporary school superintendent, related the importance of building trust in the school organization. According to Ferrera, the building of trust begins with the school leader. Being honest and consistent, giving others the opportunity to make mistakes, respecting the talents and creativity of those with whom one works, and communicating with the school community all are ingredients in establishing a climate of trust.

Trust as an element of school climate was also identified in recent naturalistic research concerning school district leadership. Murray (1991) conducted a study concerning the relationship of a school superintendent's behavior as it related to school

climate. His study was of one superintendent and the manner in which his leadership behaviors were perceived to influence school climate. Unique to his study was the fact that the researcher was successor to the subject superintendent and that the subject superintendent has a tenure of 21 years. Findings indicated that school staff perceived the superintendent as being the most influential actor in the school district in terms of influencing school climate. Incidentally, most of the members viewed his influence as a positive factor. Murray reported:

(T)hrough demonstrating behaviors that reflect leading by example, being visible, building relationships, developing a family atmosphere, and creating a climate of trust, equal treatment, and sincerity, a superintendent can influence the school climate as perceived by faculty members (p.141).

A naturalistic study examining the nature and operation of 30 institutions which displayed exemplary vocational education projects noted “. . . the importance of the administrator’s role in **risk-taking and creating an atmosphere of creativity**” (Wardlow, 1992, p. 13). The researchers identified several themes that were generally consistent in all of the organizations studied. The administrators were flexible and encouraged staff members to be innovative. A sense of mission was present in each of the schools and could be articulated by all staff members. Many staff members in several schools explained the importance of their school leader in establishing this sense of mission. Each institution had a positive climate with high levels of trust, mutual respect, excellent communication, and participation in decision making. The school leaders in these organizations displayed specific characteristics: their actions created trust within the organization, they were perceived as warm and caring persons, they had high expectations for themselves and their staff members, and finally, they were risk takers who expected their staffs to make mistakes as well as to succeed. “If an administrator aspires to excellence, trust, as a management style, is more effective than authoritarian attention to detail” (Wardlow, 1992, p. 40). The researchers emphasized that those leaders responsible for developing their organizations should be cognizant of

the importance of climate. The study also suggests that a positive climate can be developed.

Bates (1986) discussed the importance of administrators being aware of the metaphors used by the staff in a school setting, because the nature of metaphors can have a definite impact on the climate of the school and the interpersonal relations that occur in that school setting. Staff members may use one metaphor to describe their actions to the public, yet let another metaphor determine their activity resulting in a lack of congruence between what is said and what is done. Bates advised that leaders critically reflect and actively intervene when this occurs.

Many view the superintendent as the individual in the school district who has the most influence on school district climate. School district leaders view establishing school climate as one of their most important duties. Focusing on improving school climate can lead to improvement in the school organization. It is critical for a superintendent to understand that the total environmental quality within the organization encompasses the four dimensions of ecology, milieu, social system, and culture. Information garnered in each of these dimensions is significant in explaining organizational behavior or school climate. Important components of school district leadership that directly relate to school climate are the building of trust, effectively communicating with those in the school community, and encouraging risk-taking within the organization. The significance of the superintendent modeling his stated beliefs is clearly revealed. The school district leader's critical reflection upon the history of the school district and active intervention when the actions of those in the school organization are not congruent with stated or implied standards, is crucial to affecting school climate.

Succession in the Superintendency

. . . to survive, an organization must cope with the continual problem of making replacements in its series of offices. By and large, replacing an individual is a routine affair. . . . But replacing a person in a key position

is another matter. When an important office is involved, the event's significance becomes obvious (Carlson, 1972, p. 1).

Carlson (1972) spent a good deal of time investigating succession as it relates to career patterns of superintendents and how they tend to function once they are hired as chief executives of school districts. He identified two types of successors: career-bound and place-bound. A career-bound administrator is characterized as having more interest in his career and in mobility. Those having more interest in their community and less interest in mobility are seen as place-bound administrators. Carlson formed propositions concerning appointment of successors: a career-bound successor is chosen when the previous administration is perceived as unsatisfactory. If the previous administration is perceived as satisfactory, the selection of either a career-bound or a place-bound successor may occur. Usually the board will choose a place-bound successor in this instance because of his knowledge of the school district history. However, the board may choose someone from outside if the district does not have a person within who possesses the proper credentials. In instances where too many within are qualified, the board may choose an outsider to avoid creating divisiveness within the district. Carlson further contended that outsiders are expected to make changes within the district, while insiders are expected to maintain the status quo. According to Carlson, outsiders tend to create change through increasing programs, rules, and staff.

One of the first studies to give attention to succession was that of Gouldner (1954) in his Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy. He conducted a case study of one organization and determined that the appointment of an outside successor in the manager's role caused change that led to increased bureaucratization through stricter enforcement of rules, intensified supervision and an increase in supervisory positions. Firestone (1990) sought to apply Gouldner's analysis to two contemporary school districts which were being studied as part of a larger study concerning restructuring of teaching. Emergent findings that were similar to the work of Gouldner caused interest

in applying Gouldner's analysis to these school districts which had experienced succession events. Firestone's case studies indicated that the succession of an outside chief executive did not necessarily lead to increased bureaucracy, and it was possible for increased professionalism to occur. Also, it was determined that the superintendent does not singularly determine the outcomes of change. Firestone (1990) commented:

The design and implementation of change then becomes a political process involving teachers, administrators, and board members and shaped by the resources and regulations that come from higher levels of government (p. 371).

There are also the pragmatic views of succession in the superintendency. The general mission of a superintendent who succeeds another are identified by Glass (1992) as that of change-agent, developer, and maintainer of the status quo. The first is described as a chief executive who will initiate changes the board feels necessary. The developer usually follows a change-agent superintendent and builds programs after the initial resistance to change has been alleviated. The superintendent charged with maintaining the status quo is found in districts where things have been going well and the board has chosen a leader with similar personal skills and educational philosophy (Glass, 1992).

Brown and Hockwalt (1992) commented on the difficulty of any succession event, regardless of its context, because all members of the school community have to become familiar with a different leadership style, and the new superintendent must rapidly "get up to speed on a complex operation quickly" (p.46). It was noted by Wasley (1992), a Senior Researcher for School Change at Brown University, that succession often interferes with or completely disrupts projects. Carlson (1972) cautioned that when a key position is involved in a transition, there is potential for disruption since ". . . executive succession often precedes further organizational adaptation, development, and change" (p. 2).

As the above review indicates, succession events may or may not be disruptive. This largely depends upon the type of successor chosen and the mandate he is given. Succession events often are perceived by those in the organization as precursors to other transitions.

Superintendents and Change

"Students of organizations realize that change is a continual process of adaptation to new circumstances. Often an organization will, and indeed must, change its leadership to facilitate the adaptation process" (Berger, 1984, p. 105). Berger's comment in his study of school superintendent succession gives credence to the concept that chief school administrators can and do effect change within their organizations. Foster (1986) spoke of the administrator who renounces authoritarian roles and puts critical theory into practice through continued reflection, gained understanding, and education. Such an administration shares power, leadership, and effects change through engaging others in the context of the situation. Firestone (1990), in his study of two school districts experiencing succession, determined that both superintendents were highly instrumental in the direction of change in their respective districts. He commented concerning the superintendency and change:

Chief executives are well placed to initiate (organizational) changes or nurture those initiated by others. They are boundary spanners who can assess pressures for change in their districts and newly developed alternatives, and they have the internal authority to propose innovations (Firestone, 1990, p. 371).

Several researchers saw impediments to change in terms of the school superintendent's influence. As early as 1969, Abbott argued that there could be no real change in educational practices until the excessive importance of hierarchical status was eliminated, allowing teachers to be viewed as legitimate professionals and to gain proper status while continuing to teach. Bureaucratic ideology was seen as impeding this process because of the emphasis on hierarchical status and advantages give to

those in administrative positions (Abbott, 1969). Sarason (1990), in his book The Predictable Failure of Educational Reform, spoke to the concern in terms of educational reform as that of intractability, viewing the characteristics, traditions, and organizational dynamics of school systems as obstacles to achieving any educational improvement goal. Basically, he is saying that those who "have power" in school systems are obstinate in refusing to alter that balance of power and fail to see how redistribution of power might positively affect educational reform. Chubb and Moe (1990) explained that less effective schools are those which have more influence from the superintendent and the central office.

Another impediment to school superintendents and change may be described by the inability to recognize emerging developments in education. Finn (1990) cautioned that many educators fail to recognize the paradigm shift that redefines education in terms of outcomes. Many continue to subscribe to the old world view that increased inputs will create increased outputs. Superintendents who adhere to the old paradigm will continue to base their efforts at change on the traditional world view.

Wasley (1992) pointed out that leadership for change includes the ability not only to implement change but to sustain momentum for change. She explained:

Leaders who choose to move into an innovative setting need to be able to accept the overall direction the group has chosen and then support the staff by helping to further clarify and move toward its vision. Leadership for change requires skills of management, collaboration, and critical friendship--that rare ability to point out what needs to be done while sustaining momentum (p.67).

Gitlin and Price (1992), spoke from the empowerment perspective in terms of the best method for accomplishing change. Rather than increasing rules and regulations for change, this view allows for the individuals and groups involved to freely critique what they are doing.

School district leaders who have open communication practices may have more success with implementing change. Bryan (1990), in her study of one school district's

quest for improvement, found that improved communication was a major force in creating change within the district. Pajak (1992) described "decentralized communication" in school systems that are effectively restructuring (p. 129). This involves both a vertical and horizontal flow of information which can be originated at any level and permits participation of all parties involved. Another factor in decentralized communication is that candid discussion takes place between the schools and the central office. This type of inclusive communication can lead to the construction of a shared vision and commitment of those involved to support that vision (Pajak, 1992).

Hirsch and Sparks (1991) (associate director and executive director, respectively, of the National Staff Development Council), discussed how change is embraced by many school district leaders nationwide with these administrators viewing change as a constant that provides the opportunities for continuous growth. In these districts, the responsibilities of the district leader's office is no longer that of supervision and regulation, but has become centered on providing service and support to the schools. Facilitation and planning skills, knowledge of current educational theory and research, and the ability to lead groups are necessary to enable change. District leaders such as those described by Hirsch and Sparks key in on providing service and support to the schools rather than implementing change through instrumental means.

However, school district leaders in succession situations may be hampered in their efforts at meaningful change by their own approach and by comparison to their predecessors. In his analytic paper, Young (1988) examined a school district undergoing a change in leadership at the same time there is effort to include staff members in planning improvement in the instructional program. All K-8 administrators and teaching staff members were asked to analyze their current instructional program and suggest ways to improve it. Young sought to explain through his research why little actual change was accomplished in the two-year project in spite of the central office

administrators' efforts to initiate a thoughtful change process and to include all professional staff members in this process.

The former superintendent was a traditional leader who gave clear and direct messages to his staff members. They came to view his style of leadership as capable and competent. The new superintendent and his leadership team came from a very different approach. It was his intent that the staff determine the direction for the improvement program. Also, he delegated the authority for this project to one of his assistants. Because the former superintendent had built an image based on strong, centralized leadership, delegation of the improvement project by the successor to an assistant was perceived by the school community as showing a lack of responsibility. Adding to the conflict was the fact that the new superintendent and his two assistants were unable to present a united front to the staff concerning the project, resulting in mixed messages coming from the central office. In this instance, the very different leadership style of the new leader was viewed as weak when compared to the image of leadership presented by his predecessor. The resulting lack of confidence caused the school staff not to follow the new leadership team and to feel their needs for leadership were unmet (Young, 1988).

School district leaders who are knowledgeable of emerging developments in education, believe in creating conditions for staff empowerment, have open communication practices, and view their role as one of service to schools through facilitation and support appear to be those who are most successful in effecting or directing change in school districts. It is clear that those who seek to make such changes must be perceived as leaders by their staff members.

Summary and Conclusion

The literature reveals conflicting views as to the impact of the school superintendent on the school organization. In spite of the fact that a school superintendent is

a major player in school districts, the amount of study concerning school superintendents remains sparse. The role of the school superintendent continues to change, calling for consistent critique and updating of knowledge and skills.

As this review of literature has indicated, the role of the superintendent is not static and continues to emerge. Clearly, it is a highly conflicted and politicized role that requires knowledge and skills significantly beyond the bounds of the highly technical management skills that once served both business and education executive officers. Those seeking or already in such a leadership role were well advised by Kinnert and Augenstein (1990):

. . . individuals who anticipate seeking a superintendency, as well as those who are already practicing, should understand that their socialization does not stop. They must continue to seek new knowledge, develop new skills, and hone existing ones (p. 192).

Succession has the potential for being disruptive or being an improvement, and in some instances, may be both. Two specific concepts emerge from the literature: at some point all school districts experience succession and the process of succession may have the capacity to influence the direction of change in the districts involved.

School district leaders can and do effect change in their school community. However, they may be limited by their own world view, their approach, and unfavorable comparison to their predecessors.

Climate in school districts can be impacted significantly by school superintendents. Obviously, the administrative processes employed by the leader will help determine the extent of that impact. And finally, the perception of those in the affected school districts becomes the reality. As so profoundly stated by Roethlisberger (1941, p. 40) in describing the Hawthorne Experiments: "In most work situations, the meaning of change is likely to be as important, if not more so, than the change itself."

This study focused on this transition process in two different school districts and the resulting impact of school superintendents on school climate. It has provided a

holistic view of two differing contexts and fresh insight into various facets of contemporary school district leadership.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The primary purpose of this study was to describe the impact, if any, of the newly appointed superintendents on school climate in two school districts, Brookside and Carlisle, which are each experiencing a transition in leadership. Fictitious names are used for both school districts, both cities, and all respondents.

Population

The population of this inquiry were the school administrators, faculty, parents, and school board members of two school districts during the 1992-93 school term. The selected schools were Brookside School District located in the city of Brookside in a midwestern state and Carlisle Public School District located in the city of Carlisle in that same state. Purposive samples were sought in both school districts.

Instrumentation

Merriam (1988) noted:

. . . the importance of the researcher in qualitative case study cannot be overemphasized. The researcher is the *primary instrument* for data collection and analysis. Data are mediated through this human instrument, the researcher, rather than through some inanimate inventory, questionnaire, or machine (p. 19).

As a researcher working in the naturalistic paradigm and the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, my experience, beliefs, biases, assumptions, and expertise become part of the process. For over 22 years I have served in various capacities in the educational field, including classroom teacher, counselor, assistant principal,

building principal, and district office administrator. I have personally participated in and observed situations where the leadership of a school site had an impact on the overall climate of that organization. This led to my curiosity as to what influence, if any, a leader could have on a total school district community. It has been my experience, both as a participant and as a leader in an educational setting, that inclusive leadership is most effective in positively influencing the setting.

As a naturalistic researcher, it was my responsibility to recognize my personal experiences, beliefs, biases, and assumptions and to insure that these did not unduly influence the direction or results of the research project. I served as the primary instrument for collecting data by observing school district events, reviewing school district and other public documents, and conducting interviews with purposive samples from the school district. Persistent observation and triangulation were utilized to assure trustworthiness. All interviews were conducted by me, using both semi-structured and structured formats. The structure for the second interview was determined by emerging themes from the first interviews.

Procedures

This study was conducted during the 1992-93 school term. An extensive review of possible sites for the study was conducted prior to the beginning of the school term. After speaking with numerous school administrators, professors, and other educators, several possible sites were identified that met the criteria of being stable school districts that were experiencing a change in leadership. I visited several sites, speaking with chief administrators in order to identify those chief administrators who were amenable to a naturalistic inquiry during their first year of tenure.

Two school districts in particular best met the criteria. Brookside and Carlisle Public School Districts were chosen for the study because the former superintendents had extensive tenure and had left highly-regarded school systems which were

characterized as excellent. Interviews were conducted with the superintendents of each school district to verify the suitability of each site, to gain permission for the research, and to confirm a trusting relationship between the participants and me. The superintendents expressed interest in participating in the study, appropriate dates for site visits were determined, and permission to conduct the inquiry was obtained. In addition, written permission to conduct the interviews was obtained from each respondent in both school districts.

Visits were made to various school sites in each district throughout the school year. Because of the variance in size of the school districts, more time was spent in Brookside. Fieldwork in the Carlisle District included a series of visits for a total of 10 person days, while a total of 20 person days was spent in fieldwork in the Brookside District. The first series of interviews began late in the first semester to insure that participants had an opportunity to interact with the new superintendent. More than 65 interviews were conducted with various respondents including parents, teachers, administrators, and other community members. Considerable time was spent in telephone conversations to verify information and to maintain contact throughout the school year.

In most instances, the same respondents were interviewed at each visit to follow the evolution of their responses and reactions to, and perceptions of, the superintendent and his actions. Data collection included both semi-structured and structured interviews, as well as observation for strategies. Critical incidents were recorded and analyzed. Review of documents prepared by each of the chief administrators to communicate with his staff, students and patrons, as well as newspaper articles, and other pertinent information, was conducted throughout the 1992-93 school term.

An explanation of the data collection and data analysis procedures follows. Because data collection and data analysis is an interactive process, there is not necessarily a clear delineation between each of the three phases.

Procedures: Phase 1

Phase 1 of the research consisted of systematic observation, determination of key informants, semi-structured interviews, and collection of pertinent documents, newspaper articles, and public records. Information from initial interviews with the chief administrators actually began the data collection phase. In both instances, I was given an "open door" to visit any site in the school district and to approach any person in the school community to serve as a potential respondent. At Carlisle, several "key" individuals were identified by the superintendent. I approached these individuals, and in most instances, they became what Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to as "informants," who ". . . by virtue of their positions within the context" can provide an "inside" view of that context, as well ". . . as assist in the recruitment of others" (pp. 258-259). Through their assistance, a purposive, sample including key members of the administrative staff, faculty and teacher association, and parent groups, was identified. In Brookside, key informants were identified through contacts with individual gatekeepers at individual school sites. These key informants assisted in identifying others who were members of the various groups within the school community.

The first series of site visits for both Brookside and Carlisle School Districts began late in the first semester. Field notes were made of all interviews, as well as audio tape recordings in those interviews where the participants gave permission. These were transcribed as they were completed in order to provide information for data analysis, since data collection and analysis occur simultaneously in this type research (Merriam, 1988).

Data Analyses: Phase 1

Data were first recorded through the use of a microcomputer and a word processing package, with each of the tape recorded interviews and field notes transcribed to the hard drive. The first stage of analysis involved "unitizing" of information derived

from these separate documents by entering small units (ranging from one phrase to a paragraph) on a separate page for each unit (Lincoln, & Guba, 1985). These pages were coded according to context and were placed in provisional categories on the basis of "look-alike" categories. Propositional statements or labels were ascribed to each category. These labels changed over time as the categories were constantly compared with others. Through this constant comparison method, I began to observe emergent themes and category properties, which gave direction to the next interview phase. The constant comparison method (Strauss, 1981) was the primary method for grounding theories in the analysis phase.

I recorded, as part of a reflexive journal, a provisional report or, as suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (1982), a memoranda to myself to make sense of the data throughout the data collection process. This process also assisted me in the refining of interview questions and interview techniques.

Pertinent documents were analyzed during this phase. Triangulation of data included information from the various groups of interviews, documents, observations, and critical incident records. Peer debriefing was utilized in this phase to test working hypotheses and to discuss the next steps in methodological design.

Procedures: Phase 2

The second phase of the study began with the return visit to each school site for the purpose of exploring emerging themes with a second, more refined and structured interview with each respondent. Member checks were conducted with each participant in terms of information garnered from the initial interview. Because of the nature of this study, another focus of this interview was to ascertain the degree of evolution, if any, for an individual respondent's perceptions, responses and reactions as determined in the initial interview. Some emerging themes required followup with additional respondents who were suggested by the original participants.

Observations at each school district continued during this phase as did continued collection and analysis of public and other school district documents. During this phase, documents actually prepared by the superintendents were available. The collection and analysis of critical incidents continued. Notations of emergent theory were made in the reflexive journal on a regular basis. Transcription of interviews was completed in a timely manner in order to allow for a continuous and on-going analysis of data.

Data Analyses: Phase 2

Data collected in Phase 2 were analyzed in relationship to that collected in Phase 1 to determine its consistency with the core of emergent theories from Phase 1. Through the process of constant comparison and verification, revisions and modifications were made. Triangulation of data was accomplished by comparing interview transcripts, documents, and critical incident information. Peer debriefing occurred on a regular basis to assist in "clearing" my mind.

Phase 3

The last stage of this process involved the integration of the findings into a narrative report, or case study, which allows for a holistic description and analysis of the social unit (Merriam, 1988). This reporting mode was my choice because: the case study provides a basis for transferability to other sites, it is suited to demonstrating the variety of mutually shaping influences, and it can portray local contextual values (Lincoln, & Guba, 1985). More than 10 informants critiqued each case study and provided member checks. There were no significant differences identified by the informants. An external audit was conducted to address dependability and confirmability.

Summary and Final Analyses

Merriam (1988) noted that “. . . simultaneous analysis and data collection allows the researcher to direct the data collection phase more productively” and to “. . . develop a data base that is both relevant and parsimonious.” This assists the researcher in deriving theory that has “parsimony and scope” and:

. . . can be evaluated in terms of its overall explanatory power, by how well the generalizations are supported, by how well integrated the elements are, and by whether there is a logical consistency to every dimension of the theory (Merriam, 1988, p. 144).

I took the following steps to insure that the data collection and analysis would generate a data base and resultant working hypotheses of such quality as described by Merriam.

1. Unitizing: Utilizing a word processing program, I entered small units of information (ranging from one phrase to a paragraph) on a separate page for each unit.

2. Categorizing: I placed those pages that appeared to have the same content into provisional categories on the basis of “look-alike” characteristics. Propositional labels were ascribed to each category. Through this constant comparison, emergent themes became apparent and relationships between categories led to preliminary theory.

3. Case study report: Individual case study reports were written for each school in such a way as to depict the complexity of each context.

4. Audit trail: An inquiry audit was conducted by an external auditor to examine the research process for confirmability through a review of unitized and categorized data, field notes, reflexive journal, documents, and case reports. The audit was scheduled after member checks of the case study reports and the completion of the data analysis and interpretation. The external auditor was a qualified researcher who had conducted similar research projects. The processes in which data were collected and analyzed and interpretations were made were examined through a review of

documents, reflexive journal, field notes, unitized and categorized data and the case study reports. This audit established that the products of the inquiry could be traced to their sources and were supported by the inquiry. It also established that the processes by which the inquiry was conducted were consistent.

The thick description of each context reflects certain themes that emerged from this study. A delineation of these themes is found in Chapter VI, as is a final analysis of the impact of superintendent transition in the two school districts. Judgments about applicability to other contexts is, in part, a primary responsibility of the reader. In order to better understand the context of each school district, some historical information concerning the previous administrators is pertinent and is described in the following prologue to the case studies.

Prologue

The recently retired superintendents in Carlisle and Brookside had extensive tenure in their districts and left highly-regarded school systems. Both devoted a good part of their adult life to developing school systems which were characterized as excellent. Both command respect for their knowledge and their leadership abilities, and both defied common practice by surviving as chief administrators of their respective school districts far beyond the three years' average tenure for superintendents (Rancic, 1992).

When describing Dr. George Hughes of Carlisle Public Schools, most used the term "people-person" in the conversation. Respect for Dr. Hughes was based on his ability to support those with whom he worked and to work effectively with them. A former staff member explained how Dr. Hughes managed this support: "Go ahead and take credit for it being wrong. If the chief administrator will do this, people will feel better and go ahead doing their job with a feeling of security."

After several years in the business world, George Hughes began his career in teaching at Bay City Central, which was one of the first schools to integrate. Under the leadership of a superior principal, Bay City Central was transformed from a school

considered to be the "Siberia" of Bay City education to a school with a strong and collegial faculty involved in unusual and different approaches to learning. Faculty members had a great deal of latitude in their teaching methods, resulting in a good deal of research being conducted at this site. The message from the leadership was one of humanism in the academic sense: all kids are worth saving.

From this experience Dr. Hughes gained what he described as a strength in flexibility, knowing when to bend rules to help young people. He believed the strength of any administrator is knowing when to bend a rule; not to act in terms of black and white. According to him, the number of pages in an administrative policy manual is a black/white measure, "The more you need rules and regulations, the less you are an administrator. You become a manager."

At his next job as a principal in Loganville, he participated in a shift from junior high school to middle school. Plans had been carefully completed for a teaming approach at the 7th and 8th grade level. Upon hearing of the plan, the superintendent decided to add 6th grade to the middle school. This became a change thrust upon the teachers by "administrative fiat" and resulted in the middle school becoming a battleground. From this experience, Dr. Hughes gained a strength which he described as creativity, the ability to innovate without changing people. From this experience he observed that changes in people take time and that abrupt change without allowing those involved to buy into the change, is inappropriate.

