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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: AN ANALYSIS OF FACILITATING PRACTICES FOR CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS TO SUPPORT DECENTRALIZED CHANGE IN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS IMPLEMENTING THE IIIDIEIAI SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

DAVID PAUL KNUDSON
Norman, Oklahoma
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A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

BY

Fred Wood, Chair

Michael Langenbach, Member

Patricia Smith, Member

Yvonne Cano, Member

Frank McQuarrie, Member

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ABSTRACT

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: AN ANALYSIS OF FACILITATING PRACTICES FOR CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS TO SUPPORT DECENTRALIZED CHANGE IN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS IMPLEMENTING THE IIIDIEIAI SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

BY: DAVID PAUL KNUDSON

MAJOR PROFESSOR: FRED H. WOOD

This study examined the perceptions of public school superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers to determine the importance of central office administrator facilitating practices reported in the literature for working with decentralized change processes. Additionally, the participants were asked to provide other practices for central office administrators they believed were important which were not found in the literature.

The population of this study consisted of superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers in 35 school districts implementing the IIIDIEIAI School Improvement Process (SIP). Each of the districts had trained change facilitators for school sites and the schools had implemented the components of the IIIDIEIAI SIP.

The questionnaire, the Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement, was the instrument used to collect data for this study. It included 74 practices which were related to the literature about organizational design, administration, and school-based change. The practices were grouped into eight areas of administrative responsibility: Goals and Planning, Policy and Procedures, Staff Development,

Recognition and Rewards, Monitoring and Evaluation, Management of Resources, Organizational Communication, and School-level Involvement. The data were collected though a mailed survey that resulted in an 86% return. Frequencies, standard deviations, and means were used to report the importance ratings for the data. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Tukey-Kramer α statistics were used to report differences among and between responses when grouped by role.

The respondents identified sixty-eight important facilitating practices for central office administrators working to support school-based improvement. Additionally, of these practices, forty were identified as most important facilitating practices for central office administrators working to support school-based improvement. Significant differences occurred in eighteen percent of the paired comparisons.

CHAPTER ONE

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The origins of improved performance in organizations have long been of central concern to scholars and practitioners of administration. This study examines the importance of practices used by school district central office administrators to support implementation of a school-based improvement process. The first section of this chapter will describe the background information concerning various initiatives which led to the current school improvement efforts. Next, one method of school improvement is identified that involves large-scale change. Following this background, the need, the purpose, limitations and delimitations, assumptions, and the definitions of terms for the study are presented.

Background

The late 1980's and the 1990's witnessed the advent of large-scale managed change programs in organizations. Earlier types of change programs often focused on the adoption of single innovations or the extension of an existing program. Unlike previous strategies, the introduction of large-scale change programs began to address multiple components of organizations such as the adoption of several innovations while at the same time distributing authority for decision making across subunits of the organization. These large-scale managed change programs have allowed many organizations to address more complex problems and subsequently increase organizational effectiveness.

Not all large scale managed change programs have been successful. While many scholars agree that properly implemented programs can improve organizational performance (Benson, Saraph, & Schroeder, 1991; Deming, 1982; Garvin, 1987; Juran, 1988), others report that change programs have failed in various types of organizations (Fullan, 1993; Hannaway, 1993). These failures have often been attributed to problems of implementation (Crandall, 1989; Holmes, 1989; Krishnan, Shani, Grant & Baer, 1989). For example, the large-scale initiative of Outcome Based Education, rejected by many school boards, was faulted for lack of clear implementation objectives (Clark & Astuto, 1994). Similarly, programs that focus on change throughout entire organizations, such as Total Quality Management initiatives, have fallen short of expectations (Sitkin, Sutcliffe & Schroder, 1994). Thus, some have concluded that failure of large-scale change programs could be averted by improving the component parts of the implementation process.

An alternate view has suggested that poor implementation of large scale change programs should not be attributed solely to failure of the component parts. Large-scale change, while encompassing adoption of component innovations, also involves a fundamental cognitive reorientation of the organization, or what some have called organizational identity (Gioia, Thomas, Clark & Chittepeddi, 1994; Gioia & Chittepeddi, 1991; Fiol & Lyles, 1985; Reger, Gustafson, Demarie & Mullane, 1994; Rowan, Raudenbush & Cheong, 1993). Organizational identity is the basic set of beliefs or perceptions that individuals use to describe the core, unique, and enduring aspects of the organization (Albert & Whetten, 1985, Zucker, 1987). Organizational change on a large scale often results in the rethinking and redistribution of roles, resources, and decision-making authority as well as adoption of innovations (Pfeffer, 1981).

Such changes are multidimensional, and can bring into question most basic assumptions about the nature of the organization. Concerns often arise that relate to changes in an organizational member's role, the established working relationships, and familiar decision-making processes (Hall, Loucks, Rutherford & Newlove, 1975).

From this perspective, successful change efforts rest not only on the organization's ability to adapt to specific innovations, new goals, or general direction, but also the capability of organizational members and stakeholders to understand and reorient to a new conceptualization of organizational identity (Smircich, 1983).

The importance of organizational identity has increasingly been investigated. Dutton and Dukerich (1991) found that deeply embedded and basic assumptions about the organization were often used to interpret action. Furthermore, organizational identity was found to constrain organizational change (Fiol, 1991; Milliken, 1990). When actions related to change were inconsistent with these basic perceptions of organizational identity, the result was confusion, resistance, and entrenchment of organizational members (Argyris, 1990, Friedman & Lipshitz, 1992). Change processes were further impaired when role groups in the organization's environment were not in agreement about roles and practices used to facilitate change (Hannaway, 1993; Carroll, 1984; Zucker, 1987).

In response to pressures for reform and accountability, school improvement has emerged as a major issue for public educational institutions. As one type of large-scale change strategy used for increasing organizational effectiveness, school-based improvement programs focus on the selection of a set of changes which could enhance school performance. Superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers involved in school improvement often grapple with the shift in roles, responsibilities, and practice inherent in this process. While information is available about the adoption of single innovations and innovation in school-level programs, little is known about the practices of organizational members in school districts which have successfully implemented school-based improvement.

The Importance of Administrative Practices

The concern of researchers and practitioners involved in the study of large-scale change centers around the identification of practices which facilitate successful

implementation. Hackman (1986, 1980), in a study of administration and work design, proposed that individuals and groups receive powerful cues for behavior from the physical, social, and technological elements of their work. Administrative practices provide one important source for these cues and play a major role in the construction of the organization's identity.

Researchers support Hackman's observations, and have found that top administrators were able to facilitate the incorporation of new behaviors into organizations by the use of practices that facilitate members' understandings of changes in organizational identity (Fiol, 1991; Gioia, 1994; Reger, 1994). Conversely, large-scale change programs have floundered at times due to improper communication of cues by administrators (Cox, 1983; Pondy & Huff, 1988). Thus, central office administrative practices play an important role in organizational change.

Investigations of Central Office Administrative Practice

In educational organizations, several initial studies have been conducted which address the general practices used by central office administrators to support change in schools. Research sponsored by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) focused on the identification of the common "proficiencies" deemed relevant to effective supervisory performance of "outstanding" administrators. Pajak (1989) conducted a content analysis of curriculum and supervision textbooks and articles for the years 1970 to 1988 to identify the proficiencies. From this analysis, 335 practices were classified into a taxonomy of knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for successful central office administration. Excluded from the analysis were items relating to topics such as use of facilities, student discipline, and personnel issues. In a study to validate the proficiencies, Smith (1990) concluded, from the responses of 324 superintendents, curriculum supervisors, and teachers, that all 335 practices identified by Pajak were important for central office supervisors.

In a concurrent project, Fitzgerald (1991) evaluated the adoption of "competencies" in a case study of a district involved in a change program in an effort to validate a framework developed by Snyder and Giella (1988). Their framework was based upon practices employed by corporate management systems which addressed cooperative goal setting, work organization, staff development, quality control, and program assessment proposed by Snyder and Anderson (1986). Fitzgerald's findings documented estimated amounts of time and role emphasis for central office staff within one school district.

In recent years, the literature on school-based improvement has begun to address the importance of the central office and identified some specific practices that are crucial to the success of this approach to large-scale change (Asayesh, 1994; Brown, 1993; Fullan, 1994; Hannaway, 1993; Ingersoll, 1994; Wood, Killian, McQuarrie, & Thompson, 1993; Wood, 1989). However, to date there has been no comprehensive examination of the specific practices of central office administration that support and facilitate school-based improvement.

Recently, Wood (1997) proposed a set of general roles for the central office in districts implementing school-based improvement. His synthesis of literature and experience with districts implementing school-based improvement was articulated in thirteen roles for central office administrators. The roles establish a context essential for the implementation of large-scale change in many school districts. These roles included:

- providing a district long-range plan
- identifying a systematic, researched-based school improvement process
- establishing supportive district policies and procedures
- establishing a district framework for curriculum and instruction
- establishing supportive staff development programs
- preparing the board of education for school-based improvement
- modeling desired behaviors within the central office

- establishing expectations that support school-based improvement
- serving as a public advocate
- establishing a communication network among key stakeholders
- providing and managing district resources to support school-based improvement
- monitoring and evaluating improvement programs
- serving as a facilitator in school decision-making (p. 64)

Section Summary

This literature demonstrates an emerging focus on the roles of central office administrators in school districts. These recent studies also highlight the importance of central office practice in school districts involved in large-scale change. However, no distinction has been made between the multitude of administrative practices used in various approaches to large-scale change. This researcher identified school-based improvement as an established approach to increasing organizational effectiveness, and a distinct approach for which roles and practices within general areas of administration have not been researched.

These studies identified some of the general competencies which are traditionally part of a central office administrator's job. They support the notion that administrative roles played a major role in the management of schools. Furthermore, they support and extend knowledge about the general areas of administration discussed throughout the literature identified in Chapter II which includes: a) goals and planning, b) policy and procedures, c) staff development, d) recognition and rewards, e) evaluation, f) management of resources, g) communication, and h) involvement in school/site-level activities. These studies, however, did not research the specific practices that should be used by central office administrators when implementing a process of school-based improvement.

Need for the Study

In the past, research related to the process of large-scale change through school-improvement initiatives has focused on the use of specific practices at the school level. Crandall (1993), however, highlighted the lack of research addressing the role of the central office administrators in school improvement:

> Studies of school improvement spend little time elaborating on either the contributions or the roles of individuals who work in school district central offices. These individuals are often mentioned incidentally or as the conglomerate "district support." The RAND studies found that, at minimum, endorsement from the central office was needed for implementation success, and that efforts were nearly always doomed to failure when well-placed individuals at the district level worked against them (p. 91).

Other authors and researchers concur with Crandall's observation of the central office staff. Bauchner, Eiseman, Cox & Schmidt (1982) indicated that local facilitators from the central office contributed more to the success of school improvement efforts than any other role group. Corbett, Dawson, and Firestone (1984) found that central office administration provided a major source of psychological rewards to principals to sustain interest in goal attainment. Cox (1983) noted that the "central office staff may well be the linchpins of school-improvement efforts" (p. 12). Thus, there was a need to identify the enabling roles and facilitating practices used by central office administrators in public educational systems during the process of large-scale school-based improvement efforts.

Statement of the Problem

The roles and practices of the central office administrators have been identified as an important focus for study. Research studies on central office administrators have identified general roles in traditional school settings (Fitzgerald, 1991; Pajak, 1989; Snyder, 1988; Smith, 1990). These scholars have indicated the importance of the central office administrators in the improvement of current practice. However, a review of the literature between 1980 and 1995 revealed no research which described specifically how central office administrators provide leadership in a large-scale school-based improvement process. The studies of organizational characteristics and studies of the adoption of generic competencies as well as reports from practitioners have added to the understanding about the general roles and responsibilities of central office administrators, but the existing studies do not examine how central office administrators support the process of school-based improvement. Thus, the problem of this study is to identify facilitating practices which enable central office administrators to support the implementation of school-based improvement.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to identify important facilitating practices which enable central office administrators to support the implementation of school-based improvement processes as perceived by superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers. The school-improvement process selected for this investigation was the Institute for the Development of Educational Activities (IIDIEIAI) School Improvement Program (SIP). This program was developed based on a substantial body of research which focuses on school-based change. The activities for the program were initially based on the RPTIM Model of Staff Development (Wood et al., 1989, 1981).

This model has been used extensively for development of various programs in the school improvement movement (Citizens Educational Center Northwest, 1986; Marburger, 1989).

Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions that examine the perceptions of superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers related to the importance of administrative practices used by the central office administrators in the implementation of the IIDIEIAI SIP:

1. To what degree did superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers in public schools using the IIDIEIAI School Improvement Program agree that each of the practices in the COPSBI questionnaire was important to the implementation of school-based improvement?

2. Were there significant difference between and among superintendents, central office administration, principals, and teachers in public schools using the IIDIEIAI School Improvement Program in the extent to which they agree that the practices in the COPSBI survey were important to the implementation of school-based improvement?

Limitations and Delimitations

The study was conducted within the framework of the following limitations and delimitations:

1. The study was delimited to districts having implemented the IIDIEIA School Improvement Program in one or more schools. School selection criteria further limited selection to schools that employ personnel who have completed the school goal-setting process, have participated in the related school-improvement training, and have implemented their respective plans for at least one year.
2. The data collected in the study represent members' perceptions, and thus, are by definition subjective attributions rather than objective assessments.
3. There is an absence of research describing the role of central office administration in the process of school-based improvement. Thus, questionnaire items were delimited by the criterion of usefulness to central office administrators for support of decentralized improvement processes; not all administrative practices in the literature were examined.
4. The COPSBI instrument was developed as an exploratory instrument for assessing levels of importance for practices related to administration of school-based improvement. Thus, conclusions should be tempered with respect to the initial assessments of reliability described in Chapter 3.

Assumptions

The study was conducted within the framework of the following assumptions:

1. The responses to the questionnaires and interviews were honest and accurate.
2. The selected participants were the best source of data for the study since they had been involved in implementing the IIDIEIA SIP for at least one year.

3. The schools that were identified by IIDIEIAI and the school district for participation in this project used similar school-improvement processes and procedures for school improvement.

4. The school district contact person, provided by the Institute for the Development of Educational Activities, was the most knowledgeable in determining others in the district who were actively involved in the implementation of school improvement using the IIDIEIAI SIP. Therefore, the contact person was the most appropriate person to identify other active participants in the district's school-improvement efforts.

Definitions

School-based Improvement: These are the developmental efforts that focus on the school, rather than the school district. These include, but are not limited to, professional development of teachers, the implementation of innovations, school-focused curriculum development, organizational development, and incorporation of strategies of increased knowledge utilization in the roles of administrators, teachers, and students (Hopkins & Weeden, 1984).

Central Office Administrator: An organizational employee whose primary responsibilities lie in the administrative domain. For the purposes of this study, central office administrators are those administrators who occupy roles distinct and separate from the roles of superintendents and principals. Central office administrators often coordinate activities across the organization and between its various subunits. In school districts, central office administrators frequently supervise areas such as budget, personnel, curriculum and instruction, staff development, student services, and state/federal programs (Blumberg, 1986; McGivney & Haught, 1972; Pajak, 1992, 1989; Snyder, 1994).

Large-scale Change Program: An organizational change which has an impact on multiple processes and groups throughout the organization. Such changes are viewed in contrast to single innovation adoptions (Abrahamson, 1991, Damanpour, 1987; Downs & Mohr, 1976; Meyer & Goes, 1988; Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990).

Perceptions: These are the subjective attributions reported by the study's respondents regarding the conditions observed from their respective experiences. "Meanings are in people's minds rather than in the objects themselves. Hence, when looking at the same object, everyone does not 'see' the same thing" (Langenbach, Vaughn, & Aagaard, 1994, p.117). In this study, all information reported by the participants will be considered perceptions.

Administrative Practices: Organizational activities that are indirectly related to the basic work activities and are more related to its management (Daft, 1982; Damanpour, 1987; Ibarra, 1993; Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981).

Role group: A group of individuals employed in positions identified by a common name and similar situations (Thompson, 1982).

Innovation: The creation or adoption of an idea, behavior, or technology that is new to the organization adopting it (Daft, 1982; Lorsch & Lawrence, 1970; Rogers, 1983 Wolfe, 1994).

Summary

This chapter introduced the concept of administrative practices which facilitated the adoption of school improvement processes as a means for large-scale change in public school districts. The discussion reviewed the background leading to the current focus on school improvement initiatives. The development of large-scale managed change programs was identified as a major direction that organizations were using to address their needs. Deficiencies in the literature related to central office administrators involved in such projects were emphasized. The text then presented the purpose of the present study, followed by limitations and delimitations, the assumptions, and the definition of relevant terms.

The following chapters describe the proposed study in further detail. Chapter II extends these introductory concepts about the administration of school-based improvement by reviewing relevant literature related to administrative practices from 1980 through 1997. Chapter III describes the research design used in this study including the selection of participants, the development and description of the instruments, data collection procedures, and the related analysis procedures. Chapter IV presents the findings from the study. Chapter V contains a synthesis of the evidence which supports the study's conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Chapter Two presents relevant concepts and theory related to this study. The literature was searched by computer using key terms and by examining the Comprehensive Dissertation Indexes, the Education Index, and the Current Index to Journals in Education. The literature search covers the period from 1980 to 1997.

This information is organized in three sections which serve as a conceptual basis for the study. The first section explains relevant concepts and definitions related to the study. Specifically, school-based improvement is defined as an important strategy for organizational effectiveness. Since the study uses the term "central office administrator" in a specific way throughout the study, it is also defined.

The second section traces the role of the central office administration from its historical beginnings to the present. As conceptions of school administration have evolved, central office administrators have developed unique roles in the implementation of improvement strategies in schools. Relevant theoretical concepts about the role of administration are included that reflect scholarly thinking in the literature for each era. Recent entries in the literature describing pertinent information about central office involvement in school-based improvement have also been reviewed. This brief historical review raises key issues that are important to the identification of emerging administrative practices which support school-based improvement.

Following the historical discussion, the third section presents information about the practices of central office administrators in the implementation of school-based improvement. Research studies and scholarly conceptualizations from 1980 to 1997 were searched and analyzed (Bogden & Biklen, 1992; Holsti, 1969; Krippendorf, 1980). Included in these sources of information were a) research about organizational designs, administration, and decentralized systems, b) literature related to school-based improvement, and c) the IIDIEIA| School Improvement Program materials. This final section is organized as the conceptual basis which supports the items in the survey of Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement (COPSBI) that was developed and used to collect the data in this study. Concurrent with the information from the research and scholarly literature, specific practices are presented related to the eight role areas addressed in the COPSBI questionnaire: Goals and Planning, Policy and Procedures, Staff Development, Recognition and Rewards, Monitoring and Evaluation, Management of Resources, Organizational Communication, and School-level Involvement.

Relevant Concepts and Definitions

Organizational Effectiveness

Studies of school improvement have sought to identify strategies that would lead to increased levels of organizational effectiveness. Rapid social, economic, political, and technological changes over recent decades have underscored the importance of examining in detail the issues related to organizational effectiveness. Researchers and practitioners have long held that an organization exists to accomplish recognized objectives through cooperative effort (Cunningham, 1977; Denison & Mishra, 1989). The degree to which the organization accomplishes its basic purposes and meets the needs of its key constituencies indicates the degree of effectiveness.

In the study of organizations, researchers and practitioners must have indicators to assess the extent of effectiveness. Scholars have suggested that change in levels of organizational effectiveness may be viewed over a period of time (Cameron & Whetten, 1981; Cunningham, 1977). The ultimate long-term indicator of effectiveness is whether the organization sustained itself for a prolonged period in the environment. Recent instances of school districts which have been replaced by privatization, charter schools, or state control boards attest to the fact that schools, as well as other types of organizations, must be effective to survive.

Other indicators have been relevant for evaluating organizations for short-term effectiveness. Three common indicators that reflect short-term effectiveness discussed in the literature were productivity, efficiency, and satisfaction (Gibson, Ivancevich, & Donnelly, 1991). Productivity refers to the ability of the organization to produce output equal to demands. Measures of productivity in schools have included such indicators as the number of students graduated, standardized test scores, or number of reading scores brought up to grade level. Efficiency refers to the cost related to achieving an organizational output. In a period of budget constraints, educators have become keenly aware of measures of efficiency such as the costs per pupil for materials, field trip expenses, and direct or indirect charges for special education services. The notion that organizations exist as social systems requires consideration be given to the extent to which organizational activities satisfy the needs of employees. Districts that implement large-scale innovations have discovered the need to rethink work design to address issues of employee satisfaction.

In an intermediate time frame, levels of adaptiveness and personnel development have been suggested as indicators of an organization's ability to achieve effectiveness. Adaptiveness has been viewed as the ability to respond to internal and external changes. Organizations that are able to adapt practices related to planning, organizing, leading, and policy making, in response to change are viewed as more effective (Denison & Mishra,

1989). A second way that organizations ensure their effectiveness over time is by investing resources in ways that enable them to meet future demands (Katzell & Guzzo, 1983). This strategy, termed development, has taken the form of professional in-service, cross-functional training, and other activities that enhance knowledge, skills, and perspectives. Adaptiveness and development allow an organization to better meet the demands put upon it.

School-based Improvement

Improvement in educational systems has frequently been defined in terms of increasing organizational effectiveness (Cuban, 1984; Fullan, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1990). In the last two decades, many forms of organizational improvement have been proposed including alternative forms of teacher preparation, increased levels of state or national standards, implementation of district-wide programs, and total decentralization (Campbell, Cunningham, Nystrand & Usdan, 1990; Darling-Hammond & Wise, 1985). However, this study focuses on school-based improvement as a means of increasing the organizational effectiveness of schools.

School-based improvement has been a strategy for organizational effectiveness that focuses on the school as the primary unit of improvement. Wood (1997) notes that school-based improvement includes processes that enable schools to set improvement goals, develop short and long range plans, plan and conduct in-service activities, implement changes in professional practices within the school and classroom, and monitor to ensure that the new practices are maintained. Thus, districts have used school-based improvement as a process to enhance levels of effectiveness by increasing the adaptiveness and development at the school-level. Through the school-based improvement process, districts can directly address issues related to productivity, efficiency, and satisfaction.

Central Office Administrator

Researchers and writers have struggled to define the role of the central office administrator. Early writings about the school districts use the term central office administrator interchangeably to refer to superintendents, curriculum supervisors, and the many other varied roles. More recent organizational writings acknowledge the superintendent's role as distinctly different from other central office supervisors (Pyzant, 1994; Wissler & Ortiz, 1988).

Central office administrator roles, while existing as extensions of the superintendent's office, resemble the role of superintendents in few ways. One way that they differ is that superintendents and central office administrators usually have different career stages. The average career superintendent's tenure, as chief executive officer, is 4.5 years, while a central office administrator's tenure is more than double that number (Campbell, Cunningham, Nystrand & Usdan, 1990). In addition, most central administrators work directly with programs and services in the district's schools, whereas superintendents usually do not. Rowan (1982) identified at least seventeen staff position titles. In addition to roles relating to curriculum and instructional development, titles related to business services, cafeteria, personnel, guidance, and psychological services are common in most districts. Least consistent across districts were titles related to curriculum and instruction. Pajak (1989) found that almost every central office job description includes the responsibility to "assist the superintendent in all other functions as required." Thus, while the role of the central office administrator has not been clearly defined as a single role, the set of roles it encompasses are viewed as distinct and separate from the roles of superintendents and principals.