After a brief period spent as an assistant superintendent in Loganville, he began his career at Carlisle in 1977. The previous superintendent was asked to leave and not return after the board of education purchased the remainder of his contract in the midst of a good deal of turmoil. The district was involved in five lawsuits and personnel matters that required Dr. Hughes' immediate attention. He believes a strength in creating stability out of chaos was gained from this experience.

Academic areas have always been a focus for him and his spending of funds was for instructional purposes rather than other areas. During his career at Carlisle the school population increased by approximately 40%. Because of the low bonding capacity and his emphasis on academic spending rather than facility building, the district made use of many prefabricated buildings. Lowering the pupil-teacher ratio was important to him, as was providing a sense of job security for those who were doing their job well. Because he had a distaste for negotiations that often resulted in rules and regulations that limit flexibility, he resolved problems with a professional administration and shared-decision making. He described his leadership as: ". . . giving you the support to do your job without retribution from your superior. If you wanted to try something new, I would challenge you first, then say, 'have at it,' then give you every possible resource to do it."

Considered by many to be an expert in school law and finance, David Edwards had spent the past 17 years as superintendent of Brookside School District in a suburban area of this state. Dr. Edwards' career in education began as a teacher at the high school school level. At one point, he resigned to accept a supervisory position in a local business. After several years, he returned to the school system and served as assistant superintendent for business and administrative services. He became superintendent of the fairly small school system in 1974 and quickly built a reputation for having extensive knowledge of both financial and legal matters pertaining to the superintendency.

During his tenure, the school system expanded to over five times the size it was when he entered the superintendency in 1974. His expertise in financial matters was put to use many times as the growth in the school district put a strain on an already austere school budget. A staff member explained his success in this area: "Dr. Edwards did some very good things for this system. . . . I feel like financially he kept us afloat when a lot of people would have fallen." A good portion of his time and efforts

were spent in promoting bond issues to build and equip school plants. During his tenure, 20 bond issues passed and eight schools were constructed.

Dr. Edwards was characterized as being a very powerful leader with an emphasis on central office control. His leadership was described as "more paternalistic and single person guided." Policy was established to cover most issues that might arise in the management of a school district or an individual school site. A staff member commented: "He was very consistent in his management and predictable. His leadership got us through some tough times."

Administrators were expected to be familiar with the administrative policy and to carry out this policy effectively. The school district was viewed as very structured with "only one right way" to carry out the activities of the district.

Seeing the business of school as being of significant importance, Dr. Edwards spent a good deal of time on that particular aspect. He was viewed as being "legal oriented, business oriented, runs a tight ship." He also saw the importance of the school district being a part of the community business group. The fact that the school district was one of the largest employers in the community appeared to be a source of satisfaction for him.

Dr. Edwards was highly respected for his knowledge in all areas of education and innovation was his byword. A voracious reader, he was aware of all the latest trends in education. Those with which he agreed were implemented through a very traditional management process. A school community member commented, "Dr. Edwards had lots of good ideas and he did a lot of good for Brookside."

Dr. Edwards was credited with setting an expectation within the district throughout his tenure which resulted in a standard of excellence. A teacher who started in the district at the same time Dr. Edwards became superintendent commented:

I think it is the presence of excellence that he presented throughout the years. . . . There was a total change from when I started until now as far as principals, and expectations of teachers, and promoting teamwork

within the school itself and the standard of excellence that was expected from us. . . I think it is because of the expectations of administration.

There is a total of 32 years of experience in the superintendency between these two men who, for different reasons, were clearly successful in their respective school districts. Uniquely, each man spent his total career as superintendent in his respective school district. The loss of the experience and dedication possessed by these two men is dramatic.

How do the newly appointed superintendents and their respective school districts fare in this "changing of the guard?" The following two case studies (presented in Chapters IV and V) offer an answer to this question.

CHAPTER IV

CARLISLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A REFLECTION OF THE COMMUNITY

A Place to Call Home

Entering the outskirts of Carlisle, I am entranced by the mixture of the old and new buildings housing businesses which lined either side of the highway. The closer I come toward the downtown area, the more the architecture appears to be from a much earlier time in the century.

There are a large number and variety of stores, restaurants, services, and other businesses in this rather small city. By walking through a mud and gravel parking area to order at a drive-in with window service only, I can lunch on a greasy, old-fashioned hamburger. Or, a full meal is conveniently available by traveling a few short blocks to a four-star restaurant. A feed store sits across from a well-known jewelry store. Farmers dressed for field work walk the same streets as do men and women dressed for business meetings, sometimes stopping to visit, often calling out greetings to one another. Names that appear on window fronts and doorways reflect various ethnic and ancestral roots. A community college, several historical areas, and museums add to the diversity of this city. In spite of, or perhaps because of the mix of architecture and people, Carlisle appears to be a fairly cosmopolitan community.

The same characteristics are reflected in the schools of Carlisle. School sites range from the very latest in architectural style to buildings that have buckets on classroom floors to catch water that leaks through the roof each time rain occurs. "Cowboys," "preppies," and "jocks" walk the same halls, often interacting with one

another, regardless of their group. Student and teacher names and accents reflect various backgrounds and origins. Programs offered to students range from vocational to enrichment courses. In describing the school district, many speak of this complexity:

We are a very diversified school system. We have an almost perfect cross-section of socioeconomic groups. When you are looking at comparing our particular school district with the socioeconomic makeup of the U.S., they are not all upper class, middle class or lower class.

We have a wide range of patrons here from the college to agricultural. We have about as many academic all staters as anybody around. We have gifted programs; we just have a full range of about anything that they could ask for.

I think there's a good mixture of professional and blue collar workers. Education has been really pressed here and with the college in town also we've been fortunate over the years to have a lot of real fine students and National Merit Semifinalists. . . .

My first impression as I visit various school sites was the atmosphere of openness and friendliness I sense from both staff and students. Upon entering each building, students, teachers and other staff acknowledge my presence by greeting me, asking if they can help me, or by smiling in my direction. The feeling I get in each school is that of being a welcomed visitor rather than that of an interloper. Visiting with various staff members in each location, my perception is that I could easily fit in with the faculty and be a member of their team. A sense of cohesiveness and cooperation seems to exist in each school setting and is described by many as a family-like atmosphere:

. . . we have a close-knit school district, and teachers work very well together. We go as a group to present problems or issues and we tend to be able to get a lot done as a group.

We are very fortunate to have such a wonderful staff here.

. . . we just do not have much turnover. We just have a good close knit family.

Teachers are seen as a strength of the school district. They seem to have the desire to provide the best for students. A concerned, interested attitude toward children is described by many:

I feel like the majority of the teachers are caring. . . . I feel like most of them sincerely care about the children. I think the teachers are really one of our strongest points. . . .

I am very impressed with the teachers that we have here and our teachers are very open to provide the best for students.

. . . the teachers here are professional and they really care about kids. There might be one teacher that I would not want my child to have in the school and when you consider 45 teachers and all different personalities, that says a lot.

Others describe the expertise of teachers as well as their willingness to share information with colleagues, to involve parents, and to work cooperatively with others:

In general, the ones that I have been associated with have all been interested in children, positive toward trying to keep up, and aware of educational curriculum things, and they seem to have a good attitude.

. . . they will share their ideas and what they have learned. There are some who have attended other workshops and enjoyed it and will go to their administrator and say, this is really neat. I think we need to share it with, whoever, and they have been well received. We do not always agree on everything, but that is the purpose; what may work for one person does not always work for somebody else, but at least everybody is willing to share and take a look at it.

We have a fairly stable teaching staff, they are well educated. . . .

Our percentage of people with masters is very high. . . . The good thing about Carlisle, again, is that the teachers are very well aware that they are going to interface with the parents on a regular basis. That has an awful lot to do with the way they teach. We really do involve parents to be part of everything.

. . . the individual teachers in each grade in our school (there are two or three teachers that usually get along well together and they cooperate) . . . in one grade, one teacher is an exceptional math teacher and one is an English teacher, so they switch kids and they cooperate in that area. So they are trying to give them the best advantage . . . I think they're doing that for the student.

A Change Occurs

The Carlisle Public School System is the largest school system in the county, and serves close to 4,000 students. The school district itself encompasses a total of 35 square miles. School services are located at eight sites within the district. The organization of the school district is typical for a school district of this size in this state. The school board is composed of five members who meet on the first Monday of each month. The school superintendent and three assistants serve as the centralized school administration. Early in the summer, before this study was initiated, the school board began working with a new superintendent, Dr. Bob Kellogg. Dr. Kellogg was hired for the position following an extensive search process carried out by a consulting agency specializing in school superintendent search services. The agency had actively recruited him from another school district, where he had spent a number of years. He followed George Hughes, who was highly regarded throughout the state as a school superintendent.

Prior to Dr. Kellogg's arrival in Carlisle, the administrative structure was made up of the superintendent, associate superintendent, and two assistant superintendents. The associate superintendent also was a candidate for the superintendency at Carlisle. Shortly after Dr. Kellogg was hired, the associate superintendent resigned to move to a superintendent's position in another school district. Dr. Kellogg promptly revamped the central office structure to eliminate the associate superintendent's post and assigned a third assistant's position to the organizational structure. He asked the two remaining assistants to reorganize the administrative duties into what they thought would be equitable and satisfactory assignments for the three assistant positions. Applications were then sought for the third assistant's position. The post was filled by an administrator from Dr. Kellogg's former district.

The first major happening after the new superintendent reported for duty involved negotiations between the Carlisle Teachers Association and the Board of Education. Many of the teachers were not happy with the previous year's process, which involved the use of a professional negotiator:

Last year we hired a professional negotiator which we hated. It was us against them, a horrible time.

Our other superintendent used to hire someone to come in and do this. We've always felt you could save that little bit of money. If the teachers can come up with a group to negotiate, surely the administration can come up with a group to negotiate.

The CTA negotiation team made their feelings known, both to the school board and to the new superintendent. The professional negotiator was hired as a consultant, but did not come to the negotiation sessions. Bob Kellogg agreed that the superintendent's office would negotiate directly with CTA, with either himself or one of his assistants attending the sessions depending upon which issue was being addressed. Teachers and administrators reported that this process was quite different from those of the past in many respects. Several described the openness, cooperation, and communication:

Just recently I worked on the negotiating team and so, since I was really green, people were telling me 'be prepared for a lot of head butting and a lot of ugliness.' I was really preparing myself for the worst. As we went in with a new team and a new superintendent, it was just wonderful. I felt like we had real good negotiating teams on both sides. I was prepared for it to be a brick wall with upper administration on one side and the teachers on the other. It was not like that, it ran very smooth.

It got to the point where we were all intermingling, a more relaxed atmosphere where all could tell how they felt. We revamped negotiations by that change, went from formal to informal.

Some of the people on the team were veteran negotiators and they were real pleased with how it went. They thought that was one of the best negotiating teams that we have had to deal with as far as everybody being nice and not having any major flare ups. They felt like that the upper administration was giving us the full information. I think that in the past, they did not feel that way.

Others were impressed by the direct communication concerning the budget:

Then it'll come down to dollars and we'll just say, okay, we have x number of dollars. We could do this or this, this or this, this or this, or any combination of the above. Let's figure out what'll be best for everybody and we'll do it. Dr. Kellogg is not one to try to hide anything. If he's going to spend money on something, he'll just say, we need to spend this money. It's either mandated or our buses are falling apart or this, that, or the other thing is so broken down that we have to replace it, and then we have x number of dollars left over and we will spend it other places and you can help us make those decisions. It's pretty open.

We were so excited about the possibility of change that what actually happened with money wasn't that important to keep us out of a money hole. We knew you couldn't get money if it is not there. He was open to let us look at the records, communication was more open. Even if you didn't hear what you wanted to hear, at least it was open.

The contract was ratified in August for the first time in many years in spite of the fact that veteran teachers received a minimal raise. Several commented on the support for that action:

Always in years past we have never been able to sign off or finish until December; we would not even have a signed contract until then, when it should be done in August. This year we just about hit on time, by the first of school and that was our goal.

We're saying that we settled for less than we would have. Because they presented the whole picture overall to us and explained what everything was and they seemed to be up front about everything.

Most people approved the contract or voted for it, including me, because, give the new superintendent a chance. Give him a chance.

Another issue described by parents and teachers that occurred shortly after Dr. Kellogg's arrival involved the wearing of jeans by teachers. Prior to his arrival, word had reached the teachers through unofficial channels that Dr. Kellogg believed that teachers should dress professionally and that the wearing of jeans was not appropriate. In his opening remarks at the in-service meeting, he did address the importance of professional appearance. He also stated that he would listen to any proposals to wear blue jeans under certain circumstances. The resolution of the jeans issue by accepting a proposal from the teachers was seen as a positive compromise by both teachers and parents:

. . . we heard about the fact that some of the teachers really liked to wear jeans and we had heard that he had a dress code for teachers and that you could not wear jeans. Everyone was waiting for him to bring this up and people were getting upset about that and he took care of that real fast. He did not realize that this was a big issue and that it was important to some of the teachers so, he said, what we will do is just make Friday jeans day and on the other days wear something else.

The impression that I got . . . is that although he really does not like it, he was willing to listen to the teachers and compromise with them.

One of the first committees organized during the first semester was the building committee. The function of this committee was to determine the building needs for the district. Members of the committee included parents, teachers, business leaders, and administrators. Shortly after the committee was established, a bond issue was proposed. A member of the building committee described the function of the committee:

The building committee came about because, as the new administration came in not knowing which way to go with bond issues and with building repair, talking about whether we need to demolish a building or repair it or just which direction we need to go, rather than just pouring good money after bad, they decided that we would get input from this cross-section of people. What we are to do is tour each facility in the Carlisle system, then we get back and we prioritize the needs. We see where we want to be 5 years from now, 10 years from now, which buildings are salvageable and which ones should be replaced.

In his newsletter dated September 25, 1993, Dr. Kellogg spoke to the importance of establishing a program of bond issues and his desire for staff input:

It is very critical to this school system that we get on a program of bond issues so that we can maintain buildings, purchase buses, and purchase needed equipment. The money is just simply not available from other sources and we desperately need the money which can be raised through bond issues. . . . I want your input as we make critical decisions. In order to share my thoughts and get your input, I have scheduled faculty meetings in each building.

Others noted the keen perception of the superintendent concerning needed improvements, using bond issues to the maximum, and the importance of including needs for many sites in the bond issue:

Dr. Kellogg walked in and said, 'First thing that we need here is a bond issue, not just part of a bond issue, but we need to be taxed to the max here; we need these roofs fixed.' He said the '. . . building was

deplorable,' in fact, he had a wonderful quote in the newspaper. . . . I saw the best and the worst, the best were the teachers and the students and the worst was the building. He is not afraid to let the people know what happened and they passed it by a big margin. . . .

Another thing that I never felt here, but was mentioned was that whenever we would have a bond issue, it was like, 'we are really sorry that your roof leaks, but we need to build this new school.' With the bond issue that Dr. Kellogg put through, it was like the main objective was to finish [the] elementary, but 'we want money for all the schools for repairs.' So, they spread it out and every building is included somehow in this bond issue. Maybe you do not accomplish as much if you built one school, but it really boosted the morale. We found out that we were going to get teacher desks; I have never had a desk. This is so exciting. He is seeing that there are needs everywhere and he is addressing them.

Under the tenure of the former superintendent, a previous bond issue had failed just one year earlier. Several commented on Dr. Kellogg's role in securing the passage of this bond issue by talking with various groups and enlisting their support:

Carlisle has a lot of women's clubs of which I am a part of. I know on several occasions, this new administrator has been at our meetings and he has thoroughly discussed everything he plans to do and then he has sat back and asked, 'Now what do you want me to do? You have children in these schools, you are people of the community, what do you want me to do?' Then we all told him all our little gripes and complaints. I never have seen that before. I know he did that in several different clubs, not just the ones that I am in. It takes getting out and doing those kinds of things. I am sure his evenings are not with his family very often right now, but it was worth it; it paid off. Both of the bond issues passed, and until this current bond issue, we were living here for two or three previous to that, none of which passed.

Yes, we had a bond issue for that [new elementary], I guess a year ago in October to finish it, but it failed. Then we had to do this one, Dr. Kellogg did a good job of selling everyone on this one and told everybody that the way for us to increase the salaries and things is to free up some of our money by bond issues. Our teachers got out and worked to get this one passed.

Now, the previous administrator had started the ball in motion. As a parent, and out in the community listening to my friends talk, I heard people were not so favorable for all the bond issues it takes, because being a rural community there are more people who have no children in the school system than there are people like me who have children in the school system, and it is difficult to get those kinds of issues passed. This new administrator is also a politician; he can present it in such a way that he has gotten two bond issues passed very quickly. I am sure

the previous administration wanted things done in the past, but I think in the community now, that is seen more favorably and is due to a lot more publicity that this new administration has been able to put out.

I visited with few persons in the Carlisle School District who failed to turn the discussion to committees. Numerous committees were set up by Dr. Kellogg for the stated primary purposes of gaining input from those affected by the decision and for improving the planning process:

I have served and am currently serving on a building committee that is assessing the needs of the district for years to come. This is something that is new; we are seeing input from business leaders, from townsfolk, patrons, teachers, a good assortment of people on this committee.

He has a curriculum committee appointed and a discipline committee. He is big on committees. He wants everyone's opinion before making a decision. I think people here are going to perceive that as good. It has not always been that way.

. . . he does a lot more of rule by committee. You know, go around and get committees going and getting a lot of input from people.

Several mentioned how membership on the committees has led to interschool involvement and has affected their working relationships with others:

. . . different committees that he has put together involves someone from every school and so. . . I have met and gotten to know so many more (people). To me, this has helped to get to know more of the teachers; to get to have a relationship with them.

I am getting to work with more people. I think the committees have made that possible, and maybe there is a hidden idea behind having these committees; maybe that is one reason, so that we can get together.

I have teacher friends in this building who have started working on (several) committees, so it does seem like the teachers are getting more involved this year.

Attributes, Actions, and Attitudes

Many commented on the attributes of Dr. Kellogg including astuteness regarding making change and the wisdom of knowing where he is before moving on:

Dr. Kellogg is perceived as being the element of change at all levels. The community, the board and he perceives [sic] himself as the element

of change. I think the principals and teachers also have this same perception. . . . I think Dr. Kellogg is a very intelligent person. He knows that you have to know where you are before you start changing. He is learning where he is this school year.

But so far, he has just been so upbeat and positive about what he plans down the road. Bob is smart enough to know not to come in and try to make a bunch of changes right off. . . .

I do not care how long your superintendent was there; during that time he is going to form enemies and he is also going to have a lot of loyal folks. So, he is not going to change those loyal ones' minds overnight and you already have the others on your side anyway, because you are new. I think that is what we are seeing here. I think Bob respects what [the former superintendent] has done over the years.

Being organized, focused, and giving direction were attributes that were noticed and commented upon by teachers, administrators, and parents:

I think Dr. Kellogg has his definite ways of doing things and he came in prepared, and he did his homework on the district.

I have also noticed that Dr. Kellogg really firmly believes in not being a crisis administrator, but making plans and trying to set goals and reach those goals through well thought out plans interactively. He wants plans that are made by teachers, administrators, parents, and the interested board members, all working together.

An administrator commented on Dr. Kellogg's efforts to unite the district with a singular and common course:

I do think that the change that I have seen in autonomy and site management is good. Too much of a good thing often is not good. I think if anything, we had too much autonomy. Dr. Kellogg has sort of reined that in a little bit and I think that is good. I think that we are much better in decision making and direction and being aware of what the other guy is doing. . . . We used to have a tremendous amount of horizontal power . . . we had a tremendous amount of site autonomy. We could do what we wanted with our sites, and as long as we did not make waves and there were no complaints about us, it was okay. The general philosophy is there, but we were not metered by any particular drum beat. We could just all go out there and not only march to a different drummer, we could supply him with the beat that we wanted. I think that now, while we are still autonomous, we hear a cadence in the background that we can all march to. I think that is good, it ensures that you are all marching in the same direction.

Communication appears to be a strength of Dr. Kellogg. Teachers were impressed by his ability to remember names and the fact that he associates directly with them:

I feel like Dr. Kellogg has really made an effort to be around us and get to know us. He has been in our building and is here at least once a week and comes by our room and speaks to us and wants to know how things are going.

Our new superintendent has come to faculty meetings. He is more visible. He eats lunch in the cafeteria with us more often. There is a group of teachers who bring a covered dish lunch and he even got involved with that.

Dr. Kellogg sat through the whole staff development thing at the beginning of school. He came here for the retired teachers' luncheon and was relating an event that happened at home. We said we wanted to meet his wife. She came to our staff development. He said the next day that he looked for you girls to introduce to my wife. It is just like he is one of us!

Dr. Kellogg will walk through and he knows everyone's name and he will stop and talk to you about something that relates to you. It is like this man cares about you; he cares enough to find out a little bit about you to remember what you had to say.

. . . after practice one day . . . every boy that walked out he said, 'hello' to and called them by name. He said things like, 'Hi, Joe, how is your job down at Homeland?' I do not even know all the boys' names. I do not know how he knows all these things; this must be something that he really works on doing.

His interaction with all members of the school community is affected by his approachability, willingness to listen, and their comfort level in visiting with him concerning problem areas:

I think he has really made an effort to involve us more. Myself, as a teacher, up to this year, I never felt like anybody really, in the administration, really cared a lot. I know that they must have, but I just did not ever feel like that they really did. He makes an effort to make sure that he knows what we are doing and what is going on; in fact, I think he has made a concerted effort to do that. He wants our opinions on things and he will listen.

Even if he does not agree with you, he is willing to listen.

Now, I feel comfortable that if I did have a problem and could not get it resolved here, that I am not the least bit intimidated and I would just go over there and talk to him. I do not feel like my job is in jeopardy.

Direct communication is accomplished through his monthly meetings with staff members and any others that choose to attend:

He is real open. One of the things that he started, is that once a month he has a superintendent's visitation. This is a meeting after school that is just whatever you want to talk to him about, he will talk to you about. Any of the teachers that want to come can. If something has happened, like at a board meeting, and he wants to explain to people, this is his opportunity. Any questions that the teachers have, all they have to do is just show up and ask him. He has this meeting once a month. There is a lot of communication that was not there before.

It was an informal gathering of people and the people there just kind of expressed what they wanted to say. . . . I think it was working toward that [informal interaction]; some of the people there already knew him and then there were some people like me, who were attending the meeting for the first time and were not quite 100% totally comfortable, but just kind of thinking, 'now can I say this or can I say that?'

[He] had general meetings asking if any of the teachers would feel free to meet with him at his weekly meetings. You can come in and voice your concerns, ideas, needs, whatever you want to talk about.

Many noticed and commented on his personal visits to school sites and school activities:

The first thing I noticed about our new superintendent was that he is more visible. He has been around to visit actual classrooms and teachers.

Also, he is very good with his communication skills; he is very warm. He came to us and did not say, 'Now all of you come down to this big general meeting.' He worked very hard to learn all the teachers' names and I think he knows all the teachers in the district and that is impressive.

With the new one now, he has been in several times since the first of school and he even told everybody that he would be popping in to say 'hi' and see how things are going. If he did not know who you were, or if he had not met you before, he introduces himself to you. He would tell you, 'I do not want you to get uptight; I am not there to critique your room.' He just wants to see what is going on.

Another area of communication is the weekly newsletter he writes for staff members. In the first edition, dated August 25, 1993, he described the purpose of the newsletter:

The purpose of the Newsletter will be to acquaint you with items of interest or concern to the entire school district . . . we are one school district, and I believe we need to know what is going on in individual schools in the district. Throughout the year, there will be topics which all employees should know about, and I will attempt to keep you current through this publication. It is intended for all school employees and will be distributed in such a manner that all employees will have access to one. Please help me in obtaining information for the Newsletter.

The newsletter proved to be popular with staff members, according to most:

Another thing that he does that we really like, is that every Friday or almost every Friday, we get a little newsletter from him. This kind of ties the schools together and you can read things about all the schools, or maybe about a teacher. It is just really nice.

. . . he will also put out this newsletter after the board meeting, letting them [staff] know what happened at the board meeting. His theory is that he does not want them to hear it secondhand from anybody else. So, that has worked real well so far.

He has a newsletter that he sends out that I like very much. Teachers are encouraged to send in things to share with other teachers and he is good to compliment programs and things that teachers are doing.

The importance of effective communication among members of the school community is an issue addressed by Dr. Kellogg in speaking to or writing to his staff. He commented on examples of effective communication and compliments those involved:

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of communication. I must communicate effectively with you, with the community, and with the Board. You must communicate with parents at every opportunity. Two excellent examples of communication came across my desk this week. Think about how you communicate with your students and parents. We exist in a community, and how that community perceives us determines much about our success. We can help control that perception through the manner in which we communicate.

Several of you have sent me copies of communications you have sent home with students. I enjoy receiving these and commend those of you who are doing this.

This newsletter is to enhance communication across the school district. We are one united district, and it is valuable and interesting to know what is going on in other schools. Many of you are taking the time to send me information to share with all employees in the district and I appreciate it. I learn much from your notes and calls. Keep them coming.

A number of parents, teachers, and administrators admired Dr. Kellogg's quick action in actually becoming a part of the community. The Board of Education gave him a year's grace to sell his home before he would be required to move to the community.

A teacher described Dr. Kellogg's actions:

He was told he could have a year to move here. But he's already moved his kids to Carlisle schools and is now renting a house. They are going to church in Carlisle and he is involved in civic things here. I am impressed by that.

Others noted his presence and participation in extracurricular and civic activities:

It may be because he has children, but everywhere I would go, there he would be. You know, like football games, pep rallies, chili suppers. I just think that it's nice that he takes the time to be involved that much with his children. I see him doing so much and giving so much of himself that it makes you want to give.

He is very, very active in the community. He's in the newspaper a lot as far as being on different committees. He does something with the hospital, fund-raisers, and this and that. He is very civic minded.

Another area addressed by teachers, administrators, and parents was his influence, visibility, and openness with the larger community:

We have a small community, but this is a large school and one person over all of these people. There have been times when you go half of a year and not really see or talk to your superintendent. It has not been that way this year. You just feel very comfortable with speaking out, airing your concerns and feelings. Like we had the bond issue, there was a lot of negative feelings about that from the community and even some teachers and he turned everything positive. I felt like it helped the community. He presented long-range goals, not just for now, but for the future.

... the new administration is consciously trying to make an effort to meet with every level of person in town, including the townsfolk and the patrons, as well as the teachers.

He has had many articles in the paper. He was very good about visiting clubs and groups to promote the bond issues. He listened to the

teachers and did a good marketing job as far as what is needed in the Carlisle schools. I feel that is so important to educate your public.

From things that he says, you know that you are not just hearing one little group's opinion and he is not reacting to just one little group. He has checked with different people to find out what they think about things. You feel like he is representing more of the community.

He has a meeting that is open to anyone in the community that wishes to come and to talk, whether it be a complaint or something that they are excited about or just general information that they want.

In visiting various schools, talking with teachers, parents, and administrators, one issue that seemed to emerge in conversations was what was perceived as a carry-over from the new superintendent to both administrators and teachers. More organization, being more proactive toward problems, supporting teachers, and seeking input were all seen as positive changes in other staff members:

I really like being here too. I have noticed a change in leadership in the building too as far as doing things. We got a calendar and it had faculty meeting on every Thursday. It used to be that we might be here at five till eight and they would come on over the speaker and announce faculty meeting in the library. I think Dr. Kellogg is saying to them that he wants them to be organized and let your teachers know what is going on. I like to know what is expected of me.

. . . assistant superintendent's office--things come out of there--school buses. He gets concerned about situations on school buses. . . . People are making moves to save money, cut corners, get progressive. He worked out a new plan, we didn't see that before. Buses used to be here until 3:40 now are gone at 3:05. He looks at things through a critical eye and has improved efficiency and effectiveness.

I think our principals were told [by the superintendent] that if we have a rule, we are going to enforce it. Teachers, after awhile, get to the point where we are trying to follow the line and nothing happens. There has been more of push that we will do something.

I have noticed a kind of effect on our principal in that he is spending more time sitting down and talking with us. I think that relates to the idea of getting input from faculty and things like that. [He] is more inclined to come in and try to find out some things from us, how we feel about things.

Administrators talked about how Dr. Kellogg believes in making plans, and making decisions based on what is best for students and teachers. He is very

demonstrative in what he wants administrators to do and whatever is done better bring about benefit to students and teachers. There is a greater attempt to control the environment rather than the environment controlling the administrators. Several discussed what it was that Dr. Kellogg expected from them, where they see him headed, and what has occurred thus far:

The prime directive is making decisions based on input from others:

I see some restructuring for us down the road. I think he is more into site-based management than most of them are these days; moving in that direction. I think a lot of people in town, including the staff, have just seen it as maybe a breath of fresh air.

He does not think of problems in a theoretical sense and then reinterpret it to the practical, he simply deals with it in the practical.

[Have seen] overall more planning and a great attempt to control the environment rather than allowing the environment to control your decision making process.

Climate: How It Feels

Many mentioned an improvement in morale as a result of actions and attributes of the new administration. One teacher told of getting her heater repaired simply by bringing it to the attention of the superintendent. Shortly after she mentioned it to him, the assistant superintendent was out and quickly arranged for the repair:

I always felt like I got the run around before. I know that has helped the morale in our teachers this year. . . . I was getting a little paranoid there for awhile and now I feel really comfortable. They are not just trying to put on a good front for the public; they really seem to care.

Others talked about the changes they have noticed in attitudes and morale level during the few months since the new superintendent started:

Well, I do feel like there is a little bit freer atmosphere in being able to say what you feel and we have a lot less negative feelings about the overall school system.

I think people have a more open attitude and it seems like morale is a little bit on the rise, lifting a little bit. With a new superintendent you have hopes.

I think the morale is up more and so relations are better . . . you do not hear so much griping and you are thinking if there is a situation or problem that comes up . . . maybe we can go ahead and do this. We think of ways that maybe we can go ahead and ask him.

Running through the conversations I had with various members of the school community was an underlying issue concerning their opinion of or attitude toward the changes they had observed thus far:

So far the changes that I have seen have all been very positive and I think that is what we needed in this district . . . a positive image, both in the community and within our own organization; one that is very open and above board.

I like them; I think he is doing an excellent job.

I think for a little bit there was a little anxiety on the part of the teachers, along the lines of, what is going to happen here? Is he going to come in with a whole bunch of changes, or is he going to let us keep doing what we are doing? After that anxiety was set aside, there was no problem at all.

Good, as you can tell. We hope he keeps this up. He is brand new, but we hope these things continue. . . I hope he keeps asking for input. I hope he stays with the superintendent's visitation and I feel he will. I feel this is the way he operates.

I like them [changes]. I think that is one reason that we feel we are a little more positive. He is very positive. It seems like he wants to hear what you have to say. You get a good feeling that maybe what you feel counts.

I feel more and more positive about the future and how things are going to turn out. I think this is a good change. I think that maybe the last administrator was just here too long.

As I ended my initial round of visits to Carlisle at the end of the first semester, one question relating to the superintendent seemed to be on the mind of several. Although, for the most part, they liked what they had seen and experienced thus far, some questioned whether there would continue to be follow-through on his part:

I think the way he has come across where he seems to show a sincere, genuine interest in the school system and trying to have everyone work together and be a family is good. People are looking at it in positive way. One thing that everyone is looking to is the fact that they are kind of watching if he says something, is he going to follow through with it.

Right now, everybody is looking at, because this is a new superintendent, is he going to try to do what he can to please everybody so he does not cause a ruckus in the school system? I think that as people are being more open to express concerns and likes and dislikes about things, he will tell you if he can do something about it or not. He is being open enough that, if he does not know, he will say, 'I do not know.' That has been kind of good.

The school community of Carlisle was taking somewhat of a 'wait and see' position.

Outcome-Based Education: A Visit to a Parent

Forum-Second Semester

Arriving shortly before the appointed meeting time, I am greeted by a locked door. Pondering whether I had misread the notice of the meeting, I walked back toward my car to sit as I decided my next move. Within a few minutes, a woman parked her vehicle and walked toward the door. I asked her if this was where the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) meeting was to be, and she told me the meeting would be in the P.E. room. As I enter the elementary school building, I feel as though I am in Anywhere Elementary School. Student work from second grade is displayed along the front hallway. The sound of footsteps on the generic tile floor sound just the same as when I walk into any school. The smells associated with young children remain in the air, even though it is hours since they left for the day. There is the odor of perspiration mixed with playground dirt, chalk dust on sweaty hands, white school glue spread where it shouldn't be, and the residue of milk on thermos bottles left behind by forgetful children. I can almost hear their voices as they rush out to recess.

Teachers' names posted over doorways are similar in origin to those I noticed when I was in the downtown area last semester. As I gaze in the doorways on my way to the P.E. room, teachers' desks--some quite cluttered, others bare--appear almost as sentinels guarding the smaller children's desks in each room. I find the P.E. room, which appears to also be used as a lunchroom. It is quite small, and actually seems to be two classrooms that had been combined to form a larger area. Two fold-down

cafeteria tables with seats on either side are awaiting those who will attend this session concerning OBE.

When I was visiting Carlisle during the first semester, OBE was mentioned just in passing. Dr. Kellogg had referred to it briefly in the staff newsletter when he had mentioned that Carlisle Public Schools would participate in a state pilot program for OBE, that a committee would be formed, and that a core group of teachers would be trained to assist in training the rest of the staff. His rationale for becoming a pilot school was:

Outcomes-based is coming, and it was my feeling that we should proceed while we would be in a position to receive assistance from the state. I am unsure about outcomes based instruction and do not completely understand the details at this time. The best part of the program, however, is that we can chart much of our own course.

Carlisle Public Schools did "chart their own course" with OBE, as did many schools in the state. Their committee work had resulted in a plan that had been presented in 11 open forums at school sites and churches in the community. That night was to be the twelfth and final presentation for patrons in this particular school's attendance area.

Fifteen adults and two children sat at the cafeteria tables for about an hour and a half listening to a central office administrator present the simple plan that Carlisle had chosen. Several in the audience took copious notes; others challenged her statements with pointed questions. Many appeared to be relieved by the content of her answers, while others appeared to remain confident in their belief that OBE just would not work. As I sat in this twelfth meeting, it became clear that OBE was not just a minor issue in the community of Carlisle, just as it was not a minor issue in many communities across the state of Oklahoma.

School staff members are comfortable with how their OBE program is progressing and the leadership displayed by all those involved:

I think OBE overall is going real well considering the flack that's been noticed around this part of the state. What we have done is that we're putting it only in social studies next year. We're working up units in social studies at this time. Plus, we're just taking from those outcomes what best fits [our] County and Carlisle. We're not taking it as a blanket package. . . . We are just looking it as a vehicle for instruction, not as subject matter.

We have a lot of leadership within the teachers. Now it seems like we have a good leader overall. We have some, I think they're called assistant superintendents, I really don't mind mentioning names, because they are wonderful, wonderful people. Sallie, in fact, led the OBE Committee. She's one that's been much responsible for the good PR that we do get on that, and the way that she can come across and explain it, the research that she's done. We have two or three teachers then that just took off on that, and I mean they went to workshops and did research on it, researched the states where it doesn't seem to be doing very well and why it wasn't doing very well and they were so prepared for any question that was asked.

They also realized the importance of parents being involved in the process and welcomed that involvement. They felt that efforts are being made to inform and to involve parents:

We've had our share of questions being asked. There have been a couple of editorials in the paper. It's some concerns that are really brought about by some out-of-state people. They come in and they're doing just like they are in [your city] or anywhere else. They've had the 13-page petition where it's failed back east. They've had the rainbow curriculum, and all that, where this has nothing to do with rainbow curriculum or anything like that. They asked me how we were going to attack it. The only way I know is just by education. If people would just come and look at what we're trying to do and have some degree of trust is about the only way we're ever going to go with it. I think if that would cause enough commotion to cause the patrons to be in tune and check our curriculum, that's great, if they would do that.

The OBE in the whole state . . . there's been a lot of negative feelings about it. I know you're aware of that in Carlisle. Carlisle just took off on it. So we've had these meetings at schools, in communities, different places, and invited people to come. I like the approach Carlisle has taken with it because it's been slow and gradual and making sure everybody understands that we're not jumping into this and we're willing to listen to the parents. So I think, well I know, since the meetings that were held last week, there was one at [Wolcott], and one at Carlisle elementary schools at night and then one day a couple of special service people and teachers were at the school. The parents could drop in during the day. So I think after that and then we've had some good news publicity on it, the news articles. The feeling I'm getting in town now is, I

like your approach to it and maybe there's some things that were misled, misunderstood. I think that's coming along real well.

In spite of the success of the public relations efforts, a vocal group of parents expressed their concern about the OBE process in Carlisle. One parent summed up the feelings of several in describing her feeling that the school people listen but have the opinion they know what is best and give few answers to parents' questions:

So they have seemed to listen, especially on the OBE front . . . but their answers are still always, 'we understand your concerns, but this is what we know.' And some of the questions, like finances, you ask them how much is this going to cost? And the most concise answer I heard or the most factual was that 'We've spent \$6,000 to date on some education and training for teachers. And we're hoping that will be the most expensive year. So, you don't get any ideas about how much it's going to cost.' . . . There's some questions with specifics that, get a pat, 'it's okay; we'll take care of it. You know, we're doing this in your best interest.'

The School Community

Another pressing issue that occurred early in the second semester involved the annual school election. This election was held in conjunction with another issue that involved an increase in tax rates which was voted down. One of the three levies that support the operation of the schools also was not approved by the voters. This state's law is very specific in that all three levies must pass in order for a school district to continue to qualify for state aid. Should the school district not qualify for state aid, the State Department of Education has jurisdiction to decide the fate of the school district. Generally, the decision would be to annex the affected school to a neighboring school district.

Shortly after the failure of the millage vote, Dr. Kellogg called a special meeting of the board of education for the purpose of determining what course of action to follow. His recommendation was to call another election as soon as possible, which under state law could not be scheduled for approximately two months. Also, all costs of

the election must be borne by the school district. Board of education action set the second school election for the month of April.

Dr. Kellogg set into action garnering support for this school levy. He asked for help from all staff members in educating the public as to the importance of this particular election. He personally visited civic clubs and various community functions for the express purpose of explaining the millage levy.

The student editor of one of the school newspapers called the superintendent and asked him to come out to visit with students in an enrichment class about this issue. The teacher of the class described the impact of his visit:

. . . visited with the students about the necessity of the [millage levy]; that if Carlisle did not pass it the second time, we could be annexed into another district. . . . Then we settled down and really discussed the ramifications of this. That, 'No, buses wouldn't take you. No, you would not get to choose the district you would go to; the district might not want you. You would not be a Carlisle Tiger. . . you would try out again for all your different sports--cheerleading, any extracurricular activities.' . . . Finally, I think the students understood.

The efforts of all those involved paid off in April when the millage passed by an overwhelming margin, with over 81% voting in favor of the issue. Dr. Kellogg gave credit to all members of the school community pulling together for this success.

During visits with members of the school community there was much discussion of how Dr. Kellogg seemed to be trying to pull the school community together to strengthen the bonds both within the school district itself and with parent groups. Parents discussed how he has worked with the parent groups through meeting with parent organization members on a regular basis. One parent related her experience with the superintendent's interest in the organization and his efforts to bring the individual school parent organizations together to form a stronger community group:

. . . one thing Dr. Kellogg has started doing is trying to draw us all together as a more community type school instead of like, for the elementaries, we have three different elementaries and it has been, that's this school, it's this school. . . . And what he's trying to do is make us to be Carlisle Elementary Schools. All interacting and balancing each other, helping, maybe doing some community type fund raising . . . he's trying

to get us to do community fund raisers together and he's been having meetings of the different PTO's from different schools and just that itself, all of us women like to talk and we've all exchanged ideas or we've had this problem, how do you address this, just I think, open lines of communication. . . . He is real interested. He wants it to be a stronger group.

Another described his efforts to pull the school district together internally:

I still feel like we're still heading toward being more of a big family. I think he's wanting everyone to be a big family rather than just high school here, elementary, junior high, and try to put across that we all work together. Our district cannot do well unless we're all in there and all pitching in our fair share. I think he's still working toward that and he still would like . . . for teachers to be able to, if they had a concern or a problem or anything, to be able to call him and set up an appointment and just come in and talk and not be afraid.

Several credited Dr. Kellogg as being the catalyst for improved communication and cooperation among the school principals this school year. One related how she was particularly impressed with the fact that for the first time there was sharing between schools in terms of different schools using other school facilities for activities:

One of the places we saw a dramatic change. . . [Our school] really doesn't have any facilities where we come together as a common group. Even though we're a small number of parents, we can't get all the parents and the kids into that little bitty two-room cafeteria. So, they never could have activities. They couldn't bring all the parents in at the same time. So we wanted to do some things like that and they said that in the past, every time they tried to do it, there was no place. They had to rent some place to have these meetings. Well this year, I mentioned that to Kellogg . . . and we ended up getting into, we had one activity at [another] elementary. We had one activity at [the] junior high and we had one activity at the high school. So, we're really spread around. And that is apparently a first. That's never been allowed before where we could use the other facilities without paying any kind of fee . . . and it was no problem. I just talked to their principals and they said, sure, come on over and use them.

The community in general appears to be viewing the school system in a positive vein. There is a good deal of interest in curriculum and in extra curricular activities. The business community is active in school activities and very supportive financially through the local school foundation. A parent summed up this feeling of support:

I think that the community is so interested in financially making things available, like with the school foundation, the public school foundation, that's, I think, an exceptional feature of Carlisle School District. I just

think that the community support is really there for making it possible for the educators to do what they need. And I think there is still a lot of parents that are interested in honors-type programs and having their students excel. I'd probably say the strongest factor is the community support. Because even when the community has been upset about something, it's never been well, we're going to pull out and let you fall on your face. We want to get in there and help.

The change in the school administration appears to have opened the door for more community involvement and improved communication. The willingness of the superintendent to encourage input and involvement is noted. Several commented on this situation:

I'd say in today's climate, Carlisle is pretty well satisfied . . . with what's going on. There's always areas for improvement. I think with the change of administrations, those people in the community who are interested in change in the schools see this as an optimum opportunity to become involved . . . the administration has said, 'We want to hear from you. Come on out and tell us.' We do have more people coming up saying, 'Why can't we do this and why can't we do that?' I don't think it's dissatisfaction so much as it's a intent of let's make it better.

I think the community's accepting him pretty well because we're trying to do everything in . . . an open attitude. He seems to make himself [available], I guess at special functions and things, he's been there. He's talked with a very sincere and open mind that he wants parents to be able to come into the schools and express their concerns and things like that. I think he's wanting to have a lot of community involvement.

. . . people are a lot more positive, a lot more willing to work. Parents, you know, I think they're finding that they have an administration, plus principals, but I am including that, they are much more willing to listen. So if they have a problem or something they want to discuss, they feel freer to come to the schools and do that. The schools have made a real effort to have parent conferences and open houses and things like that to keep the parents informed.

He just seems willing to address problems. If parents come to school in protest about something, he seems to listen to them and gives them a voice and then after that, I don't know what he does. I mean, you know, he tries to do, I'm sure, what he can do to please or say, 'Hey, there isn't anything we can do about that, you know, this is the way things are.' But I do think that he's given voice to people.

I've heard a lot of good comments around town that he's approachable, that he's open to suggestions, that he does desire community input on decisions. He's moved over here and has become a part of the community.

A concern during this semester related to the number of committees and the time commitment required of members. Most were very happy to be getting input into decisions made by the committee process but also talk about the tremendous time commitment involved. They realized that Dr. Kellogg was attempting to involve lots of people in getting things done through the committee process. This process also involved Dr. Kellogg taking the recommendation of the committee:

He's real good on that--of not going against the committee's wish. He has the theory that if we're going to appoint a committee, then we need to listen to them, if at all possible, follow their findings. I think that is one of his strong suits that he is doing so far. I've been a member of those committees where you do a lot of work and that's about all. 'This is what we're going to do, go see if you agree.' He hasn't been that way. He really has been refreshing on that. He lets the committee work and lets them function. He's pretty well taken their word on it.

During this semester, members of the school community continued to notice a degree of carryover from the superintendent to other staff members. They mentioned his level of enthusiasm and motivation being reflected in principals and teachers. His expectation that the staff establish and maintain rapport with the parents is apparent. His actions have encouraged the teachers and other staff members to be "a little more professional" as they face problem situations:

Dr. Kellogg tends, when he sees a problem, to try to confront it. Not in a confrontational manner, but he tries to look in the eye and say, 'Okay, how are we going to solve it, what are we going to do?' And I think that more and more you see other people doing that. You see them sort of following his lead, and saying, 'Okay, here's a problem; let's see what needs to be done about it.' . . . I've noticed teachers . . . doing it [voicing their opinion and their concerns] in a less confrontational manner. They tend to think they'll be heard or listened to.

Attributes and Actions: Second Semester

Listening to other's concerns and being open to visits from members of the school community are actions of the superintendent noted by many. This is explained best by a teacher relating her experience in visiting with the superintendent about an

issue with which she did not agree. Earlier in the year she had stated that she would not be afraid to go visit with him and found that when the opportunity arose, she wasn't:

. . . he was real open. The superintendent was really nice. It was real informal. I felt very comfortable talking with him. I had just said I would like to express my opinion. . . . And he was real open about it and said he was glad that I did come to talk to him, but he did tell me that once he looked into it that, just because of what I said wasn't going to be a yes or a no, but that he would look into it. So it made me feel good that at least he was listening and had an open mind. So I was real pleased with that.

Dr. Kellogg's political acumen in other arenas is seen as a positive characteristic that brings success to the school district:

Bob is a good politician. He's a good politician at the state level. He's personal friends with many of the people down there, including [state senator, state representative, state superintendent] and many, many others. He was really visible during our bond issue. He went around and he met with every civic organization he could get to in town, from the senior citizens group to the hospital auxiliary. He just met with everybody and promoted a good image. He promotes a good image, a good positive image.

Dr. Kellogg's impact on the school system and community in general, appears to be largely due to personal characteristics and actions. Members of the school community are impressed with his degree of excitement about the school district and the level of energy he has to meet the continuing challenges involved in working with teachers, board members, and parents. His desire to improve the school district was seen by some as an indication of his interest in the district and as a reflection of his ambition:

I feel like he's interested. We all are interested in things that reflect upon us and I think maybe that's a little more concern for him. That he wants us to look spit and polished. He wants our school district to be a good example. He's young and he's ambitious and my only concern would be that, what looks good might conflict with what's really effective. I think so far, from everything I've seen, he's really interested in trying to make it a good school district.

Many felt that Dr. Kellogg has been somewhat taken aback by the depth of financial difficulties in the district and with the number of crises that continue to arise.

That he successfully functions in the simultaneous roles of crisis manager while making plans for the future was noted. His success with financial matters was appreciated:

Just from finances, that's one thing that I appreciate because I'm more financial minded or something and we've run in the red forever and borrowed from Peter type thing and he is trying to get us in the black. He's made some cuts and pulled up the stirrups and I see that as effective. Because I think that can only help the students in the long run. . . . He's willing to go out and push enough and be in enough meetings and talk enough and network enough to try and get bonds to make repairs and upgrades. That's effective. . . .

Members of the school district community noted that Dr. Kellogg's visibility level in the schools has slowed down this semester but that his interest has not:

. . . he's not visiting the buildings as much as he did, but he's here whenever he is called or anything like, we're in an Arts Festival this week and he showed up just to watch. . . . Dr. Kellogg was here the other day, just to watch to the play. We did a painting, everybody in school did a dot. He showed up to do his little dot. Not only Dr. Kellogg, but the assistant superintendent dropped by to see a play. They just want to be part of the school and they . . . come and watch and see what's happening, not just to put in a little appearance. So I still feel real good about that. I still feel real good about Dr. Kellogg.

Another view is that the superintendent tries to be so visible that he overbooks himself sometimes, resulting in another issue:

He's late for meetings. That's a negative. They [teachers] don't like that and neither do I. He has a little trouble being on time to his meetings. If I was going to fault him with one thing right now as far as my concerns, that's what I'd fault him on, he leaves people standing too much.

In April, two building administration positions opened due to retirements of long-time administrators. Dr. Kellogg explained his intentions concerning these vacancies in the Superintendent's Newsletter:

Openings have been posted as the search begins for their replacements. These are critical positions and much thought must be given as to how their replacements will be named. In order to determine what procedures will be followed, I want input from those teachers who will be affected.

He then outlined meeting times and dates for the purpose of meeting “with any interested teachers to provide us with their ideas.” He also encouraged those interested in administration to apply, since they would “be looking inside first.”

Shortly after this announcement, one staff member talked of how impressed she was with the process and noted that even the secretaries were coming to the meeting to discuss the replacement. She said that he “. . . wants our input as to what we want in a principal. We already have names to give him and feel comfortable telling him what we think and want.” She said she knows that she will feel very comfortable with whoever they hire because she will have a part in it. In May, Dr. Kellogg announced that the administrative positions had been filled with qualified candidates from within the school district who bring expertise and experience with them to the positions.

Also, at the May Board of Education meeting, reports were accepted from both the building committee and the technology committee concerning their recommendations. The building committee submitted some recommendations to solve short-term problems involving overcrowding at an elementary school and unhealthy conditions at an athletic dressing facility. Also included was the recommendation to have regular general upkeep of all facilities and grounds. The repair of roofs, ceilings, and lighting in several schools was previously recommended, as was the purchase of new furniture and equipment for several schools. The committee would continue to work toward a long-range plan for the school district facilities.

The bond issue that was passed early in the school year had an allocation for technology that had been recommended by Dr. Kellogg. A member of the Technology Committee discussed the workings of that committee:

We have money from the bond issue that was passed, that the superintendent initiated on that [technology]. So we have that money to spend for the next school year . . . [we spent] all this time trying to decide where it's most needed and the priority of the schools that needed it most. . . . We hope to have one computer for the workroom or the library for teachers to be able to use, which they don't have now . . . and then, the future plans . . . would be to have one on every teacher's desk.