Historical Background of the Central Office

Early Beginnings

The roots of the central office can be traced back to the first public school legislation, the Massachusetts General Court Act of 1647, which mandated the administrative responsibilities for communities to locate, hire, and support their own teachers. By the end of the 18th century, schools had become a widespread institution, and community boards were developed (sometimes referred to as aldermen or councils) which were given legal right to operate schools and levy taxes. Primarily charged with coordination of instruction, especially skilled educators were recruited from the teaching ranks to perform administrative roles, since few programs existed that provided formal management training (Bidwell, 1965).

At first, these administrators, superintendents, and their central office staff, conducted a major portion of the in-service for increasing the professional and cultural competencies of young and inexperienced teachers. As late as 1877, for instance, 1500 of Maine's 6000 teachers were new teachers between the ages of 14 and 17 of whom few had formal pedagogical training (Richey, 1957). Thus, many of the initial roles for central office administrators related to upgrading the quality of general teaching skills.

District Needs for Administrative Expertise

After the mid-nineteenth century, administrative roles dramatically changed as a result of increased district size and complexity of instructional procedures. Since the United States was primarily a rural nation, schools during that period were organized around community centers and were administered by local boards and principal-teachers (Butchart, 1986). Social forces led to the development of graded schools and comprehensive curriculums which spread to the approximately 110,000 school districts which were operational in the United States. During the post-World War II era, the

nation's demographics changed from rural communities, as people moved toward urban areas. Many districts reorganized and consolidated, resulting in larger districts with increased student and staff populations. By 1972, less than 17,300 districts were operational, a drop of approximately 85 percent in thirty years (Bidwell, 1965). Increased district size had the effect of increasing the number of administrative decisions that needed to be made, and thus, required more central office administrators than in previous rural school configurations.

Other trends in this era had the effect of increasing the requirements of administrative expertise that was needed for schools to operate effectively. The introduction of Great Society social initiatives during the 1960's required central office staffs to acquire skills in monitoring federal-level programs. Increased research and evaluation resulted in specialized knowledge about the effectiveness of instructional strategies. Unionization of the teachers prompted the need for school districts to acquire strategies for participation in collective bargaining. Later, litigation against schools increased the need for school district expertise related to issues such as minority rights, equal access, and separation law. Thus school boards, often staffed by the local druggist, clergy, or parent, found themselves operating multi-million dollar school enterprises faced with complex administrative issues. As requirements for special expertise increased, school boards turned to professionally trained administrators, employed on behalf of the district to manage the logistics of day-to-day affairs and to address the programs requiring specialized knowledge (Bidwell, 1965).

By the latter 1960's and early 1970's, researchers documented that the central office had acquired responsibilities for influence or management of all major decision areas in school districts (McGivney & Haught, 1972). They observed that the central office administration had also taken on the characteristics of other large bureaucratic systems. This new cadre of professional managers were seen as highly effective at coordinating funds, directing staff, and ensuring curricular and instructional uniformity. However, with

this extensive level of central office coordination and control in place it was almost impossible for full curricular, instructional, personnel, or financial discretion to reside at the school level as it had up to that time with individual teachers or with the community boards of education. Researchers of this period concluded that central office coordination had greatly increased school district efficiency, yet a sense of teacher commitment and the responsiveness to local needs, common in previous eras, had been sacrificed (LaNoue & Smith, 1973; McGivney & Haught, 1972).

During this period, additional information became available related to the evolving distinctions between the role of the superintendent and the role of central office administrators. With the advent of more centralized forms of administration, the role of the superintendent was elevated in the community. Much of the community input, problem-solving, and decision-making for schools was no longer conducted at the school-level. The superintendent became the most prominent visible symbol of the school system in the community. Lewis and Miel (1972) likened the superintendent to the producer and main actor of the public performance staged by the school district. Pajak (1987) extended this analogy, concluding from his research that superintendents were constantly on the "front of the stage" as they provided leadership and direction before the public, the school board, and the school staff. Central office administrators, on the other hand, mainly attended to "backstage" matters in order to ensure a smooth and credible overall performance (Pajak, 1989).

Organizational researchers, Meyer and Scott (1983) found that various positions within the district helped to dramatize the success of the instructional program for audiences. Students, for example, presented artistic and athletic performances, superintendents gave speeches at meetings of community groups and made public presentations extolling the virtues of the local academic program. However, central office staff spent a great deal of time ensuring that state department paperwork was completed, that federal reports were filed, and that deadlines for grants were met. In each of these

examples, a performance of some type may be said to be staged to project an image to the public or outside agencies that the school was responsibly and competently doing its job.

Subsequent analyses of schools as institutions, from this era, identified a set of control structures that were distinct from other types of organization and concurred with previous observations. According to Green and Welsh (1988), coordination and control had been defined as the organization's need for an activity to be done repeatedly in some orderly fashion. While public schools had developed as large bureaucracies, they had failed to develop either strict bureaucratic controls or highly professionalized structures which are characterized by collegial forms of collaboration and control. Karl Weick (1976) and others (Lortie, 1975; March & Olsen, 1976; Meyer & Rowan, 1977) have argued that this arrangement in schools could be thought of as "loosely coupled" systems.

According to this view, school districts tended to have strong central bureaucracies and had a "weak technological core" in which the goals of education were variable and uncertain, and the cause-and-effect relationships that link teacher activities to student achievement were poorly understood. This uncertain technical core was seen as a threat to legitimacy since schools had neither consensus about goals nor consistent measures that warranted claims of effectiveness. Thus, centralized bureaucratic structures allowed districts to appear efficient and uniform in the local political environment, while at the same time operating with a great deal of variation between classrooms and between schools (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Hannaway, 1993; Meyer, Scott, & Deal, 1983; Zucker, 1988). Unlike more technically developed organizations, which have been rewarded for efficient production and attainment of clear outcomes, institutions with an uncertain technical core were likely to be rewarded with resources and support for maintaining and implementing structures and processes considered important by the constituencies in the organization's external environment while conveying an appearance of rational management (Argyris, 1990; Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990; Leibenstein, 1994; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977; Zucker, 1987; Zucker 1983).

Administrative Roles in the Effective Schools Initiative

In the 1970's and early 1980's, research on effectiveness of schools departed from the loose structure view of schools and advanced a highly rationalized view of instruction and school administration (Edmonds, 1979; Rosenshine, 1983). Proponents of educational reform argued that the lack of coordination and controls in schools had been a major factor in the educational crisis, and that goals of schooling could be clearly framed, measured, and managed to produce outcomes with high degrees of certainty. Many legislatures and school districts responded to this view by implementing systems of greater accountability, higher standards, top-down state controls, national goals, and prescriptive personnel evaluation systems (Bacharach, 1990; Goodlad, 1985; Kirst, 1989; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). In the classroom, this view was also reinforced, as teachers were given grade-level objectives, formal coordination of assignments, and pacing guidelines (Purkey & Smith, 1983; Rosenholtz, 1985).

The role of the central office administration, in this era of "tightened structures", was to ensure implementation of effective-school research practices. District in-service focused on training teachers in more uniform approaches to teaching. Researchers in school improvement during this era emphasized the need for strong administrative leadership. They noted that while user commitment was important, their research indicated that school-level input in curriculum development led to lack of program fidelity and implementation, and thus leading to ineffectiveness (Crandall and Loucks, 1983; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Leithwood, Holmes, & Montgomery, 1979).

The conclusions of the effective schools researchers and the accompanying school improvement solutions seems to be consistent with much of the research in organizational theory and design. Research in organizational design indicates that arrangements used to coordinate and control work differ in response to the nature of the work undertaken (Cummings, 1981; Meyer & Scott, 1978; Simpson, 1985). When jobs are designed to be

simple, routine, and standardized, work tends to be coordinated in a "mechanistic" approach, that is, an approach characterized by high levels of centralization, formalized procedures, directive leadership, and routine task in order to maximize efficiency. Thus, when teaching is viewed as the implementation of standardized curriculum content, delivered by uniform teaching practices to all students, administrative approaches are usually mechanistic. Conversely, when jobs are designed to handle complex or non-routine work, a more "organic" administrative approach is used, resulting in higher levels of worker self-management, unique procedures, and coordination and control structures based on shared goals, values, and professional norms (Walton, 1985).

Movements Toward School Decentralization

In the mid-1980's, researchers and practitioners began to question mechanistic administrative approaches that emphasized centralized control in the implementation of school improvement. Research emerged that emphasized a view of teaching as more of a non-routine technology and portrayed teachers as skilled professionals who were key decision makers in the schooling process (Berliner, 1986; Shulman, 1987) This new wave of research presented the notion that even though educational goals may be clear, schools, classrooms, and individual students are infinitely variable and dynamic. Therefore, while the process of instruction can be rationally understood, the act of teaching represents a complex technical problem that requires non-standardized solutions, high levels of professionalism, and more organic administrative approaches (Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986; Lieberman, 1988; National Governors' Association, 1986; Tucker, 1988).

State educational policy and school districts responded to this second wave of research by implementing various forms of decentralization. Decentralization, it was observed, existed when decision making responsibilities for key organizational functions (technical or administrative) were distributed across organizational members, locations,

and/or constituents. Decentralization, whether referred to by that name or closely associated terms such as school-based decision making, site-based management, or participatory management, has been in vogue over the past decade and has been established in some form in every state (Neal, 1991).

Three major forms of decentralization have been recently discussed in the literature: system-level decentralization, organizational decentralization, and market/political decentralization (Ball & Bowe, 1991; Bimber, 1994; Clune & White, 1988; Conley & Bacharach, 1990; David, 1989; Hess & Easton, 1992; Muncey & McQuillan, 1992; Ogawa, 1994; VanMeter, 1995; Wohlstetter, 1995). All types of decentralization have focused on the goal of improving organizational effectiveness by allowing greater authority in decision making to persons who are closer to the delivery of services. System-level decentralization involves distribution of decision-making authority from national, state, or regional jurisdictions to local districts or agencies. This form of decentralization has often been termed deregulation.

The second type, organizational decentralization, entails changes within the district-level hierarchy to distribute decision making authority across various subunits. This form of decentralization has been frequently known as school-based decision making or site-based management.

The third form of decentralization involves a shift of authority out of centralized administrative structures of a school system into the hands of some other designated governing body such as school parent councils, school choice plans, or charter school governance. These types of arrangements have been called market or political decentralization since decision-making authority has been placed directly with parents as consumers of educational services.

All three types of decentralization have had an impact on the implementation of school-based improvement. However, the primary type identified in this study is the

second type, organizational decentralization, that involves moving responsibilities for school improvement from the central office to the school level.

These various forms of decentralization in school districts have been familiar topics since the early literature of organizational theory. Scholars have found that the debate between centralized and decentralized administrative approaches, with the notion of efficient and responsive governance that is "close to the people" at the center, has been argued since before colonial days. In reflecting upon administrative traditions in the United States, La Noue (1973) observed that decentralization has been traced in alternating cycles that are characterized by values that partly reinforce and partly conflict with each other. He observed a historical pendulum that swings between a focus on local representation to emphasis on bureaucratic efficiency. He stated:

> One value may predominate in administrative practice until its disadvantages lead to opposing reform suggestions. The contemporary concern with representativeness is just one part of the cycle. As disadvantages grow with the system resulting from earlier reformist impulses towards increased professionalism and bureaucratic efficiency, the move to make administrative structures more representative and "closer" to their clientele gathers momentum. In turn, criticism is likely to arise over favoritism, lack of uniformity, inefficiency, and other problems associated with decentralization and lay involvement in administration, and a swing back towards other values may be anticipated. Although a cyclical process is the result, change does occur, for different interests are mobilized in each succeeding period (p. 6).

Site-based management has been increasingly adopted by districts. Decision making authority for key functions has been shifted to school-level personnel. Scholars, however, have observed that a majority of site-based management initiatives have not resulted in expected levels of improvement (Bimber, 1994; David, 1989; Hill & Bonan,

1991; Wohlstetter & Buffet, 1992). While few could disagree with the claim that increased participation in school decisions has been an important result of site-based management efforts, they also have found that most site-based management efforts do not change fundamental power relations in schools and most decisions continue to be controlled by central means.

Strike (1982) heralded this dilemma, more than a decade ago proposing that shifts in authority for management were only an initial step toward the goal of significant school improvement. He stated that, "autonomy required more than the absence of central directives. Making school improvement choices without adequate knowledge and understanding to support those choices was being arbitrary, not autonomous"(p. 45). He encouraged the search for a more comprehensive theory and set of administrative practices since decentralization has been a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the successful implementation activities that result in school improvement.

The Importance of School-based Improvement

Over the last twenty years, school-based improvement has emerged as an important process for assisting schools, teachers, and administrators to identify and implement needed changes at the school level in a systematic manner. Processes and procedures have been developed that enable schools to identify improvement goals, develop short and long range plans, customize in-service programs for the goals, implement changes in school programs and professional practices, and monitor to ensure that changes remain (Bimber, 1993; Wood, 1989). Many districts, having adopted school-based improvement as their main strategy for increasing effectiveness, have found that the decentralization of many central office governance structures was embedded in the success of their efforts. They discovered that as teachers and principals changed their roles at the school-level, superintendents and central office coordinators simultaneously needed to change the ways that schools were administered at the district level.

Absent from the literature, however, is a body of research and theory that has been applied to administration of districts using school-based improvement. A single study, to this point, was identified that investigated administrative practices of superintendents employed in districts that are implementing school-based change (Ennis, 1996). In the study, central office administrators are indirectly addressed in relationship to the leadership of superintendents. Using a self-reflective survey, 34 superintendents rated behaviors that they perceived were important for their roles in school districts that had adopted school-based improvement. The study focused on three main areas of influence for superintendents: their work with the board of education, with school stake holders, and with central office administrators. Analysis of the data from the questionnaire yielded the following information as priorities in each of the three areas.

Working with the school board:

1. Create an organizational structure which promotes school-based planning and authority.
2. Develop parameters for school-based decisions which promote school change.
3. Clarify the extent to which boards members are comfortable with schools becoming different due to individual school-based change programs.
4. Review and, when appropriate, revise district policies for the purpose of supporting school-based change.

School stake holders:

1. Provide staff development resources to support school-based change goals.
2. Involve principals in district-wide decisions that influence school level decision making.
3. Achieve direct communication between principals and superintendent.
4. Encourage school district problem solving through long range planning over quick fix solutions as a way of solving school district problems.
5. Inform all school stake holders about the district's values and priorities concerning school-based change.

Central office administrators:

1. Communicate to the central office administrators the district's values and priorities about school-based change.

2. Align district level human and fiscal resources with school-based change efforts.

3. Model shared decision making for central office administrators.

4. Demonstrate commitment to school-based change efforts by discussing related issues at district level meetings. (p. 87)

Goldman, Dunlap and Conley (1993) suggested that a facilitative administrative approach was useful in order to maximize the performances of individuals and groups during interdependent types of work. They defined a facilitative approach as one that included a) acquiring or arranging material resources that support staff activities and aspirations, b) creating synergy by grouping staff who can work together effectively yet collectively possess the skill mix required for designated tasks, c) supervising and monitoring activities to provide feedback and reinforcement, d) using networks to provide links between the school and the outside world, e) collecting and distributing information to allow greater control over the conditions of work and methods of teaching, and broader decision making, f) lobbying informally to cause movement toward goals, as opposed to exercising authority in the context of formal meetings, and g) serving as a role model of the organization's vision. These activities broadly outline administrative strategies that could support school-based improvement.

Wood (1997), through work with school-based improvement processes and an extensive review of the literature, conceptualized ways that central office administrators and superintendents could work to successfully accomplish this type of change. He indicated that central office administrators must work on two levels to support school-based change. The first level was to create a district-level context within which school-based improvement could be implemented. This context was created through "enabling roles" that provided the

essential conditions for schools to engage in the process of change. Wood identified the following as enabling roles for central office administrators and superintendents:

Enabling Roles:

1. Provide a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement plans.
2. Identify at least one systematic, research-based process that schools will use to plan and implement school improvement.
3. Establish district policies and procedures that support shared decision making, site-based management, school-based improvement, and differences between and among district schools.
4. Establish a framework for curriculum and instruction in the district.
5. Establish a staff development program to assist school planning teams, principals, and central office administrators as they plan and implement decentralized change and school improvement.
6. Prepare the board of education for and obtain their commitment to school-based improvement.
7. Model the desired behaviors for improvement within the central office.
8. Establish expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement.
9. Serve as public advocate for school-based improvement, and decentralized decision making.
10. Establish a communication network between and among the central office, schools, and community that keeps stake holders informed about implementation and outcomes of school-based improvement.
11. Provide and mange district resources to support school-based improvements.
12. Monitor and evaluate the district's improvement programs.
13. Serve as facilitator and support for school-based improvement and shared decision making.

The second level that Wood addressed related to direct assistance given to principals and school faculty and others involved in the school-improvement process. This

type of assistance was called "facilitating roles". These roles were seen as supportive to schools as they progress through the process of school-based improvement.

Facilitating Roles:

1. Communicate policies and procedures that support school-based decision making and change and ensuring they are followed by schools.
2. Set expectations and model the desired behaviors that are to be used by schools to implement successful school-based change.
3. Coordinate and communicate between and among the district schools and the central office.
4. Provide training for school personnel to guide and implement school-based improvements.
5. Become directly involved in the improvement process within schools.
6. Provide and identify resources necessary to plan and implement the stages of school based improvement.
7. Recognize and reward those who planned and implement school-based improvements.
8. Monitor progress toward achieving improvement goals and plans.
9. Provide data assisting schools in evaluation of school-improvement efforts.

Section Summary

The literature concerned with the historical role of central office administrators has been reviewed in order to relate this study to pertinent developments in administrative practice. The literature supports assumptions related to the importance of central office roles in efforts to increase organizational effectiveness for schools. Central office administrative roles have also been resilient through eras of dramatic change. Evidence suggests that central office roles, while diverse, can be viewed as distinct administrative functions apart from the roles of superintendents and principals. Current literature suggests that an emphasis on decentralized administrative structures are not sufficient to ensure increased organizational effectiveness. Developments, such as school-based

improvement, which more explicitly targets enhanced effectiveness, will require adjustment in the existing practices of central office administrators.

Administrative Practices in Decentralized Systems

In the literature, various solutions have been proposed as appropriate changes in organizational roles in response to increased levels of decentralization and school-based improvement. Some have questioned whether, through the process of decentralization, central office staff positions could be eliminated or staffed on rotating or temporary schedules (Campbell et al., 1990). Others argue that site-based management approaches tend to be superficial, thus requiring few adjustments in the traditional institutional arrangements of education (Bimber, 1994 ; Hannaway, 1993; Zucker, 1987). The analysis of either of these extremes is beyond the scope of this study.

This study was designed to identify practices that central office administrators use to facilitate the implementation of school-based improvement and the degree of agreement on these practices among and between four role groups. This study follows the perspective of organizational researchers who hold that when systems are poorly attuned to contextual requirements, they are subject to a wide range of problems that hinder improvement efforts (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969; Perrow, 1967; Tsui, 1990). In the process of large-scale change, more effective organizations have taken steps to recognize and re-define roles and structures in order to satisfy the needs of constituencies that have a stake in the success of the organization (Axelrod & Keohane, 1986; Lawler, 1989). These effective organizations tend to identify and adopt strategies that could enhance short-term productivity, efficiency, and satisfaction. In addition, these organizations address a second level of change by systematically improving organizational capabilities for addressing future needs through enhanced levels of adaptiveness and staff development.

For the purpose of the study, it was necessary to review specific areas that have been important to the practice of effective central office administration and organizational design. Throughout the review process, the author found that no instruments had been developed to assess the identified areas for central office administrators. A portion of the practices were also characteristic of superintendent behaviors (Ennis, 1996; Griffin, 1995) or principal behaviors (Blase, 1997; Glickman, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1991). Other practices could be classified in more than one administrative area. However, the following discussion of practices is limited by the criterion of usefulness to central office administrators for support to decentralized improvement processes.

The following section discusses the eight administrative areas that were identified in the literature as functions of central office administration. Each area will be defined using the literature related to administration and decentralized systems. Then findings from research and the informed perspectives of scholars is presented which serves as a rationale for the specific practices listed for the eight areas of the survey of Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement (COPSBI): goals and planning; policy and procedures; staff development; recognition and rewards; monitoring and evaluation; management of resources; organizational communication; and school-level involvement.

Goals and Planning

One of the fundamental problems facing central office administrators using decentralized approaches to school improvement has been how to ensure continuous movement toward overall district goals without limiting the potential for creativity, initiative, and innovation in the school-based approaches. The literature on general practices related to goals suggests that goals are associated with increased levels of performance because they direct attention, unify efforts, and encourage persistence (Locke & Latham, 1990). Planning refers to the process by which available information is used to develop courses of action at the subunit or site. Given the prominence of school-based

initiatives, information related to goal setting and planning has become increasingly valuable.

Successful use of goals and planning in decentralized systems includes several components that differ greatly from those processes used in centralized approaches. In the centralized approach, with pre-determined goals, school-level staff have had little need for decision-making skills such as analysis of information, program review, curriculum development, or strategic planning. In a decentralized approach, these goal setting and planning skills have been used to a greater extent. One important component that has occurred at the district-level, has been the development of an agreed-upon framework or long-range plan that serves as a context for subunit planning (O'Leary-Kelly, 1994; Simons, 1995; Weingart, & Weldon, 1991). Simons (1995) observed that "telling people what to do by establishing standard operating procedures and rule books discourages the initiative and creativity unleashed by empowered employees" (p. 84). However, he found that providing broad but clearly defined limits encourages innovation and change.

In addition to acknowledgment of organizational limits, meaningful goals should provide a clear sense of direction. Weisbord (1992) documented numerous instances in which large groups successfully developed compelling goals. Through structured activities participants clearly defined the future state of their organization. Other scholars seem to confirm the notion that development of group goals allows for diversity between participants while at the same time it facilitates the process of change (Hackman & Morris, 1975; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Ancona & Caldwell, 1990).

Another component suggested by scholars and practitioners that supports improvement efforts is the planning process itself. They found that before site-level planning was started, at least one systematic process for plan development was adopted so that participants were in agreement with how plans were to be developed and were knowledgeable about the overall direction (Gioia, Thomas, Clark & Chittipeddi, 1994; Meyer & Goes, 1988; Nutt, 1986; Wood, 1997; Wood, Killian, McQuarrie & Thompson,

1993). Crucial in this process is the use of "sense-making" activities that allow participants to interpret available information in light of past performance and in reference to best practice. Participants could then take into consideration the likely outcomes of their own actions and those of stakeholders in trying to understand and plan next steps (Cousins & Leithwood, 1993; Corner, Kinicki & Keats, 1994). Adopting a systematic process, in which stakeholders have confidence, enables participants to develop a greater sense of responsibility and commitment to goals (Argyris, 1990), to learn new and useful group skills (Bernathal & Insko, 1993; Cousins, 1992), and to better identify the types of problems and opportunities to be addressed in site planning (Sitkin, Sutcliffe, & Schroeder, 1994). Thus, central office administrators can facilitate movement toward district goals by supporting school-based improvement efforts through goals and planning practices.

This literature related to goals and planning supports the following practices that can be used by central office administrators in support of school-based improvement:

1. Establish a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement.
2. Identify and adopt at least one systematic process or program that schools may use to plan and implement school improvement.
3. Establish a district vision which communicates broad direction.

The discussion of new roles for central office administration by Wood (1997) also supported the above practices. In addition, Wood indicated that for successful implementation of school-based change, central office administrators can utilize the following additional practices:

4. Conduct district level planning sessions with central office administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.
5. Develop district goals in collaboration with district administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.

6. Define the characteristics and skills needed by participants included in school-level decision making groups.

7. Define, practice, and model the roles and responsibilities desired for school-level decision making groups.

8. Establish a district-wide curriculum framework that indicates the expected broad learning goals for students in the district.

9. Identify goals that will be required of all schools in the district.

Policy and Procedures

Change, of any consequence, must of necessity be addressed through the school board policy and procedure development process. In spite of the many eras of educational reforms, school systems have retained a local governance structure for development of school policy and procedures (First, 1992). In order for central office administrators to support the implementation of school-based improvement through the development of policies and procedures, it is important to understand their role in working with the school board and identifying relevant types of policies. Thus, central office administrators have their most immediate access to the development of policy and procedures through the local school board interactions.

The *American School Board Journal* (Underwood, 1991) reported that there were approximately 87,000 school board members that serve as elected or appointed officials. State statutes place the responsibility for operation of local school systems in the hands of these officials and their designee, the superintendent as the chief executive officer. The intended role of the school board is generally considered to make policy. The term policy means "the official choice of a school governance body to achieve a purpose systematically and consistently" (Gallagher, 1992). Traditionally, the superintendent and central office staff have been charged with collection of data, analysis of information, and drafting policy recommendations. The board then reviews the available information and makes policy decisions on a wide range of issues including student issues, staffing, fiscal matters and

performance contracts, accountability to the community, and planning for the future. The board then delegates to the administration the authority to implement policies and evaluate their effectiveness as they handle daily problems.

Analyses of school board processes for policy and procedure development have identified issues related to the implementation and administration of school-based improvement. The Institute for Educational Leadership, or IEL, found that board and local communities are supportive of the concept of local governance through school boards (IEL, 1986). However, few community members and also a small percentage of teachers actually know about the role of the local school board. Furthermore, IEL observed many inconsistencies in discharging the function of policy development. Among the study's major findings were the following concerns. These concerns describe some of the common challenges for central office administrators in the process of school board policy and procedure development:

1. There is strong public support for maintaining the basic institutional role and structure or the school board, but little public understanding of school boards' actual roles and functions.

2. Boards are frequently perceived to spend too much time on administrative responsibilities and "trivial" matters and not enough time on educational issues.

3. Boards are perceived as reactive rather than deliberative and as representative of special interests rather than of the entire community.

4. Board members are seriously concerned about state-level intrusiveness, but have not yet developed a strong response that would make them full partners in educational improvement.

5. The public has high expectations for board member performance and holds school board members to a greater evidence of ability and commitment than other office holders.

6. Board members continue to grapple with tensions over necessarily gray areas between the board's responsibility for policy making and the superintendent's responsibility for administration.

7. School boards recognize the need for their own development, but the resources and systems to provide this are inadequate.

8. Few boards conduct evaluations of their performance, and very few involve the "outside" in such evaluations. (IEL, 1986)

Other studies concurred with these findings. Newman (1983) found that board members often make decisions based more on past personal experience rather than evaluative information. Board members, in general, want to take less risk than administrators, and are less supportive of new programs than administrators. In another study, Mutchler and Duttweiler (1989) proposed that eight barriers constrained the successful implementation of site-based programs. These barriers include resistance to changing roles and responsibilities, fear of losing power, lack of skills for consensus and collaboration, lack of trust about shifting authority, fear of taking risks, lack of adequate definition and clarity, inadequate or inappropriate resources, and lack of hierarchical support. In a follow-up assessment, superintendents, central office administrators, and principals confirmed these proposed barriers. School board presidents, however, indicated that these barriers would not be significant obstacles to implementing site-based management.

These findings have implications for the role of central office administrators with the school board and the types of policy and procedure that would support the implementation of school-based improvement. Of primary importance is the fact that school-based improvement could not be accomplished without the support of policy which establishes a decision-making process at sites (First, 1992). The above literature, however, emphasizes the importance of central office administrators developing effective working relationships with the board in addition to adopting supportive policy.

Since roles for board members may be unclear, it would be important to define procedures to guide the implementation of school-based improvement. As schools accept increased responsibility, procedures should be defined that the school board and central office would use to review and approve school improvement plans. For utmost clarity,

these procedures should define criteria for decisions to be made at the school level and at the district level (Wood, 1997).

In school-based improvement, plans developed by school teams might include strategies that conflict with standard operating procedures. For these situations, the central office should define procedures that allow exceptions to state or district policies that restrict school improvement efforts (Sykes & Elmore, 1988; Wood, 1997). These procedures may also include negotiation with the teachers union for contractual items that would support school-based improvement (Mitchell, Kerchner, Erck & Pryor, 1981).

Lastly, the development of closer working relationships with board members should address the potential lack of trust about shifting authority during decentralization (Ring & Van de Ven, 1994). The central office could develop trust by modeling a change in behavior, and supporting the adoption of a systematic process of school-based improvement. Central office administrators could demonstrate and report to policy makers how providing greater freedom to schools in key areas enable school improvement to occur. The process of establishing policies to allow school-based improvement in addition to developing a productive working relationship with the school board enhances the likelihood that school-based improvement will be supported.

This literature supports the following practices that can be used by central office administrators in support of school-based improvement through policy and procedure:

1. Establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures.
2. Identify criteria for the decisions to be made at the school level and the district level.
3. Support systematic school improvement processes used by district schools.
4. Identify procedures for the schools to use in the selection of improvement goals.
5. Define the procedures for the school board and the central office to review, support, and approve school improvement plans.

6. Define procedures and criteria that allow exceptions (waivers) to district policies that may restrict efforts to improve schools.

7. Define procedures and criteria to obtain waivers to state policies and procedures that may restrict efforts to improve schools.

8. Negotiate contractual items with the bargaining unit (union) which support school-based improvement.

9. Provide greater freedom for schools to make decisions (for example: curriculum, personnel, budget, and facilities).

Staff Development

The ability to learn from experience systematically and continuously is considered to be critical for individuals and organizations seeking improvement (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Friedman & Lipshitz, 1992; Levitt & March, 1988). Staff development has been defined as the provision of activities designed to advance knowledge, skills, and understandings in ways that lead to changes in thinking and behavior (Fenstermacher & Berliner, 1983, p. 6). The results of these learning processes has been associated with increased performance for individuals, for groups, and for organizations (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992).

In the past, staff development has focused on increasing levels of awareness and training teachers in various instructional techniques through workshops and in-service presentations. In recent years, the role of staff development programs has been more broadly conceived to include all relevant stakeholders in the learning process. Staff development activities have been developed for other roles such as principals, central office administrators, and school board members which enable them to better understand multiple views and expectations as they carry out their role in school improvement (O'Brien & Reed, 1994; Van Dyne, Graham & Dienesch, 1994; Wood, Thompson, & Russell, 1981). Some districts have used strategies such as "vertical learning teams" which bring together individuals from across the boundaries of organizational roles to focus on improvement topics (Wood & Gresso, 1990). The trend to include more types of participants in staff

development for school improvement has supported the idea that systems are more effective when constituent roles are more closely attuned.

School districts have expanded the types of strategies by which staff development is conducted. In addition to the standard in-service workshops, strategies have been developed that provide for more in-depth learning experiences. Strategies such as observations or short-term job rotations allow participants to view new behaviors modeled in a meaningful, job-related context. Other staff development strategies such as site-based mentors, "coaches", or trained facilitators provide ongoing support at the school-level for desired changes.

The content of staff development is now more diverse than in the past. For some components of the educational process, those that are more clearly understood and agreed upon by constituents, in-service focuses on increasing the reliability and uniformity of staff performance. Often, this is the focus of staff development for new teachers, for teachers who have changed positions, and for maintaining or extending successful programs. Other settings, in which the task outcomes are not clearly defined, require new learning and have a clearly different content and strategies (Smylie, 1988). If a school-level goal is addressed, for example, the development of a school-based community involvement program, in-service would contain activities for exploring the problem, defining main issues, searching for solutions, and organizing learning experiences for the appropriate school staff. This diversity of content enables school personnel to use staff development in a manner that is more conducive to school-based improvement.

Organizations that have adopted a decentralized approach to improvement often have greater need for a staff development unit that is charged with facilitating learning according to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995). They indicate that these "middle managers play a key role in facilitating the process of organizational knowledge creation. They serve as the strategic 'knot' that binds top management with the front-line managers. They work as a 'bridge' between the visionary ideals of the top and the often chaotic realities of business

confronted by front-line workers. They are the 'knowledge engineers' of the organization" (p. 128). This linking is accomplished by facilitating the inclusion of diverse participants, in facilitating the process of learning, and keeping all stakeholders informed about research, programs, and practices related to the organizational goals (Nutt, 1986).

This review of the literature highlights the importance of staff development practices that can be used by central office administrators in support of school-based improvement. The concepts from the literature, and additionally Wood (1997) proposed that new roles for central office administrators in the area of staff development could be observed in the following practices:

1. Establish or expand a district-wide staff development unit which is responsible for training personnel in school improvement topics.
2. Coordinate in-service programs so schools can share training when appropriate.
3. Provide at least one trained facilitator in each school to guide school faculty through the school improvement process.
4. Establish in-service programs for central office administrators which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.
5. Establish in-service programs for principals which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.
6. Prepare the school board so they understand and can carry out their role in supporting school-based improvement.
7. Train district personnel as trainers or "coaches" to support school-based in-service.
8. Ensure that training is available so that new teachers and administrators in the district use practices put in place by the school improvement processes.
9. Keep teachers and administrators apprised of the newest programs and practices in education.

Recognition and Rewards

Scholars have acknowledged the inextricable link between work design and employee performance (Louis & Smith, 1990; Malen, Murphy, & Hart, 1987; Rosenholtz & Smylie, 1984). The main purpose of recognition and reward programs are to a) attract qualified people for employment, b) to keep employees coming to work, and c) to provide clear feedback, motivation, and incentive for employees to achieve high levels of performance (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly, 1991). In the organizational literature, work design refers to a strategy that links the set of job characteristics (the grouping, the task technology, and control of work processes) with work rewards (the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits) that employees receive from their job (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Kalleberg 1977; Martin & Shehan, 1989; Miskel, McDonald & Bloom, 1983; Rowan, 1990). This research suggests that changes in the design of recognition and reward systems have the potential to contribute to the implementation of school improvement by providing teachers with more satisfying work and career experiences, and by making greater use of professional expertise. Various designs for recognition and rewards have appeared recently such as career ladders, team incentives, outcome bonuses, leader stipends, special recognition programs, job-rotations, mentoring, cross-training, and opportunities for extended role assignments (Chandler, Lane, Bibik & Oliver, 1992; Freiberg & Knight, 1990; Hatfield, Blackman, Claypool & Mester, 1985; Malen, Murphy & Hart, 1987). Some programs have been implemented by state mandate, others have been originated at the district-level by contract negotiation or policy change. Regardless of the initiating source, issues related to work design have increased importance when levels of decentralization have been increased because of the fundamental changes in roles, authority structures, and work design at the district-level and in schools (Kirst, 1988).

In a review of recognition and reward systems, Popkewitz and Lind (1989) observed that many school reform efforts have emphasized the importance of schools producing significantly improved outcomes, but these same reforms consistently failed to

address how work would be redesigned to satisfy the needs and expectations of employees (Popkewitz & Lind, 1989). Studies of the work design of teachers provide further insight. Lortie (1975), in a seminal work on teachers, found that the structure of the teaching occupation tends to provide more psychological (intrinsic) than material (extrinsic) rewards. Later analyses by Conley and Levinson (1993) and Cummings (1981) indicated that beginning teachers and teachers close to retirement place a greater value on extrinsic rewards; however, for most career teachers, salary increases alone appear to have limited utility for recognition and rewards. Each of these scholars calls for further study of the impact of work design.

At this time, little information appears in the literature related to the best match between the implementation of school-based improvement and the recognition or reward strategies. The current literature, however, offers guidelines for work redesign that increase the likelihood for success of the types of changes that ensue during the implementation of work redesign: a) recognition and rewards are received more positively when strategies are consistent with the norms and work culture at the school-level (Freiberg & Knight, 1990; Hart, 1990; Milliken, 1990), b) leadership roles and enhanced professional roles are important intrinsic motivations for teachers and have an impact on organizational outcomes, although no empirical studies substantiate the contrary notion that extrinsic rewards have a negative effect on intrinsic motivation (Hatfield, Blackman, Claypool & Menster, 1985; Kalleberg, 1977; Martin & Shehan, 1989), c) when work is viewed as non-routine and interdependent, recognition strategies are more successful when structured to reinforce group achievement, d) individual salary, combined with an incentive plan seems to best link reward to performance outcomes. Conversely, total organizational salary plans are one of the weakest systems of recognition and reward since they were found to reduce perceptions of worker efficacy toward organizational outcomes (Bache, 1986; Lawler, 1971). Many school systems and teacher unions' endorsement of total

organizational salary plans has brought increasing levels of scrutiny about recognition and reward issues related to school improvement in public education (Lieberman, 1995).

Unexplored in the literature are issues related to how changes in recognition and rewards specifically support the implementation of school-based improvement. Tannebaum (1994) indicated that those in administrative roles have a wide variety of strategies that are available, beyond monetary incentives, which could serve to recognize the importance of accomplishments, thus providing an intrinsic reward. Katzenbach and Smith (1994) found that when work is restructured into teams charged with a challenging task, members of the team put into place their own recognition and reward structures which are highly motivating. While practices have not been identified that specifically are linked to the support of school-based improvement, options are available which are consistent with the educational work culture and could be developed by central office administrators to support school improvement efforts.

Block (1993) states that systems of recognition and rewards should communicate in concrete ways the type of organization desired. He adds, for example, that organizations that desire to promote innovation and satisfaction of the consumer should pay teams of workers for outcomes. This design promotes interdependence and teamwork as employees strive to accomplish agreed-upon results.

This literature related to recognition and rewards supported the following practices that can be used by central office administrators in support of school-based improvement:

1. Link district-wide teacher pay to accomplishment of school improvement goals.
2. Link district-wide administrator salaries to accomplishment of school improvement goals.
3. Link "incentive" school funding to accomplishment of school improvement goals (such as lump sum incentives, per capita incentives).
4. Distribute team or group monetary incentives for accomplishment of specific goals.

5. Provide a district program that gives individual teachers special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.

6. Provide a district program that gives principals special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.

7. Provide schools with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.

8. Provide teams or groups with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.

9. Link a system of expanded professional opportunities to accomplishment of school improvement goals. (such as: release time, additional training, conferences).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are primarily concerned with the creation and utilization of information to make decisions about the processes and the extent to which an organization has achieved its stated purposes and goals. In the past monitoring and evaluation was viewed solely as one of the roles of central administration and were used to maintain accountability and centralized control. Over the years, scholars and practitioners argued that comprehensive reporting systems were impractical in schools and were seen as inappropriate for loosely coupled systems (Weick, 1976) or professional bureaucracies (Mintzberg, 1979). However, organizations continue to be held accountable for public funds, programs, and use of property. Thus, practices related to evaluation and monitoring practices must, at a minimum, address accountability issues, but should also provide useful information that supports school-based improvement efforts.

With emphasis on decentralization, many site-based management approaches have advocated delegating complete authority for evaluation to the school level. Studies which examined districts using site-based management found that school-level evaluation and program evaluation are almost non-existent (Clune & White, 1988; David, 1989). They found that even when some form of evaluation was implemented, highly individualized school evaluations made comparative judgments impossible because of a lack of agreed-

upon criteria and measures. This finding raised questions of effectiveness since the stated goal, school improvement, could not be reliably assessed.

Recent studies reveal new roles for the use of monitoring and evaluation in the improvement process (Corner et al 1994; Cousins & Leithwood, 1993; Fischoff, 1990; Krishnan, Shani, Grant & Baer, 1993; LaRocque & Coleman, 1989; Manz & Sims, 1987; Meyer, 1994; Ring & Van de Ven, 1994; Simons, 1995). Effective organizations are reported to have a clearly articulated set of beliefs about the core values and mission of the organization as the basis for development of any measurement framework. This belief system is then articulated as a set of quality standards or district-wide expectations. Site-level staff are then required to develop site goals. Higher performing organizations with decentralized sites have mastered the process of translating the uniform quality standards into specific definitions of performance at the site-level. They are then able to measure their own development toward site goals as well as meet the expectations of the system-wide standards.

In a report on decentralized systems, Meyer (1994) emphasizes that central administrators should be responsible for developing the strategic direction for the organization and should have agreed-upon measures for knowing levels of overall achievement. But to ensure that ownership and accountability for performance remain at the site-level, central administrators must not create site measures. Instead, Meyer recommends requiring sites to identify and develop a practical set of measures which will help them perform their jobs. This is seen as beneficial since the practice of sites developing their own measurement system helps them create a common working language, an essential component of any highly performing team (Gabarro, 1987; Johnson & Johnson, 1991; Katzenbach & Smith, 1994). Thus, central office administrators would have a role in facilitating the evaluation of district-level goals through activities such as establishing evaluative criteria and facilitating administration of district-wide assessments.

Research studies have indicated a continued role for monitoring and evaluation in decentralized school improvement efforts when implemented properly. In a district case study, Klein-Kracht and Wong (1988) found that the school-level staff was able to accommodate having autonomy with accountability for instruction delegated to the school. However, when the district implemented evaluation activities in a haphazard and inconsistent manner, the faculty had no sure means of knowing when they were doing their job well, and over time they became insecure, anxious, and threatened by the central office participation in school improvement efforts. In an empirical study of 75 school districts, LaRocque and Coleman (1989) found that monitoring and evaluation were important for the success of school improvement. High performing districts are characterized by central office administrators who hold schools accountable for quality standards while at the same time leaving responsibility and authority for the types and methodologies of change at the school level. Thus, the literature suggests that schools would benefit from a requirement to conduct annual assessments of site goals, and the central office communicating expectations for the use of the evaluation results.

Improvement strategies that are intended to affect organizational effectiveness may have an impact on all forms of evaluation in the school. One of those areas is personnel evaluation. If personnel are expected to adopt new ways of working, this difference may be reflected in adjustments of professional teacher evaluation. Similarly, changes in roles and responsibilities may prompt adjustments in the evaluation process for administrators in order to reflect goals for improvement (Cohen & Gadon, 1978; Conley & Levinson, 1993).

Recent literature has frequently cast the roles of evaluation in terms of a feedback process that is used to increase the quality of services, to monitor results that would inform site planning and further develop the evaluative capabilities of personnel (Cousins & Earl, 1992; Fiol, 1994; Lightfoot, 1986; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Whyte, 1991). This redefined use of monitoring and evaluation practices suggests a facilitating role for central

office administrators such as providing access to centralized information systems, collecting and sharing data from parent and the community, and assisting the school with the evaluation of its programs (Wood, 1997).

This literature related to monitoring and evaluation supported the following practices that can be used by central office administrators in support of school-based improvement. Four of these practices (items 4, 6, 7, and 9) were also mentioned by Wood in his discussion of school-based change.

1. Establish criteria by which district-level goals will be evaluated.
2. Require schools to conduct annual assessment of site goals.
3. Facilitate the district-wide administration of one or more standardized assessments for all students in selected grade levels.
4. Communicate expectations for school's use of performance data in school-level planning processes.
5. Adjust district professional teacher evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.
6. Adjust district professional administrator evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.
7. Provide access to centralized information systems for school planning teams (e.g., information databases, technical reports).
8. Collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals.
9. Assist the school in the evaluation of its programs.

Management of Resources

The availability of resources along with the structures that control the allocation of these resources, have long been factors that shape school improvement. Site-based budgeting has been initiated as part of the larger movement that symbolizes the push for decentralization of public schools. In most states, state legislatures have the ultimate

authority for fiscal accountability, and school boards continue as the primary local governance structure that must approve the district budget (Reyes, 1994). In districts having more centralized administrative structures, the superintendent and the central office administrators have had the primary level of input in decisions about allocation of resources. As districts have moved to greater levels of decentralization, decisions related to the allocation of resources have increasingly moved to the site-level. In schools, this means that control of resources, often allocated in "lump sums", allows decision makers to address specific needs more efficiently, and to place greater focus on local priorities, and to produce greater staff involvement and commitment.

The benefits of implementing a site-based budget process have not gone without the voicing of concerns. In an evaluation of twenty-six schools, using focus groups, Belli and van Lingen (1993) found the following concerns:

1. Roles changed, increasing workloads for principals, teachers, and staff particularly in areas where they felt they lacked appropriate training.
2. Principals increased fiscal and managerial responsibilities to the detriment of instructional leadership.
3. Budgets had discrepancies between projections and actual funding.
4. The central office exerted too much control from some departments.
5. The central office had inconsistencies in internal communications.
6. The central office should have provided more training for staff. (p. 36)

O'Brien and Reed (1994) examined district changes in response to the North Carolina School Improvement and Accountability Act, which initiated a state-wide program that included site-based management of resources. Their findings identified issues related to management of resources as a major barrier to site-based management. Study participants reported frequently that "inordinate amounts of time and effort were expended

by faculties trying to reach consensus on how to allocate decidedly small amounts of money" (p.12).

Two additional areas were identified as key resources for the success of school improvement plans by O'Brien and Reed. These resources were time and training. Participants indicated that deadlines and policies that were established to allow participation were unrealistic for schools which tried to gather information and then reach consensus on important issues. Time during the operational day was not allotted for meetings, and some staff were reluctant to make crucial decisions which depended on voluntary participation after school hours. One participant commented that "the process was so time consuming, the end product was lost". Therefore, a successful strategy for implementation of school-based improvement includes allocations of time for key components of the process such as team building, vision development, goal setting, and evaluation activities.

Training was also highlighted as a key resource that had an impact on the outcomes of school improvement. O'Brien and Reed (1994) found that during the initial planning of site-based management, funds were allocated for training programs. However, after a period of implementation, many educators found the need for additional training for which no funds had been allocated. While services were available to meet identified needs, lack of funds often precluded participation in professional development activities. Thus, schools should have a budget for in-service training activities that complements its improvement goals

This literature related to management of resources indicated that the following practices are appropriate for use by central office administrators who facilitate a process of school based improvement. All of these practices were also supported by Wood (1997) in his discussion of school-based change and staff development:

1. Collaboratively identify and provide resources that schools need from the district to implement their school improvement plans.

2. Provide resources and time to support the activities of readiness (e.g., team building, vision development, goal setting, and program selection).

3. Assist schools in developing budgets which support school improvement goals.

4. Ensure the school has a budget for in-service training that supports its school improvement plans.

5. Provide adequate time during the school year to support in-service education for school faculty.

6. Budget district revenues in "lump sums" to schools, allowing schools the flexibility to allocate these funds as needed.

7. Delegate authority for decisions about the budget to the school (for example: materials, facilities, and personnel allocations).