Recommendations accepted by the board of education included new computers at four school sites and additional equipment at one school site. Work stations for teachers were included at all of the school sites. The committee would continue to finalize a three-year plan to use for future bond issue information.

Climate: How It Feels Now

Throughout my conversations the second semester, there was an underlying current of attitudes toward the superintendent, changes that have occurred, and the school district itself. The common thread running through these dialogues was that of favorable sentiment:

The general attitude of teachers, administrators, and parents is more positive. . . . The general attitude toward the superintendent is that of being pleased with his performance. He's made an effort to include us in what's going on. Before we were told, now we are allowed to be involved. Even if it doesn't go your way, at least you were involved.

I can feel real hope this year now. . . I think everyone feels more hopeful.

I think the teachers have a good feeling about the school district. I think they feel better about it than they did before.

I think that the people who are interested in education . . . and you always find people who couldn't care less . . . but I think the people who have children and who have the interest are very happy that he is here. I feel like that he's doing a good job.

. . . I have knowledge in a small community . . . other people and the members of the school board are friends of mine and they all are so excited about him. They say nice things about him.

I think the general attitude toward him from administrative staff is really, really good.

However, there is a small segment of the school community that continues to believe that their input falls upon deaf ears, that community members of the committees are hand-picked by the administration and that decisions made through the committee process are predetermined by the administration.

The question that had been posed at the end of the first group of visits during the fall semester concerning whether Dr. Kellogg would follow through with actions congruent with his words remains somewhat unanswered. Many spoke of finding Dr. Kellogg to be "for real" in their dealings with him, yet understand why others may have that question. This was explained best by a school staff member:

So far, I've found him to be for real. And I know where the teachers are coming from on that. I think two things we could understand about that is, number one, sometimes teachers aren't accustomed to having that much say or that much knowledge of what's really going on. They find that to be new, so obviously we're going to be a little bit reluctant to say, 'Well, is anybody just giving us a smoke screen, or are they really wanting us to know what's going on?' Maybe in the past, they haven't felt that they've had that much say, so I can understand why they'd be a little reluctant. Maybe they're also feeling a little bit of, well, maybe some of this sounds too good to be true. You prove to me that that's how its going to be.

Others, in discussing whether he will continue to carry out what he says he will do, cautioned that the financial situation may play a part in his ability to do so:

. . . I think he'll carry it out, but I think everybody has to understand it takes the money; it takes the full bond indebtedness to do it. I think he's eager to do this, but if every teacher could tour all of the facilities and see everything there is a problem with, I don't know why the man took the job, to be honest with you. It's a big job. I think he'll carry it out but he's going to have to continually keep the backing of the board and everybody else to do it. I feel this way. I feel very strongly that if it can be done, he can do it.

I trust him. Not that I didn't at first, but I really waited on my opinion to find out what, I mean I didn't just walk into it go, oh, it's a new superintendent, does everything he says, that's how it will be. So I really waited to make an opinion on him. I have trust in him. I feel, sorry is kind of the wrong word, and sympathy is not it either. I really believe he didn't have any earthly idea of the financial straits we were in. He's trying to do things, and he's working to do things. Sometimes I just know by just the look on his face that he's so overwhelmed by it all. He wants to do the right thing. He really is trying, which we haven't had that in a long time, somebody trying to straighten things out. I feel real good about him. But I really feel for him at times.

Others see the big test for his congruency lying in the negotiations process for the 1993-94 school year. They were impressed with his honesty and openness during

the prior year's negotiations process. The teachers admittedly settled for less because they felt they ought to give him a year's chance. They were aware that money previously allocated for repairs and other building improvements was not spent out of the general fund. They admitted they will be hard to convince when it comes to whether there is enough money for a salary increase this year:

I'm probably thinking they're going to tell us that they have this certain amount of money, because that's kind of what they laid out on the table last year. But I really feel like that we probably will not just take it at face value that way. I think we'll probably go ahead and want either figures and audit type things to actually see. One of the things that they said on the salary thing last year on a piece of paper was that they already had certain monies appropriated for certain things. Well, as it turned out through the school year, instead of the school having to pay, like say for paving and things for the new school, the city actually did it. So it was really no cost to the school district as far as we understand. You know, they said they worked out something. So we know that that amount of money did not have to apply to that. And then we passed the bond issue, so the bond issue actually was going to, those monies were going to be able to take care of roof repairs and other things that they had listed under there. So we felt like some of those monies then should be available. So, we'll see how that goes.

But I just really feel like how negotiations go and how things work out at the table and how the word of the things from the table get spread through the faculty. Yes, I think that's going to be one of the key things. Especially if he cannot come up with answers or reasons why certain things are having to be done. . . . So, if they feel like that the administration is giving us clear-cut answers. And nothing hidden, then. . . . I think they're going to be more open.

Thus, Bob Kellogg will begin his second year as he did his first, facing what appears to be a rocky negotiations process. However, the difference this year is that he and his administration are viewed as totally responsible for the financial situation and the resulting success or failure of negotiations. The Board of Education negotiations team offered to the Carlisle Educators Association negotiating team an increase in salary for career teachers which was not readily accepted. Contrasting opinions as to the amount of money available for salary increases led to somewhat of a "stand-off" in determining final salary increases. Differing from last year's timely finish in August, this year's negotiation process will continue after the start of school.

Bob Kellogg spent his first year in Carlisle actively involved in securing improvements in facilities, technology, and overall communication, as well as seeking the involvement of all members of the school community. He credited their efforts in achieving "some important accomplishments" but noted that they have ". . . barely scratched the surface of what we can do in Carlisle." Dr. Kellogg ended his first year continuing to seek the commitment of the people of the school community to work together in reaching "those important goals" and making "this school all that it can be." That he has plans for a second year of improvement projects for Carlisle Public Schools became apparent.

CHAPTER V

BROOKSIDE PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A COMMUNITY ASSET

From "Home Town" to City

Just after the turn of the century, plans were made to build a railroad between two young towns, Medlock and Trent, along the banks of the largest river in what is now this midwest state. Once the route was determined, a land company contracted to lay out additional towns along the line. A site was acquired near the planned tracks and named Brookside by a representative of the company. This townsite was approximately three miles from a small village that had recently been established by settlers from another territory. When they realized that the tracks would bypass their townsite, several put their houses and buildings on runners and used teams to drag them to Brookside. Others acquired lots from the company, and within a few weeks the town of Brookside had a main street, houses, a hotel, and several stores. The depot was completed the next year and served trains carrying passengers, mail, and freight.

Residents of Brookside created a "family" town by quickly organizing a school and establishing churches to serve the families of the town. Farmers settled the surrounding area and made Brookside their market center. It remained the core of an agricultural area for over six decades while experiencing slow growth. The completion of a large expressway directly from Brookside to the downtown and business areas of Trent, a large city to the west, began a new era for Brookside.

Brookside became a haven for home developers and a home to many who commuted to work in Trent. The small farm community began to experience unprecedented growth. Where crops had once been planted, homes were rapidly rising placing

a great demand on the school system for educational services. The citizens of the school district community answered the challenges well by consistently voting bond issues to meet these needs. During the past two decades, the Brookside Public School District has built more than 15 new schools to serve a school population approximately three times the size it was in 1973.

The Brookside Public School District is over 100 square miles in size and is bounded by several other school districts. There is a diverse student population that represents several countries and many states in the U.S. Because of its proximity to Trent, many who are transferred to work in the metropolitan area choose to live in Brookside and commute to Trent so their children could attend school in a suburban area with a reputation for excellence. Brookside Senior High students consistently score above the state and national norms on the ACT. Many students earn college credit through the advanced placement program. Scholarship amounts for 1992 were close to \$5 million. Achievement test scores at all levels continue to be well above average.

Because of the geographic size of both the city and the school district, one can enter Brookside from various routes and get many viewpoints of the diversity of the area. Arriving on Main Street, which runs for only two miles, I am transported back to another time. Several businesses in this area have made attempts to modernize their "store-fronts"; however, downtown Brookside is a perfect example of Small Town, USA in the 1950's. There are homes, drug stores, furniture stores, clothing stores, a shoe store, businesses, several services, and a school located on Main Street. The school, although modern windows have been installed, is reminiscent of those built in the early 1930's.

However, entering Brookside less than one mile to the west, I am in another world. Fast food restaurants, businesses, and shopping areas line both sides of this major artery of the city. For the most part, traffic moves along well above the posted

speed limit. For an area of approximately two miles, a residential area is intermixed with the others. It appears that this area was once a part of the small community of Brookside before it began its expansive growth. As I continue traveling, I pass a school which appears to have been built in the 1970's, a hospital, a fire station, churches, and other commercial areas. I reach an area which is filled on all four corners as far as the eye can see with fast food ventures, convenience stores, shopping centers, discount stores, grocery stores, cafeterias, restaurants, movie houses, and other services and businesses. Many community members consider this corner to be the "hub" of Brookside and rarely, if ever, visit the downtown area.

There are three core areas of the community which serve Brookside Public School patrons. There is the business and residential area immediately around the original town site, the business area and its many surrounding residential areas south on Maple, and the business area that serves the myriad residential areas on the north side of the expressway. For many of these residents there seems to be little commonality other than the Brookside Public School District. However, a resident explains that the school district is a center of collective interest:

Well, I think in Brookside that the school district is the focal point of our community in as far as activities, as far as community spirit, as far as bringing the whole town together. Because this town is very oriented to children and the needs of children . . . the reason the people move here is because of the school system. So I think that brings a quality of community people to our town and they're here because of the school. And the needs of the children are going to be a priority. So therefore the relationship between the school and the community, I believe is very positive.

Another described the basic foundation that was laid many years ago by parents in the community in terms of education being important for their children:

I think it is built into the district. . . . I know that maybe now it is less and less. But I know it is continuous, the importance of getting a good education . . . being a good school supporter . . . these kind of things have been in the district [for years].

Several members of the school community expanded on a quality in teachers that had continued to exist in the Brookside School District throughout the years involving a sense of commitment to instructional excellence among the group:

There definitely was a feeling of this is who we are. We might not be the highest paid group, but we are the best. . . . With all the teachers it was, 'I will be,' and it's not a competitive thing in the building that, 'I am going to be better than this teacher or better than that teacher.' It was, 'Together we are.'

. . . there's something about Brookside. I don't know what it is, but there is something about if you tell a teacher they can't do something they'll do it . . . a teacher would make a statement, like, 'Well, so and so has this and we can't have that but we will still beat them.' . . . it's just that the odds are so overwhelmingly against them in being able to accomplish this or pull this thing off. This seems to be the time that the spark comes out in them and . . . it really ignites them. . . . I know this is the one thing that when principals or teachers leave, this is one thing they miss, this cohesiveness, this being a part of something.

Many talked about other qualities that influence the reputation of the school district and what that reputation has been:

I think we have a very progressive school system. We keep up with all the current trends in education. Brookside does not seem to be afraid to step out and try new things.

I think the school district is very innovative. I believe that for two reasons: the leadership and the the people in the classroom. Both groups of people are willing to accept new challenges. . . .

But wherever you go, it has been my experience, around the state if you say you are from Brookside, the first thing they say is, 'You have a good school system.' That's the words that I have always heard, 'Something really good must be going on up there.'

I think people that are in the field of education see it as a very structured, maybe even rigid district with lots of rules and regulations.

A Different Approach

The Brookside Public School District is one of the largest in the state, serving approximately 15,000 students at more than 20 sites. It is organized in a similiar fashion to other school districts of its size in this state. A five-member Board of Education

meets twice monthly to carry out the business of the school district. Last spring, before this study began, the Board of Education selected a new superintendent, Dr. Hal James. Dr. James was selected from a field of five finalists for the position after an extensive interview process. The Board had enlisted the assistance of a superintendent search service to conduct a regional search for appropriate candidates. Dr. James had actively sought an appointment as a superintendent in this part of the country and left his position in another district after a brief tenure. Dr. James reported for duty in June and began the task of following Dr. David Edwards, a highly respected educator in the community, the state, and this region of the country.

Hal James "hit the floor running" when he reported to work at Brookside Public Schools. Immediately after Dr. James arrived, he began a series of individual interviews with more than 35 members of the school community. In a newsletter to patrons, he explained the importance of good communication and described the purpose of the interview process:

My first priority is to better understand the school system and those who work for it and support it. To accomplish that goal, I have begun a series of individual interviews with members of the School Board, the Administrative Team, past and present presidents of the Educators' Association, teachers at all levels, parents, and business people. These interviews are focusing on topics such as priorities for the future, district strengths and weaknesses, areas of concern, and examples of how the school system interacts with the community to make important decisions.

He also indicated that he planned to obtain additional written input through a community survey. Information collected through these processes would be shared with the Board of Education, staff members and the community, and used as a starting point for a strategic planning process planned for later in the fall.

During this same time period, Dr. James was simultaneously involved in several other activities including restructuring the board meeting process. His first change was to turn over the role of chair of the meeting to the board president. At Dr. James' first official meeting in July, it was apparent from his posturing that he was neither pleased

nor comfortable with the arrangement, the size, or the presentation of the agenda items. At this meeting, the first items on the agenda were numerous financial reports, followed by correspondence to and/or from the Board of Education and staff, unfinished business, regular business items, followed by the Executive Session.

Shortly after this first meeting, a special board meeting was held to discuss ways to improve the board agenda and meeting process. Among other things, it was determined that parents, students, and staff should always know and understand what the board is doing and should have input in board matters. Also, a decision was made to post agendas at each school building in a location easily accessible to the public. Another change was the decision to move some board meetings to school sites. Agenda changes were incorporated at the next board meeting.

This was the first regular meeting held since the modifications in board agendas had been approved. The first item on the agenda was a presentation by the Advanced Placement coordinator concerning the success of the Advanced Placement Program. This report fell into the newly designated agenda category highlighting instructional issues which had replaced financial reports in this prominent place on the agenda. Financial reports and related items were now assigned to the general consent agenda, which was a newly determined category that allowed numerous items to be approved with one motion and roll call vote.

During this meeting, the superintendent appeared calm, cool, and collected. He spoke when questions were directed to him. He spoke also to compliment the AP program for its excellent work. Those who were regular attendees of board meetings were quite surprised at the brevity of the meeting. Meetings, excluding executive sessions, had been averaging about four hours in length. This meeting was over in less than an hour and a half. Many commented about the difference in the atmosphere of the meeting and the feeling of cooperation that seemed to be present between the board

members and the superintendent. A Board of Education member gave his impression of the board meeting changes:

He [Dr. James] came . . . at the very beginning and said . . . 'My job is not to run the board. That is the board's decision and I will not be involved in all presentations, recommendations. That is your league and not mine.' I think the board has shown good reaction to that and the feeling that they have more say in the directions that we take.

Teachers also commented on the impetus for and the wisdom of the changes:

I think he brought in ideas. For example, the school board itself in working through their agendas. I do not think they had any idea or knew that other possibilities existed in running a meeting. They had been trained under the previous leadership and that is all they knew. For him to bring in the idea that this could change and to push forward for it to change. . . .

I have heard that they are moving the school board meetings to other locations, which I think is a good idea because it lets people in that particular area of the community attend and be more aware of what is going on. It also gives the school board a chance to see what is going on in the schools too.

During this same six-week time period, the superintendent had his first meetings with the administrative team and shared his philosophies and ideas concerning the educational process. Although his discussion covered several topics, the main thrust was that all administrators understand that the primary focus is on instruction. Members of each and every department were told that, regardless of their particular function, their focus must be on instruction:

We can't have a fractured organization, we must have all groups' support. We are in the business of educating kids, all other departments are support. . . . School exists for children and not for adults. It's a place of employment for adults, but the major focus and most important part are the kids.

He discussed the move toward more site-based management and threw out the challenge of reallocating existing resources so that more could be directed to instruction. The potential of technology, both as a tool for making teachers more efficient and effective and as a powerful instructional vehicle, was addressed. He spoke of the importance of administrators being advocates for teachers and of their responsibility for

“clearing the debris” for the teacher to teach. Information concerning the need for restructuring public education was also shared in terms of outcome based education philosophies. A strategic planning process for the district was briefly outlined and administrators were asked to volunteer to serve on this committee.

A Censorship Controversy

During this same six-week period, Dr. James was facing a critical censorship issue. Prior to his arrival, a statewide corporation had volunteered to furnish each elementary school media center with copies of an earth science book to be used as a resource by elementary teachers for presenting activities, stories, games and songs that dealt with the concept of the planet Earth being a beautiful place to preserve and to keep safe for generations. Also, the business agreed to sponsor a workshop to be presented by the authors for up to 40 teachers. This corporation had already sponsored several workshops in other school districts in the state and had distributed the book to many teachers. Prior to Dr. James' arrival in Brookside, instructional administrators eagerly had agreed to accept the offer of the books and had scheduled the authors' workshop. Shortly after Dr. James' arrival, a small group of patrons in Brookside began questioning the content of this resource book claiming it contained religious references to a “Mother Earth” concept. A patron challenge to the book was filed with the school district resulting in a district committee review of the book. The committee's finding was to allow the book to be placed in use as a resource book, with a note attached to each book advising teachers that some parents may have objection to certain stories and activities in the book and that good professional judgment and knowledge of acceptable standards in the community should be used when selecting portions of the book for classroom use.

However, the next day the statewide corporation's community relations officer advised instructional administrators at Brookside that they were withdrawing their offer

of the books and would not sponsor teacher training. This withdrawal of support came after several days of newspaper headlines concerning the book and protests by a small group of parents.

In spite of this lack of corporate support, the school district contracted with the authors to complete the previously scheduled workshop and, through the efforts of the authors, obtained copies of the book for each teacher attending. Interested parents were invited to attend the training session for the teachers, and a videotape was made of the training for parents to view if they wished. Copies of the book were labeled, as directed by the committee decision, and placed in each elementary school media center for use as a resource book. Dr. James commented on what he saw was the real issue involved in the controversy: "I see it as a larger issue. We're talking about the censorship issues. We don't need to create a situation where parent groups are deciding what books we can and cannot have in our library."

He further commented that he trusted teachers to use good judgment in determining what was appropriate for use in their classrooms. An editorial in one of the local newspapers summed up the feelings of many and praised Dr. James for his stand:

Dr. James made it plain that neither he nor the school district at large needs a situation where parent groups decide the nature of library books. . . . We trust our teachers to know, within the boundaries of good taste and community standards, what to teach in the classroom. . . . The school teachers and school administrators who made the decision to keep [this book] in our media centers [as] teacher resource material should be commended. . . . They deserve a pat on the back for their courage, because it is easy to cave in at the first sign of controversy. After all, a big statewide corporation did, withdrawing support of the book and going back on their own good judgment in the face of a small handful of sweet mothers who would like to be arbiters of wisdom and knowledge for all of us.

Teachers and other staff members were impressed with how he handled the controversy and demonstrated his faith in the teaching staff:

I really felt like he handled it well. . . . He did not buckle to the parents, he listened to them. . . . [then said] that he had faith in us, that he trusted our professional judgment.

I really appreciated, again, how he stood up for his teachers in saying that we would teach this and leaving it up to the teacher's judgment as to how we put it across and used it in the classroom. I liked that.

One parent discussed her first experience with Dr. James involving the earth science book as one that increased her comfort level in working with him:

I went in wondering, 'What are you all about, buddy?' My first actual contact with him had to do with the earth science book. He came to our PTA and he sat on the floor and he listened. I voiced some concerns and he asked me questions about those things and took into consideration what I said.

Actions and Attributes

In his August newsletter, mailed to the homes of all school community members, Dr. James further addressed the strategic planning process emphasizing the importance of involving every segment of the community. He described a survey that would be designed and mailed to every school community household for the purpose of obtaining as much information as possible about how the Brookside community felt about important educational issues. Information gained through this process would be used as a basis for strategic planning:

It is crucial that the school district begin strategic planning with valid information from the largest number of citizens. Then, it is vital that the planning process involve 60-100 key individuals representative of every community group in a process to determine the focus and the path of Brookside's educational system.

Information concerning the board approval of a restructuring plan in the plant operations of the school district was also shared in this newsletter. The proposal by the director of plant operations outlined a savings of approximately \$220,000 to the school district through reorganizing schedules, so that over 17 positions would be eliminated through attrition and schedule revisions.

At the first meeting with teachers in August, Dr. James spoke to the issues of restructuring education through an outcome-based education philosophy and the use of technology, as well as more site-based decision making. He addressed the strategic

planning process and asked for volunteers from the teaching ranks to serve on the committee. That many plans and decisions would be made through the committee process involving teachers as members of the committees was made clear. The importance of good communication among all members of the school community was emphasized. That instruction and students were top priorities was clearly delineated. Although many teachers were not impressed with the delivery of this information, many liked the message. A classroom teacher explained:

. . . his first approach to the teachers, that was pretty disastrous when speaking to teachers at the opening session. The lighting is poor, the tone is monotone. The information is interesting, but people are starting to doze off. Even with that not too auspicious beginning, teachers then realized as he started to work out and come out to the buildings, they realized that this was a new creature, a new approach to them and to the whole process. . . . He just seems to have encouraged people to feel that there's a possibility of improvement in almost any problem.

On the first day of school, Dr. James began visiting individual school sites. Staff members were impressed with his visibility in the schools and his approach:

Administrator: One of the things that I appreciated about him, when he did visit my building, was that it appeared that even the teachers felt comfortable approaching him with some of their concerns. I feel that he listened. Also, he looked for positive things around my building. . . .

Administrator: I like the fact that he has come to the building; people notice. The day he came to the building I was not there, but it gave the assistant principal the opportunity to be known to the superintendent. The superintendent was able to walk the building, encourage the teachers that he is coming out, he really is going to come out. He promised he would and there he is. I think that is a positive step and the superintendent is visible, very visible.

Teacher: He came to my classroom and what was so funny was that we had been sitting in the lounge and saying, 'Well, I have not seen the superintendent come around to check the schools yet.' Then, in he walked. . . . I did not stand at attention and salute. It was, 'Please come in and meet my students, I am glad to have you here.' It was not threatening at all.

Dr. James' visibility was not limited to school sites and classrooms. Many Parent-Teacher Association units asked him to visit their meetings at the beginning of

the school year and he accepted their invitations to speak. Several commented on his presence and his ideas:

When he spoke to our PTA, everything was positive. We are a growing, progressive community and the schools are having a hard time keeping up. He was real positive in his suggestions, like, 'Let's go to the community businesses for expertise and help.' I had never heard that before. . . . I came away from the meeting feeling that he was open to change, he was open to suggestions, and he was looking to the future in technology.

He spoke very comfortably with the group. He is very knowledgeable about the subject that he talked about. He discussed what he hoped would continue as far as more computers and he is very curriculum and child oriented. He wants to do what is best for the child.

. . . he was well received and he was very impressive. He seems more personable, or at least that is what I hear from other people too, that you could go out and actually touch him. . . . I do not think people would be afraid to walk up to him and say, 'This is what I would like to see.'

Others described various attributes of the superintendent that have emerged in their experiences with him, including a sense of openness, acceptance, and understanding:

Teacher: [O]ne of the things I see in the new leadership is that this leader is very understanding of other view points and because of it, people are going to be more into critical thinking and know that they are not going to be reprimanded or suffering any reprisal for speaking out on issues that they feel very strongly about.

Teacher: When I worked on the United Way the attitude of, 'Hey, we can talk to this gentleman--he may not like our ideas, but we were not afraid to say anything even when he came into the room' was very casual. It was not like he was going to judge you. It was a casual thing. It made me feel like I could participate and be casual and be myself and not have to be on guard all the time. I felt like more came out of the meeting, because more teachers were willing to talk and there was nothing struck down and said that we can not take this in and discuss this, nothing like this was said.

Parent: I feel that he has a lot of openness. Dr. Edwards did too, though. I feel that in both the past and the present we have that availability. I think that what is happening now is that new avenues are being explored. The pot is being stirred. It is not staying the same.

Trust is a quality that many have seen evidence of in their dealings with the superintendent whether it be in his attitude or the attitude of those with whom he works:

Administrator: I do think that the change has been that Dr. James is giving people the freedom to make decisions, he trusts them . . . he has built or is trying to build his superintendency on trust. Trust that there are professionals hired, there are competent people hired for the support staff ranks and that's what he expects them to do. He trusts them to do their job; however, if they are not, he will deal with it.

Teacher: He may be giving us a snow job, but at this point we all trust him. If he messes up, we may run him out of town on a rail, but at this point I do feel like he is really and sincerely trying to listen to us. We have not had any major problems to see where he is going to stand with us, but so far, so good.

Several described their impression of the shift in emphasis of the school district under the leadership of Dr. James:

Administrator: I think there is a more instructional emphasis this year rather than business-oriented. Instruction and students are more important with the new superintendent than this operating a business.

Administrator: I have also seen a change in vision. In my opinion, we are more curriculum-oriented and less building site; the emphasis is on technology and curriculum, whereas before . . . my personal feeling was that curriculum was somewhat overlooked before and that it was put as priority now.