Organizational Communication

Communication has been generally defined as the content and supporting processes that are used to convey messages from one person or group to another (Marsh, 1983). These messages comprise basic units of meaning that eventually lead to common understanding between people, the goal of communication processes. Much of what people understand emerges through the use of symbolic communication processes, of which the most common form is language. Many have argued, however, that not only is language symbolic, but events and patterns of action are also symbolic, especially in organizations (Feldman & March, 1981; Gabarro, 1987; Pfeffer, 1981). Thus, in this study organizational communication is defined as the language, actions, and processes used by groups to increase levels of understanding between people for the purpose of accomplishing intended organizational outcomes.

Organizational members develop understanding of their work through various forms of organizational communication. Written missives, events, and patterns of behavior serve to communicate the intended structures and processes of the organization.

Members also exchange messages with each other, with administrators, and with clients. Over time, individuals develop a set of beliefs, or cognitive frameworks, used to identify the distinctive and core attributes of their organization. This set of beliefs has been called organizational identity (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Fiske & Neuberg, 1990). When people experience new information or innovations, this organizational identity is the framework used to make sense of changes in a way that relates to prior understandings about the organization (Bartunuk, 1984; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Fiol, 1991; Gioia, 1986; Pondy & Huff, 1985). In attempting to introduce changes that support school-based improvement, it is necessary to identify organizational communication practices that best symbolize the transition toward new ways of working.

The implementation of school-based improvement is a large scale change with simultaneous adjustments in roles, in organizational structures, and in processes of working together. Tushman and Romanelli (1985) proposed that such large-scale changes represent a significant discontinuity in the common understandings about the organizational identity. Such pronounced reorientation of organizational identity, as opposed to incremental changes, required communication practices by those responsible for the changes that enabled employees to first understand the changes and then incorporate the new actions into their framework of understanding.

Thus, when implementing a process of school-based improvement, it is important for the central office to communicate a strong rationale for improvement to school personnel. Higgins (1987) found that communication about the improvement process had to be of sufficient intensity that the members were prompted to re-assess their view of the organization's identity. Members who perceive a close correspondence between the current identity and proposed innovations tend to view changes as unnecessary because they believe that the organization's current state of functioning is adequate to meet desired outcomes. Similarly, changes that are perceived as lofty expectations are also met with

resistance because those changes are viewed as unattainable (Reger, Gustafson, Demarie & Mullane, 1994).

Researchers have found that communicating the notion of improvement is particularly difficult for people who are highly educated, and those working in institutions that lack clear standards for results (Argyris, 1993, 1990; Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990; Leibenstein & Maital, 1994). They discovered that from the term "improvement" people infer a need for detecting error and identifying superior ways of working. While some employees view an emphasis on improvement as the a natural function of an effective organization, others view it as a judgment of their level of competence. It was necessary to determine ways of communicating expectations improved ways of working without incurring excessive resistance to activities related to improvement.
Argyris (1993) stated that:

> Smart people are generally unaccustomed to failure. Recognizing and admitting it, and accepting responsibility for it in front of fellow workers, is one of the hardest things in the world for accomplished people to do. When it is suggested their performance may have been less than perfect, they react with feelings of guilt and anger, and resistance to change ensues (p. 85).

In the literature, various types of practices are identified that have been used by central administrators to support the implementation of change initiatives. First, central administrators play an important role in communicating reasons for implementing changes that are perceived by employees and relevant stakeholders as relevant and appropriate to their organization. In the literature, central administrators use a wide variety of information to communicate a strong rationale for continuous improvement such as preparation for future challenges (Hamel & Prahaled, 1994), use of evaluation results (Cousins & Leithwood, 1993; King & Pechman, 1984; Noblit & Eaker, 1988), and development of

more professional, ethical, or democratic workplaces (Apple, 1990; Blase et al., 1995; Hess & Easton, 1992). Each of these reasons for change communicate a compelling rationale and expectations for successful performance.

Central administrators, additionally, are able to communicate throughout the organization by modeling desired behaviors in events and activities (Nutt, 1986; Walton, 1985). For example, when an organization emphasizes employee ownership and commitment, top administrators adopt more participatory methods of conducting meetings with employees. Administrators are also able to communicate through actions or events that are perceived differently from past ways of working including practices such as serving as a public advocate for improvement processes, or demonstrably seeking to eliminate barriers to site improvement efforts. Each of these practices by central administrators conveys a message of the importance and sincerity of the improvement effort.

A third way that central administrators are able to communicate about the importance of the improvement initiative is to increase the number of opportunities for direct interaction with clients or patrons of the organization (Hannaway, 1993; Whiteley, 1991). Employees are able to better identify and to focus on needed improvements by having a better understanding of the expressions of interest, concern, or dissatisfaction by interested parties. Some administrators extend this concept within the organization by communicating the concept that "everyone has a 'customer', internal or external, whose expectations must be met" (Krishnan et al., 1993). Providing greater opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns with each person's customer grounds expectations for change in the reality of daily situations.

Central administrators using these practices have provided opportunities for parents and the community to voice their interests and concerns throughout the implementation of the school-based improvement process. Similarly, school staff have had opportunities to express their perceptions of the improvement process. The level of effectiveness in these

new working relationships is determined by the ability to establish ongoing communication networks in which participants repeatedly exchanged information and had opportunity to "make sense" or process the outcomes of the improvement efforts (Gabarro, 1987; Gioia et al., 1994).

This literature related to organizational communication supported the following practices that can be used by central office administrators in facilitating school-based improvement. All but two of these practices (items 8 and 9) had similar practices mentioned by Wood (1997) in his discussion of school-based change and staff development.

1. Communicate a strong rationale for continuous improvement to all school personnel.
2. Communicate expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement.
3. Model the use of improvement practices and behaviors within the central office.
4. Model shared decision making in decisions throughout the district.
5. Establish communication networks to keep stakeholders informed about implementation and outcomes of school improvements.
6. Serve as a public advocate for having school-based decision making and improvement.
7. Seek to eliminate district barriers to school-based improvement.
8. Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of school staff.
9. Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of parents and the community.
10. Report progress annually toward district-level goals to the public (such as school personnel, parents, and community members).

School-level Involvement

Individuals who have skills and abilities to promote change have been viewed as a valuable resource in the improvement process (Yukl et al., 1993). Such persons have been

able to use these skills to influence decisions directly related to the improvement organizational effectiveness. Historically, central office administrators have had a high level of influence, and subsequently have garnered the confidence of superintendents, the school board, the public, and the school staff (Wagner & Gooding, 1987; Wolfe, 1989). School districts which have adopted greater levels of decentralization have had to make decisions about the ways in which these successful innovators should be deployed when responsibilities for improvement were shifted to the school-level.

The literature related to organizations offers a broad range of empirical findings highlighting the relationships between successful innovators and the improvement process (Aiken, Bacharach, & French, 1980; Bacharach & Lawler, 1980; Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981; Kotter, 1986; Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981; Monge & Eisenberg, 1987). Such persons have been identified as having extensive capabilities to affect the outcomes of an improvement process. These persons are reported to have extensive individual attributes, formal organizational positions, and are centrally located in the network of key processes that regulate information and resources for change.

The literature indicates that as individuals, successful innovators have higher educational levels than peers, have higher levels of expertise, and are involved in extensive professional activities (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; French & Raven, 1959; Tushman & Romanelli, 1983). They are frequently noted for their ability to articulate reasons and practical procedures for change resulting in an enhanced ability to persuade others of the desirability of changes (Nutt, 1986). Concurrently, these skills allow innovators to foster supportive coalitions for change and to successfully navigate the organizations political waters (Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981; Krackhardt, 1990; Stevenson, Pearce, & Porter, 1985).

In organizations, formal position provide a second source of influence to support improvement processes. Researchers found that persons that are able to bring about successful change are likely to have high seniority, which indicates greater levels of

perceived organizational legitimacy (Baldridge & Burnham, 1975; Mintzberg, 1983). As a result, these persons often have access to material resources that can support change. Successful innovators are usually in a position with a greater level of flexibility, allowing more self-management of schedules, discretion over pacing of work, and opportunity to cross organizational boundaries. The formal organizational position also enables them to influence both how decisions are made as well as the content of decisions (Astley & Van de Ven, 1983; Ibarra, 1993; Johns, 1993; McGiveny & Haught, 1972).

A third source of influence arises from the person holding a central position within informal networks of relationships, as opposed to formally prescribed positions (Astley & Sachdeva, 1984; Bacharach & Lawler, 1980; Ibarra, 1993). Like formal authority, network centrality indicates a higher status in a social grouping. However, those with high levels of network centrality are frequently called upon to assist in solving technical and administrative problems. The difference between formally and informally derived influence, however, is that the latter comes from patterns of interpersonal interaction that build effective working relationships (Brass, 1992; Gabarro, 1987).

School districts which have adopted greater levels of decentralization have had to determine how best to use influential central offices administrators during large scale changes, such as the implementation of school-based improvement. Under more centralized arrangements, these successful central office administrators were deployed as key decision-makers in district programs for school improvement. Under site-based management approaches, researchers found central office administrators positions effected in two ways. In an effort to emphasize individual schools, some central office administrators were isolated from the areas for which they had significant expertise. They did not receive training for their new role and were often excluded from the network of those working with information and resources (Asayesh, 1994).

Other districts implemented participatory activities for gaining staff input at the school-level, however their programs were managed in much the same fashion by

centralized means (Bimber, 1994; Hannaway, 1993; Klein-Kracht & Wong, 1988; Tyack, 1993). In these districts, concerns have surfaced about the role of central office administrator involvement at the school-level since the site for decision-making changed, but the authority to make decisions had not changed. Central administrators were able to manage the process and the content of site decisions to the extent that school-level faculty perceived that the decisions have been pre-determined. Thus, some have asked, at what point does school-level involvement of central office administrators contradict the notion of school-based decision making?

This initial level of research indicates that when organizations adopt greater levels of decentralization, the relationship of the central office with the decentralized site is fundamentally changed. It is not appropriate for the central office to function without respect for changes in roles at the decentralized subunits. Conversely, when central office personnel are highly involved at the decentralized site, this has been viewed as intrusive in participatory decision making processes (Klein-Kracht & Wong, 1988).

Between these two extremes, two additional gradations of involvement are mentioned in the literature; the first is frequently called a resource role, and the second a process consulting role. The resource role is often organized as a centralized support for needs that are identified by the site (Lawler, 1989; Manz & Sims, 1990). While less a part of the site decision-making team, they are asked to help with such activities as acquiring evaluative information about programs or processes that the site would consider for adoption. The central staff serves as a resource for expertise in content areas, presents staff development activities, and helps teams locate additional resources to accomplish site goals. In conjunction with these activities, the central office is viewed as a resource for avenues of communication to key stakeholders such as parents, the school board, and other central office members.

The second role, that of a consulting team member, indicates greater levels of interaction during the planning and decision-making processes as they occur at the subunit

(Lawler, 1989; Yukl, 1993). While they do not become a formal part of the site organizational arrangements, central administrators participate as members in setting goals and developing written plans for improvement. Study of affects on individuals (Bandura & Cervone, 1983), reveal that a combination of setting goals with giving feedback has a higher motivational affect than either strategy by itself. LaRocque and Coleman (1989) found schools with higher levels of student achievement had central office administrators who met with school-level teams to discuss relative standings of the school on district assessment data. The school was then expected to include this information in the development of site goals. In their sample of schools, achievement levels were greater when central administrators discussed this information in person, using the consultation role, rather than when the resource role was used, by simply delivering the information.

In both roles, as resources or consultants, administrators are perceived as most effective when they model a facilitative type of behavior in all types of interactions. When facilitative behaviors are modeled in site interactions, administrators are perceived as more credible leaders (Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Ring & Van de Ven, 1992), more effective communicators (Gabarro, 1990), more trustworthy (Parkhe, 1993) and as more able to facilitate changes requiring complex solutions (Argyris, 1994; Axelrod, & Keohane, 1986; Manz & Sims, 1990; McLean, 1989).

The organizational literature related to involvement of central office involvement in decentralized improvement processes supported the following practices. All but one of these practices (item 9) had similar practices mentioned by Wood (1997) in his discussion central office roles in school-based change and staff development. The practices identified for this area were :

1. Help the school obtain information needed to make informed decision about possible programs, research, or consultants.
2. Participate as a member of school planning teams.

3. Assist the school planning team with the development of written improvement plans.

4. Serve as on-call resource person with expertise in content areas. (for example: science, bi-lingual education, special education).

5. Work with principals and planning teams to locate additional resources to support school improvement goals.

6. Deliver training in an area of expertise.

7. Participate in school in-service sessions with principals and teachers.

8. Assist school faculty in communicating progress toward improvement goals (such as to parents, the school board, and the central office).

9. Meet in person with school-level teams to discuss relative standings of the school regarding assessment data.

10. Assist schools in using data to make future implementation decisions, adjusting programs as necessary.

11. Model facilitative behavior in school-level interactions.

12. Encourage expansion of changes to other areas of school programming.

Summary

This literature provides information about the role and practices of central office administrators. The historical background of this role shows that many of the common practices for central office administration have developed in concert with scholarly views of organizational effectiveness. Trends in the conceptualization of administrative practice have moved from mechanistic approaches toward more organic and site-based approaches. Recent findings indicate that in addition to shifts in decision-making authority, districts should continue to focus on school-based improvement. A conceptual framework and specific practices have been discussed for eight areas related to the administration of decentralized systems that were identified in the literature. This information serves as the basis for the development of questionnaire used in the study questionnaire.

CHAPTER THREE

STUDY DESIGN

Introduction

This chapter describes the procedures used in conducting this study. It begins with a description of the population. Next, the Survey of Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement (COPSBI), the questionnaire developed for the study, is described. The description includes information concerning the organization of the instrument and how validity and reliability were determined. The third section reviews procedures used for data collection. Finally, a description of the research design and data analysis is presented.

Population

The population for this study was composed of certified personnel in public school districts that had implemented a systematic process of school-based improvement; for this study, that process was the Institute for the Development of Educational Activities (IIIDIEIAI) School Improvement Program (SIP). In describing the procedures used to identify the population and sample for the study, this section first discusses why the IIIDIEIAI improvement program was selected. Next, the process of school district selection is described, followed by a discussion of the steps used to identify a sample of teachers, principals, central office administrators, and superintendents within these districts.

School Improvement Program Selection

In order to study the supportive practices of central office administration in districts using school-based improvement, it was necessary to identify a specific school improvement process that was used by a substantial number of districts and focused on processes consistent with criteria for a decentralized system. This allowed the researcher to ensure that the respondents had similar experiences.

The School Improvement Program developed by IIDIEIAI was an improvement process used by districts to enable schools to develop and implement improvement goals. Since 1985, approximately 65 school districts in the United States have trained more than 500 SIP facilitators to guide schools through site-based improvement. SIP was based on a five-stage, cyclical process; these research-based stages include: readiness, planning, training, implementation, and maintenance (Wood, 1989). Schools using the IIDIEIAI program were selected as sources of participants for this study because this process has wide acceptance in school districts and has been used over an extended period of time. A general description of the program is detailed in Appendix A.

The IIDIEIAI SIP was also selected because it matched the criteria for systems that exhibit a high degree of decentralization. It was necessary to identify a program that was developed to focus on schools that had high levels of self management at the sub-unit level since this study sought to identify supportive administrative practices in such a context. The following discusses the general characteristics of decentralized systems and how the SIP was consistent with these characteristics reported in the literature.

In general, decentralized systems are organizational arrangements in which the major portion of planning, tasks, and decision-making responsibilities are distributed across sub-units, or parts, of an organization (Fischoff, 1990). Responsibility for achievement of organizational goals is shared in varying degrees, between a central governance and sub-units within the organization. A shift in organizational arrangements to include higher levels of decentralization is an administrative strategy intended to create

greater responsiveness, innovation, and increased levels of employee participation and performance (Walton, 1985).

Researchers of organizational administration have studied decentralized systems across a variety of organizational types (Astley, 1983; Brown, 1993; Cole, 1982; Easton, 1965; Fischoff & Johnson, 1990; Hackman, 1986; Lawler, 1989; Meyer, Scott & Strang, 1987; Rowan, 1990; Van Meter, 1995). One of the many types of organizational arrangements they identify occurs frequently in school districts; this arrangement usually includes sub-units (schools) within a larger organization (districts) which: a) have responsibility for a relatively whole task located at one site, b) employ members who possess a high level and variety of skills relevant to the group task, c) exhibit high levels of self management over decisions such as work process, task schedules, and assignment of members to tasks, and d) utilize meaningful feedback processes about performance for the group as a whole. These criteria were used by the researcher to identify a systematic school-based improvement program which addresses the issues related to decentralization. The following section discusses how the IIDIEIAI School Improvement Program matches these four characteristics.

Most schools in the United States met the first criterion because, while part of a larger organization, they were arranged to perform a relatively whole task at one site. Schools had been arranged to offer four to six years of a students' educational experience at one site in the form of elementary, middle school, or high school education. Even though schools had been subject to explicit directives from federal, state, and local policy-making groups, they had the potential for increased levels of decentralized management because of their organizational arrangements (Bimber, 1993; Hannaway, 1993). The SIP was designed to support increased levels of participation and self management in school-level change.

Second, public schools frequently had sufficient skills, in the form of trained personnel, housed on site to deliver a major portion of the assigned educational process for

the respective student population. This arrangement made possible greater levels of site self management, unlike other organizational arrangements (e.g., continuing professional education, district-wide staff development programs, or university programs) which tended to be governed by central administration, by mandate, or by standards. SIP was designed to develop and use the skills of personnel at the school-level to promote school improvement.

The third criterion of decentralized systems was that the sub-units tended to have a greater responsibility for making key work decisions. Fischoff (1990) noted that while all parts of a system were held accountable for organizational results, decentralized sub-units had more control over how these results are achieved. Sub-units (schools), for example, could make decisions about their budget, personnel assignments, curriculum and instructional methods, and use of resources for staff development. Centralized districts had these responsibilities assigned to a central office administrator and had not adopted a planning process which facilitates participation in decision making. SIP provided for increased site responsibility as a faculty participated in the selection and planning of improvement programs and activities that would be implemented in the school.

The fourth criterion was the use of a feedback system that evaluated the performance of the sub-unit as a group. Many institutions used some form of evaluation to assess performance. DeStefano (1990), however, made one distinction between the various uses of evaluative information. The evaluation of programs in school districts she studied used evaluative information primarily for accountability purposes such as school accreditation, state testing mandates, or school board program review. While this kind of evaluation served other necessary administrative functions of monitoring and compliance, the information generated was seldom used at the sub-unit level for improvement. Evaluation processes that had greater levels of use in decisions at the sub-unit level included components that were related to the site activities and social context, and were seen as valid by members of the sub-unit (Cousins & Earl, 1992; DeStefano, 1990; King

& Pechman, 1984; Walker & Cousins, 1994). The IIDIEIAI School Improvement Program employed evaluation processes which were used for school-level feedback. These included school profiling, use of assessment data for planning, evaluation of training, monitoring of implementation, and evaluation of impact (IIDIEIAI, 1994).

A review of the SIP process and the model from which it was developed indicated that the IIDIEIAI program contained elements which matched all four criteria of a decentralized system. Thus, school districts using the IIDIEIAI School Improvement Program training program were judged to be a viable source for locating participants who had experienced a decentralized approach to school improvement.

School District Selection

The first step in identifying the population for this study was to contact the Vice President of IIDIEIAI to obtain a list of districts that had implemented the School Improvement Program. The IIDIEIAI staff provided a list of districts and facilitators in those districts who had been trained to guide schools through their improvement process. For each facilitator, the date he/she completed the IIDIEIAI training necessary to implement SIP in a school were identified.

The initial list of districts was selected based on training dates that allowed for at least one full year of school improvement implementation. Experience of at least one year was a prerequisite for participation in the study. This level of experience was deemed necessary so that responses to the questionnaire would be based upon first-hand knowledge of program implementation.

The next step was to identify districts with schools that had actually implemented the school-based improvement process. The following criteria were identified as sufficient evidence that districts had implemented the School Improvement Program: 1) the IIDIEIAI School Improvement Program had been officially approved for use in the district by the school board; 2) a retreat or series of meetings had been conducted which resulted in the

development of school-level improvement goals in at least one school in the district; and 3) one or more school improvement projects was being implemented to achieve the school's goals and plans.

To identify districts implementing decentralized school-improvement processes, the facilitators who had completed training in SIP at least one year prior to the 1995-96 school year were called by phone; in districts where more than one facilitator had been trained, one of the facilitators was designated by IIDIEIAI as the contact person for the district. In making the selection between facilitators trained at the same time, IIDIEIAI was asked to identify the facilitator that was most knowledgeable about the school-improvement process. When each contact person was called, the study was explained and the following questions were asked: 1) had one or more schools in your district begun using the SIP process? 2) had use of the IIDIEIAI School Improvement Program been officially approved at a school board meeting? 3) had a retreat been held in which improvement goals were identified for the school(s)? 4) was at least one school implementing one or more of its improvement projects? 5) had at least one central office person worked consistently with the school(s) throughout the SIP? Persons answering yes to each of these questions were asked to help with the research study in their district. The final list of participating districts had schools that completed at least the Readiness and the Planning stages of the IIDIEIAI school improvement program by the end of the 1994-95 school year. During the 1995-96 school year, the districts were participating in the Training and Implementation stages of the IIDIEIAI school improvement program. A list of school districts participating in the study is located in Appendix B.

Participant Selection

Participants were selected from each of four role groups for each district selected for the study: 1) a central office administrator who had the most knowledge and experience with the training, planning, and implementation of school improvement projects in the

district; 2) the superintendent of schools or an assistant superintendent who had been involved with the decisions related to implementation of the IIIDIEIAI School Improvement Program; 3) a building-level administrator or principal who had been assigned to a school participating in the School Improvement Program for over one year; and 4) a teacher who had actively participated in SIP and was assigned to the same school as the identified principal.

Selection of study respondents was accomplished by asking the contact persons for each district to identify persons in these role groups to be involved in the study. It was assumed that persons who were trained by IIIDIEIAI as facilitators and were identified as a district contact person were most knowledgeable about school improvement activities occurring in the district. The contact person had the option of self-selection for any of the appropriate roles.

Instrumentation

Purpose of the Instrument

Perceptions of supportive central office administrative practices were assessed using the Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement (COPSBI) questionnaire (See Appendix C). The COPSBI questionnaire was developed by this researcher from a content analysis (Bogden & Biklen, 1992; Holsti, 1969; Krippendorf, 1980) of materials from three sources: a) research about organizational designs, administration, and decentralized systems, b) literature related to school-based improvement, and c) the IIIDIEIAI School Improvement Program materials. The analysis of these materials yielded eight content categories of administrative practice: a) goals and planning, b) policy and procedures, c) staff development, d) recognition and rewards, e) monitoring and evaluation, f) management of resources, g) organizational communication, and h) school-level involvement. The COPSBI questionnaire was developed as an exploratory

instrument to determine the degree to which supportive administrative practices within these eight content categories were seen as important during the implementation of the IIDIEIAI School Improvement Program.

The instrument format selected for the study was survey research. The specific type of survey techniques was a self-administered mailed questionnaire (Dillman, 1991). This method of data collection has been used extensively and has been deemed appropriate for situations in which researchers seek to collect original data from populations that are too large to observe directly (Babbie, 1989; Dillman, 1991).

Organization of the Instrument

The COPSBI questionnaire was organized into two parts. The first part consisted of seven questions that ask for demographic information. Respondents were asked to identify their roles in the district and indicate the extent of their involvement in the IIDIEIAI School Improvement Program. The second section contained supportive central office practices classified into the eight content categories noted above. Under each of the eight category headings were listed items accompanied by a seven-point Likert magnitude rating scale (Bass, 1974). Respondents were asked to indicate the level of importance each of the central office administrative practices had during the implementation of a school-based improvement program. Practices perceived as "not important" were to be marked one (1) on the left side of the scale. Practices perceived as "very important" were to be marked seven (7) on the right side of the scale. Numbers, equally spaced, were printed between the two extremes, with four (4) labeled of "moderate" importance. A detailed description of both sections of the COPSBI follows.

Section I: Demographic Information

The first section included items which enabled the researcher to describe respondents in the sample. Personal descriptors of the respondents included: role in the

district, level of training for school-based improvement, experience with school-based improvement implementation, and general level of education.

This information was important in describing respondents since the study focused on the analysis of perceptions of persons having confirmed levels of experience in the implementation of school-based improvement. To gauge the level of experience the respondents were asked to indicate whether they (1) had been trained as a facilitator for the IIDIEIA School Improvement Program, (2) were employed by this school district when the IIDIEIA school improvement program was initiated, (3) had participated as a school-level planning team member using the IIDIEIA school improvement process, and (4) had participated as a district-level planning team member using the IIDIEIA school improvement program. They also reported the number of years they had been employed in the district.

Section II: Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement

The second section of the COPSBI contains 74 items that describe practices used by central office administrators to facilitate the implementation of school-based improvement. The practices were grouped into eight content areas: (1) goals and planning-nine items (2) policy and procedures-nine items, (3) staff development-nine items, (4) recognition and rewards-nine items, (5) monitoring and evaluation-nine items, (6) management of resources-seven items, (7) organizational communication-ten items, and (8) school-level involvement-twelve items. While these items have been categorized by primary area, some were included in more than one area. These administrative content areas were identified in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

The COPSBI was scored by recording the number selected by the respondent for each item. Responses were considered continuous data. Since the study focused on exploring patterns within the data, items within each category were initially assumed to be independent of each other. Thus, a total score for each item was calculated, but category scores were not computed for the survey results.

Measurement Characteristics

Instrument Reliability

Reliability has been generally defined as the degree to which assessment results are free from errors of measurement (AERA, 1985). In the development of the COPSBI survey, a systematic process was used to develop the items. First, specific instrument development procedures were followed to ensure minimal error in the assessment process (Anastasi, 1988; Moss, 1992). The procedures used to develop the COPSBI questionnaire included (a) defining precise administration procedures, (b) specifying exact scoring procedures, and (c) sequencing the survey contents into sections thus reducing error due to fatigue and cognitive complexity.

In addition, reliability was examined with quantitative procedures to determine the amount of consistency or inconsistency that was inherent within this particular instrument (Feldt & Brennan, 1989:105). Nunnally (1978) suggested that reliability of a scale is a situational indicator of effectiveness and "should be demonstrated a posteriori for every sample to which it is administered" (p.69). Cronbach's coefficient alpha technique yields the average of all the possible split-half correlations that can be computed from continuous data and is considered to be one of the most rigorous procedures used to estimate an instrument's internal consistency reliability. Researchers have not demonstrated consensus on standard levels for reliability using this technique (Aiken, 1985; Anastasi, 1988; Moss, 1994), however, in *Instrument Development in the Affective Domain*, Gable and Wolfe (1993) suggest that exploratory instruments at times have produced levels of overall consistency of .70 or greater and still have adequate consistency (Cook & Campbell, 1979; Schoenfeldt, 1984). In this study sample, the internal consistency of the scale was .73 as measured by Cronbach's (1970) coefficient alpha, which was judged adequate for an exploratory study.

Content Validity

A primary issue in the development of questionnaires is the extent to which the instrument content matches the theoretical concepts and definitions available in the literature. (Borg & Gall, 1989). Holsti (1969) defined this process as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of communication." Krippendorf (1980) extends this definition when he defines an assessment of content as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context" (p. 16).

In order to develop valid items, the researcher conducted a content analysis of the research and conceptualizations in the literature from 1980 to 1997 relating to the roles of central office administration. Specific practices were then identified that were reported to be in use in the administration of decentralized organizations and in school districts. The practices were then operationalized into items for use in the questionnaire. The resulting items were then compared with the literature reported in Chapter 2 to ensure that they reflected the intent of the content communicated by the researchers and other scholars.

Content Adequacy

Another issue in the development of a questionnaire was whether the items adequately assessed the areas for which the instrument was designed. Instruments in which content has been grouped into sections or domains has been classified as having constructs. A construct is a grouping of information by a theoretically defined term that is used to explain some phenomenon of interest to researchers (Babbie, 1989). Instruments that contain a reasonable and representative sample of items from the construct to be measured are said to have adequate content (Anastasi, 1982). Content adequacy is a fundamental psychometric property of any measuring instrument that yields valid information, according to the American Educational Research Association, American

Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (American Psychological Association, 1985).

To begin the process of validating items in this exploratory study of supportive practices of central office administration, an assessment of the COPSBI survey content was conducted. A panel of four "judges" was asked to examine the survey for content adequacy, visual format, and clarity of instructional cues. The judges were selected using two criteria. The first criterion was the familiarity with school-based improvement processes as evidenced by membership in the network of staff development facilitators identified by IIDIEIAI or by having participated in the administration of a school district implementation of school-based improvement. Both trained facilitators and participating administrators were considered to have relevant expertise with school-based improvement programs. The second criterion for participation as a judge on the panel was membership in one of the four role groups examined in this study, specifically superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers.

The panel of judges included two staff members from IIDIEIAI, Jon Paden and Steve Thompson. These judges had worked extensively with the development of facilitator training programs and implementation of the school-based improvement process in many districts. The third judge was Judi Barber, a central office administrator at Norman Public Schools in Oklahoma. Dr. Barber had extensive experience in the implementation of improvement programs at the school level and at the district level. The fourth judge, Frank McQuarrie, is a professor in the College of Education at the University of Oklahoma. Dr. McQuarrie had experience in the implementation of school-based improvement programs as well as experience in research of such initiatives. A list of the panel of judges and their respective affiliations appears in Appendix F.

The panel of judges was asked to assess the content adequacy of the instrument using the rating form in Appendix G. The rating form instructed the judges to review each of the 70 items for clarity of wording, and relevance to the category of administration in

which the item was placed. Judges were asked to respond by marking concerns, suggesting revisions, or providing additional information directly on a survey. A rating sheet asked for summary judgments regarding the survey format, purpose, and content adequacy. Judges were provided space on the form for additional comments or suggestions. Responses were used to interpret whether the survey items adequately measured their intended content domains and if assessment formats were appropriate. This multi-stage process, with an analysis of theoretical content in the literature, followed by the panel of judges serving as a content review panel, was the primary method of validating the items in the COPSBI questionnaire.

Procedures

This section describes the procedures used to collect data for the study. First, the format used for eliciting accurate data is described in consideration of recommendations for survey design (Dillman's, 1991; Fox, Crask & Kim, 1988; Hippler & Schwarz, 1987; Jensen, 1985). This is followed by a presentation of the strategies used to ensure an adequate response rate to the COPSBI questionnaire.

Measurement Format

Jensen (1985) emphasized the importance of using response strategies that increase respondents' ability to provide accurate information when using self-administered surveys. Specifically noted were measurement formats that provide respondents assurance of confidentiality, ease of response, clear and attractive visual formats, and use of instructional cues.

To that end, each respondent's packet contained:

1. A cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and instructions for responding to the survey
2. A pre-addressed, pre-stamped return envelope
3. An informed consent form
4. A copy of the survey of Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement

In addition to basic instructions, the cover letter explained the importance of the respondent's contribution to the research study and gave assurance of confidentiality. The survey was printed with high contrast, black text on buff colored paper. Survey text included clearly marked sections with concise instructions for marking responses.

Response

Low response rate has been identified as a major source of measurement error in sociological survey research (Dillman, 1978). The assumption is that the higher the response rate the lower the potential of non-response error and therefore, the better the survey data. Researchers (Dillman, 1991; Fox et al., 1988; Hippler, 1987) have noted various means of improving response rate such as reducing the perceived costs of participation, increasing perceived rewards of participation, and increasing trust with the participant. The following discusses how the research on survey methods was developed into a sequence of procedures used to enhance response rate in this administration of the COPSBI survey.

The COPSBI survey was distributed to participants in the Spring of 1996. Personal telephone interaction was made with each of the site contact persons to screen for participation and to establish rapport. For those sites which met the researchers criteria, the contact persons were asked for a list of names and addresses of the site participants. This information enabled the researcher to check response and to send follow-up

correspondence. Packets were then sent to the contact person of each site with instructions for distribution to participants. The cover letter and survey are included in Appendixes C and D.

One week later, a postcard was sent to each participant acknowledging their selection for participation in the study, thanking them for their efforts, and suggesting a rapid response. Two weeks after the original mailing, a replacement survey was sent with a follow-up letter (Appendix E) to those who had not returned the questionnaire informing them that their survey had not yet been received.

If the COPSBI questionnaires were not received in four weeks, non-respondents were again sent a replacement of the survey instrument. A cover letter was enclosed informing respondents that their survey had not been received one month after the original mailing. This letter reiterated the previous descriptions of the study's social usefulness and why their response was important to the study. Phone numbers for the researcher and the site contact person were included in this cover letter with an offer for assistance with any questions. At this time, the site contact person was also telephoned and asked to be available to site participants who had questions.

The number of responses needed for the study was calculated based on Cohen's (1977) technique. With a power of .8, a minimum of 113 responses from districts were needed to compute a large effect using .95 confidence intervals. In all, 121 surveys were returned. The total response rate was 86 percent. Classified by role, the response rate was superintendents 29 returned (83%), central office administrators 33 returned (94%), principals 31 returned (89%), and teachers 28 returned (80%). These rates were judged to provide an adequate level of response for the intended analysis procedures in the study.

Data Analysis

This study and the data analysis were concerned primarily with two factors: a) the extent to which all respondents agreed that each of the central office practices were

important to implementing school-based improvement, and b) whether there were significant differences between and among each of the four role groups in the degree to which they believed that these central office practices were important in implementing school-based improvement.

To determine the extent of importance for each of the central office practices within the total sample, descriptive statistics were calculated for each of the items. These statistics included frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to identify statistically significant differences among and between four role groups for each of the items on the COPSBI. The Tukey-Kramer HSD test (Kramer, 1956; Tukey, 1953) was used as a follow-up means comparison method when significant differences between groups were identified. The level of significance for the study was set at .01. All computer analyses of data were conducted using computer program JMP SAS (SAS Institute, 1994).

Qualitative data was compiled from the open-ended question that followed each administrative area on the questionnaire. This information was analyzed using the constant comparative methods for coding information (Bogden & Bicklen, 1992).

Summary

This chapter described the specific procedures used to conduct the study. First, the procedures for identification of the population and the study sample was presented. Next the instrument for the study was described along with information about its development, its organization, and the related measurement characteristics. Finally, procedures for data collection were detailed followed by the analysis methodology used to interpret the survey responses. Chapter IV will present the results of the data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data and the report of findings for this study. The purpose of the study was to identify important facilitating practices which enable central office administrators to support the implementation of school-based improvement processes as perceived by superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers. The study identified the most important practices in eight general areas of administration. The study then identified practices for which perceptions between the role areas differed to a significant degree. The analysis procedures were designed to answer two research questions:

Research Questions:

1. To what degree did superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers in public schools using the IIIDIEIAI School Improvement Program agree that each of the practices in the COPSBI questionnaire was important to the implementation of school-based improvement?

2. Were there significant difference between and among superintendents, central office administration, principals, and teachers in public schools using the IIDIEIA| School Improvement Program in the extent to which they agree that the practices in the COPSBI survey were important to the implementation of school-based improvement?

The report of findings in this chapter is organized into four sections. The first section explains demographic information about those who participated in the study: the superintendents, the central office administrators, the principals, and the teachers. Data related to the respondent's level of participation in the school-improvement process will detail their involvement in SIP planning activities at the school-level and at the district level. It will also discuss the sources of training that aided them in implementing school-improvement processes. In addition, this section presents the data related to the respondent's length of employment by the district and the size of district in which they work. The data in this section, in summary, will provide information about the amount and types of activities that comprise the background experiences of respondents.

The second section of this chapter presents an analysis of all participant responses to the facilitating practices of the central office perceived to be important for implementing a process of school based improvement. The data analyzed were collected using the Survey of Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement (COPSBI) which was developed and validated for use in this study. The instrument examined eight categories of administrative practices: Goals and Planning, Policy and Procedures, Staff Development, Recognition and Rewards, Monitoring and Evaluation, Management of Resources, Organizational Communication, and School-level Involvement. Means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were calculated to determine the degree to which central office practices were important.

The third section of the chapter addressed differences in responses when the data were grouped by the identified roles: central office, superintendent, principal, and teacher. Initially, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures were used to calculate F-ratios for the variance among responses for each practice. A *p*-value was then calculated to determine the probability of obtaining, by chance alone, an *F*-value greater than the one calculated. The level of significance was set at .01.

The Tukey-Kramer HSD (honestly significant difference) formula was used to compare differences between all role groups. The four role groups allowed for comparison between six paired roles: superintendent and central office (*S-C*) ; superintendents and principals (*S-P*), superintendent and teachers (*S-T*); central office and principals (*C-P*); central office and teachers (*C-T*); principals and teachers (*P-T*). For each practice identified as significant by the ANOVA procedure, Tukey-Kramer calculations determine which specific paired roles were significantly different.

The fourth section of the chapter presents the information related to additional practices identified by respondents to an open-ended question on the COPSBI questionnaire. The constant comparative method (Bogden & Biklen, 1992; Glaser, 1978) was used to code, categorize, and compare responses and determine additional practices.

Demographic Information

District Information

Participants in this study provided information in the first section of the COPSBI questionnaire about their districts and the extent of personal involvement with the implementation of school-based improvement. The purpose of collecting this information was to ensure that responses were obtained from teachers and administrators who were actually involved in the implementation of the school-improvement process. Data were collected from a population of school personnel classified in four roles. A total of 121 surveys were completed; this was a return rate of 86%. Twenty-nine (82%)

superintendents, 33 (94%) central office administrators, 31 (89%) principals, and 28 (80%) teachers returned completed questionnaires.

Respondents indicated that district student populations for this study ranged from 1000 to over 20,000 students. Twenty-one participants (17%) indicated that they worked in districts with student populations from 1000 to 4999. Fifty-three participants (43%) reported that their district enrollment was between 5000 and 9999. Thirty-four (28%) reported working in districts with enrollments between 10,000 to 19,999 students. Thirteen respondents (10%) represented districts with student populations greater than 20,000.

Experience with School Improvement

This study was designed to obtain information from persons who were knowledgeable and capable of reporting about the importance of administrative practices in the implementation of school-based improvement based upon direct experience. In order to assess the level of experience of respondents with school-based improvement, information was collected related to the number of years the school-improvement program had been implemented in the district, the length of participant employment in the district, training completed related to school improvement, and participation in the school-improvement planning processes at the school-level and/or at the district level.

The average number of years that school-improvement programs had been implemented in the districts was 5.8 years. Length of implementation ranged from a low of three years to a high of 15 years. Of the 121 respondents, 71 (59%) reported that schools in their district had been implementing school-based improvement between three and five years. Thirty-nine respondents (32%) reported a length of implementation between six and ten years, and 11 (9%) reported a length of implementation between 11 and 15 years.

Participants were also asked to indicate number of years that they had been employed in their current district. The data combined from all roles indicated that 25

respondents (21%) had been employed by their respective school district between one and five years. Thirty-one respondents (26%) indicated their tenure with the current district was in the range of six to ten years. Twelve persons (10%) had been employed between 11 and 15 years, while 41 respondents (34%) had remained in the district between 16 and 20 years. Twelve individuals (10%) reported working with the district 21 years or more.

Indicators of a respondent's involvement in various types of training activities were also considered relevant to this study since research has reported that in large-scale change, such as the implementation of school-based improvement, requires substantial reconceptualization of roles and actions and thus, would require training experiences. The COPSBI survey asked study participants to respond to several options for training activities in school improvement including: involvement in the IIDIEIA| school-improvement facilitator training sessions, participation in school-level or district-level school-improvement planning teams, and other types of experiences. It was expected that persons involved in the district implementation could receive various types of training including the IIDIEIA| Facilitator Training Session 1, lasting five days and the IIDIEIA| Facilitator Training Session 2, lasting an additional five days. In addition to these ten days of training from IIDIEIA|, participants could have received training through other sources such as district developed programs, visiting other schools, mentoring arrangements, school program evaluation, seminars, college courses, or review of other program materials and research. The survey asked participants to note such sources of training.

Question 3 on the questionnaire asked the types of training that respondents personally received for implementing the school-based improvement process. Forty (33%) participants reported attending only the five-day IIDIEIA| Facilitator Training Session 1. Forty-four (36%) participants reported attending both the first training session and the subsequent five-day IIDIEIA| Facilitator Training Session 2. Thirty-five (29%) participants reported other types of training. Two participants (1%) reported that they had no training experiences related to their role in the school-improvement process. In summary,

approximately two-thirds of the study received formal training from IIDIEIAI, while one third had experienced district-level training, related course work, or other learning experience they attributed to their knowledge base.

Demographic questions 4 and 5 asked for the degree to which the participants were involved with school-improvement planning activities at the district level. Ninety-nine participants (82%) reported that they participated in district-level planning teams responsible for the school-improvement process. Twenty-seven superintendents (93%), 30 central office administrators (91%), 24 principals (77%), and 18 teachers (64%) indicated they had been involved in school-improvement planning at the district level.

Respondents also furnished information about their participation in school-level planning teams. The data indicates that 97 participants (80%) were involved in school-level activities; this included 12 superintendents (41%) and 26 central office administrators (79%). All 31 principals and all 28 teachers had participated in school-level planning activities.

Importance of Central Office Facilitating Practices

The first research question in this study concentrated on the identification of facilitating practices of central office administrators perceived as important to support the implementation of school-based change by experienced school personnel. More specifically, this section reports the findings related to research question one: To what degree did superintendents, central office administration, principals, and teachers in public schools using the IIDIEIAI School Improvement Program agree that each of the practices in the COPSBI survey was important to the implementation of school-based improvement??

The findings reported here are based upon the analysis of the completion of the survey of Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement (COPSBI) by all 121 respondents. These respondents were asked to assess the level of importance of 74 central office facilitating administrative practices based upon their participation in implementation

of school-based improvement in their district. Nine practices were included in the role area of Goals and Planning, nine in Policy and Procedures, nine in Staff Development, nine in Recognition and Rewards, nine in Monitoring and Evaluation, seven in Management of Resources, ten in Organizational Communication, and twelve in School-level Involvement. Respondents indicated their perceptions of importance on a Likert scale. On the left end of the scale, 1 was identified as being of low importance or not important and to the right side of the scale 7 was identified as being very important, or having a high level of importance. Respondents could mark any of the continuous numeric gradations from one to seven to indicate the levels of importance. Means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percents were calculated for all respondents on each of the practices.

In examining the data related to question one, the degree of importance of the central office facilitating practices related to each role area were determined using two criteria. First, important practices were identified and then practices considered most important were identified. Practices with a mean of five (5) or greater were considered important in the implementation of school-based improvement. Most important practices were determined by examining the combined frequencies and percentages of responses to options 6 and 7. Those facilitating practices for which 75% of the respondents recorded either a 6 or 7 were identified as most important practices.

Tables 1 through 8 report means and standard deviations for each of the practices in each of the eight administrative role areas. Following the means and standard deviations, frequencies and percentage are reported for the data from response options 1 through 3. These responses were combined since they showed the number and percent of respondents who perceived the practices were not important or were of low importance, which was not related to Question 1. Next, the frequencies and percent calculations for response option 4, 5, 6, and 7 were reported. The last column in each table reported the combined frequencies and percent calculations for response options 6 and 7 together. These combined

frequencies and percentages for option 6 and 7 were used to determine which central office facilitating practices were perceived as most important.

Central Office Practices Related to Goals and Planning

Goals and planning, the first central office administrative role area to be examined, contained nine central office practices that were reported in the literature as important for supporting school-based improvement. These practices included specific planning activities conducted by the central office activities as well as the establishment of mechanisms, such as the adoption of a planning process and the establishment of a district long-range plan, that would facilitate school-level goal setting and planning. The specific practices related to goals and planning included:

1. Establish a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement.
2. Identify and adopt at least one systematic process or program that schools may use to plan and implement school improvement.
3. Conduct district-level planning sessions with central office administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.
4. Develop district goals in collaboration with district administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.
5. Establish a district vision which communicates broad direction.
6. Define the characteristics and skills needed by participants included in school-level decision-making groups.
7. Define, practice, and model the roles and responsibilities desired for school-level decision-making groups.
8. Establish a district-wide curriculum framework that indicates the expected broad learning goals for students in the district.
9. Identify goals that will be required of all schools in the district.

Table 1 displays the summary of responses of all respondents related to the importance of these nine practices of central office support through goals and planning when implementing school-based improvement. All nine practices had a mean score of 5

Table 1
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Goals and Planning

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
1. Establish a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement.	6.19	1.06	0	0	0	0	2	2	11	8	17	14	26	21	66	55	92	76
2. Identify and adopt at least one systematic process or program that schools may use to plan and implement school improvement.	5.90	1.07	0	0	0	0	5	4	6	5	24	20	41	34	45	37	86	71
3. Conduct district-level planning sessions with central office administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.	5.95	1.21	2	2	0	0	2	2	10	8	18	15	39	32	50	41	89	74
4. Develop district goals in collaboration with district administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.	6.25	0.87	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	19	16	41	34	58	48	99	82
5. Establish a district vision which communicates broad direction.	6.52	0.71	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	10	8	33	27	77	64	110	91

(table continues)

Table 1
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Goals and Planning

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
6. Define the characteristics and skills needed by participants included in school-level decision making groups.	5.42	1.66	2	2	11	9	6	5	6	5	26	21	41	34	43	36	70	58
7. Define, practice, and model the roles and responsibilities desired for school-level decision making groups.	6.13	0.93	0	0	1	1	2	2	0	0	23	19	46	38	49	40	95	79
8. Establish a district-wide curriculum framework that indicates the expected broad learning goals for students in the district.	6.10	0.98	0	0	0	0	2	2	7	6	16	13	38	31	58	48	96	79
9. Identify goals that will be required of all schools in the district.	5.58	1.64	2	2	6	5	9	7	13	11	14	12	26	21	51	42	77	64

or greater indicating they were perceived as important central office practices related to goal setting and planning in facilitating school-based improvement.