Teacher: I think we're less building- and site-oriented and more curriculum and thinking about what we're going to need for our people that are going to graduate to go into job placement, how they're going to deal with the future. That's my feeling now, we are not looking at just this is a plant . . . something that you could be really proud to look at . . . we're looking inside of it now.

The leadership style of Dr. James is seen to be a factor in transitions that have occurred in the district. The fact that he has been on the front line as a teacher and as a building principal is seen as a positive attribute. That he has a "bottom line" was also noted:

Teacher: No matter who you are, you can never forget where you came from. . . . In any area of leadership, if you do not have compassion for the people that work for you, or try to understand what they are going through and try to address some of the needs that they have, then you are not going to be as successful as you would like to be. With the new

leadership, I think that we are going to see some things change and are definitely going to see people feel better about their jobs and be more productive.

Administrator: He has a structure to operate but it's not that cold, hard, 'this is the only way to get it done' policy. I see Hal as a flexible leader and there is more than one way to do something or to get something done . . . but I know there is that characteristic about him where you 'hit the wall,' so to speak. It is there. He tolerates and he works as long as he can, then finally his authority as superintendent can come out. . . . But he really tries a lot of different ways and approaches before he gets there, but it is there.

Without fail, almost everyone who talked with me in Brookside discussed Dr. James' emphasis on technology and his desire to move ahead quickly in that direction.

Administrator: Anybody who has had a chance to meet the superintendent would realize that he is in the area of services and . . . is caught up in technology. He believes that it is the way of the future and the way of now as well and we are just trying to keep up. Computers, voice mail, phone mail, fax machines, and car phone--he believes that they make schools and people have a chance to operate more effectively and more efficiently. We have not had a lot of technology . . . we just have miles to go in that direction and he has made it clear that is the direction he is going in. Again, I am excited about that.

Teacher: In the technology, I think that Dr. Edwards had got us started, I just think that Dr. James is going to move us fast as he can. Maybe it is his willingness to change some priorities in the district . . . with some of these tasks forces that he is starting is a clear indication that he is willing to look outside for money outside of tax dollars to try to meet, not that all of it will go to technology, but it would make some available. That is something new with him.

Teacher: He is very knowledgeable about high tech and that is important to him. I think that just seeing him, he is open to more ideas as far as using the technology, even though it may be a big initial cost to start off with, I think that in planning for the future, he can see the end of the rainbow. . . . He is looking over the hump to see what is at the end of the road and so the hump may be worth the climb.

Most school community members brought up changes that had occurred in the school district. They considered Dr. James' philosophies and leadership style as playing a part in these perceived changes:

Administrator: I think that it goes back to the superintendent. Some of the people feel like the superintendent is a figurehead that sits over here and does not have a lot of input, but by his philosophy alone, in the way a school district should function, whether he comes out and talks to me

or goes out and visits with anybody, has made a major difference. He is not just a figurehead. His major philosophies have to rub off on everybody in the district.

Teacher: I would say probably the change relating to giving people the responsibility to do the job and expecting them to do it, is probably Dr. James's management style and is, probably . . . some of his philosophy. On technology, I think, based on his presentation when he talked to all the teachers at the beginning of the year, is a deep-seated belief that this is the way we have to go to keep up. He is willing to make whatever commitment it takes to try and do that.

Parent: I think he directly influenced them. He is bringing ideas in that I guess he has seen work in other districts. . . . I do know that what I have heard I have liked. Now we will have to wait and see.

Carryover to Others

In discussing happenings in the school community during the first semester, comments turned to a degree of carryover from the superintendent that school district members noticed in themselves and in others. Some related the transition in leadership as causing a new focus throughout the district which enabled administrators the opportunity to "treat people differently." He was seen as the catalyst for a domino effect that has been of benefit:

Teacher: I think there has been a positive effect that has come down through the ranks. You see it . . . as it comes down and as we as teachers deal with the administration building. I have felt like a peon going in there before. I felt like, 'Why bother, they are going to look down on me.' . . . [Now] I do not feel that way or that others will be treated that way either. Seeing the change coming down through the administration to the principal [and] reflected in the administration at the administration building, I am hopeful that will change everything as it goes.

Administrator: I think people are managing differently because of him. He has a new management style, so that flows over and is directly related to him being the person in charge.

Administrator: Now I come away upbeat, very positive. It has been noticed by teachers. Meetings have been shorter, which allows me to get back to the building earlier and spend more time. The overall effect is carrying over to the rest of the buildings to my view anyway. . . . It's a different approach. It's still top down and I think it should be top down. But, the leader is one who is leading . . . a leader doesn't always make decisions. A leader allows people to make decisions. There is trust

there. If the group he is leading is having trouble, then he finds new ways to lead.

Teacher: We have noticed this year from being in his [principal's] meeting, I do not know if he is being encouraged by the superintendent to have more activities, more positive ideas, or to lead with your teachers. I am assuming that he was encouraged to do this, but I may be mistaken. I think that has been a benefit.

Another area often mentioned was that of the difference in various members of the school community working together for the benefit of students:

So, then as the new superintendent has come, I have felt like an invitation was made to combine the administration and the teachers and that we work together. I have heard so many good things as far as committees and just acceptance of working together for one thing--not working against each other, but working together for the good of the kids; the kids come first. Basically, what I had seen was what looked good came first, what would make the school district look good, not what was good for the kids came first.

An administrator explained that he was intrigued by how the new superintendent, because of his emphasis on students and their instruction, seemed to be a different breed than most practicing superintendents:

. . . he has placed the emphasis that schools are for kids. I've never heard that before from practicing superintendents. I know . . . that everyone thinks that is what schools are for, but he makes it a point over and over again that we are here for kids. In all my times with administrators . . . I just never have seen them emphasize that. They are always talking about budgets, buses, and those things that you have to have for schools to run. And he has approached it from the other side; schools are here for the kids. Now what do we have to do to make this happen? I know this is the way it is supposed to be; I just never have been able to work in an environment like that before.

He further described how this superintendent's actions directly related to what current literature and research have to say about school administration:

That's what we have always been told in graduate school . . . you know that these schools are for the kids and all these grand things we can do to help kids. . . . In my experience, as practicing administrators we have become more concerned and felt more comfortable with the business side of the enterprise, and what time was left we dealt with instruction, which was very little. It just kind of took care of itself. Now, the emphasis is on instruction and kids--that's where it is placed now. . . . I think it is wonderful. And . . . if we ever had a chance to see theory and practice in action, this is it.

A special educator related the difference he felt in terms of the current emphasis on people rather than legalistic issues or paperwork in terms of special education:

What we hear from Dr. James is 'I am not as concerned about the paper and the legalistic aspects as I am about the people part of your job.' That feels so good. You can have an excellence where you are striving for this mastery of all these tasks, but when you start dealing with the excellence of your population and doing better for the people that you work with, it gives you a different feeling. There is more joy to what you are doing.

In my discussions with members of the teaching staff, regardless of whether or not they had a union affiliation, the topic of negotiations was mentioned by all as a positive experience. For the past few years, the negotiation process was seen as a negative experience by both administrators and teachers. Shortly after Dr. James' arrival, the negotiations procedures for the current school year began. Previously, it had been determined that a different approach, win-win negotiations, would be used. Most viewed this three-day process as successful, and was best summed up by a teacher's comments:

I think that morale is much higher and I attribute that to the raise we got and the fact that we were allowed to immediately sign a contract because the negotiations went so smoothly. The negotiation team members went back to their schools and talked about the win/win situation and it was just totally positive from the very beginning. People are always concerned about change no matter what, but they were also concerned that the year before there was not an increment step, so when that happened it was a breath of fresh air. People were ready to breathe more easily.

Others addressed the improvement in attitudes among the members of the teachers organization and of others toward that organization in Brookside:

I think the pride of teaching has come back a little bit. There for awhile, it was just, 'Well, I am a teacher.' Now I think we feel a little more professional. I have a friend who is a teacher in [Trent] and you know their negotiations have been going on forever and ever and you get the feeling from them that it is us against them. I do not feel that this year. . . . When we got ready to do the membership drive for the [BEA], people were not as apprehensive about joining. It was like it was okay to be a professional, and it was okay to join this. In the past, it was like some of them were almost afraid to join.

One thing that I have really noticed is [BEA] is calm this year. . . . I think it is because, I don't know if anything is really that different, except that they are treated with respect. And, when you are treated with respect you don't dig for dirt like you do when you are not. That is a major change.

A board of education member described the more intensive contact he has had with the current superintendent and the greater amount of open communication they shared which had direct effect on improving his operations as a board member. He also described a difference in his working relationships with others in the school community:

I can see in the people a much better attitude. Everybody is not accepting the change well, but that is human nature . . . seeing that they have a better attitude, more openness and that they can communicate with the board. To me, that opens friendly relationships and it certainly goes beyond employer-employee relationships. They feel more comfortable in their position and with the board's position.

Transitions

School community members spoke of the improvements they felt and saw since this school year began. A change in atmosphere and attitude was described in terms of cooperation, a more relaxed atmosphere, and almost a sense of freedom. One administrator spoke of his experience in terms of "This is one of the best school years I have had." He further explained what has contributed to this experience:

Although in the past you know I have performed my job I think quite successfully, I never felt that I had any control of anything. This year I feel that I have control to make decisions within the proper framework and to do the job, and that has made a difference in the way I perceive my job. It has made it more comfortable, more enjoyable. It has just been a delight to come to work!

As one who normally does not like change, a teacher reported this change as one she approves of because ". . . it makes me feel good to work with people who feel good. I see people feeling better." Another reported ". . . a tremendous change in the atmosphere." She further commented:

I would say that there is more cooperation, which is vital to the interest, not only of the students and the community, but to the administration, teachers, and support employees as well. It is something that I think we have lacked in this school district and I think it is something we are going to see a great deal more of in the next year.

Another educator reported what she has seen in those with whom she has contact in terms of their attitudes:

There is a real calmness there that I don't remember there ever being. There is just an overall calmness. People that are my friends at the administrative level that I visit with . . . there is a different feeling and it is an appreciative feeling . . . it's a feeling like I'm being listened to, my opinion does mean something.

An issue raised by many members of the school community is that of an improvement in overall morale. Representatives of various segments of the school community articulated their view of this phenomenon:

Teacher: With the new superintendent, [it] seems like the morale of the teachers is up a little bit. They feel like they are being questioned about how we feel about different things, which is a little different than what it has been in the past and it seems that we are being listened to for a change. We have been vocal in the past, but it has not always fallen on listening ears.

School board member: In the beginning, of course, the board was very apprehensive. We were very unhappy that the change [in superintendents] had to occur. But, the realization was there that, yes, we need to change and through the process of selection. We are very pleased with the choice that was made. Responses come every week on what a good choice was made, from staff, community and students . . . we have seen a dramatic increase in teacher morale. The way the new superintendent treats the teachers is a welcome relief to them.

Administrator: Morale is higher than I have ever seen it. I think teachers have a sense of hope and a sense of release that things are going to be okay. I do not sense the tension that I used to when I walk into the building. I see this not only for the teachers, but the administrators as well. I see a lot less stress.

A parent discussed how she was impressed when she heard Dr. James' comments concerning involving teachers in the process of decision making because "If you get them involved they feel as if they own it [the decision] and that is true." A teacher reported how the committee involvement process appears to be working:

We will have someone say, 'Okay, look, we were all involved in this, yes we disagreed, yes, we had some heated debate, but we came to a common ground.' Then we were able to go out and because I was able to share what I felt as an instructor, as a teacher, as a leader, that made me feel good. We may not have ultimately got what I want. But, you know what? I can sure understand why we decided on this goal instead of this one, because I was involved.

Dr. James seems to have as a priority the involvement and participation of all aspects of the school community. A parent discussed that one of the first things she heard about Dr. James was that he wanted community and parental involvement. Since she had never heard such an emphasis placed on this type of involvement, she questioned his sincerity until she realized that "He really feels that way." She described her feelings toward the shift in emphasis placed on community and parental involvement:

I like that change. I believe that when I look at other school districts throughout the nation and look at it from my friends' points of view, what they get to do and what they do not get to do, and they are in awe and shocked that we are allowed to communicate our feelings effectively and have people listen to us. They just sit back and say, 'You are kidding, you get to do that in your school district?' I hear that and realize what a good school district this is.

Another idea implemented by Dr. James was that of organizing a school foundation for the purpose of involving the community at large as well as the business community in supporting the efforts of teachers. The appropriateness of such an involvement is noted by a staff member:

I think the foundation is probably the best. I think that part of the change is good because he is incorporating more people that are coming in from different view points to be parts of these committees. I think the foundation is wonderful when people can contribute and be a part of the system. This brings community cooperation and people can see where their tax dollars are going and have a voice in the process.

Obtaining input from all members of the school community emerged as a priority of Dr. James as well. He appeared to be comfortable with listening to ideas that did not necessarily agree with his viewpoint. Acceptance of other points of view is a

standard operating procedure for Hal James. Many have had such an experience or have knowledge of others who have experienced this acceptance:

Teacher: I have felt that people are more willing to speak out; they are not afraid of what someone will do if they disagree with the administration. Positive things have been said about going to meetings and having positive input, at least being listened to. That ideas are worth being listened to and the participation and involvement of teachers has been greeted with acceptance . . . in fact, teachers are invited to be participatory in decisions.

Administrator: I feel that we have been given more input, the entire community has been given more input into what is going on, and not only were we giving input, but we were actually listened to, and some thought is given as to what we had to say.

Teacher: I think the idea is that we have input in decisions and that we are listened to. I think more comfortable feelings about being accepted as teachers and being respected as teachers is important and has especially been evident this year. When I met the administrator . . . I did not know who he was before. I was talking to someone else and he walked up and we were discussing insurance here and I was explaining my problems with it, and he simply stated the philosophy behind it in a kind manner. He did not look down his nose at me, which has been done before. Whether I disagreed or not, I was treated with respect. That I could disagree and still be of quality, I guess, is the word I am looking for.

Others discussed the committee approach Dr. James is using to obtain input and to make decisions. A major committee is being organized to complete a strategic planning process. One teacher described it as a method for obtaining "more grass root input" through ". . . a committee that is going to look at priorities and goals and find the big picture for the district." All members of the school community have been asked to volunteer to serve on various committees. They realize that he wants their input whether they are school employees or community members. In spite of the amount of time they are giving, they understand that their input is valuable to him:

I have a lot more committee work, although I am not sure that I appreciate that. Of course, there again, I know that he is trying to get the input of people instead of just coming in and saying, this is the way it is going to be. Some of us feel like we are committed to death, but again, you are not being drafted, you are being volunteered, if you want to work on these committees.

It became apparent to them that not only did he want to hear their input but that he would use it. A teacher commented, "He is trying to get in all this input so he can prioritize what is important, not just what he sees as important, but to get their input and prioritize based on that."

The issue of having the autonomy to do one's job or to carry out one's duties, as well as the freedom to make decisions at one's own level, was mentioned by various members of the school community. An administrator commented on the difference for teachers:

. . . we have empowered the teachers to make some decisions that they should have been making all along. If it's important enough that it is in the curriculum that we do these things, then we have empowered them now to do that . . . before we were slapping their hand and saying 'no that's an impossible task' because of some business or policy type of thing.

A collaborative relationship involving the board of education and the superintendent was described by an observer:

I think he sees himself in a partnership with the board and not in confrontation with the board and I do not see him as trying to put his personal agendas through without listening to the board. I think he wants their input instead of their rubber stamp. To me that comes out just in a board meeting in the way he deals with them. . . .

A board member felt the current working relationship with the superintendent ". . . gives the impression to the community that the board is actually fulfilling their role." He further agreed that the public is better served because the board is more active:

They [the public] felt in the past and the actual words were, 'The board is the rubber stamp of the administration.' I feel that they totally did change and I sense it from the public. We are thinking through a lot of decisions instead of just accepting them.

Others in the school community detailed what has happened for them personally in regard to their responsibilities and their feeling towards that:

. . . it's one of the best years that I have had. It has been a change because of the authority. I know the authority [superintendent's] is still there and I know that the new superintendent certainly doesn't hesitate to make decisions and tell you things that need to be taken care of. But

the line of authority, I feel, is different. I feel that I'm more in control with decisions that I make.

The number one thing in my mind that he is saying is that we have hired these people to do certain jobs, let's let them do their jobs, and that is one of the most exciting things for me. It has made it a better place to work; I do not know how you cannot feel better about your job when you have more input. . . . I have more responsibility now. It is ironic that you have more work, but it is more pleasant because of it and more positive.

An atmosphere that allows the members of the school community to feel free to take risks was described by several:

Teacher: I tend to feel more confident and more willing to experiment in my own classes.

Teacher: Principals are going to feel more relaxed at making a decision that they may not have made before. Because of that, teachers are going to see that relaxed . . . so that if you make a mistake, hey, we all make them and because you made one, that probably means you were out trying to do your job. If you sit back and do nothing, well, no one is ever going to know you make mistakes, because you are not taking any risks. Leaders take risks.

The move toward decision making at the level of implementation is viewed positively by most members of the school community, yet there is the question of how site-based decision making will work best for this school district. Teachers see its implementation as a slow process and are concerned that in a district this size there is still need for consistency between schools. One mentioned that when teachers realize how it will benefit them, they will become involved in the process. One teacher related that "Everyone is going to have to work more to make it work."

Change: How It Feels

In discussing the many transitions that have occurred during the first semester, attitudes expressed range on a continuum from positive to apprehensive. Excitement, hope, and encouragement are adjectives used to describe what has happened thus far. A teacher expressed her feelings:

I am very excited about the changes. . . . I think that the freshness, the fresh outlook of things, is going to cause us all to be more critical in our

thinking. I do not think we have been the critical thinkers that we need to be on the job and I think we are going to see that now that we have come into the new leadership style.

Another teacher described differences in her attitude and her willingness to be involved:

Very positive--hopeful is the word. I think not fearful. Not afraid to be involved. I would stand back and not want to be involved sometimes for fear of my ideas not being what everybody else thought and so before you speak out you stand back and look at the situation. I think I am excited about committees being formed. There was one committee that I really wanted to be on, but I am not going to have the time to be on it. Before I would have thought, 'Why bother, it would not matter.'

An administrator related how, in spite of an increased workload, his attitude is positive:

I am involved in a lot more things than I was involved in with the old superintendent. So, my sense of being overwhelmed has increased, but my enjoyment and satisfaction have increased as well. I do not mind doing more for someone that you know appreciates it and respects what you are doing and gives you some autonomy to it. So, there comes the satisfaction, but also more work.

A member of the Board of Education described his attitude now as "very positive." He continued:

It would be difficult not to be positive with all the positive comments that I am getting from all of the other different sectors. We were pleased with our decision and we hoped that everybody was going to be as pleased as we thought we were going to be and it has even been more so.

As noted previously, the continuum of attitude toward the changes includes that of apprehension. Most who spoke of apprehension saw it in others rather than in themselves and in others' work sites, rather than in their own:

It surprises me; I did not realize how much the previous administrator's ideas influenced people district wide. Even though they know that we are under new leadership . . . I am amazed at the people that can not give that up, can not give up the old. The majority of administrators are not optimistic. Key administrators are, but I see a lot of them as being scared. They do not know what is going to happen.

I think that probably some of them [administrators] have the old philosophy and they are having a hard time moving over to a more relaxed and a more accountable philosophy. I think in a lot of ways they wanted that, but at the same time it is somewhat uncomfortable too. Some of those will come around and fit in after awhile and I am not sure that others will.

Just his arrival has brought a lot of different feelings from a lot of different people. I think that you have a group of people that have experienced some unrest about our new superintendent coming in. In my opinion, these people are the ones that have been here a long time and are used to the structure that Dr. Edwards had and those changes that are being made or are going to be made and not knowing what those changes are going to be, has really made these people uneasy.

The push toward technology seems to frighten some teachers and excite others. One realized her fears but noted that she was comfortable with the manner in which Dr. James was implementing changes:

Well, I am a little apprehensive about some of them. I understand that Dr. James is a real computer person and I break out in hives when I get around computers, but it is the thing and we are going to have to learn to use them. Again, I think he is following a tough act, Dr. Edwards was a good guy, he had a lot of good ideas. Anytime you have somebody new, you are going to have to have some changes. He has not made any monumental major changes all at once, it seems like he is kind of easing into this. So far, so good, it seems like it is working. Nothing drastic has happened to me to make me nervous, yet.

Another teacher described how the emphasis on technology creates different attitudes:

I think that as things continue to happen, some fears are alleviated and some are heightened because they see certain things change. One of the big pushes is in technology and those that are not comfortable with computers are concerned that we are turning into little groups of computer places, others that are computer literate and love computers are thrilled. So, we have a different camps again, which you are going to have anyway.

Communication

It appeared that there were also different camps in terms of opinions about the level of communication in the school district since the new superintendent has been on duty. Many were extremely pleased with the level of communication and saw it as a strength:

Teacher: I would say that communication probably is the thing that . . . I am seeing most of right now. To build a base of trust, all of the areas of school administration need to be brought forward, so that all parties, regardless of whether they agree or disagree, can come to a common ground and they can understand. I think that is just a very vital issue

and I think that we see right now, probably communication as being the number one thing.

Board Member: There is probably more feedback. I think there is more appreciation on the things being done by the staff. I know there was appreciation before, but I think it has been communicated better with that being a major goal. He [superintendent] has carried that out very well. When anything happens good, they hear about it.

Others described how communication problems were rising from the changes implemented by the superintendent. Some felt they had an insufficient amount of knowledge concerning what was going on in the district:

Administrator: I have noticed that initially at the beginning of the year he talked about his philosophy and generic things that he wanted to do and his expecting us to go along with that, but I have not seen any specific things, certainly nothing in writing on this is the way things are going to be or here are my specific goals, and I do not always understand that. I think that is a lot of the reason people are kind of in limbo.

Teacher: I have heard a few principals comment that they do not feel like they know what is totally behind the system anymore. Now, they do not seem to know so much about what is going on system wide; it is more focused on what they are doing.

Others related what they interpreted as a degree of uneasiness or uncertainty at the central office level that contributed to a lack of effective communication:

. . . I felt from the people above me a lot of edginess, a lot of uncertainty. . . just from general things that passed through our level of grapevine, it appeared to be a lot of power things going on that . . . we really didn't know factually that was going on, but enough rumors that I think at our level and the level below us there was a lot of uncertainty about where we were going, where we were headed.

At the mid-month Board of Education meeting in November, the implementation plan for outcome-based education was presented to the Board for their approval. Teachers, administrators, and parents had worked together to design the first phase of implementation, which consisted of providing training on a voluntary basis to teachers in the areas of learning styles, cooperative learning, integrated/thematic units, and alternative/authentic assessment. It was made clear that although the plan did build on the philosophy that all children can learn, success breeds success, and that schools control the conditions of success, the Brookside plan would be tailored to the needs of

the Brookside community and would be a continuing process involving both teacher and parental input. The approval of a minor amount of money to fund this training process was requested from the Board of Education.

A small but vocal group of parents, many of whom had protested the use of the earth science book, attended this board meeting to object to the plan. They had many concerns, including the ultimate cost of the program, that more capable students would suffer, that special education and gifted programs would be eliminated, and that the competition among students for grades would be eliminated. Each issue was successfully addressed by a member of the administrative staff and the Board of Education approved the expenditure of the funds and the implementation of phase one of the program.

At the meeting, Dr. James explained that there would be a series of public forums to present information and to answer questions about outcome-based education. Plans were made for the first forum to be held before winter break began. A series of meetings would be held at each of the middle schools in order to make it as convenient as possible for patrons to attend a session in their particular geographic area.

The OBE Public Forum

Shortly before the appointed starting time, a few more than 60 people filed into the Carnegie Middle School all-purpose room. Every aspect of the school community was represented, as patrons, parents, students, teachers, and administrators settled into various clusters while others sat in pairs or as singletons in the process of sparsely filling the seating area of more than 200 chairs. Dr. James began the meeting with an overview of the OBE philosophy and explained that changes are needed in the way schools currently operate. He explained that OBE is not a program or a quick-fix, "but is a different way of viewing the education of students and the methods by which they

are taught.” The world has changed from one that prepared students for the industrial revolution to one that requires students to be prepared for the information age. “Instruction must be altered to provide appropriate skills for students to work successfully in the technological age.” He further explained that this process would not be quick, but “will take years of deliberate, thoughtful involvement of teachers and the community.”

As various members of the audience approached the microphone to voice concerns, seek reassurance, or to ask questions, it became apparent that there were various motives for attending the meeting. Some came to seek answers, others came with the singular purpose of denouncing the program, while others came to show support. During the over three-hour meeting, Dr. James and four members of his administrative staff attempted to address each issue. Dr. James made it clear that the acronym of OBE means different things to different people in different parts of the country. He further explained that many teachers have been using some forms of OBE in their classrooms for years. That the program would proceed with parental involvement at every step and would be phased in gradually was stipulated. It was evident at the end of a three-hour time span that questions remained to be addressed, and a very weary Dr. James explained that these questions would be collected and be the first on the agenda at the next open meeting after Christmas.

Reflecting on the First Semester

As the first semester at Brookside drew to a close, Dr. James summed up in his monthly newsletter to all members of the school community what had been realized during that period of time, including the organization of the Brookside Public School Foundation and the different approach to Board of Education meetings:

The Brookside Public School Foundation is organized and hard at work already. . . . The Foundation will make a difference, both in a partnership with the community and through providing funds for exemplary education

projects to provide our students with more opportunities for academic growth.

As an avenue to solicit more public participation, one of the monthly Board meetings is held in one of our schools. . . . So far, participation in those meetings conducted in schools across the district has been extremely encouraging. The Board also added special informational reports on activities happening in our schools, providing an opportunity for recognition and a greater awareness of the special talents of students and staff.

He spoke to the issue of strategic planning as an exciting prospect for the new year:

With Strategic Planning getting underway, I know that many good things will be discussed, planned for, and carried out during the new year. The partnership between this school district and the parents, students and other residents of the community is a strong one, forged with the mutual bond of giving students the very best education possible. With that partnership continuing and strengthening in 1993, students, staff, and community will benefit.

Perhaps what had been accomplished in the first few months of Dr. James' tenure was best summed up by a member of the school community:

I think our new superintendent has brought the best and worst out in some people. Those people that are uneasy and come in and see the changes that are talked about react where the best that they have to offer is not coming through because of their concern. I think at the same time you have the total opposite of that. You have people who can see that there is a chance to make a difference and make a contribution and be involved and most people I think are starting to shine and thrive on the changes and will continue to.

Brookside: Second Semester

Dr. James' second semester at Brookside began just as harried as had his first few months on the job. The month of January found him involved in the community wide strategic planning process, continuing with the OBE public forums, and beginning a series of "casual coffees" at each school site in the district.

The strategic planning process involved a group of over 100 parents, business leaders, teachers, and administrators in a series of three meetings to identify goals for the school district. Efforts were made to include a cross section of the community as well as a teacher from every school in the district. Results of the community survey

completed in November and opinions garnered from the interviews conducted early on by Dr. James, as well as demographic information, was used as baseline information for the planning process. Dr. James explained that such planning “is designed to encourage meaningful communication between school and community” and also “to solicit input from all segments of Brookside into a plan to guide the school district in educating students for today and tomorrow.”

Many members of the school community viewed this strategic planning process as the major accomplishment of the school year. Also, this process and the resulting goals were viewed as genesis for further action and implementation. The involvement of so many different members of the school community was viewed as positive in obtaining cooperation and involvement from all segments. One member of the group commented:

I thought it was set up very well. I especially liked the all-day Saturday meeting where we met in small groups and . . . each group, because of its size, had a lot of interaction. At least the group I was in, everybody spoke, commented. There was some disagreement, but people were able to come to . . . agreement. And I like the fact that there were more . . . members from the public sector than educators.

Another described how the strategic planning under Dr. James’ direction had “all kind of set our vision and I think teachers are . . . they’re excited.” Others commented on the various types of people that were on the committee, including parents and business people who were invited to give opinions. A participant commented on the perceived worth of this activity: “. . . everyone gave it a very good effort, which I don’t think they would have done had they felt it was a lost cause or that it wasn’t going to be listened to or that it’s just an exercise in futility.”

However, there was a small group who apparently felt that Dr. James’ use of baseline data was a method of predetermining the results of the goal setting process:

I felt like it [strategic planning] was very directed so that the results would come out like this school system wanted it to come out. . . . I felt like it was real guided . . . one of the real problems that I’ve had was there are people out there going, ‘Its just a rubber stamp, just a rubber stamp.’

And then, you know, it could so easily be misconstrued that way and I don't really believe that that was the case. I really believe the administration was looking for guidance.

Dr. James and members of his administrative staff conducted more OBE forums during this month. At one, members of the teaching staff joined the group to explain their viewpoints and how they were already using many of the techniques and methods outlined in the OBE philosophy. Dr. James lamented the fact that the acronym OBE had so many different meanings for so many different people. He continued to make it clear that parents would be involved in the planning process for an outcomes-driven program:

Brookside is involving the community through the Strategic Planning process, through the four forums held in each sector of the city, and through committees and study undertaken in several different areas. The Brookside plan for education based on learner outcomes will be different from any other plan in the state or nation, because it will be based on community standards, wishes and values.

Many realized that the forums were worthwhile in communicating with the public and in improving the relationship between the school and the community. One described how he thought that relationship was enhanced through Dr. James' actions:

I think he contributed mostly through the OBE forums that were being held . . . people just seeing the superintendent and the staff and getting a feel for what was going on. . . . But I think the main thing was just that he was out there working in the people.

Another commented that "The parents don't seem to be as stirred up as they were at the beginning of the school year." In noting to what that might be attributed, she related the evidence of improved communication:

. . . the posting of the school board minutes, it's available. No one can ever say they don't know what's going on. They just have to read it. . . .

And also I think they may be just, hopefully, they just realize that change is not for the worse. Change is always for the betterment of students. With the outcomes-based parent meetings, I think those are very, very positive.

A teacher related how her motivation level was higher as a result of actions concerning OBE and the superintendent:

First of all, I'm somewhat enthusiastic about the idea of using OBE. That's an overwhelming feeling now that we're all going to have to adjust to. Some people are fighting it very much. Some people are doubtful about it. Some are excited and some are very excited. I mean there's all different stages still in the buildings. That, to me is refreshing, constructive. The idea that the superintendent has been willing to go out and defend this to the public head on . . . at least he is willing to get out there and risk his reputation and face the problem.

In spite of the extensive efforts from the superintendent's office to educate all members of the school community about OBE, a degree of fear remains. A parent explained how this unrest continues:

I said to him, 'You know, the reason people are so anti-OBE is what they've seen on the East Coast. . .because the outcomes can get so general. . . .' But still people are afraid they're going to allow the homosexual education, yeah, all that fear just still rises. Well, the teachers themselves are saying, 'I'm not going to teach that kind of stuff' and we'll all be forced to do it. Something that goes against how I feel. Still, there's a lot of fear in teachers about OBE, a lot. And I hate to just zero in on that but that has been his biggie. That's what brought the most attention at this point in time. I think it's sort of a waiting and watching to see if he will really keep his word. They're wondering, well, what's he all about still.

Yet another detailed how Dr. James' efforts have been successful in communicating effectively with those who are uneasy about OBE and other questioned educational services :

. . . from what I can see with him, he has not been . . . hiding anything, and no question is too dumb, no question is one that we shouldn't ask. He's been very open with them and, in fact, a couple of parents that I know that have been at meetings where he has been, have almost been swayed the other direction because they feel that he is so professional.

. . . he's been . . . reassuring to these parents. Because, you know, he's new. A lot of people didn't know what he was going to be like coming in, and, you know, we don't like change, most of us. And Dr. Edwards was very well thought of. He was. In the public, I think that he was very well thought of. He was very professional but, you know, Dr. James is an entirely different person with a different personality, but has seems to have dealt well with this group that seems to be so adamant about what we are doing or not doing.

Dr. James began a series of "casual coffees" at each school site for the express purpose of "staying in touch" with the Brookside teachers and for hearing first-hand what teachers' concerns are. For the most part, teachers were pleased with the opportunity to visit directly with superintendent. One teacher related her experience:

. . . the times that Dr. James took with the faculty I think were very good. I think that there were a lot of people that didn't know necessarily . . . some of the directions that . . . he's taking, and I feel like that really helped kind of solidify . . . because people really felt positive about that, that they appreciated the information. . . . There's still some concern about change, but about making change for just change sake.

. . . but just a little concern for that, but a good feel for the positiveness of the superintendent coming to the campuses, making an effort to talk to the different people.

February found Dr. James attempting to complete several projects that would make more efficient and effective use of school resources, including an agreement between the city and the schools, a fiber optic network to improve communication and administrative tasks, and the genesis of a budgeting committee to look at reallocating funds to provide more funding for instruction. An interlocal agreement between the city and the schools was approved that provided for sharing of information, resources, staff work and facilities that would be of mutual benefit to the two public entities. The first project involved the city paying the school to print a quarterly community newsletter. With the money paid to the school district, improved equipment could be purchased for the school print shop, thereby improving the quality of product and service for both public bodies and more effective use of public funds.

The idea of installing fiber optic lines to electronically link all school sites became a viable plan that Dr. James began working toward. A fiber optic network could be built by linking with existing fiber that had been installed by a local utility company. Dr. James began negotiations with that company and took the project to the State Corporation Commission to determine if rates could be reduced. Because this would be the first such network within a public school system in the state, no precedent had

been set for rate determination for a public entity. Although the initial cost would be high, the shared educational and technological information would save money in the long run. Also, the improvement of efficiency and effectiveness within the administration of the school district would result in lower costs and more money to spend on instruction. The installation of video systems would allow the "sharing" of classes and curricula. Also, a link with the area technology center or a statewide system would later be incorporated for the sharing of instruction from there, as well possibly accessing an international data base that might provide learning opportunities from all over the world.

The budgeting committee began meeting early in February for the express purpose of reviewing budget requests from all department heads. For the first time in the history of Brookside, each department head was given the responsibility of building a budget for his or her area. Each person presented their budget to the committee with rationale for the expenses and costs. Members of the budget committee included administrators, parents, and teachers. Dr. James made it clear that the budgeting process would be an open process so that each member of the school community would have information as to how the funds were being allocated and spent.

Shortly after spring break, the Board of Education announced an early retirement incentive for both certified and full-time support employees. A request for such a program was initiated by the superintendent after he was approached by a employee who brought up the subject. The Board overwhelmingly approved the program because of the possible salary savings that could be obtained. Another advantage of the program was the possibility of streamlining the number of staff members through attrition. Dr. James announced a restructuring of the administrative staff that would take place at the beginning of the new fiscal year. His new organizational chart was aimed at "flattening" the organization and reorganizing duties in a more effective manner. The retirements and reorganization plan met mixed reviews:

Administrator: I think whenever you get a new leader . . . when changes come, you wonder. I know there's been some changes in staff down at

the board building . . . and the way that's organized. And people have questions about that. I think personally it's wonderful. But I think overall they see him as someone who truly cares about kids and they're willing to stand behind him.

Teacher: I think the retirement of all the people this year has been a concern to some people because it's like, a lot of people that, even though who some of the folks had argued with them forever, they look at them as the rock . . . even if there's things you don't agree with the rock, there's a stability there that's a security because it's so steadfast and has been that way for a long time. So, I think there's a bit of uneasiness there and who's going to take people's places and what's it going to be like once we get in new thoughts and attitudes and new this and that. But I don't think that's a negative thing.

Parent: I think it's good. I think in the interim they were kind of wondering . . . not sure what to think or do or kind of the anticipation of what might happen and who might stay and who might be gone. A little bit of that, not too much, but there is a little bit of concern. But that went away very quickly.

The Brookside Public School Foundation held its first fund raising dinner in the month of April. Collections from ticket sales, a silent auction, and private donations helped members surpass their goal by almost doubling the targeted amount. This drive allowed the awarding of over 35 Brookside Foundation grants to teachers before the school year ended. Without fail, the foundation was mentioned as a major accomplishment of the school community and one that brought the community together:

Community member: We're building a bridge linking the community and the school system. Plus, we're creating a closer partnership between businesses, parents, community and the school system.

Parent: For one thing that I have noticed is the foundation coming in and actually cementing that community school relationship. The opportunity for the business community and people to get involved in really supporting the schools and not just financially. The finances are great, but also, where your money is, there goes your heart a lot of times. And so I think that's been a real positive thing.

Teacher: Again, I think the foundation, and I'm assuming this is his brain child, maybe he brought it with him from another school district or whatever. But the foundation . . . once we've realized what it was . . . then we began to see some of the things that you could do with it. You could take field trips . . . just different things. But it was like, this is for us. We can use this . . . [I] went to the foundation dinner and was real impressed with as many teachers as there were there. . . . I think the foundation

dinner was a good cross-section of a little bit of everybody and that showed that the teachers were with this and involved in it.

Teacher: I think that there's the development of the foundation just as a cork pops out of a bottle of champagne and all the bubbles come out. Everybody felt so held back that they lost their enthusiasm working with the school district. [They] felt that they had been bound up for so long and there was just a pent up energy that came forth. We've seen the foundation actually come to fruition. We've see the money that they've collected in this first situation. We'll see the results of the grants going to the teachers here.

The support of the community was again illustrated by the bond issue held in May, having an overwhelming approval rate of over 81%. That members of the school community were able to work together cooperatively to positively support the facility needs of the growing school district was clearly demonstrated by the highest approval rate in over 20 years. Dr. James and his administrative staff had spent many hours visiting civic, school, and community groups to explain the bond issue proposal. A member of the school community comments on the support shown by the teachers and its impetus:

What I have observed is that he . . . wants them [teachers] involved. He has got them involved from the bottom to the top of this school district. And they have shown their support by this last election, the way they worked and helped. They feel a part of the game plan. . . . I have noticed a marked difference in them.

Teachers commented positively about the collaborative effort of both administrators and teachers in sitting side by side working a telephone "reminder to vote" process the night before the election. This was the first time that they had seen such a large number of administrators working in this capacity:

I had [another] teacher mention to me last night after coming back from the phone bank about the election her surprise. She said, 'You should see what the administrators are doing. . .they wouldn't get out and do that that we ever noticed before.' It was always, well, why don't the teachers get out and do that? But now the administrators can get out and work with the public, too.

How It Feels: Second Semester

Many of the same feelings that had been discussed during the first semester remained at the end of the second semester. In almost all instances, the feeling of the individual did not vary from one time period to the other. Those who felt optimistic and positive continued to feel that way. Some who were apprehensive at the beginning overcame that feeling of apprehension. Also, there were those who began the year in an apprehensive mode and ended the year in that same frame of reference. One teacher described the climate of the school district metaphorically in terms of weather:

I would say that it was a rather, starting at the beginning of the school year, starting at the end of the previous school year, things were rather gray. And it has come up several shades of lighter, toward the light. It's a gradual thing and I think it's a situation where we remove the clouds one by one. Things that are worrying and concerns and worries. They still have their shadows out there, but they're not as heavy.

A parent discussed how she has viewed what is going on the school district during this past year in terms of how everyone is feeling:

I'd say rather calm--just everyone working towards their goals, and I don't see a lot of anxiety. I think they're getting more comfortable. I think they're comfortable with what's happened.

An administrator summed up how she thinks members of the school community were feeling at this time:

It's past the apprehension part. It's into wishing and hoping and I think it's a very positive climate. People are more willing to get involved and more willing to let their ideas be known. I think they feel overall freer to contact people in . . . this administrative building and by doing that they're saying that they think they can have an effect. They think they can give a new perspective or something. If it's a good idea, it will be listened to. It's a real positive community.

A mixture of both excitement and uncertainty was mentioned by another administrator:

. . . [uncertainty] I think with the new administration and the decisions that are being made. I think a lot of people feel like there's been a lot of loose ends out there that haven't been going back together and I don't

know if it's just as a result of a totally different change in how things are being run. And trying to hang onto the old and yet accept the new. Well, I think it goes back to excitement to some extent. But at the same time feeling that we're moving too quickly in some areas too. That maybe we need to back off and slow down and really take a look at what we're doing.

Yet another administrator related that the climate at this point was "stressed, but not as stressed as previous years, stressed in a different way." He further explained:

Yes, I'm trying to figure out how I want to explain this. Stressed before was trying to figure out how to bypass the system so that you could deal with your community in an effective way. Bypassing the system meaning that knowing that . . . there's all these policies but they really don't apply to this particular situation so you stretch them a little. Stress this year is the fact that everybody is stressed because of paradigm shifts, stressed because of many, many changes. I'll bring up the communication thing one more time. Sometimes not communicating in advance and knowing that all these things are coming in advance then they happen. The causes stress on some people's part.

In general, school community members indicated that the relationship between the school and community includes more cooperation and a more positive attitude. Feelings toward the school district directly reflected on the superintendent and are favorable in most instances:

Teacher: Well, I think everything's much more upbeat. My feelings in general are that we are more of a family type, you know, we're working together for the good of all. We're not here to see how much the teachers can get and how much money they can get and how much retirement they can get, but it's more like . . . we're here for the kids, the school is for the children. And it seems like he's been more, I don't know, he's treated us more fairly. He's treated us with more professionalism, I think. And treated us like we're real people.

Administrator: By and large, I think the school and community relationship's never been better. I think we have a stiffer force out there that we have to deal with, we have to work with and I even think that that force can become a part of the district. . . . But it's out there, that negative force is there, but I think it's much better.

Administrator: [I feel] enthusiastic . . . excited about the potential, excited about the possibilities. . . . And I think the community has lent to this excitement because again; I really believe there's tons of people out there that have been saying, 'Let us help you, boy, we're proud of this community, we're proud of this school. Let us help you.' That's part of what's going on here now, they're being asked and being let, allowed.

An administrator summed the feelings of many school community members in describing various attitudes toward the superintendent:

Parents, I think, absolutely feel more in tune with him. I think they feel that they have a listening ear, where before, nine times out of ten, decisions were made before they even got their question asked. I think they feel that he's very approachable. I think he has challenged parents as well in terms of looking objectively and critically at the way we instruct their children. I don't think we did a good job of that at all. We simply said, 'Here's what we're going to do,' or 'Here's the plan,' and didn't involve parents, so hopefully, I think we will continue to build a stronger patron base through that.

Teachers, I think absolutely are happy with him . . . the few comments I've heard from teachers have been a result of negative communication in most cases by administrators, but when the truth was known and when the superintendent visited with those groups personally and set the record straight, I think loyalty has remained there and I think we've been to the max with full teacher support.

A teacher related what she has seen as the school year unfolded in terms of attitudes toward the superintendent:

I think, for the most part, there's a very positive support of the superintendent. I think there are some that have been resistant to change. They're unwilling to change, who have seen the status quo as appropriate, to not care for change. To not care possibly for the difference in personalities from one administration. However, and I can say this safely because I come in contact with so many different people, the change has been received overwhelmingly very positively.

Another member of the school community conveyed that most agreed with the steps the superintendent has taken in changing the district:

[They feel] confident. Confidence that what he's doing is the right thing and he's taking them in that direction. I think especially the teachers and I think a lot of the administrators, they could sit down and say . . . change this district in these ways. They would say the same things that he is doing. And I think they feel real good about that and they have a lot of confidence in what he's doing.

In my visits at Brookside, without fail, each of the various sectors of the school community mentioned one issue concerning the superintendent which they all saw as a concern involving the length of his speeches or presentations. One parent who

complained about this situation said, "That's just his personality." Others indicated support for the superintendent but some aggravation involving this matter:

I think that their attitude is that they're supportive, very supportive of Hal. I think that they understand that he has the kids' interests at heart, very dedicated, a very dedicated individual in what he believes in. Now I just haven't heard any bad stuff about Hal. The only thing I hear about Hal is he talks too long. And he knows that.

The comments that I heard yesterday from the speech that he made at the awards thing . . . is that he closed his speech three or four times before he . . . quit talking. By saying, in closing, in closing, in closing. Comments I've heard is that . . . is one of his weak areas. I like all of the things he is doing, but he is not a public speaker.

As mentioned by a teacher earlier in the year, the "different camps" in terms of technology seem to be coming more together at this point in the school year. This appears to be largely due to actions taken by the superintendent to obtain needed technology to make work situations more effective. Also of significance is his ability to explain the importance of technology to the teaching staff in terms that make sense to them and show respect for them:

Administrator: It's become a lot more efficient in the district this year simply because they were able to purchase a lot of technology to help out . . . a lot of people with chores and that in itself may not mean a whole lot. But it does to the people that had some of those pen and pencil tasks taken away from them and are doing more important things now. . . . I think that that certainly shows that there's caring toward those people, whether they're support people, or administrators, or teachers. It shows a great deal of support from the administration here that they care very much that they [support people, administrators, teachers] won't have to spend their time doing routine things, that they can do more important things, higher level things.

Teacher: And he's trying to ease us into this technology. I know I've got my heels stuck in the ground, but I'm going to work on it, I'm going to work on it. When he came to the school and talked to us, he explained the technology. A lot of older teachers aren't ready for this. We're not ready for computers, we're not ready for this, and he explained how much easier things would be . . . he can explain to you and say, this is why it's good, this is what's happening, rather than because I said so . . . when you ask him a question, he doesn't immediately come up with his fist doubled. He will talk to you like a person rather than try and start an argument with you. . . .

Many credited the superintendent for his role in contributing to and involving others in change:

Parent: I think the way he's come in . . . he's come in strong, but not like this is the way it's going to be, this is my way. I think he's taken some time to look around, see, get a feeling for the way things are. He hasn't just come in and changed everything. I think he's taking his time and assessing the situations and helping people be a part of the change, not just changing [it] himself.

Board member: . . . the superintendent, that's the way he operates, that's the kind of person he is. He seeks input from any level and certainly the door is always open . . . for discussion with the different segments of the community, with employees . . . [he] just is really an open person . . . that had to add to the confidence, being able to know that when they, the community would suggest something that they knew that it was being evaluated.

Administrator: I think, number one, it's Dr. Hill . . . and number two, (and this partly spins from number one) is that he's involving the community and the business people. I think that's one of the things that at least is exciting to me . . . teachers see that the community and the business people were excited about our school and wanted to get involved.

An atmosphere where risk-taking is encouraged continues to be identified by group members as a welcome change. Having autonomy to do one's own job is another item of importance:

It's a helping, supporting relationship that we have now and I can't stress this enough . . . I think all of us, we're afraid to take risks. I think that maybe it's the nature of the profession. We talk about things, but we don't want to take risks. Now . . . I think the environment is established where we can risk. And this risk thing in turn will result in some change for the district. . . . I think under Hal's leadership, you feel like if you make a mistake, well, that's okay. We'll go back and we can fix that or he'll help you fix it. And you don't have to worry about that . . . [before] I think we had help and support, but it was a critical type of help and support. . . . I felt and I said before that there was tremendous pressure not to make a mistake. But now I feel that that environment has changed that you can take risks, you can make mistakes. Not that you couldn't make them before but, if you make them now, you're going to have a lot more support for that, especially if you're trying to do something that's improving this district.

He creates a working environment that you can be creative in and that you can feel that you're in charge of what's going on. . . . If you run up against a situation, you'll have that support from him. And I think that's pretty well all through the district.

The element of trust continues to be a vital issue in the superintendent's working relationships with others. One teacher explained how he has built up trust and a good cooperative working atmosphere by his actions lining up with his words, "When you're dealing with the number of employees we have in this school district, they have to see it."

The month of June found Dr. James closing out his school year by conducting a site-based decision making workshop for building and district office administrators. He described this meeting as a ". . . first step in utilizing site-based decision making to make the Brookside School District more efficient and responsive to the public. Site-based decision making nurtures involvement by the public and the staff at all levels."

Negotiations with the BEA were completed during a three-day period late in June using the Win-Win format that had been used the previous year. The chief negotiator reported that she felt, "In my 11 years of negotiating this went the smoothest of all. I do believe that Dr. James was instrumental in reaching an agreement." Other teachers credited his openness with the BEA throughout the school year as an impetus for smoother negotiations:

We are not being railroaded into a lot of things that in the time past, it's like 'This is what you have, this is what you take, be thankful.' It's now, 'How do you feel about this?' . . . he's allowed the teachers to be with the [BEA] more open . . . we can use the [school] mail now . . . and we don't have to get permission for every little piece of paper that comes through. He is . . . treating us like a professional organization, like 'You have the intelligence, run with it.'

That Brookside Public Schools have experienced change during the past school year is evident to all. The degree of change and the significance of the change seems to be determined by one's own perspective. One school community member summarized what appeared to be the question in the minds of many:

. . . we kept hearing it at the beginning of the year, that change is going to occur and on a daily basis you don't realize how much it happens, but at the end of the year when you're kind of looking at everything in retrospect, you realize how much happened this year, and it frightens people. And I think for the first time, a lot of people are going into a

summer break not knowing what Brookside Schools is going to be like when they come back. Last year, they knew it had to have some simlance to the same school system because he couldn't change everything over the summer. But now there's a lot of things that start July first and I think people really wonder what's it going to be like when they walk back in that door.

The groundwork for moving the school district ahead with the involvement of those in the school community seems to have been laid during the past school year led by the efforts of Dr. James. One member of the school community who has been around for many years described his feelings:

I still think that things are happening and things are running right. I feel like the district is . . . coming into the 21st century . . . it really is. Now, I don't know if it's going to be successful or not. But I certainly think that it has a [great chance]. I think we're in the last stages of an incubation period in the district. And that's not to say what we did was bad either What we were doing was fine, we did fine, you know. But when we changed the administration . . . he started the district evolving into, well, I want to say this right, into more thinking of what the literature says the district should be doing at this particular time . . . the strategic planning, involvement of the teachers, the involvement of the community, all these things. . . . Always before we kind of said, come help us, but don't really help us. And now we're saying help us because we need you to, we need your input . . . I think these people really feel a part of what's happening in this school district. And when you get that going and you get that kind of a support, then if you make a mistake, they say 'Hey, we'll help you, we'll get it done, we'll go on.'