Using this criterion of 75% reported for combined responses of 6 and 7, five facilitating administrative practices were identified by the respondents as most important for central office support through goal setting and planning. The five practices were: practice 1, establish a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement (76%); practice 4, develop district goals in collaboration with district administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives (82%); practice 5, establish a district vision which communicates broad direction (91%); practice 7, define, practice, and model the roles and responsibilities desired for school-level decision making groups (79%); and practice 8, establish a district-wide curriculum framework that indicates the expected broad learning goals for students in the district (79%).

Central Office Practices Related to Policy and Procedures

The second set of central office practices that were examined related to the administrative role area of policies and procedures that facilitated the implementation of school-based improvement. The literature used as a basis for these items indicated that those working with policy issues related to school-based improvement were involved in at least three types of activities which included establishing or negotiating the adoption of specific policies, implementing policies by applying definitions or criteria to specific situations, and helping schools navigate the complexities of policy by general support of school-level goals and by facilitating exceptions to policy that allowed schools to achieve their goals.

Nine practices addressed central office support for school-based improvement through policy and procedures. The facilitating practices for this role area related to policy and procedures were:

1. Establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures.
2. Identify criteria for the decisions to be made at the school level and the district level.
3. Support systematic school-improvement processes used by district schools.
4. Identify procedures for the schools to use in the selection of improvement goals.
5. Define the procedures for the school board and the central office to review, support, and approve school-improvement plans.
6. Define procedures and criteria that allow exceptions (waivers) to district policies that may restrict efforts to improve schools.
7. Define procedures and criteria to obtain waivers to state policies and procedures that may restrict efforts to improve schools.
8. Negotiate contractual items with the bargaining unit (union) which support school-based improvement.
9. Provide greater freedom for schools to make decisions (for example: curriculum, personnel, budget, and facilities).

Table 2 contains the analysis of responses to the policy and procedures practices. The nine practices in this administrative role area had a mean ranging from a low of 5.27 to a high of 6.51 indicating that they were all considered important for central office administrators in facilitating school-based improvement.

When the combined ratings for response options 6 and 7 were examined, three practices were determined to be most important for central office administrators when supporting school-based improvement through policy and procedures. These three included practice 1, establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures (76%); practice 3, support systematic improvement processed use by district schools (90%); and practice 9, provide greater freedom for schools to make decisions (for example: curriculum, personnel, budget, and facilities) (82%).

Table 2
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Policy and Procedures

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
1. Establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures.	6.02	0.94	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	10	17	14	49	40	43	35	92	76
2. Identify criteria for the decisions to be made at the school level and the district level.	5.27	1.94	4	4	0	0	7	6	12	11	18	16	36	32	37	32	73	64
3. Support systematic school-improvement processes used by district schools.	6.51	1.01	2	2	0	0	0	0	3	2	7	6	24	20	85	70	109	90
4. Identify procedures for the schools to use in the selection of improvement goals.	5.37	1.31	2	2	0	0	8	7	18	15	34	28	31	26	28	23	59	49
5. Define the procedures for the school board and the central office to review, support, and approve school-improvement plans.	5.78	1.37	2	2	2	2	7	6	2	2	32	26	27	22	49	40	76	63

(table continues)

Table 2
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Policy and Procedures

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
6. Define procedures and criteria that allow exceptions (waivers) to district policies that may restrict efforts to improve schools.	6.00	1.08	0	0	0	0	3	2	11	9	20	17	36	30	51	42	87	72
7. Define procedures and criteria to obtain waivers to state policies and procedures that may restrict efforts to improve schools.	5.84	1.15	1	1	2	2	1	1	7	6	29	24	41	34	40	33	81	68
8. Negotiate contractual items with the bargaining unit (union) which support school-based improvement.	5.83	1.13	0	0	2	2	2	2	11	9	21	17	44	37	38	32	82	68
9. Provide greater freedom for schools to make decisions (for example: curriculum, personnel, budget, and facilities).	6.23	1.03	0	0	0	0	4	3	6	5	12	10	35	29	64	53	99	82

Central Office Practices Related to Staff Development

The third administrative role area was central office support of school-based improvement through facilitating staff development. This section contained nine practices. The practices focused on two main areas: establishing specific services that could be provided through central coordination, and addressing the staff development needs for various role groups within the district to support the school-improvement process. The central office practices related to support of school improvement through staff development were:

1. Establish or expand a district-wide staff development unit which is responsible for training personnel in school-improvement topics.
2. Coordinate in-service programs so schools can share training when appropriate.
3. Provide at least one trained facilitator in each school to guide school faculty through the school-improvement process.
4. Establish in-service programs for central office administrators which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.
5. Establish in-service programs for principals which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.
6. Prepare the school board so they understand and can carry out their role in supporting school-based improvement.
7. Train district personnel as trainers or "coaches" to support school-based in-service.
8. Ensure that training is available so that new teachers and administrators in the district use practices put in place by the school-improvement processes.
9. Keep teachers and administrators apprised of the newest programs and practices in education.

Table 3 displays data pertaining to the responses of the participants concerning the importance of these nine facilitating practices when working with staff development to implement school-based improvement. The means ranged from a low of 6.01 to a high of 6.57, indicating that all practices had means considerably greater than 5 and thus, were

Table 3
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Staff Development

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f* *P*	2 *f* *P*	3 *f* *P*	4 *f* *P*	5 *f* *P*	6 *f* *P*	7 *f* *P*	6-7 *f* *P*
1. Establish or expand a district-wide staff development unit which is responsible for training personnel in school-improvement topics.	6.12	1.06	0 0	0 0	3 2	11 9	11 9	39 32	57 47	96 79
2. Coordinate in-service programs so schools can share training when appropriate.	6.01	1.19	0 0	2 2	2 2	12 10	17 14	31 26	57 47	88 73
3. Provide at least one trained facilitator in each school to guide school faculty through the school-improvement process.	6.22	1.19	0 0	4 3	1 1	4 3	17 14	24 20	71 59	95 79
4. Establish in-service programs for central office administrators which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.	6.23	0.92	0 0	0 0	1 1	7 6	14 12	40 33	59 49	99 82

(table continues)

Table 3
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Staff Development

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	*P*	2 *f*	*P*	3 *f*	*P*	4 *f*	*P*	5 *f*	*P*	6 *f*	*P*	7 *f*	*P*	6-7 *f*	*P*
5. Establish in-service programs for principals which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.	6.57	0.66	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	9	7	31	26	80	66	111	92
6. Prepare the school board so they understand and can carry out their role in supporting school-based improvement.	6.33	0.84	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4	14	12	38	31	64	53	102	84
7. Train district personnel as trainers or "coaches" to support school-based in-service	6.11	1.07	0	0	0	0	3	2	10	8	16	13	34	28	58	48	92	76
8. Ensure that training is available so that new teachers and administrators in the district use practices put in place by the school-improvement processes.	6.48	0.73	0	00	0	0	0	0	4	3	5	4	40	33	72	60	112	93
9. Keep teachers and administrators apprised of the newest programs and practices in education.	6.41	0.79	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	11	9	39	32	68	57	107	88

considered important for central office support through staff development. These data also revealed that eight of the nine practices had combined ratings of 6 and 7 reported by at least 75% of the respondents. Only practice 2 failed to receive this level of support. However, this practice recorded a combined response to options 6 and 7 of 73% which was very close to the criterion set to be considered a most important practice.

The ratings of practices fell into two areas. First, the five highest importance ratings were given to practices addressing the staff development needs for role groups within the district to support the school-improvement process. These highly rated practices indicate the importance of training experiences for new teachers and administrators. Also identified in these practices are in-service training programs for principals, central office administrators, and school board members which would prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities related to school improvement.

In addition to training programs, the high importance ratings were given to practices describing changes in organizational structuring of personnel for staff development. These practices focused on changes in ways that school improvement is supported through staff development including: providing at least one trained facilitator for each school, training personnel as school-improvement "coaches", and establishing or expanding a district-wide staff development unit for training personnel in school-improvement topics.

Central Office Practices Related to Recognition and Rewards

The fourth administrative role area examined was a group of nine central office facilitating practices focusing on the respondent's perceptions concerning the importance of recognition and rewards by central office administrators in the implementation of school-based improvement. As discussed earlier, in Chapter 2, the main purpose of recognition and reward programs are to a) attract qualified people for employment, b) to keep employees coming to work, and c) to provide clear feedback, motivation, and incentive for

employees to achieve high levels of performance (Gibson et al., 1991). The practices included in the survey assessed the perceived importance of the central office role in linking four common types of recognition and rewards (salaries, bonus incentives, interpersonal recognition, and personal growth opportunities) with the accomplishment of school-improvement goals. The specific practices identified related to recognition and rewards included:

1. Link district-wide teacher pay to accomplishment of school-improvement goals.
2. Link district-wide administrator salaries to accomplishment of school-improvement goals.
3. Link "incentive" school funding to accomplishment of school-improvement goals (such as lump sum incentives, per capita incentives).
4. Distribute team or group monetary incentives for accomplishment of specific goals.
5. Provide a district program that gives individual teachers special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.
6. Provide a district program that gives principals special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.
7. Provide schools with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.
8. Provide teams or groups with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.
9. Link a system of expanded professional opportunities to accomplishment of school-improvement goals. (such as: release time, additional training, conferences).

Table 4 displays the data related to the perceptions of all respondents on the importance of central office support of school-improvement processes through recognition and rewards. Three of the nine practices achieved a mean score of greater than five and were considered important facilitating practices. Of these three practices, two were concerned with the importance of providing special recognition to schools (practice 7, 75%) and teams (practice 8, 77%) for the accomplishment of school-improvement goals.

Table 4
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Recognition and Rewards

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
1. Link district-wide teacher pay to accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	3.47	1.70	23	19	10	8	27	22	32	26	11	9	13	11	5	4	18	15
2. Link district-wide administrator salaries to accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	3.52	1.68	23	19	8	7	23	19	38	31	13	11	10	8	6	5	16	13
3. Link "incentive" school funding to accomplishment of school-improvement goals (such as lump sum incentives, per capita incentives).	4.28	1.93	17	14	8	7	14	12	24	20	14	12	30	25	14	12	44	36
4. Distribute team or group monetary incentives for accomplishment of specific goals.	4.09	1.77	17	14	6	5	14	12	35	29	19	16	20	17	10	8	30	25
5. Provide a district program that gives individual teachers special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	4.86	1.93	12	10	10	8	4	3	16	13	18	15	36	30	25	21	61	50

(table continues)

Table 4
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Recognition and Rewards

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
6. Provide a district program that gives principals special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	4.67	1.95	14	12	8	7	10	8	14	12	23	19	29	24	23	19	52	43
7. Provide schools with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	5.33	1.65	2	2	3	2	3	2	9	7	13	11	45	37	46	38	91	75
8. Provide teams or groups with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	5.25	1.45	3	2	1	1	3	2	3	2	18	15	46	38	47	39	93	77
9. Link a system of expanded professional opportunities to accomplishment of school-improvement goals. (such as: release time, additional training, conferences).	6.04	1.21	2	2	1	1	2	2	8	7	10	8	47	39	51	42	98	81

The third practice with a mean higher than five was practice 9) link a system of expanded professional opportunities to accomplishment of school-improvement goals (such as: release time, additional training, conferences). The area of Recognition and Rewards had the fewest number of practices that were rated as important by respondents. Practices 1 and 2, related to linking teacher and administrator pay with accomplishments, received the lowest mean importance ratings of all 74 practices.

Central Office Practices Related to Monitoring and Evaluation

The role area related to monitoring and evaluation contained nine practices reported in the literature as important for central office support of school-based improvement. These practices focused on issues related to the communication of expectations for use of evaluation, access to evaluation data, adjustments to personnel evaluation systems, and the participation of central office in school evaluation activities. Table 5 presents the results for these specific practices:

1. Establish criteria by which district-level goals will be evaluated.
2. Require schools to conduct annual assessment of site goals.
3. Facilitate the district-wide administration of one or more standardized assessments for all students in selected grade levels.
4. Communicate expectations for school's use of performance data in school-level planning processes.
5. Adjust district professional teacher evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.
6. Adjust district professional administrator evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.
7. Provide access to centralized information systems for school planning teams (e.g., information databases, technical reports).
8. Collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals.
9. Assist the school in the evaluation of its programs.

Table 5
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Monitoring and Evaluation

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
1. Establish criteria by which district-level goals will be evaluated.	5.95	1.22	2	2	0	0	2	2	9	7	24	20	31	26	53	44	84	69
2. Require schools to conduct annual assessment of site goals.	6.06	1.11	0	0	2	2	2	2	6	5	20	17	38	31	54	45	91	75
3. Facilitate the district-wide administration of one or more standardized assessments for all students in selected grade levels.	5.09	1.67	6	5	0	0	17	0	18	15	26	21	20	17	34	28	54	45
4. Communicate expectations for school's use of performance data in school-level planning processes.	6.00	1.01	0	0	0	0	2	2	9	8	21	18	41	34	46	39	87	73
5. Adjust district professional teacher evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.	5.42	1.47	3	2	3	2	9	7	10	8	25	21	41	34	30	25	71	59

(table continues)

Table 5
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Monitoring and Evaluation

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
6. Adjust district professional π evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.	5.57	1.41	1	1	4	3	8	7	10	8	18	15	42	35	38	31	80	66
7. Provide access to centralized information systems for school planning teams (e.g., information databases, technical reports).	5.98	0.99	2	2	3	2	0	0	4	3	26	21	31	26	55	45	86	71
8. Collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals.	6.07	0.99	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	2	15	12	60	50	40	33	100	83
9. Assist the school in the evaluation of its programs.	6.09	1.07	2	2	2	2	0	0	11	9	12	10	34	28	60	50	94	78

Table 5 contains the results of the analysis of means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percents for the central office practices related to monitoring and evaluation. All nine practices were rated at levels that achieved a mean of five or greater. Mean scores ranged from a low of 5.09 to a high of 6.07. Consequently, all nine practices were perceived to be important for the support of school-based improvement.

Combined frequencies and percentages for response options 6 and 7 indicated that three of the practices could be identified as most important. These practices were: practice 2, require schools to conduct annual assessment of site goals (75%); practice 8, collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals(83%); and practice 9, assist the school in the evaluation of its programs (78%).

Central Office Practices Related to Management of Resources

The next set of central office facilitating practices related to central office support of school-based improvement through management of resources. These practices focused on district-level commitments to allocate resources in support of school-based improvement activities, and providing school faculty with opportunity to manage the resources allocated to their school. The seven central office practices related to management of resources included:

1. Collaboratively identify and provide resources that schools need from the district to implement their school-improvement plans.
2. Provide resources and time to support the activities of readiness (e.g., team building, vision development, goal setting, and program selection).
3. Assist schools in developing budgets which support school-improvement goals.
4. Ensure the school has a budget for in-service training that supports its school-improvement plans.
5. Provide adequate time during the school year to support in-service education for school faculty.

6. Budget district revenues in "lump sums" to schools, allowing schools the flexibility to allocate these funds as needed.

7. Delegate authority for decisions about the budget to the school (for example: materials, facilities, and personnel allocations).

The findings concerning central office support through management of resources is shown in Table 6. All seven practices were considered important with means ranging from a low of 5.90 to a high of 6.45. Five of the practices were determined to be most important for the central office when implementing school-based improvement processes. The first of these was practice 2, to provide resources and time to support the activities of readiness (e.g., team building, vision development, goal setting, and program selection); ninety percent of the respondents indicated either a 6 or 7 for this practice. The other four practices included practice 1, collaboratively identify and provide resources that schools need from the district to implement their school-improvement plans(78%); practice 5, provide adequate time during the school year to support in-service education for school faculty (88%); practice 4, ensure the school has a budget for in-service training that supports its school-improvement plans (86%); and practice 6, budget district revenues in "lump sums" to schools, allowing schools the flexibility to allocate these funds as needed (78%).

The analysis of these results reveals that participants perceived a high level of importance for both centralized and decentralized practices for management of resources. Responses to practices 1 and 5, emphasized district-level planning of resources and scheduling. At the same time, practices 6, 3, and 4 reflected a site-based approach to allocation of funds.

Table 6
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Management of Resources

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
1. Collaboratively identify and provide resources that schools need from the district to implement their school-improvement plans.	6.16	1.02	0	0	0	0	4	3	4	3	19	16	35	29	59	49	94	78
2. Provide resources and time to support the activities of readiness (e.g., team building, vision development, goal setting, and program selection).	6.45	0.86	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	3	6	5	34	28	75	62	109	90
3. Assist schools in developing budgets which support school-improvement goals.	6.04	1.18	2	2	0	0	2	2	6	5	22	18	33	27	56	46	89	74
4. Ensure the school has a budget for in-service training that supports its school-improvement plans.	6.34	0.95	0	0	0	0	2	2	7	6	8	7	34	28	70	58	104	86

(table continues)

Table 6
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Management of Resources

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
5. Provide adequate time during the school year to support in-service education for school faculty.	6.42	0.79	2	2	0	0	0	0	3	2	10	8	30	25	76	63	106	88
6. Budget district revenues in "lump sums" to schools, allowing schools the flexibility to allocate these funds as needed.	6.23	1.03	0	0	1	1	1	1	6	5	19	16	28	23	66	55	94	78
7. Delegate authority for decisions about the budget to the school (for example: materials, facilities, and personnel allocations).	5.90	1.26	0	0	3	2	2	2	12	10	24	20	25	21	55	45	80	66

Central Office Practices Related to Organizational Communication

Organizational communication, the seventh area of administrative practice for the central office staff, addressed the role of practices related to conveying information and assisting staff members in reorienting their understandings of the district's organizational identity as the normal changes during implementation of school-based improvement unfolded. One type of practice identified in the literature in this area was concerned with the communication between the district and its stakeholders. Leaders were seen as having an important role in communicating to people and groups outside the organization that were concerned about school processes and outcomes. Thus, practices in this administrative area focused on the establishment of communication networks, providing a rationale for actions, and reporting results to the community.

Other practices addressed the need for clear communication within the organizational membership, providing credibility and direction in the process of implementing school-based improvement. Practices gleaned from the literature related the importance of leaders who communicated clear expectations in the organization. Leaders, however, who used multiple modes of communication (modeling desired practices, serving as an advocate, listening, eliminating barriers to performance) increased the likelihood of successful implementation. The practices related to communication were:

1. Communicate a strong rationale for continuous improvement to all school personnel.
2. Communicate expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement.
3. Model the use of improvement practices and behaviors within the central office.
4. Model shared decision making in decisions throughout the district.
5. Establish communication networks to keep stakeholders informed about implementation and outcomes of school improvements.
6. Serve as a public advocate for having school-based decision making and improvement.
7. Seek to eliminate district barriers to school-based improvement.

8. Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of school staff.

9. Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of parents and the community.

10. Report progress annually toward district-level goals to the public (such as school personnel, parents, and community members).

Table 7 reports the responses of participants on the ten practices concerned with central office support of school-based improvement through organizational communication. All ten practices in this section recorded a mean score of five or greater. Mean scores ranged from a low of 6.36 to a high of 6.59. Thus, all ten practices met the criterion of being important practices in the implementation of school-based improvement.

A review of the combined frequencies for response options 6 and 7 furthermore showed that all ten practices were also selected as most important by the respondents. Specifically, responses supported the types of organizational communication strategies identified in the literature. Importance ratings were high for central office administrators helping to make sense of changes by communicating a strong rationale (practice 1, 93%) and clear expectations (practice 2, 95%). It was also important for central office administrators to communicate about changes through their actions such as modeling shared decision making (practice 4, 93%), modeling the use of improvement practices (practice 3, 91%), seeking to eliminate barriers in the district (practice 7, 95%), and serving as a public advocate for school-based improvement (practice 6, 91%). Finally, it was important for central office administrators to provide opportunities for exchanges such as listening to feedback from school staff (85%) and parents (practice 9, 88%), and reporting progress toward district goals (practice 10, 90%).

Table 7
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Organizational Communication

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
1. Communicate a strong rationale for continuous improvement to all school personnel.	6.58	0.91	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	5	26	21	87	72	113	93
2. Communicate expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement.	6.56	0.71	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	4	3	37	31	78	64	115	95
3. Model the use of improvement practices and behaviors within the central office.	6.52	0.94	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	7	28	23	82	68	110	91
4. Model shared decision making in decisions throughout the district.	6.59	0.95	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	3	23	19	90	74	113	93
5. Establish communication networks to keep stakeholders informed about implementation and outcomes of school improvements.	6.36	0.86	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	5	13	11	33	27	69	57	102	84

(table continues)

Table 7
Importance of Central Office Practices related to Organizational Communication

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
6. Serve as a public advocate for having school-based decision making and improvement.	6.42	0.81	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	6	4	3	40	33	70	58	110	91
7. Seek to eliminate district barriers to school-based improvement.	6.58	0.64	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	3	36	30	79	65	115	95
8. Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of school staff.	6.45	0.78	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	16	13	27	23	74	62	101	85
9. Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of parents and the community.	6.50	0.82	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	5	8	7	26	21	81	67	107	88
10. Report progress annually toward district-level goals to the public (such as school personnel, parents, and community members).	6.47	0.80	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	5	6	5	34	28	75	62	109	90

Central Office Practices Related to School-Level Involvement

The final collection of practices to be examined were those concerned with the extent of direct involvement by the central office at the school level during implementation of school improvement. The literature suggested various increments of school-level involvement by central office administrators. Some writers suggest a minimal amount of school-level involvement such as providing occasional training, assisting with external communication, or providing occasional encouragement (Klein-Kracht & Wong, 1988). Other authors infer a greater amount of involvement by the central office as participants in the site-level activities (Yukl, 1993; Lawler, 1989). In the latter case the central office would have an active school-level role if they were to assist school teams with activities, such as the development of written plans, discussion of school assessment data, or aid in the site evaluation and adjustment of programs.

Twelve practices were included in the section on school-level involvement. The items reflecting the increments of school-level involvement included:

1. Help the school obtain information needed to make informed decision about possible programs, research, or consultants.
2. Participate as a member of school planning teams.
3. Assist the school planning team with the development of written improvement plans.
4. Serve as on-call resource person with expertise in content areas (for example: science, bi-lingual education, special education).
5. Work with principals and planning teams to locate additional resources to support school-improvement goals.
6. Deliver training in an area of expertise.
7. Participate in school in-service sessions with principals and teachers.
8. Assist school faculty in communicating progress toward improvement goals (such as to parents, the school board, and the central office).
9. Meet in person with school-level teams to discuss relative standings of the school regarding assessment data.

10. Assist schools in using data to make future implementation decisions, adjusting programs as necessary.

11. Model facilitative behavior in school-level interactions.

12. Encourage expansion of changes to other areas of school programming.

Table 8 presents the analysis of responses to the 12 practices reported in the literature as important for central office support through school-level involvement. All of the twelve practices achieved a mean score in the range of 5.28 to 6.36, indicating all were considered important.

Six practices were determined to be most important for the central office support of school-based improvement through school-level involvement. These six practices, having the combined response options of 6 and 7 greater that 75%, were practice 1, help the school obtain information needed to make informed decision about possible program, research, or consultants (84%); practice 5, work with principals and planning teams to locate additional resources to support school-improvement goals (87%); practice 6, deliver training in an area of expertise (75%); practice 8, assist school faculty in communicating progress toward improvement goals [such as to parents, the school board, and the central office] (75%); practice 11, model facilitative behavior in school-level interactions (79%); and practice 12, encourage expansion of changes to other areas of school programming (78%).

It should be noted that the practices selected as most important suggest a moderate to low level of direct involvement at the school level. None of the practices suggesting a more active participation in school level planning and decision making (such as practices 2, 3, 9, 10) were selected as most important.

Table 8
Importance of Central Office Practices related to School-Level Involvement

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
1. Help the school obtain information needed to make informed decision about possible programs, research, or consultants.	6.33	0.91	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	17	14	36	30	66	55	102	84
2. Participate as a member of school planning teams.	5.28	1.56	3	2	4	3	6	5	28	23	15	12	31	26	34	28	65	54
3. Assist the school planning team with the development of written improvement plans.	5.61	1.27	1	1	1	1	2	2	25	21	17	14	39	32	36	30	75	62
4. Serve as on-call resource person with expertise in content areas (for example: science, bi-lingual education, special education).	5.95	1.29	1	1	1	1	5	4	10	8	19	16	28	23	57	47	85	70
5. Work with principals and planning teams to locate additional resources to support school-improvement goals.	6.36	0.81	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	14	12	41	34	64	53	105	87
6. Deliver training in an area of expertise.	6.14	0.96	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	3	24	20	36	30	55	45	91	75

(table continues)

Table 8
Importance of Central Office Practices related to School-Level Involvement

Practice	*M*	*SD*	Level of Importance 1 *f*	1 *P*	2 *f*	2 *P*	3 *f*	3 *P*	4 *f*	4 *P*	5 *f*	5 *P*	6 *f*	6 *P*	7 *f*	7 *P*	6-7 *f*	6-7 *P*
7. Participate in school in-service sessions with principals and teachers.	5.99	1.13	1	1	1	1	1	1	9	7	20	17	40	33	49	40	89	73
8. Assist school faculty in communicating progress toward improvement goals (such as to parents, the school board, and the central office).	6.09	0.98	0	0	2	2	0	0	6	5	22	18	40	33	51	42	91	75
9. Meet in person with school-level teams to discuss relative standings of the school regarding assessment data.	5.67	1.51	2	2	4	3	6	5	13	11	18	15	29	24	49	40	78	64
10. Assist schools in using data to make future implementation decisions, adjusting programs as necessary.	5.84	1.27	2	2	2	0	0	0	11	9	26	21	33	27	47	39	80	66
11. Model facilitative behavior in school-level interactions.	6.24	1.19	2	2	0	0	0	0	10	8	14	12	21	17	74	61	95	79
12. Encourage expansion of changes to other areas of school programming.	6.21	1.13	2	2	0	0	0	0	6	5	19	16	27	22	67	55	94	78

Section Summary

Table 9 presents a summary of the practices rated as most important for the central office when facilitating the implementation of school-based improvement. The practices are listed in rank order beginning with the item with the highest combined percentage recorded for rating options 6 and 7. Practices receiving an importance rating of 6 or 7 by 75% of all respondents were considered most important and were included in this listing. The table displays the administrative role area, the number of the practice, and the practice statement. Following each practice, the frequency and percentage for combined responses of 6 and 7 are presented. Practices having the same response frequency are listed in the order in which they appeared in the questionnaire.

Table 9
Summary of Most Important Practices

Administrative Role Area	Item number	Practice	Combined Score 6 - 7	
			f	*P*
Organizational Communication	2	Communicate expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement.	115	95
Organizational Communication	7	Seek to eliminate district barriers to school-based improvement.	115	95
Organizational Communication	1	Communicate a strong rationale for continuous improvement to all school personnel.	113	93
Organizational Communication	4	Model shared decision making in decisions throughout the district.	113	93
Staff Development	8	Ensure that training is available so that new teachers and administrators in the district use practice put in place by school-improvement processes.	112	93

(table continues)

Table 9
Summary of Most Important Practices

Administrative Role Area	Item number	Practice	Combined Score 6 - 7	
			f	*P*
Staff Development	5	Establish in-service programs for principals which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.	111	92
Organizational Communication	3	Model the use of improvement practices and behaviors within the central office.	110	91
Organizational Communication	6	Serve as a public advocate for having school-based decision making and improvement.	110	91
Policy and Procedures	3	Support systematic school-improvement processes used by district schools.	109	90
Management of Resources	2	Provide resources and time to support the activities of readiness (e.g., team building, vision development, goal setting, and program selection.	109	90
Organizational Communication	10	Report progress annually toward district-level goals to the public (such as school personnel, parents, and community members).	109	90
Staff Development	9	Keep teachers and administrators apprised of the newest programs and practices in education.	107	88
Organizational Communication	9	Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of parents and the community.	107	88
Management of Resources	5	Provide adequate time during the school year to support in-service education for school faculty.	106	88

(table continues)

Table 9
Summary of Most Important Practices

Administrative Role Area	Item number	Practice	Combined Score 6 - 7	
			f	*P*
School-Level Involvement	5	Work with principals and planning teams to locate additional resources to support school-improvement goals.	105	87
Management of Resources	4	Ensure the school has a budget for in-service training that supports its school-improvement plans.	104	86
Staff Development	6	Prepare the school board so they understand and can carry out their role in supporting school-based improvement.	102	84
Organizational Communication	5	Establish communication networks to keep stakeholders informed about implementation and outcomes of school improvements.	102	84
School-Level Involvement	1	Help the school obtain information needed to make informed decisions about possible programs, research, or consultants.	102	84
Organizational Communication	8	Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of school staff.	101	83
Monitoring and Evaluation	8	Collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals.	100	83
Goals and Planning	4	Develop district goals in collaboration with district administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.	99	82
Policy and Procedures	9	Provide greater freedom for schools to make decisions (for example: curriculum, personnel, budget, and facilities).	99	82

(table continues)

Table 9
Summary of Most Important Practices

Administrative Role Area	Item number	Practice	Combined Score 6 - 7	
			f	*P*
Staff Development	4	Establish in-service programs for central office administrators which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.	99	82
Recognition and Rewards	9	Link a system of expanded professional opportunities to accomplishment of school-improvement goals (such as: release time, additional training, conferences).	98	81
Goals and Planning	8	Establish a district-wide curriculum framework that indicates the expected broad learning goals for students in the district.	96	79
Staff Development	1	Establish or expand a district-wide staff development unit which is responsible for training personnel in school-improvement topics.	96	79
Goals and Planning	7	Define, practice, and model the roles and responsibilities desired for school-level decision making groups.	95	79
Staff Development	3	Provide at least one trained facilitator in each school to guide school faculty through the school-improvement process.	95	79
School-Level Involvement	11	Model facilitative behavior in school-level interactions.	95	79
Monitoring and Evaluation	9	Assist the school in the evaluation of its programs.	94	78

(table continues)

Table 9
Summary of Most Important Practices

Administrative Role Area	Item number	Practice	Combined Score 6 - 7	
			f	*P*
Management of Resources	1	Collaboratively identify and provide resources that schools need from the district to implement their school-improvement plans.	94	78
Management of Resources	6	Budget district revenues in "lump sums" to schools, allowing schools the flexibility to allocate these funds as needed.	94	78
School-Level Involvement	12	Encourage expansion of changes to other areas of school programming.	94	78
Recognition and Rewards	8	Provide teams or groups with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	93	77
Goals and Planning	1	Establish a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement	92	76
Policy and Procedures	1	Establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures.	92	76
Staff Development	7	Train district personnel as trainers or "coaches" to support school-based in-service.	92	76
Goals and Planning	5	Establish a district vision which communicates broad direction.	91	75
Recognition and Rewards	7	Provide schools with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	91	75

(table continues)

Table 9
Summary of Most Important Practices

Administrative Role Area	Item number	Practice	Combined Score 6 - 7	
			f	*P*
Monitoring and Evaluation	2	Require schools to conduct annual assessment of site goals.	91	75
School-Level Involvement	6	Deliver training in an area of expertise.	91	75
School-Level Involvement	8	Assist school faculty in communicating progress toward improvement goals (such as to parents, the school board, and the central office).	91	75

In summary, 43 of the 74 practices were identified as most important across the eight administrative role areas. The role area with the highest number of practices selected as most important was Organizational Communication with a total of ten practices. Staff Development was the area with the second highest number of practices selected totaling eight. Each of the administrative areas had practices selected as most important: School-level Involvement had six practices selected as most important, Management of Resources five practices; Goals and Planning had five practices selected, Monitoring and Evaluation had three practices; Policy and Procedures three practices; and the area of Recognition and Rewards had three practice selected as most important.

Differences Among and Between Role Group Responses

The second section in this study will report findings related to research question two: Were there significant differences among and between superintendents, central office

administration, principals, and teachers in public schools using the IIIDIEIA] School Improvement Program in the extent to which they agree that each of the practices in COPSBI questionnaire were important to the implementation of school-based improvement?

In examining the data related to question two, significant differences in the responses were analyzed in two stages. First, variation was analyzed (ANOVA) to determine if mean group scores for each COPSBI practice differed only because different people were responding to the items rather than because the four role groups differed in any way. ANOVA procedures yielded indicators, F-ratios and p-values, that estimated if further analysis could result in a reduction of variance included in the total group mean scores. To accomplish this, variation was partitioned into two terms: variation attributable to the total model and variation attributable to error. Mean squares were calculated for each of these terms. F-ratios were then calculated by dividing the model mean square by the error mean square. The last step in the first stage was to assess the probability of obtaining, by chance alone, an F-ratio greater than the one calculated.

Evaluating the variance among responses enabled the researcher to determine the effectiveness of the total mean response as an adequate statistical model for interpretation of each item. If the probability associated with an F-ratio was large, then the total mean score explained the responses adequately. Conversely, if the p-value was small, then it could be concluded that analysis of responses by role groups better accounted for the variance in the data than did the total mean model. In this study, observed significance probabilities of .01 or less were considered evidence of significant differences among the responses, thus reducing the likelihood of a Type I error (Borg & Gall, 1989: 352)

Having identified practices with significant differences among responses, the second stage of analysis identified role group pairs between which the significant differences occurred. The Tukey-Kramer test of honestly significant differences (Tukey a, HSD) was used as a follow-up test to compare the absolute differences between group means with the difference needed for statistical significance, or as it is often called, least significant difference (LSD).

Tables 10 through 17 report findings from the analysis of variance among responses and significant differences between role group pairs for each practice in the eight role areas of the COPSBI questionnaire. In each table, practices are listed followed by the total group mean and the respective F-ratio calculated for each practice. F-ratios having a p-value of .01 or less are noted with an asterisk (*) indicating practices having significant differences.

Results of the Tukey a tests are reported in a set of columns in each table. These columns list results of the Tukey a for each pair of roles: superintendents and central office administrators (*S -C*); superintendents and principals (*S-P*); superintendents and teachers (*S-T*); central office administrators and principals (*C-P*); central office administrators and teachers (*C-T*); and finally principals and teachers (*P-T*). In the tables, pairs with a positive value, are significantly different at the .01 level and are marked with an asterisk (*) followed by a letter notation indicating the role group with a higher group mean value, that is (S) for Superintendent, (C) for Central Office, (P) for Principal, and (T) for Teacher. A complete listing of means and standard deviations by role group is compiled in Appendix H.

The following discussion of these findings will be organized by the eight administrative role areas. First, each practice in these role areas with significant differences among the responses are identified. Next, the significant differences between role pairs are then presented.

Differences Among and Between Responses for Goals and Planning

Table 10 reports the differences among responses and between role groups related to the importance of the nine practices of central office support through goals and planning when implementing school-based change. When analysis of variance was applied to the data, five of the these nine practices were significant at the .01 level; these were practices 1, 2, 4, 5, and 8.

Follow-up analysis using the Tukey a (HSD) determined that practice 1, establish a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement, was reported as important significantly more important by central office administrators (M=6.63, SD=.69) than by teachers (M=5.71, SD=1.18). On practice 2, identify and adopt at least one systematic process or program that schools may use to plan and implement school improvement, central office administrators (M=6.57, SD=.79) note this practice as significantly more important than teachers (M=5.21, SD=1.03). Calculations indicated that on practice 4, develop district goals in collaboration with district administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives, both superintendents (M=6.44, SD=.17) and principals (M=6.54, SD=.62) were significantly higher in their ratings than were teachers (M=5.71, SD=.80). On practice 5, establish a district vision which communicates broad direction, ratings of importance were significantly higher for superintendents (M=6.68, SD=.60), central office administrators (M=6.69, SD=.46), and principals (M=6.80, SD=.40), than for teachers (M=5.85, SD=.93). For practice 8, establish a district-wide curriculum framework that indicated the expected broad learning goals for students in the district, central office administrators ratings (M=6.51, SD=.71) were significantly higher than teacher ratings (M=5.64, SD=1.09).

Table 10
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Goals and Planning Practices

Practice	Total		Tukey *a* (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
1. Establish a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement.	6.19	4.42*	-0.22	-0.58	-0.54	-0.47	0.09*[C]	-0.27
2. Identify and adopt at least one systematic process or program that schools may use to plan and implement school improvement.	5.95	10.06*	-0.10	-0.69	-0.13	-0.19	0.57*[C]	0.02
3. Conduct district level planning sessions with central office administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.	5.95	3.05	-0.43	-0.32	-0.64	-0.20	-0.08	-0.71
4. Develop district goals in collaboration with district administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.	6.26	5.89*	-0.49	-0.58	0.04*[S]	-0.38	-0.11	0.15*[P]
5. Establish a district vision which communicates broad direction.	6.53	14.34*	-0.50	-0.40	0.31*[S]	-0.39	0.33*[C]	0.43*[P]

(table continues)

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with ([S]) for Superintendent, ([C]) for Central Office, ([P]) for Principal, and ([T]) for Teacher.

Table 10
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Goals and Planning Practices (continued)

Practice	Total		Tukey α (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
6. Define the characteristics and skills needed by participants included in school-level decision making groups.	5.43	3.47	-0.91	-1.16	-0.48	-1.05	0.05	-0.30
7. Define, practice, and model the roles and responsibilities desired for school-level decision making groups.	6.13	2.95	-0.08	-0.41	-0.59	-0.40	-0.26	-0.59
8. Establish a district-wide curriculum framework that indicates the expected broad learning goals for students in the district.	6.18	4.55*	-0.52	-0.72	-0.16	-0.46	0.10*[C]	-0.20
9. Identify goals that will be required of all schools in the district.	5.59	1.14	-0.67	-0.65	-0.98	-1.25	-1.09	-1.06

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with ([S]) for Superintendent, ([C]) for Central Office, ([P]) for Principal, and ([T]) for Teacher.

Differences Among and Between Responses for Policy and Procedures

Differences among responses and between role groups related to the importance of the nine practices related to the use of Policy and Procedures are reported in Table 11. Analysis of variance calculations indicated that five of the nine practices contained significant differences at the .01 level. These were practices 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7.

Tukey a (HSD) calculations revealed that on practice 1, establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures, superintendents (M=5.89, SD=.85), central office administrators (M=6.33, SD=.73), and principals (M=6.64, SD=.48), all recorded importance ratings higher than teachers (M=5.07, SD=.89). On this same practice, however, principals (M=6.64, SD=.48) had ratings significantly higher than superintendents (M=5.89, SD=.85)

On practice 2, identify criteria for the decisions to be made at the school level and the district level, central office administrators (M=5.75, SD=2.06) and principals (M=5.74, SD=1.80) both gave significantly higher ratings than did superintendents (M=5.0, SD=1.77) and teachers (M=4.46, SD=1.89). On practice 3, support systematic school-improvement processes used by district schools, principals (M=6.77, SD=.42) gave significantly higher ratings than teachers (M=5.92, SD=1.58). The Tukey a analysis for practice 6, define procedures and criteria that allow exceptions (waivers) to district policies that may restrict efforts to improve schools, central office administrators (M=6.51, SD=.71) and principals gave ratings significantly higher than teachers (M=5.28, SD=.97). Similarly, on practice 7, define procedures and criteria to obtain waivers to state policies and procedures that may restrict efforts to improve schools, central office administrators (M=6.15, SD=.79) and principals (M=6.16, SD=1.13) gave ratings significantly higher than the ratings of teachers (M=5.17, SD=1.18).

Table 11
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Policy and Procedure Practices

Practice	Total		Tukey *a* (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
1. Establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures.	6.02	23.87*	-0.18	0.13* P	0.19* S	-0.29	0.64* C	0.95* P
2. Identify criteria for the decisions to be made at the school level and the district level.	5.27	9.59*	0.23* C	0.02* P	-0.96	-0.91	0.39* C	0.18* P
3. Support systematic school-improvement processes used by district schools.	6.51	4.55*	-0.76	-0.68	-0.09	-0.63	-0.08	0.04* P
4. Identify procedures for the schools to use in the selection of improvement goals.	5.37	1.92	-0.30	-0.62	-0.88	-0.73	-0.52	-0.84
5. Define the procedures for the school board and the central office to review, support, and approve school-improvement plans.	5.78	3.60	-0.34	-0.81	-0.79	-0.60	-0.01	-0.49

(table continues)

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with (S) for Superintendent, (C) for Central Office, (P) for Principal, and (T) for Teacher.

Table 11
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Policy and Procedure Practices (continued)

Practice	Total		Tukey α (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
6. Define procedures and criteria that allow exceptions (waivers) to district policies that may restrict efforts to improve schools.	6.00	7.78*	-0.38	-0.75	-0.11	-0.52	0.43* C	0.07* P
7. Define procedures and criteria to obtain waivers to state policies and procedures that may restrict efforts to improve schools.	5.84	5.17*	-0.53	-0.53	-0.31	-0.86	0.08* C	0.07* P
8. Negotiate contractual items with the bargaining unit (union) which support school-based improvement.	5.83	3.44	-0.72	-0.34	-0.61	-0.50	-0.40	-0.01
9. Provide greater freedom for schools to make decisions (for example: curriculum, personnel, budget, and facilities).	6.23	3.31	-0.71	-0.79	-0.15	-0.66	-0.24	-0.10

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with (S) for Superintendent, (C) for Central Office, (P) for Principal, and (T) for Teacher.

Differences Among and Between Responses for Staff Development

The findings related to differences among and between responses for the third administrative area, staff development, are displayed in Table 12. Significant levels of variance among responses were identified in five practices though use of ANOVA procedures. These practices included practice 1, 4, 5,6, and 7.

Tukey a procedures, used to identify role pairs having significant differences, indicated that for practice 1, establish or expand a district-wide staff development unit which is responsible for training personnel in school-improvement topics, central office administrators (M=6.64, SD=.60) had ratings significantly higher than teachers (M=5.71, SD=1.04). For practice 4, establish in-service programs for central office administrators which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement, principal ratings (M=6.64, SD=.60) were at a notably higher level than those of teachers (M=5.82, SD=1.09). Distinctions between role pairs were also identified on practice 5, establish in-service programs for principals which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement. On this practice, superintendents marked ratings (M=6.82, SD=.38) at levels significantly higher than those of teachers (M=6.17, SD=.81). For practice 6, prepare the school board so they understand and can carry out their role in supporting school-based improvement, superintendents (M=6.37, SD=.72), central office administrators (M=6.63, SD=.60), and principals (M=6.54, SD=.67) all indicated importance for this practice to a level significantly higher than teachers (M=5.67, SD=1.02). Finally, practice 7, train district personnel as trainers or "coaches" to support school-based improvement, was rated by central office administrators (M=6.51, SD=.71) as significantly more important than indicated by teacher ratings (M=5.39, SD=1.22).

Table 12
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Staff Development Practices

Practice	Total		Tukey *a* (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
1. Establish or expand a district-wide staff development unit which is responsible for training personnel in school-improvement topics.	6.12	4.59*	-0.12	-0.64	-0.65	-0.31	0.08* [C]	-0.43
2. Coordinate in-service programs so schools can share training when appropriate.	6.01	1.83	-0.39	-0.77	-0.92	-0.58	-0.32	-0.70
3. Provide at least one trained facilitator in each school to guide school faculty through the school-improvement process.	6.22	1.64	-0.75	-0.82	-0.54	-0.59	-0.31	-0.68
4. Establish in-service programs for central office administrators which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.	6.23	4.32*	-0.58	-0.22	-0.44	-0.34	-0.28	0.08* [P]

(table continues)

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with ([S]) for Superintendent, ([C]) for Central Office, ([P]) for Principal, and ([T]) for Teacher.

Table 12
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Staff Development Practices (continued)

Practice	Total		Tukey a (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
5. Establish in-service programs for principals which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.	6.57	5.29*	-0.32	-0.31	0.11* S	-0.48	-0.06	-0.09
6. Prepare the school board so they understand and can carry out their role in supporting school-based improvement.	6.33	9.44*	-0.36	-0.46	0.06* S	-0.52	0.33* C	0.24* P
7. Train district personnel as trainers or "coaches" to support school-based in-service	6.11	8.50*	-0.22	-0.26	-0.29	-0.76	0.31* C	0.27* P
8. Ensure that training is available so that new teachers and administrators in the district use practices put in place by the school-improvement processes.	6.48	2.26	-0.44	-0.23	-0.51	-0.35	-0.36	-0.14
9. Keep teachers and administrators apprised of the newest programs and practices in education.	6.41	1.34	-0.46	-0.59	-0.36	-0.38	-0.53	-0.29

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with (S) for Superintendent, (C) for Central Office, (P) for Principal, and (T) for Teacher.

Differences Among and Between Responses for Recognition and Rewards

Table 13 contains the findings from the ANOVA and Tukey α tests for the administrative role area related to the use of recognition and rewards in the implementation of school-based improvement. When analysis of variance was applied to these data, four practices were determined to have significant differences at the .01 level. These were practices 1, 2, 7 and 8.

On practice 1, link district-wide teacher pay to accomplishment of school-improvement goals, Tukey α calculations indicated that central office administrators (M=4.36, SD=1.67) had ratings that were significantly higher than superintendents (M=2.82, SD=1.41) and principals (M=3.06, SD=1.67). Analysis of data related to practice 2, link district-wide administrator salaries to accomplishment of school-improvement goals, revealed that central office administrator ratings (M=4.39, SD=1.67) were significantly higher than the ratings of superintendents (M=2.96, SD=1.52). Practice 7, provide schools with special recognition (non-monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals, was rated at a significantly higher level by superintendents (M=5.79, SD=1.67) and central office administrators (M=5.75, SD=1.19) than it was by teachers (M=4.28, SD=1.90). Tukey α calculations yielded significant differences on practice 8, provide teams or groups with special recognition (non-monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals, showing higher ratings by superintendents (M=5.51, SD=1.54) and central office administrators (M=5.93, SD=.82) than teachers (M=4.35, SD=1.66)

Differences Among and Between Responses for Monitoring and Evaluation

Differences among responses and between role groups related to the importance of the nine practices related to the use of Monitoring and Evaluation in the implementation of

Table 13
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Recognition and Reward Practices

Practice	Total		Tukey α (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
1. Link district-wide teacher pay to accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	3.47	5.57*	0.22* [C]	-1.09	-0.65	0.02* [C]	-0.49	-0.86
2. Link district-wide administrator salaries to accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	3.52	4.99*	0.12* [C]	-1.16	-0.79	-0.02	-0.46	-0.93
3. Link "incentive" school funding to accomplishment of school-improvement goals (such as lump sum incentives, per capita incentives).	4.28	1.76	-1.50	-1.43	-0.91	-1.27	-0.47	-0.74
4. Distribute team or group monetary incentives for accomplishment of specific goals.	4.09	1.03	-1.24	-1.25	-0.93	-1.21	-0.88	-0.69
5. Provide a district program that gives individual teachers special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	4.86	2.15	-1.53	-1.46	-0.54	-1.40	-0.48	-0.62

(table continues)

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with ([S]) for Superintendent, ([C]) for Central Office, ([P]) for Principal, and ([T]) for Teacher.