Dr. Hal James ended his first year much as he began it, busily involved in several projects he had targeted to improve and enhance the school district. Strategic planning had identified goals to design action plans for and had resulted in belief statements to guide the direction and course of the district. Parent forums would continue as a vehicle for open dialogue to keep everyone aware of the progress being made. The first phase of the ambitious fiber optics program was near fruition and Dr. James had tenaciously met the legal and financial obstacles to this point. He had just begun the first of a series of workshops and activities to reach the goal of making site-based decision clearly understood by the principals. A long-range planning committee composed of parents, teachers, and administrators was in genesis. It would be of value in determining building needs for the future and how to best utilize the limited re-

sources of the district. Also, plans were being made to develop a program among all administrators for goal setting and writing of action plans "to accomplish positive change within the district that would benefit students." Hal James was actively engaging others in the effort to move the Brookside School District into the 21st century.

CHAPTER VI

ANALYSES

Ratcliffe (quoted in Merriam, 1988, p. 157) has told us that "Data do not speak for themselves; there is always an interpreter, or a translator." The purpose of Chapter VI is to provide such an interpretation. This chapter is designed to provide an analyses of two school districts and the ramifications of superintendent succession in each. In interpreting the happenings in these school districts, the concept of mutual simultaneous shaping, as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985), must be kept in mind:

Everything influences everything else, in the here and now. Many elements are implicated in any given action, and each element interacts with all of the others in ways that change them all while simultaneously resulting in something the we, as outside observers, label as outcomes or effects (p. 151).

Lincoln and Guba further explained that any particular outcome simply "happens" as a product of the interaction of all elements, thus the mutual shaping.

In the two school districts, many elements or entities had a part in shaping the transition that occurred throughout the school year. The change in the school district leadership, the people in the school district, and the climate of the school district all interacted to shape one another. No singular element or factor influenced the transitions in Carlisle and Brookside; they were the product of interaction between and among all the elements in these two school districts.

In the following sections of the chapter, major issues concerning school district climate, attitudes, and linkages in terms of school community transitions will be identified for each district. The final section will present a comparison of the actions, strategies, and practices in each school district.

School Climate: Carlisle

School climate has been identified as relating to the “feel” an individual gets from his or her experiences within the school district encompassing the dimensions of ecology, milieu, social system, and culture. In some respects, each of these four dimensions may be independent of the others, but in most contexts they are interactive. For example, a person’s morale (milieu dimension) may be influenced by improvements in the physical and material aspects of his environment (ecology dimension) or by a change in relationships (social system dimension), all of which are part of the school district’s context. Not only is school district climate multi-dimensional, it is inextricably interwoven within the context. Thus, any interpretation of school district climate transition requires cognizance of this interactivity and connectivity.

As previously stated, the various dimensions of climate overlap and no one dimension is deemed more important than another. Although the following climate characteristics are reported singularly, there can be no clear delineation between or among them and each may influence or shape the others.

An enhanced physical and material environment contributed to a heightened sense of comfort and feeling of well-being for school community members. The synergistic efforts of the building committee, staff members, and the superintendent led to the passage of a bond issue to improve each school site as well as to add needed technology for teachers and students. The impact of attention to this dimension is best described by the comments of one of the staff members:

(E)very building is included somehow in this bond issue. Maybe you do not accomplish as much if you built like one school, but it really boosted the morale. We found out that we were going to get teacher desks, I have never had a desk. This is so exciting.

Feelings of an open atmosphere with an opportunity for input valued by the leadership contributed to a positive morale. However, a sense of an administrative

driven decision-making process with little or no regard for others' input contributed to negative feelings and anxiety resulting in lower morale for a small segment of the school community. Also, there continued to be a question of congruency concerning whether the administration would continue to make actions match words.

There was a degree of trust and mutual respect among members of the school community related to the openness of communication processes. Communication was inclusive and was both vertical and horizontal. It could originate from any level or any school community member. There was a level of comfort in approaching the administration and voicing one's opinions or concerns.

There was a collective sense of empowerment among the members of the school community that developed throughout the school year. Shared power and decision making through the committee process became a standard operating procedure. In general, community members, staff members, and parents felt involved in decision making and had input.

There were extended working relationships and increased involvement between and among parents, community members, teachers, and administrators. The school community became more cohesive and began placing value on the district as a totality or "a big family" rather than individual school sites.

A more professional working environment was established through actions of members of the school community as they faced the challenges that arose during the school year.

The dimensions of climate including ecology, milieu, social system, and culture all were influenced during the school year by the interaction of many entities and elements present in the school district. Additionally, transitions in climate impacted attitudes, and transitions in attitudes impacted climate. There was no starting point and no ending point; each mutually shaped the other.

Attitudes: Carlisle

Attitudes in the school community during this period of transition were many and varied. The general attitude toward the school district was one of support and satisfaction. This period of transition was viewed as an opportunity to become involved:

(W)ith the change in administrations, those people in the community who are interested in change in the schools see this as an optimum opportunity to become involved . . . the administration has said 'We want to hear from you. Come on out and tell us.' We do have more people coming up saying 'Why can't we do this and why can't we do that?' I don't think it's dissatisfaction so much as it's an intent of 'Let's make it better.'

The attitude toward ecological improvements was generally positive and efforts in this area were also viewed as evidence of the administration's concern and sincerity. In speaking of obtaining a long needed repair a teacher commented:

I always felt like I got the run around before. I know that has helped the morale in our teachers this year . . . now I feel really comfortable. They are not just trying to put on a good front for the public, they really seem to care.

This was also another area viewed by the school community as an opportunity for input to change.

School community members had an attitude of openness which reflected their comfort in expressing their opinions and giving input: "I do feel like there is a little bit freer atmosphere in being able to say what you feel and we have a lot less negative feelings about the overall school system."

There was a positive attitude toward the transition reflecting trust and mutual respect in the communication process:

I like them [changes]. I think that is one reason that we feel like we are a little more positive. He is very positive. It seems like he wants to hear what you have to say. You get a good feeling that maybe what you feel counts.

This also contributed to an attitude among many in the school community that what they thought and said made a difference. Yet, there were also those who felt there was no regard for their input.

There was an accepting attitude among members of the school community toward the efforts to strengthen the bonds within the school district:

(W)e're still heading toward being more of a big family . . . rather than just high school here, elementary, junior high, and try to put across that we all work together. Our district cannot do well unless we're all in there and all pitching in our fair share.

The general attitude in the school district was that the new administration should be given a chance: "With a new superintendent, you have hopes."

Other attitudes toward the superintendent included respect for his quick action in becoming a part of the community, his political acumen, and his influence with the larger community. He was perceived as an element of change at all levels, yet was credited with having the wisdom to assess where he was before making major changes.

There also were negative attitudes in the school community toward the superintendent. His ambition was a characteristic viewed with mixed reaction, as was his degree of congruency. The question was whether his ambition was for the school district to be the best it could be or for it to look the best it could look. Congruency dealt with whether his words would continue to line up with his deeds. Being late and keeping others waiting contributed to negative attitudes.

Linkages: Carlisle

Several significant issues arose early in the transition period that seemed to shape further interactions between the school community members. One involved the negotiations process being viewed positively in terms of open communication and cooperation. The "jeans issue" compromise presented by the teachers and accepted

by the superintendent appeared to lay the groundwork for members of the school community to feel their input had impact. The success of the bond issue campaign which involved the work of many school community members gave credence to community support for the schools. Each of these issues seemed to add to the success of relationships between members of the school community and the superintendent.

Members of the school community became actively involved in planning for improvements in ecological issues through the establishment of working committees to recommend additional building and technological needs. Ecological issues influenced the school community members' impressions of the school administration's overall efforts. The superintendent's role in recommending and securing passage of bond issues, as well as moves by the school board and the administration to improve the care of buildings and to implement regular general upkeep, also contributed to the ecological dimension. The fact that he worked effectively in crisis situations with a precarious financial situation to keep the district "in the black" while actively planning for the future contributed to a sense of comfort as well.

Communication was inclusive and provided for all staff to participate through monthly meetings with the superintendent, a weekly staff newsletter, personal visits to school sites and activities, and a willingness to listen to others. Communication was further enhanced by the "humanness" of the superintendent which was expressed through direct association with school staff, memory for names, visibility at schools, and approachability. Interaction with the members of the community was characterized by visibility at community and civic events, willingness to listen, approachability, and being comfortable listening to them concerning problem areas. A caring attitude, warmth, and interest in people helped establish rapport with these school community members so they felt comfortable approaching him with concerns, questions, suggestions, or problems. The importance of all staff members communicating effectively with their public was articulated, modeled and implied.

Dealing with the diverse constituencies of this school community was seen as a quite natural activity by the parents and staff members and the complexity of the school district was looked on as almost a matter of pride. The openness and friendliness at each school site seemed to be an outgrowth of the members ability to deal with disparate situations; yet, in spite of this quality, their sense of cohesiveness was mostly limited to their own building with little interaction between schools. In many respects they were like little islands with no interconnectivity.

The establishment and implementation of the committee process had many implications for the total school community, shaping both teacher-teacher and community-school relationships. Membership on the committees led to more inter-school involvement, more overall input, and extended working relationships between and among parents, community members and teachers. By working on the many committees established during the school year, both teachers and parents began to develop relationships that spanned grade levels and school sites. The genesis of a stronger community parent group through bringing individual site parent groups together was encouraged by the periodic meetings of all school parent groups with the superintendent. Efforts to pull the entire school district together internally resulted in sharing of ideas and facilities, as well as providing an overall direction for the district. As one person stated, "We hear a cadence in the background [which] ensures that we are all marching in the same direction." Bridges were beginning to span the islands. Members of the school community began to place value beyond their individual school sites toward the total school district with various groups "all interacting and balancing each other."

The committee process not only contributed to extending and building new relationships among school community members, it also helped create conditions of empowerment for these patrons, business leaders, and staff members, by including them in planning for issues that would ultimately affect them (or their children) and then

taking the recommendation of the committee. Committees were viewed as actual working committees that made recommendations through a shared decision-making process. However, there was a small contingency who believed the committee process to be perfunctory.

Carlisle Public Schools took a proactive role in joining other schools in a state-wide OBE pilot to "chart much of our own course" in restructuring instructional strategies well before state mandated changes would take effect in the latter part of the decade. A committee of parents, teachers, and administrators completed the plan which was communicated through a series of 12 open forums held in various areas of the city. However, a small segment of the community felt the OBE plan was an administrative-driven decision, that communication was one-sided, and that their concerns about the OBE process were not taken into consideration.

Superintendent Succession: Carlisle

As an externally recruited candidate, Bob Kellogg promptly recommended organizational changes at his earliest opportunity. The first included the restructuring and flattening of the internal organization of the central office administrative staff accomplished with the collaborative input of the assistant superintendents. The second included internal changes in the negotiations process implemented by utilizing the professional negotiator as a consultant only and using a member of the superintendent's staff as the chief negotiator for the board team resulting in a more open, cooperative process.

The implications of these actions were far-reaching. Staff members felt that the reorganized central office staff performed duties effectively in terms of leadership in instructional issues (OBE) and in ecological issues (buildings and buses). There was a perceived carryover from the superintendent to other administrators in terms of them being more organized, being proactive toward problems, supporting teachers, and

seeking input. This influence also contributed to improved communication and cooperation among the principals. Later in the semester this perceived carryover also was reflected in how teachers faced problem situations more professionally as well. The improvement in the negotiation process was attributed partly to the apparent open communication from the board team. The receptivity of the other staff members involved in both these processes, combined with the actual changes, led to what was viewed by the participants as an improved professional working environment.

Succession issues included Kellogg's external recruitment from a position of longevity in another school district, his quick action in becoming a part of the community, and his reorganization of administrative assignments. At least, implicit direction for change was understood because he immediately recommended organizational changes. This situation may relate to Carlson's (1972) contention that "outsiders" are expected to create change within organizations. Even though Kellogg appeared to be a "career bound" successor because he was externally recruited, his immediate and broad involvement with the community, as well as his extensive stay in another school district, suggested that he may become what Carlson described "a statesman," which is a career-bound successor who has a strong commitment to the community and focuses on the school district as a whole (p. 45).

The organizational changes that "flattened" the administrative staff by the elimination of the deputy superintendent's position, eliminated a paid negotiator from the board's negotiation team, and appeared to improve the professionalism in some staff members are similar to Firestone's (1990) findings that succession by an outside chief executive does not necessarily lead to increased bureaucracy and that increased professionalism may occur.

Summary: Carlisle

During this period of transition in Carlisle there was a perceived improvement in physical and material issues through collaborative efforts. There was a more open communication process that valued input from all segments of the school community. Shared power and decision making through the committee process contributed to a collective sense of empowerment. There were extended and improved working relationships between and among parents, community members, and school staff members. The school community became more cohesive and placed valued on the district as whole. Attitudes during this period were generally those of support and satisfaction. Negative attitudes related to those who felt their input was not taken and that decisions were driven by the administration.

Early successes in terms of improving the negotiations process, accepting a compromise from the teachers, and passing of the bond issue seemed to add to the success of relationships between members of the school community and the superintendent. Also viewed positively were the superintendent's quick action in becoming a part of the larger community, the "flattening" of the internal organization of the school district, and the perceived improvement in professionalism of staff members. The issue of the superintendent's actions continuing to be congruent with his words was ongoing.

School Climate: Brookside

As stated previously, the concept of mutual shaping is inherent to the interpretation of any transitions that occurred in this school district during the past year. All entities and elements interacted to shape one another, there is no singular cause or explanation for the happenings. It is also important to note that the various dimensions of school climate overlap and none is more important than another. Also, although efforts are made to report them singularly, there cannot and should not be any clear delineation between or among them and each may influence or shape the others.

The physical and material aspects of the ecological dimension were enhanced by the collaborative efforts of school community members to continue the building program and to gain needed technology for the school district. The reallocation of existing resources to instructional areas added to this dimension as well. "There is a more instructional emphasis this year rather than business oriented. Instruction and students are more important with the new superintendent than this operating a business."

A change to a more open, comfortable, and relaxed atmosphere with a sense of freedom contributed to an improved morale. Being insecure with "change from what we have all worked with so many years," as well as the belief that decisions were administratively driven contributed to a sense of apprehension.

In general, a sense of improved communication with an opportunity for input valued by the administration added positively to the social system dimension, although some school community members felt there was a lack of effective communication. School community members felt comfortable giving their input.

An atmosphere of trust that encouraged risk-taking and autonomy contributed to a collective sense of empowerment among members of the school community which developed throughout the school year. Shared decision making through involving the school community in a committee process became a standard operating procedure.

There was more involvement and participation of all contingencies of the school community, with relationships among members of the school community becoming more open and direct.

A change in emphasis at the central office level toward instruction as the focus of the school district brought congruency to the professional staffs' commitment to excellence in this area.

All dimensions of school climate including ecology, milieu, social system, and culture were mutually shaped by the interaction of the many entities and elements present in the school district during this period of transition. As noted previously, the

various dimensions of climate overlap and each may have influenced or shaped the others. There is no singular cause or explanation for the occurrences. As was the case in Carlisle, transitions in climate influenced attitudes, and transitions in attitudes influenced climate.

Attitudes: Brookside

There were varied attitudes in the school community during this period of transition. Many described positive attitudes of excitement, hope, and encouragement. The general attitude toward the school district was one of increased support and involvement:

People are more willing to get involved and more willing to let their ideas be known. I think they feel freer overall to contact people . . . in this administrative building and by doing that they're saying that they think they can have an effect.

There was a supportive attitude toward the collaborative efforts of the teachers and administrators to support the bond issue for facility and technology needs. The shift toward the instructional emphasis was generally viewed as appropriate.

An attitude of support toward the change in atmosphere was held by many: "It makes me feel good to work with people who feel good. I see people feeling better." Yet there was an apprehension related to being insecure with "change from what we have all worked with so many years," to unrest because the old organizational structure is changing, as well as concern because of the emphasis on technology. Another area of apprehension related to a segment of community members who had a degree of fear in regard to instructional issues, as well as a group who felt that decisions were administratively driven.

Many members of the school community were pleased with the level of communication and saw it as a strength. They felt comfortable expressing their opinions

and felt their "opinion means something." Others felt that communication problems arose from the transition process.

There was an attitude of trust both toward and from the superintendent: "At this point, we all trust him." His attitude of trust related to empowerment, "giving people the freedom to make decisions" and "he trusts them to do their job."

The committee process was viewed as an opportunity to give one's input into the decision-making process and to come to common ground. School community members were pleased with the emphasis on increased involvement and participation among members of the school community, as well as the improved relationships among members of various groups.

Attitudes toward the superintendent ranged from positive to apprehensive. He was credited with "taking his time and assessing the situations and helping people be a part of the change." Also, he was seen as a different breed of superintendent who considered schools for kids, instruction more important than business, and who put an emphasis on people rather than legalistic issues or paperwork. A negative attribute was the length of his presentations and speeches.

Linkages: Brookside

Several early issues in the transition process seemed to shape initial attitudes and further interactions among the members of the school community. The first was the censorship controversy which Dr. James saw as an issue of trusting teachers to use good judgment in determining what was appropriate for their classrooms. Teachers were impressed with how he handled the controversy and stood up for them: "He did not buckle to the parents, he listened to them . . . then said that he had faith in us, that he trusted our professional judgment." This issue also created negative feelings for some members of the school community, who continued to react throughout the school year.

The second was the restructuring of the Board of Education meeting process which provided for more community participation and access, as well as more active board participation. A "partnership with the Board" on the part of the superintendent and the public perception that the Board is "actually fulfilling their role" by "thinking through a lot of decisions instead of just accepting them" also emerged from this restructuring process.

Third was the change in the negotiations process which was planned well before the superintendency transition. This session went smoothly with the win/win process adding to positive feelings on the part of the teachers in terms of feeling their organization was more respected. Openness with the BEA during the school year and "treating us like a professional organization" was credited with assisting the second round of negotiations to reach agreement within three days.

Interactions in each of these issues seemed to "lay the groundwork" early on for successful relationships among school community members and the superintendent. Almost immediately after he arrived, he faced the censorship controversy and teachers immediately felt his support. The school board became more participative and felt they improved their public perception. A relationship of respect with the teachers' union was initiated.

The combined support and efforts of community members, teachers, and administrators led to the overwhelming approval of a bond issue to support the facility needs of the growing school district for another year. Also adding to the ecological issues were collaborative efforts to reallocate existing resources toward instructional expenditures which included the early retirement plan and the establishment of a budget committee. The pact between the school and the city resulted in the purchase of needed printing equipment without any cost to the school. The fiber optic network would begin the groundwork for a state of the art technological system to be build in phases that could positively impact both administrative costs and instructional

programs. Administrative costs could be reduced and instructional programs could be expanded far beyond the walls of the classroom.

Communication issues ranged from being viewed as a strength to being a problem area. Some administrators reported they have insufficient information concerning what was going on in the district and that a degree of uneasiness among administrators at the central office related to the restructuring contributed to ineffective communication.

Information was shared openly with various constituencies through OBE forums, meetings with teachers, and other members of the school community, as well as a monthly newsletter to all members of the community. Visibility at school sites, PTA activities, and civic affairs was enhanced by the superintendent's approachability. Teachers and parents felt a sense of comfort visiting with him firsthand. During the second semester casual coffees at each school continued the opportunity for "staying in touch" with teachers and hearing about their concerns directly. His acceptance of other points of view became a standard operating procedure.

School community members felt a sense of empowerment. These conditions include autonomy to do one's job and the freedom to make decisions at one's own level. A teacher reported: "I tend to feel more confident and more willing to experiment in my own class." Even increased work loads resulted in a more positive outlook because individuals ". . . have more responsibility now. It is ironic that you have more work, but it is more pleasant." Risk-taking was encouraged because the "environment is established where we can take risks" and "you can make mistakes."

The committee approach was implemented to obtain input and to make decisions. Members from the various constituencies of the school community were asked to volunteer to serve on committees. Many who participated reported their input was valued whether they were school employees or community members: "I know that he is

trying to get the input of people instead of just coming in and saying, this is the way it is going to be.”

The strategic planning committee was seen as a method for obtaining “more grass root input” through “a committee that is going to look at priorities and goals and find the big picture for the district.” This committee involved all contingencies of the school community in an extensive process that “kind of set our vision” with the resulting goals and belief statements.

The involvement and participation of the community at large through the organization of a school foundation was encouraged. The success of this foundation in a short period of time brought the community together in terms of “creating a closer partnership between businesses, parents, community and the school system.” This was the first time the community actually had been asked to help in this manner resulting in “these people really feel a part of what’s happening in this school district.” An outgrowth of the increased involvement and participation was another avenue for open communication.

Relationships with the superintendent were credited with a “positive effect that has come down through the ranks,” resulting in administrators treating others differently and improvement in principals’ actions with their teachers. Administrators and teachers began working together more cooperatively for the benefit of students. The union teachers reported their group was now treated as a professional organization.

A change in emphasis at the central office level toward instruction as the focus of the school district was congruent with the teachers’ belief system. The progressive and innovative aspects of the school district continued to be valued.

Superintendent Succession: Brookside

Hal James was an externally recruited candidate for the superintendency at Brookside coming from another school district where he had spent a short period of time in an associate superintendent’s role. He immediately began a “restructuring” and

“reallocating” process that took place during the school year. This process: (1) began with the voluntary reorganization in the plant operations department that eliminated 17 positions through attrition and resulted in a savings of approximately \$220,000, (2) included an early retirement incentive which would save money and streamline the number of staff members through attrition, (3) incorporated a “flattening” of the organization through reorganization of administrative duties in a more effective manner with fewer administrators, and (4) included the implementation of a budget committee involving parents, classified staff, teachers, and administrators to review budget requests so that all members of the school community would have information as to how the funds were being allocated and spent.

Succession issues include James’ external recruitment, educational philosophies, as well as significant restructuring and reallocating issues. As an externally recruited candidate, Hal James immediately recommended changes in the board meeting process, made all administrators aware of his philosophies and ideas concerning education, and embarked upon a year long process of restructuring and reallocating. This immediate and significant change appears to agree with Carlson’s (1972) contention that career-bound “outsiders” are expected to create change within the organization. However, the restructuring efforts eliminated various positions and reorganized duties resulting in fewer administrative positions. Those actions, coupled with the idea that administrators are to be advocates for teachers and “clear the debris,” conflict with Carlson’s contention that outsiders tend to create change through increasing programs, rules, and staff.

These same restructuring efforts that “flattened” the organization, the budgeting process, the improvement in principal and teacher working relationships, and the treatment of the union as a professional organization indicate similarities to Firestone’s findings that succession by an outsider does not necessarily lead to increased bureaucracy and that increased professionalism may occur.

Summary: Brookside

During the period of transition in Brookside there was a perceived enhancement of ecological issues through collaboration and the reallocation of resources toward instructional areas. There was a more open, comfortable, relaxed atmosphere with opportunity for input valued by the administration. An atmosphere of trust contributed to a sense of empowerment through shared decision making, risk-taking and autonomy. There was more involvement and participation of all aspects of the school community with relationships becoming more open and direct. Instruction became the focus of the total school district. Attitudes during this period generally were those of increased support and involvement. Negative attitudes related to unrest with perceived changes in the organizational structure and instructional programs, as well as a feeling that decisions were driven by the administration.

Early issues in terms of supporting academic freedom in the censorship controversy, restructuring the Board of Education processes for more community participation and access, and the improvement in the negotiations procedures seemed to add to the success of relationships between and members of the school community and the superintendent. Also viewed positively were efforts to "flatten" the organization, the opening of the budgeting process, and the perceived improvement in professional working relationships.

Comparisons

The school districts of Carlisle and Brookside have many similarities, as do their leaders. Differences also are apparent. Both districts are located geographically within minutes of each other, yet Brookside is described by most as a suburban school district, while Carlisle is part of a small, self-contained city. Ironically, Brookside school district is part of a community that is one of the largest in the state in terms of

population, yet its close proximity to Trent helps maintain its image as a suburb of that city. The presence of full-service shopping areas, a community college, and several historical museums contribute to the image of the community of Carlisle as a fully independent city. However, there are significant differences between these two school districts in geographical size, the number of school sites, the student population, and the school staff population. In all of these areas, Brookside has more than three times the size or number as does the school district of Carlisle.

There are differences in how each community has shown support for its school system. In Brookside, there has been consistent support for full bonded indebtedness to continue to meet the classroom and instructional needs of the the growing student population. The school community in Carlisle had not incurred full bonded indebtedness and failed to pass a bond issue to support such needs during the final year of the former superintendent's tenure. However, the school community in Carlisle has shown support for its schools through a highly successful school foundation implemented several years ago. Just this past year, the school community of Brookside was encouraged to begin such a foundation and awarded numerous grants to teachers during the founding year.

During this past year ecological issues were addressed in each of the school districts. The collaborative efforts of members of the school district community in Carlisle led to a successful campaign for improving the quality of school buildings and obtaining needed technology in a district that had defeated a bond issue one year previously. Members of the school community continued their active involvement in planning for continued improvements through the committee process. Brookside school community members worked together cooperatively to insure the passage of one of a continuing series of bond issues in a district that historically had maintained maximum bonded indebtedness. Continued restructuring and reallocating efforts were made to increase the amount of funding for instruction and to reduce administrative costs.

Both districts generally had a heightened sense of morale that related to a more open atmosphere with opportunity for input that was valued by the leadership. Also, increased opportunities for participation and actual involvement of school community members contributed to this area. Communication was inclusive in each district and was both vertical and horizontal. Teachers had direct input through the superintendent visitation at Carlisle and the casual coffees at Brookside. Visits to school sites and activities were carried out by both superintendents. Both visited parent and civic groups to present information and to gain input. Each planned public forums to share information on educational issues. Both were credited with being willing to listen to others viewpoints and being approachable. Monthly newsletters were utilized in each district.

The openness of the communication process in Carlisle contributed to a degree of trust and mutual respect among members of the school community. There were those who viewed the communication process as ineffective in the Brookside School District.

Inclusive leadership was displayed in both districts by encouraging and expecting teacher, community, and parent involvement in the school district. The community-school relationship was enhanced in both districts successfully through using the committee process. Most school community members who participated felt their input was valued and used. The committees also added a dimension to the communication process for both districts. Feeling a part of the decision-making process was an outgrowth of the committee process for many. As previously noted, some felt that the decisions were predetermined by the administrative processes and that their input was not valid.

School community members felt a sense of empowerment in both districts. Autonomy to do one's job, shared decision making, and an atmosphere of mutual trust where risk-taking is encouraged have been nurtured in Brookside during the past year. Shared power and decision making became a part of the operating procedures in Carlisle.

Both districts were proactive in foreseeing educational trends that would affect them. Each sought to undertake restructuring of outcome based instructional strategies well before state mandated changes would take effect in the latter part of the decade. Both faced constituencies that openly disagreed with their plans and the process. Both planned open parent forums to discuss these plans. In Brookside, Dr. James actively participated in each public forum.

The negotiation process in each school district was revamped into a more professional arena that contributed to better feelings about the process. In Brookside, a better attitude toward and among the members of the teacher union was reported. There was more openness and cooperation during the first session of negotiations in Carlisle. Carlisle faced a second round of negotiations that would test the perceived congruency of their school leader.

The underlying culture of each school district relates to teachers. Teachers in Brookside have a sense of commitment to instructional excellence that was attained through an attitude of "together we are the best," relating to a collaborative competitive spirit. Collaboration is a characteristic of Carlisle teachers as well. They pride themselves on dealing with disparate situations, yet retaining a sense of cohesiveness.

Both school district communities experienced some transition in the cultural dimension this past year. In Carlisle, opportunities to interconnect between school sites and across grade levels through committee membership developed relationships beyond that of one's own school site or parent group and, combined with efforts to provide "a cadence" for the total school district, shaped the genesis of a sense of cohesiveness spanning the district. Another transition in this area for Carlisle included shared power and decision making within the school community.

The transition in Brookside involved a change in emphasis at the central office level that was congruent with the teachers' belief system. Teachers had always believed that instruction was the basis for the school district, now the change in emphasis

at the central office level made their beliefs congruent with what actually took place in the school district during the school year. Other transitions in the cultural area for Brookside included conditions encouraging autonomy, risk-taking, and shared decision making.

The leaders in each district are considered career bound chief executives. Both made changes in their organizational structures that flattened their organizations. Both were perceived to have modeled their expectations resulting in an influence on administrators and teachers in their districts who developed a more professional orientation.

Each man had a sense of direction and focus for his school district that focused on what could be. Yet, each was credited with assessing situations carefully and involving others in the planning before they moved forward.

Both men had attributes that characterize their "humanness," including being approachable, being visible, being willing to listen, and making others feel comfortable. They each listened to, respected, and used input from school community members. Both had negative attributes that also contributed to their humanness. Dr. Kellogg was faulted for keeping others waiting by being late, while Dr. James talked too long in public speaking situations.

Each man experienced several early incidents that were generally perceived as successful for the school district by the members of the school community. These "successes" appeared to help shape further relationships between the superintendent and the members of the school community.

In each district the superintendent may have influenced change or transition, but only through an interactive process with other members of the school community was any transition realized. Both men asked the members of their school communities for input, encouraged them to work together, and capitalized on the synergy in their school

districts. Implied in their actions was the knowledge that any change would involve the cooperative effort of all members of the school community.

Conclusion

The analysis of the two school districts and the men who lead them suggested that attributes, beliefs, and actions of school leaders can influence the school community. The interactions and relationships of school district community members with the school leader in terms of his attributes, beliefs, and actions tend to shape individual and collective perceptions of the culture, milieu, ecology and social system dimensions of school climate. "We are like the world we see, and, more importantly, the world we see is like us" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 67).

Blumberg (1989), in his book, School Administration as a Craft, referred metaphorically to the "baggage" that one brings with him or her to the role of school administrator. This refers to the "various values, predispositions, attitudes, perspectives" that one brings to adult work life. This baggage impacts one's conceptualizations of problems, one's decisions, and one's reactions (p. 30). In both the school districts of Carlisle and Brookside, the content of the "baggage" each superintendent brought to his role was of importance in influencing the school community.

The analyses of the school districts of Carlisle and Brookside also brings attention to the similarities between the districts and the men who were chosen to lead them. The similarities between the two current superintendents are striking, just as were the similarities between their predecessors. Yet, it is clear that the successors are quite different than those they replaced. Both successors came into a highly political arena and faced different constituencies on a daily basis.

One useful metaphor is the present national political scene. Our current president replaced a highly respected political figure who represented a political party than had been in executive power for many years. Bill Clinton was elected with a platform of

significant change. He faces his highly political role by practicing inclusive leadership, serving many contingencies, and empowering others. He is perceived to have excellent communication and negotiation skills, needed human relations skills, and he emphasizes the "human" element. He is quite unlike his predecessor, and he practices a totally different leadership style. Yet, he is having difficulty managing the different constituencies that he serves and is unable to garner large amounts of support to make the changes he promised. Even though the citizens seem to want change, indications are that it will be difficult for him to make a second term, in spite of his contemporary leadership style.

It appears that in any political arena it is difficult to manage the diverse constituencies that make up today's society and to garner large amounts of support. Could it be that the success of Bill Clinton's predecessors and the former superintendents was based on mirroring the society at large at that time? Has society changed to the point that diversity is the norm and there is less congruency among community members? Do today's society members demand more than those that were served by the past presidents and the former superintendents? Will contemporary superintendents be allowed to establish long tenure?

Both the superintendents in Brookside and Carlise faced their constituencies well during their first year and were able to garner sufficient support to lead their districts effectively. Only time will tell how the political nature of the superintendency and the society at large influences the success of their districts and their tenure.

CHAPTER VII

COMMENTS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, SUGGESTIONS, AND COMMENTARY

Information in this chapter has been organized to serve several purposes. First, it offers some considerations in regard to naturalistic inquiry as it relates to this study. Second, the proposed research questions are addressed. Third, the conclusions to this study provide a number of implications for educational leadership. Fourth, suggestions for further research are offered. Finally, a commentary concerning this study is presented.

Comments

The primary purpose of this study was to describe the impact, if any, of newly appointed superintendents on school climate in two school districts, Brookside and Carlisle, which experienced a transition in leadership.

There have been a myriad of approaches to explain or describe school climate. The most widely used have been climate instruments which attempt to measure school climate. There are arguments that these instruments have shortcomings in that they are simply determining an "average" of individual responses, thus assuming that the overall climate of the school can be reflected in a numerical mean. Additionally, school climate research in educational administration has been mostly limited to the social system dimension failing to recognize the importance of gaining information from the other dimensions of ecology, milieu, and culture to assist in explaining organizational behavior (Miskel & Ogawa, 1988). Naturalistic inquiry lends itself to the task of

describing school climate in context and in recognizing the interactivity of the various dimensions of school climate, as well as the mutual shaping of other elements and entities involved.

Additionally, the world of educational administration has grown exceedingly complex and efforts to measure administrative "qualities" in quantitative terms can limit the scope of the inquiry to those issues which are more narrowly defined. Thus, this study incorporated a qualitative approach in order to examine the holistic and complex issues of superintendent transition and the ramifications of the change in leadership.

Working within the naturalistic paradigm provided me with the opportunity to investigate two different entities from the viewpoints of those actually involved in the transition process. Many studies of the superintendency include just the superintendent's perspective in terms of what he or she thinks she has done or said. In this study, the perceptions of others in the school community were reconstructed to provide a candid portrayal of the school districts and their leadership through the use of the case study report.

The nature of this study called for following the transition for a time period of at least a full year in order to chart the evolution of the change. Because of the variance in the size of the school districts I spent a total of 10 person days at Carlisle and 20 person days at Brookside. The time was divided between first and second semesters to give a sense of continuity to and a full depiction of the transition. I found using this time frame to be optimal for my purposes.

Part of my responsibility as a naturalistic researcher was to write case reports that were authentic representations of the people and the events in each school district community. It was gratifying when, after reading the case reports, members of each school district made comments such as: "I feel like I have just lived that school year over again!" and "It reflected the general attitude of what I felt was happening within our school system," or "It was right on track as far as I'm concerned."

Conclusions

The first research question was: What are the patterns of behavior that characterize the climate of each school district? At Carlisle, the members of the school community worked cooperatively to provide the means to improve the physical and material environment of each school site. There was a degree of trust and mutual respect among members of the school community related to the openness of the communication processes, including a level of comfort in approaching the administration and voicing one's opinions or concerns. School community members shared power and decision making through the committee process. There were extended working relationships and increased involvement among all members of the school community with an emphasis on the school district as a whole.

In Brookside, the members of the school community worked collaboratively with one another to continue the enhancement of the physical and material aspects of their environment with resources for instruction becoming the focus of the district. School community members had a level of comfort in giving input to the administration and participated in planning for the district. Risk-taking, autonomy to do one's job, and shared decision making occurred. School community members had more actual involvement in the school district and relationships were more open and direct.

The second research question was: What is the general attitude of teachers, administrators, and parents toward the district? Why? The general attitude of teachers, administrators, and parents in Carlisle was one of support and satisfaction. They felt a part of the district and that their input had impact on decision making. Communication was inclusive and provided for all contingencies of school community members to participate.

The general attitude of the school community members in Brookside toward the school district was one of increased support and involvement. They felt closer to the

district and that their input was valued. Communication processes were inclusive and provided for all members to have input.

The third research question was: What is the general attitude of teachers, administrators, and parents toward the superintendent? Why? In both districts the general attitude of teachers, administrators, and parents toward the superintendent is positive. Their perceptions of what he is (attributes and beliefs of the superintendent) and what he does (actions) contribute to this positive attitude. Both men were approachable, visible, willing to listen, and make others feel comfortable. Both practiced inclusive leadership by encouraging and expecting involvement from all contingencies of school community members in the school district. Both implemented extensive communication practices that valued others input and created conditions of empowerment.

The final research question is: What are the perceived linkages between the superintendent and district climate? In both school districts the superintendents' attributes, beliefs, and actions influenced the ecological, milieu, social system, and cultural dimensions of school climate. In the ecological dimension they both contributed to efforts for improving or adding buildings and equipment, as well as effectively handling the financial arena. In the milieu dimension, morale issues were situational and interrelated with the individual school community member's perceptions of the attributes, beliefs, and actions of the school district leadership and were generally positive. In the social system dimension interactions between administrators, teachers, parents, and other community members were improved. The committee process developed more overall input from the school community. Communication processes provided for all members of the school community to interact. In the cultural dimension, both school districts experienced some transition. In Carlisle, opportunities encouraged by the superintendent to interconnect between school sites and across grade levels through committee membership developed relationships beyond that of

one's own school site or parent group and, combined with his efforts to provide "a cadence" for the total school district, helped shape the genesis of a sense of cohesiveness spanning the district. Another transition in this area for Carlisle included shared power and decision making within the school community. The transition in Brookside involved a change in emphasis at the central office level that was congruent with the teachers' belief system that instruction was the basis for the school district. Other transitions in the cultural area for Brookside included conditions encouraging autonomy, risk-taking and shared decision making.

Implications

The findings in this study provide several implications for educational leadership. However, it is important to note that these particular men could go to another school district and act in the same manner, but the outcomes might not be the same. Also, the same actions replicated by another superintendent in his or her district may have a completely different influence.

- In both school districts the impact of ecological issues on perceptions of school climate is clearly demonstrated.
- The importance of attention to all four dimensions of school climate is addressed by actions of the superintendents in both districts.
- The superintendents in both districts demonstrate the importance of inclusive communication practices which allow for input at any level and are both vertical and horizontal.
- The superintendents in both districts establish the significance of inclusive leadership by encouraging and expecting teacher, community, and parent involvement in the school district.

- The importance of the school district leader creating conditions of empowerment through shared power and shared decision making is indicated by the actions of both superintendents.
- Actions of the superintendent in Brookside indicate the significance of providing conditions where risk-taking is encouraged.
- Dealing effectively with diverse constituencies in a political context is demonstrated by the importance both superintendents place on improving the negotiations process and involvement in the community at large.
- The impact of school district leaders modeling their expectations and the resulting influence on other staff members is indicated by the actions of both superintendents.
- The actions of the superintendents in both districts signify the importance of providing a sense of direction and focus for the school district after assessing where the district is and involving others in the planning before moving on.
- The significance of emphasizing the human element is demonstrated by both superintendents.
- The importance of the success of early incidents in the tenure of a school leader and the perceptions of other members of the school community are underscored in both these school districts.
- The superintendents in both school districts influenced change or transition only through an interactive, synergistic process involving other members of the school community.

Suggestions for Further Research

There are several possibilities for further study including extending the period of time for the study to more than one year. It would be interesting to follow newly appointed superintendents for more than one year to observe how the context changes

over a longer period of time. Another possibility would be to study newly appointed superintendents in school districts that have had frequent transition in superintendents to observe the significance of their impact, if any. Also, a similar study in school districts that have a diverse cultural base would be interesting. Including the student population and/or non-professional staff in a study such as this would add new insight. Another avenue would be to determine how the superintendent's influence on school climate might influence student achievement, if at all. A study involving newly appointed superintendents with marked differences in leadership styles would be of interest. Most intriguing would be to revisit the school districts of Carlisle and Brookside in two to five years to describe the context and the perceived impact of the superintendents at that time.

Commentary

This study was limited to two school districts which were experiencing a transition in leadership after losing leaders who had spent significant time in each district. As alluded to by one respondent, any superintendent with longevity is going to "form enemies and . . . is also going to have a lot of loyal folks," resulting in the new superintendent being in a position where "he is not going to change those loyal ones' minds over night" and already has the others on his side "because he is new." Obviously, there will be those who are pleased with the new leadership just because it is new.

Another issue to consider is that of the "honeymoon" period when most people are willing to give the new leadership a chance. Sarason (1972) tells us that this period can be a matter of weeks to over a year:

In the beginning there is a level of hope, love, enthusiasm, excitement, and joy not likely to be experienced again; it is a prelude to a time when reality is demanding and must be dealt with; accommodating to this reality and trying to get reality in turn to be accommodating produce problems and conflict that change conceptions of self and others (p. 201).

Both the issue of just wanting a change and the honeymoon period could have influence on the context of the two school districts I studied.

Yet, I believe that these superintendents were generally well-received in the context of these particular school districts because of their inclusive leadership styles with the emphasis on getting school community members involved. It appears that getting people involved builds good will and that maintaining good will depends upon the leader delivering what he promises. This issue of congruency between words and actions of the leader is significant.

After my work that spanned a full year and involved two school districts, I believe that a school leader can positively impact his or her district. The importance of the leader's attributes, beliefs, and actions has been addressed previously. Possibly the most important responsibility of the school leader is to consistently model his or her beliefs. I refer again to Deal (cited in Blendinger & Jones, 1988, p. 26), "Every person who is in a leadership position is 'on stage' all the time--no one listens to what you say, they watch what you do."

This study offered insights into contemporary educational administration and can have value for those aspiring to the superintendency or those with an interest in educational administration. The two in-depth case studies could prove beneficial for use in administrative classes, either individually or combined. The thick description provided describes strategies and practices that were perceived as successful in the context of these two school districts. Individuals can peruse this information and consider the possibility of transferability to their situation. Possibly the greatest value is that two contemporary superintendents are shown in actual situations having some measure of success through practicing inclusive leadership, emphasizing the human element, being visible, valuing others' input, emphasizing instructional areas, and being proactive. Perhaps administrators with similar leadership qualities who have avoided school district leadership positions because of a perceived emphasis on technical and

business matters may now be encouraged to consider becoming school superintendents.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORMS

Information Provided to Respondents*

Explanation that any participation is voluntary.

Explanation of the research project: The primary purpose of this study is to describe the impact, if any, newly appointed superintendents on school climate. The resulting insights may have value in improving knowledge regarding superintendent leadership behavior.

Explanation of the interview process: There will be two interviews during the school year. At the second interview, I will bring you a written summary of your comments, etc. so you can verify the accuracy of my interpretations. After the second interview, I will provide you a draft of the case study to review before I consider the research complete.

Confidentiality: Statements which might be attributed directly to you by their nature will be disguised to provide confidentiality. Any statement you make that is directly quoted will be referred to as "a teacher stated" or "according to an administrator."

Explanation of voluntary participation: You do not have to participate in the interview process and there is no penalty if you choose not to do so. Should you decide at a later date you wish to withdraw from the project, you may do so with no penalty.

Tape Recording of Interviews: If you agree, your interviews will be tape recorded. These tapes will remain solely in the possession of the researcher until dissertation defense is completed. (Target date: May, 1994). All tapes will be destroyed at that time. Access to the tapes is limited to the researcher.

Notes of your responses will be made should you prefer not to be taped.

Voluntary response to any question: Agreeing to the interview does not mean that you have to answer all questions. You may answer selectively should you choose.

Explanation of consent form: Please read carefully. I will provide you with a copy of this form, which will include information as to steps to be taken should you wish to withdraw from the study. I will mail you a copy of the signed agreement as well.

Consent form on reverse

(*The Institutional Review Board required this script to be made a part of the Informed Consent Form.)

Informed Consent Form

Mary Jane Bias is a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University and is seeking participants in a study of school superintendents. The primary purpose of this study is to describe the impact, if any, of newly appointed superintendents on school climate. The resulting insights may have value in improving knowledge regarding superintendent leadership behavior.

For further information regarding this proposed study please contact:

Dr. Edward L. Harris, Dissertation Chair
Oklahoma State University
309 Gunderson
Stillwater, OK 74078-0146
Telephone: 405-744-7244

Beth McTernan
University Research Services
001 Life Sciences East
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Ok 74078
Telephone: 405-744-5700

This agreement is between Mary Jane Bias, researcher, and _____.

Participation in this research project is entirely voluntary.

The participant is free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

The participant shall have access to the researcher's data and interpretations of the participant's comments for review during the course of the study.

Identity of the sources, the participants, school, and the community shall be disguised to such an extent that confidentiality will be maintained without altering meaning.

If the participant agrees, interviews will be tape recorded. These tapes remain solely in the possession of the researcher until dissertation defense is completed. (Target date: May, 1994). All tapes will be destroyed at that time. Access to the tapes is limited to the researcher.

Participant

Researcher

Date

A copy of our signed agreement is on the reverse side of this note. As discussed in our interview, you may at any time withdraw your consent and participation in this project without penalty. Should you desire to do so, you may contact:

Dr. Edward L. Harris, Dissertation Chair
Oklahoma State University
309 Gunderson
Telephone: 405-744-7244

Beth McTernan
University Research Services
001 Life Sciences East
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Ok 74078
Telephone: 405-744-5700

Superintendent's Consent Form

Mary Jane Bias is a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University and is seeking participants in a study of school superintendents. The primary purpose of this study is to describe the impact, if any, of newly appointed superintendents on school climate. The resulting insights may have value improve knowledge regarding superintendent leadership behavior.

For further information regarding this proposed study please contact:

Dr. Edward L. Harris, Dissertation Chair
Oklahoma State University
309 Gunderson
Stillwater, OK 74078-0146
Telephone: 405-744-7244

Beth McTernan
University Research Services
001 Life Sciences East
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Ok 74078
Telephone: 405-744-5700

This agreement is between Mary Jane Bias, researcher, and [Bob Kellogg], Superintendent. This agreement covers all research activities to be conducted as the researcher studies [Carlisle] School District, the participants, and related subjects.

Data collection will include observation of school district events, review of school district documents, and conducting interviews with members of the school community.

If the participant agrees, interviews will be tape recorded. These tapes remain solely in the possession of the researcher until dissertation defense is completed. (Target date: May, 1994).

All tapes will be destroyed at that time. Access to the tapes is limited to the researcher.

Participation in this research project is entirely voluntary.

The participant is free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

The participant shall have access to the researcher's data and interpretations at all times during the course of the study.

While the researcher shall provide the participant with all data requested, anonymity of the sources shall be protected.

Identity of the sources, the participants, school, and the community shall be disguised to such an extent that confidentiality will be maintained without altering meaning.

The participant shall be free to write an exception to the researcher's final interpretations, to be included in the case report.

Participant

Researcher

Date

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Note: The interview protocols were designed to obtain information through a conversational format. In many instances the information sought in the questions was obtained through the conversation process without having to ask the specific questions. If the information needed to provide data for answering the research questions was not provided by the respondent during the conversation, then specific questions such as the following were asked:

Interview Protocol: First Interview

Tell me about your school district.

What is the relationship between your school and the community?

How would you describe your role in the school community? (organization?)

How would you describe your feelings about the school/district?

What are some characteristics about this school district that help you (or others) be successful?

How are things going for you this school year?

How does the current administration and its decision influence how others perceive the school district? (actions/decision?)

How does school policy or standard operating procedures influence others' perceptions?

(If change is mentioned by respondent, request: Please describe any other changes you may have seen.)

What do you think about the changes?

How would you describe the feeling you get from your experiences within this school district?

What else could you tell me?

Could you recommend another person who might have a different point of view? i

If you think of anything else, would you please call me?

(If not otherwise disclosed in the interview determine:)

Has this person met the new superintendent?

Has this person observed or have knowledge of any of his actions?

A written summary of each respondent's comments from the first interview was provided at the beginning of the second interview.

Interview Protocol: Second Interview

What is your reaction to the summary?

Its accuracy?

What additions or changes would you like to make?

Tell me how things are going for you since our last meeting.

Tell me about your school district as it is now.

(If respondent mentions changes, request:) Please describe other changes you have noticed since we last visited.

To whom or what do you attribute these changes?

How would you describe your attitude toward the changes?

How would you describe the relationship between the school and the community currently?

Describe current characteristics of this school district that help you (others) be successful.

What differences have you noticed in your working relationships with others since the beginning of the school year?

How would you describe your feelings toward the school district now?

Who or what contributes to that?

How do you think others view the school district at this time?

Who or what contributes to that?

What are your feelings toward the superintendent currently?

How do you think others view the superintendent at this time?

What other information do you have to share with me?

When you think of something else, will you call me?

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FORM

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

Date: 04-20-93

IRB #: ED-93-070

Proposal Title: THE IMPACT OF SUPERINTENDENT BEHAVIOR ON SCHOOL CLIMATE IN TWO SCHOOL DISTRICTS EXPERIENCING A TRANSITION IN LEADERSHIP

Principal Investigator(s): Edward Harris, Mary Jane Bias

Reviewed and Processed As: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

APPROVAL STATUS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT MEETING.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL. ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

MODIFICATIONS RECEIVED AND APPROVED.

Signature: /s/ Maria L. Tilley
Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: April 23, 1993

VITA

Mary Jane Bias

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: THE IMPACT OF SUPERINTENDENT BEHAVIOR ON SCHOOL CLIMATE IN TWO SCHOOL DISTRICTS EXPERIENCING A TRANSITION IN LEADERSHIP

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Muskogee, Oklahoma, on November 9, 1943, the daughter of Zed and Estelle McAlister.

Education: Graduated from Central High School, Muskogee, Oklahoma, in June, 1961; received Associate of Arts degree from Bacone College, Muskogee, Oklahoma, in May, 1964 received Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Elementary Education from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, in January, 1972; received Master of Education with a major in Guidance and Counseling from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma in July, 1976; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University in May, 1994.

Experience: Elementary Instructor, Coweta Public Schools, Coweta, Oklahoma, 1972-77; Counselor, Instructor, Assistant Principal, Principal, Administrative Assistant, and Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Broken Arrow Public Schools, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, 1977 to present.

Professional Memberships: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Staff Development Council, Phi Delta Kappa, Oklahoma Reading Council, Tulsa Reading Council.