Table 13
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Recognition and Reward Practices (continued)

Practice	Total		Tukey α (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
6. Provide a district program that gives principals special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	4.67	2.02	-1.23	-0.96	-0.42	-1.23	-0.70	-1.02
7. Provide Schools with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	5.33	5.89*	-0.23	-0.87	0.19* [S]	-0.87	0.19* [C]	-0.19
8. Provide Teams or groups with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals.	5.25	7.43*	-0.67	-0.69	0.02* [S]	-0.23	0.48* [C]	-0.38
9. Link a system of expanded professional opportunities to accomplishment of school-improvement goals. (such as: release time, additional training, conferences).	6.04	2.68	-0.61	-0.81	-0.51	-0.43	-0.12	-0.66

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with ([S]) for Superintendent, ([C]) for Central Office, ([P]) for Principal, and ([T]) for Teacher.

school-based improvement are reported in Table 14. Analysis of variance calculations indicated that six of the nine practices contained significant differences at the .01 level. These were practices 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

When Tukey a calculations were applied to these data for practice 3, facilitate the district-wide administration of one or more standardized assessments for all students in selected grade levels, superintendent (M=5.55, SD=1.45) and central office administrator (M=5.75, SD=1.32) ratings were significantly higher than those of teachers (M=3.93, SD=1.63). On practice 4, communicate expectations for school's use of performance data in school-level planning processes, superintendents (M=6.33, SD=.78), central office administrators (M=6.27, SD=.91), and principals (M=6.22, SD=.66) consistently recorded higher means than teachers (M=5.14, SD=1.17). The Tukey a findings for practice 5, adjust district professional teacher evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement, indicated that superintendents (M=5.58, SD=1.52), central office administrators (M=6.03, SD=.88), and principals (M=5.77, SD=1.23) had significantly higher ratings of importance than those of teachers (M=4.17, SD=1.54). On practice 6, adjust district professional administrator evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement, superintendents (M=5.65, SD=1.51), central office administrators (M=6.09, SD=.91) and principals (M=6.19, SD=.98) again were significantly higher in their ratings than were teachers (M=4.21, SD=1.34). Calculations for practice 7, provide access to centralized information for school planning teams (e.g., information databases, technical reports), indicated that principals ratings (M=6.45, SD=.62) were significantly higher than those of teachers (M=5.21, SD=1.25). Tukey a calculations indicated that central office administrators rated (M=6.63, SD=.60) practice 8 collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals, significantly higher than both superintendents (M=5.68, SD=1.04) and teachers (M=5.64, SD=1.09).

Table 14
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Monitoring and Evaluation Practices

Practice	Total		Tukey *a* (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
1. Establish criteria by which district-level goals will be evaluated.	5.95	0.97	-0.77	-0.88	-0.75	-0.89	-0.49	-0.59
2. Require schools to conduct annual assessment of site goals.	6.06	2.14	-0.88	-0.89	-0.32	-0.85	-0.29	-0.32
3. Facilitate the district-wide administration of one or more standardized assessments for all students in selected grade levels.	5.09	8.24*	-1.04	-0.75	0.32* S	-0.50	0.57* C	-0.18
4. Communicate expectations for school's use of performance data in school-level planning processes.	6.00	11.33*	-0.68	-0.65	0.42* S	-0.67	0.39* C	0.34* P
5. Adjust district professional teacher evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.	5.42	11.75*	-0.61	-0.89	0.31* S	-0.78	0.78* C	0.51* P

(table continues)

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with (S) for Superintendent, (C) for Central Office, (P) for Principal, and (T) for Teacher.

Table 14
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Monitoring and Evaluation Practices (continued)

Practice	Total		Tukey α (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
6. Adjust district professional administrator evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.	5.57	16.79*	-0.54	-0.45	0.43* S	-0.85	0.89* C	0.98* P
7. Provide access to centralized information systems for school planning teams (e.g., information databases, technical reports).	5.98	13.23*	-0.07	-0.03	-0.19	-0.64	0.46* C	0.51* P
8. Collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals.	6.07	10.10*	0.28* C	-0.14	-0.65	-0.25	0.32* C	-0.10
9. Assist the school in the evaluation of its programs.	6.09	3.02	-0.59	-0.81	-0.35	-0.63	-0.07	-0.28

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with (S) for Superintendent, (C) for Central Office, (P) for Principal, and (T) for Teacher.

Differences Among and Between Responses for Management of Resources

In reviewing Table 15, which presents findings related to the administrative role area of Management of Resources, three practices were identified as having significant differences among the responses at the .01 level. These were practices 3, 6, and 7.

Use of the Tukey *a* procedures revealed that on practice 3, assist schools in developing budgets which support school-improvement goals, principal ratings (M=6.41, SD=.96) were significantly higher than ratings by teachers (M=5.35, SD=1.64). On practice 6, budget district revenues in "lump sums" to schools, allowing schools the flexibility to allocate these funds as needed, both superintendent (M=6.58, SD=.77) and principal ratings (M=6.67, SD=.59) were significantly higher than teacher ratings (M=5.50, SD=1.17). On practice 7, delegate authority for decisions about the budget to the school (for example materials, facilities, and personnel allocations), superintendents (M=6.20, SD=.90), central office administrators (M=5.90, SD=1.37), and principals (M=6.48, SD=.76), recorded means significantly higher than reported for teachers (M=4.96, SD=1.40).

Differences Among and Between Responses for Organizational Communication

Table 16 reports the findings related to differences among and between responses to the ten practices in the administrative role area of Organizational Communication. Analysis of variance procedures identifies five practices, numbers 2, 5, 6, 7, and 10, which contained significant differences at the .01 level.

When Tukey *a* procedures were applied to these data, practice 2, communicate expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement central

Table 15
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Management of Resources Practices

Practice	Total		Tukey *a* (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
1. Collaboratively identify and provide resources that schools need from the district to implement their school-improvement plans.	6.16	1.71	-0.81	-0.49	-0.61	-0.45	-0.60	-0.25
2. Provide resources and time to support the activities of readiness (e.g., team building, vision development, goal setting, and program selection).	6.45	1.30	-0.60	-0.64	-0.42	-0.66	-0.31	-0.35
3. Assist schools in developing budgets which support school-improvement goals.	6.04	4.98*	-0.73	-0.79	-0.04	-0.57	-0.19	0.12*^{P}
4. Ensure the school has a budget for in-service training that supports its school-improvement plans.	6.34	0.17	-0.76	-0.70	-0.65	-0.76	-0.64	-0.73
5. Provide adequate time during the school year to support in-service education for school faculty.	6.42	1.82	-0.63	-0.48	-0.36	-0.47	-0.33	-0.18

(table continues)

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with (^{S}) for Superintendent, (^{C}) for Central Office, (^{P}) for Principal, and (^{T}) for Teacher.

Table 15
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Management of Resources Practices (continued)

Practice	Total		Tukey *a* (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
6. Budget district revenues in "lump sums" to schools, allowing schools the flexibility to allocate these funds as needed.	6.23	9.60*	-0.29	-0.68	0.29* [S]	-0.19	-0.14	0.40* [P]
7. Delegate authority for decisions about the budget to the school (for example: materials, facilities, and personnel allocations).	5.90	9.56*	-0.63	-0.67	0.27* [S]	-0.34	0.01* [C]	0.57* [P]

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with ([S]) for Superintendent, ([C]) for Central Office, ([P]) for Principal, and ([T]) for Teacher.

office administrators (M=6.69, SD=.59) and principals (M=6.87, SD=.34) indicated significantly higher importance means than teacher ratings (M=6.03, SD=1.04). On practice 5, establish communication networks to keep stakeholders informed about implementation and outcomes of school improvements, superintendents (M=6.68, SD=.47), and principals (M=6.67, SD=.48) rated this as significantly more important than teachers (M=5.71, SD=1.08). Findings for practice 6, serve as a public advocate for having school-based decision making and improvement, showed that superintendents (M=6.72, SD=.45), central office administrator (M=6.45, SD=.62), and principal ratings (M=6.74, SD=.44) were significantly higher than teacher ratings (M=5.75, SD=1.17). On practice 7, seek to eliminate district barriers to school-based improvement, superintendents (M=6.82, SD=.38) and principals (M=6.74, SD=.44) indicated a significantly higher level of importance than teachers (M=6.17, SD=.94). The findings for practice 10, report progress annually toward district-level goals to the public (such as school personnel, parents, and community members), indicated that superintendents (M=6.82, SD=.38), central office administrators (M=6.57, SD=.61), and principals (M=6.61, SD=.49) all had significantly higher mean ratings than teachers (M=5.82, SD=1.18).

Differences Among and Between Responses for School-Level Involvement

School-level Involvement, the final administrative role area, included twelve practices. Analysis of variance procedures indicated that nine of theses twelve practices contained significant differences at the .01 level. These were practices 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 12.

The Tukey a analysis, as displayed in Table 17, showed that for practice 1, help the school obtain information needed to make informed decisions about possible programs, research, or consultants, central office administrator ratings (M=6.63, SD=.69) were significantly higher than the ratings given by teachers (M=5.92, SD=.81). On practice 2,

participate as a member of school planning teams, central office administrator ratings (M=5.90, SD=1.01) as well as principal ratings (M=5.83, SD=1.34) were significantly higher than ratings by superintendents (M=4.44, SD=1.63). On practice 3, assist the school planning team with the development of written improvement plans, principals indicated a significantly higher level (M=6.48, SD=.72) of importance than either superintendents (M=4.89, SD=1.47) or teachers (M=5.07, SD=1.15). On practice 4, serve as on-call resource person with expertise in content areas, principal ratings (M=6.41, SD=.95) were significantly higher than ratings by superintendents (M=5.34, SD=1.49). Practice 6, deliver training in an area of expertise, indicated that superintendents (M=6.65, SD=.61) rated consistently higher than teachers (M=5.57, SD=.92) in their ratings.

Analysis of data for practice 8, assist school faculty in communicating progress toward improvement goals (such as to parents, the school board, and the central office), revealed that the ratings of principals (M=6.51, SD=.63) were significantly higher than those of teachers (M=5.50, SD=1.10). On practice 10, assist schools in using data to make future implementation decisions, adjusting programs as necessary, central office (M=6.33, SD=.85) and principal ratings (M=6.23, SD=.76) were significantly higher than ratings by teachers (M=5.03, SD=1.50). Practice 11, model facilitative behavior in school-level interactions, yielded results showing central office administrator ratings (M=6.63, SD=.60) consistently higher than teacher ratings (M=5.64, SD=1.72). Tukey α analysis of practice 12, encourage expansion of changes to other areas of school programming, indicated that superintendents (M=6.55, SD=.68) and principals (M=6.51, SD=.62) both marked this practice as important significantly more important than teachers (M=5.46, SD=1.64).

Table 16
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Organizational Communication Practices

Practice	Total		Tukey α (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
1. Communicate a strong rationale for continuous improvement to all school personnel.	6.58	2.97	-0.52	-0.48	-0.38	-0.67	-0.15	-0.12
2. Communicate expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement.	6.56	8.76*	-0.42	-0.25	-0.01	-0.35	0.12* ^{C}	0.29* ^{P}
3. Model the use of improvement practices and behaviors within the central office.	6.52	3.93	-0.70	-0.73	-0.12	-0.71	-0.05	-0.05
4. Model shared decision making in decisions throughout the district.	6.59	4.01	-0.68	-0.71	-0.09	-0.62	-0.13	-0.03
5. Establish communication networks to keep stakeholders informed about implementation and outcomes of school improvements.	6.36	9.73*	-0.28	-0.63	0.31* ^{S}	-0.28	-0.02	0.31* ^{P}

(table continues)

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with (^{S}) for Superintendent, (^{C}) for Central Office, (^{P}) for Principal, and (^{T}) for Teacher.

Table 16
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to Organizational Communication Practices (continued)

Practice	Total		Tukey α (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
6. Serve as a public advocate for having school-based decision making and improvement.	6.43	11.79*	-0.32	-0.58	0.36* S	-0.29	0.11* C	0.39* P
7. Seek to eliminate district barriers to school-based improvement.	6.59	6.55*	-0.23	-0.41	0.14* S	-0.31	-0.09	0.06* P
8. Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of school staff.	6.45	2.79	-0.51	-0.30	-0.45	-0.17	-0.55	-0.11
9. Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of parents and the community.	6.50	1.28	-0.65	-0.31	-0.57	-0.31	-0.57	-0.44
10. Report progress annually toward district-level goals to the public (such as school personnel, parents, and community members).	6.47	10.43*	-0.34	-0.38	0.39* S	-0.54	0.16* C	0.19* P

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with (S) for Superintendent, (C) for Central Office, (P) for Principal, and (T) for Teacher.

Table 17
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to School-Level Involvement Practices

Practice	Total		Tukey α (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
1. Help the school obtain information needed to make informed decision about possible programs, research, or consultants.	6.33	4.58*	-0.21	-0.28	-0.53	-0.64	0.01*[C]	-0.07
2. Participate as a member of school planning teams.	5.28	7.77*	0.29*[C]	0.20*[P]	-0.84	-1.08	-0.09	-0.18
3. Assist the school planning team with the development of written improvement plans.	5.61	13.31*	0.11*[C]	0.67*[P]	-0.76	-0.31	-0.07	0.49*[P]
4. Serve as on-call resource person with expertise in content areas. (for example: science, bi-lingual education, special education).	5.95	5.67*	-0.01	0.07*[P]	-1.03	-0.89	-0.28	-0.21
5. Work with principals and planning teams to locate additional resources to support school-improvement goals.	6.36	1.96	-0.47	-0.66	-0.23	-0.46	-0.40	-0.22
6. Deliver training in an area of expertise.	6.14	7.42*	-0.34	-0.11	0.33*[S]	-0.47	-0.03	-0.28

(table continues)

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with ([S]) for Superintendent, ([C]) for Central Office, ([P]) for Principal, and ([T]) for Teacher.

Table 17
Differences Among Responses and Between Role Groups related to School-Level Involvement Practices (continued)

Practice	Total		Tukey α (HSD) All Pairs Comparison					
	M	*F*	*S-C*	*S-P*	*S-T*	*C-P*	*C-T*	*P-T*
7. Participate in school in-service sessions with principals and teachers.	5.99	2.28	-0.51	-0.36	-0.86	-0.72	-0.44	-0.28
8. Assist school faculty in communicating progress toward improvement goals (such as to parents, the school board, and the central office).	6.09	6.19*	-0.61	-0.31	-0.21	-0.43	-0.04	0.25* P
9. Meet in person with school-level teams to discuss relative standings of the school regarding assessment data.	5.67	2.33	-1.18	-1.07	-0.36	-1.05	-0.34	-0.49
10. Assist schools in using data to make future implementation decisions, adjusting programs as necessary.	5.84	7.54*	-0.28	-0.40	-0.38	-0.84	0.33* C	0.21* P
11. Model facilitative behavior in school-level interactions.	6.24	4.40*	-0.43	-0.59	-0.47	-0.76	0.06* C	-0.11
12. Encourage expansion of changes to other areas of school programming.	6.21	6.48*	-0.58	-0.84	0.19* S	-0.60	-0.06	0.17* P

Note: Values with significance at .01 or less are marked (*). Role groups with higher means are indicated with (S) for Superintendent, (C) for Central Office, (P) for Principal, and (T) for Teacher.

Section Summary

Practices having significant differences among responses, of .01 or less, occurred with similar frequency in each of the eight administrative role areas. The practices recording significance, totaling 42 in all, included five practices in the area of Goals and Planning, five practices in Policy and Procedures, five practices in Staff Development, four practices in Recognition and Rewards, six practices in Monitoring and Evaluation, three practices in Management of Resources, five practices in Organizational Communication, and nine practices in School-level Involvement.

Table 18 summarizes the extent that significant differences occurred between role pairs. The first column lists all the possible paired roles along with the abbreviations used in the Tukey α (HSD) analysis. In the next column is the frequency that significant differences were identified for the role pair. Superscript notation indicates the role that was significantly higher. The last column in Table 18 contains the percentage of the total number of practices.

Table 18
Summary of Significant Differences in Role Pairs

Role Pair		*f*	*P*
Superintendent - Central Office	*(S-C)*	6^{C}	7
Superintendent - Principal	*(S-P)*	5^{P}	6
Superintendent - Teacher	*(S-T)*	19^{S}	23
Central Office - Principal	*(C-P)*	1^{C}	1
Central Office - Teacher	*(C-T)*	26^{C}	31
Principal - Teacher	*(P-T)*	26^{P}	31

In reviewing Table 18, it is should be noted that the fewest number of significant differences occurred between central office - principal roles (1%), closely followed by the role pairs of superintendent - principal (6%), and superintendent - central office (7%). The small number of differences between these role pairs would indicate a greater extent of agreement related to the level of importance for the facilitating practices.

The greatest number of significant differences occurred when roles were paired with teachers. Superintendents rated 19 of the practices (23%) significantly more important than teachers. Those respondents in the role of central office rated 26 practices (31%) significantly more important than teachers. Principals also rated 26 practices (31%) significantly more important than teacher ratings.

Analysis of Open-ended Question Responses

On the COPSBI questionnaire, open-ended questions followed the items listed for each of the eight administrative areas. The purpose of including these questions was to elicit other important facilitating practices that were not articulated in the literature. Respondents were asked to identify additional central office practices that they would consider important for successful implementation of school-based improvement related to each of the eight areas. This information was analyzed using the constant comparative methods for coding information (Bogden & Bicklen, 1992). This method of analysis allows the researcher to identify key issues and recurring patterns within the data.

The analysis of open-ended responses was conducted in two stages. To begin the analysis, "other important practices" was defined as new information that was not contained or clearly implied by existing administrative areas or practices. The responses were transcribed verbatim from the returned questionnaires, grouped by administrative role areas included on the COPSBI questionnaire. Each item was then analyzed by comparing

the content to the original eight administrative areas and the 74 facilitating practices. Verbatim responses were then coded using the following criteria. If content was similar to original practices, the analogous practice number was placed in the coding column. In the content and intent of the verbatim response did not match any original practices, the words "* new information" was placed in the coding column.

In the second stage of the analysis, verbatim responses having new information were compared to each other. This second comparison allowed the researcher to identify similarities between the responses. Tables 19-26, presented in Appendix I, contain the analysis of the open-ended responses. These tables contain verbatim responses that were transcribed from returned questionnaires. Each of the tables also include the coding given to each of the responses and analysis notes.

Of the 121 participants who completed the COPSBI questionnaire, 16 (13%) offered responses to the open-ended questions. A total of 35 verbatim responses were recorded from the eight administrative areas. Six responses were coded as having other information. After completing the second stage of analysis two themes emerged. These themes related to the areas of managing resources and in monitoring and evaluation. The analysis of the new information from the open-ended responses indicated that specific training was needed in both of these areas. These practices also relate to the administrative area of Staff Development, since they focus on developing the competencies of personnel. Thus, the following two additional practices beyond the original 74 were identified:

- Provide training for schools in site management of resources (for example: site-based budgeting, use of discretionary funds, and allocation of site personnel).
- Provide training in the process and use of site evaluation for school improvement (for example: developing and measuring performance goals, data collection, analysis).

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the study's findings resulting from the analysis of data. The purpose of study was to identify facilitating practices which enabled central office administrators to support the implementation of school-based improvement processes as perceived by superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers. The analysis revealed that 68 (92%) of the COPSBI questionnaire items were identified as important practices. When compared to a more stringent criteria, 43 (58%) COPSBI questionnaire items were identified as most important practices across all role group responses.

The chapter then presented results for the analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the Tukey a (HSD) all pairs comparison procedures. These procedures were used to test for significant differences between grouped responses, a total of 444 paired comparisons for the 74 items on the COPSBI questionnaire. This analysis yielded a total of 78 paired comparisons (18%) that were determined to be significant at the .01 level.

The next chapter, Chapter Five, will present a summary of the study and will discuss conclusions based on this analysis of data, relate the findings to current practice, and propose recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a review of the study and a summary of the major findings from the analysis of the data. Conclusions about the study's findings are then presented along with their relationship to the professional literature. Next, implications are proposed for groups who would find the results of this study useful in extending their understanding of school improvement. Finally, recommendations for further research are presented.

Review of the Study

The purpose of the study was to identify important facilitating practices which enable central office administrators to support the implementation of school-based improvement processes as perceived by superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers. The study first identified the degree to which all respondents perceived that practices identified in the literature were important. The study then identified significant differences that occurred among and between the role groups, comprised of superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers, for each of the practices.

Specific Research Questions

1. To what degree did superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers in public schools using the I|D|E|A| School Improvement Program agree that each of the practices in the COPSBI questionnaire was important to the implementation of school-based improvement?

2. Were there significant difference between and among superintendents, central office administration, principals, and teachers in public schools using the I|D|E|A| School Improvement Program in the extent to which they agree that the practices in the COPSBI survey were important to the implementation of school-based improvement?

The population of this study was comprised of superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers who were employed by 35 public school districts implementing the I|D|E|A| School Improvement Program (SIP). Demographic information from the respondents revealed that, on average, their districts had focused on school-based improvement for 5.8 years. The participants from these districts had employment tenures ranging from a low of one year to a high of more than 21 years. With few exceptions, almost all the participants had received training experiences for school improvement. In addition, all had participated on planning teams for the district and/or for schools. Thus, it was determined that all respondents were highly involved in the district initiative and were knowledgeable and capable of reporting about the processes involved in the implementation of school-based improvement.

The Survey of Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement (COPSBI) was developed from the professional literature related to organizational designs, school-based improvement, and the practices of central office administrators in programs to increase organizational effectiveness. The instrument was divided into two sections. The first section asked respondents to provide demographic information about their role in the district, training for school-based improvement, participation in SIP teams, length of employment, and district size.

The second section of the COPSBI included 74 items that describe practices used by central office administrators to facilitate the implementation of school-based improvement that were identified from an analysis of the literature. The practices were grouped into eight areas: (1) goals and planning-nine items (2) policy and procedures, nine items, (3) staff development, nine items, (4) recognition and rewards, nine items, (5) monitoring and evaluation, nine items, (6) management of resources, seven items, (7) organizational communication, ten items, and (8) school-level involvement, 12 items. For each of these practices, respondents were asked to indicate on a seven-point Likert scale the level of importance that the central office administrative practices had for the implementation of school-based improvement. Practices perceived as "not important" were marked 1 on the left side of the scale; those perceived as having "moderate importance" were marked 4; and those perceived as "very important" were to be marked 7. After each of the eight areas on the questionnaire, an open-ended question asked respondents to identify additional facilitating practices they would consider important for successful implementation of school-based improvement.

The original 74 practices included in the COPSBI were validated in two ways. First, the literature was analyzed to identify the practices which had been identified as important for administration of organizations that were designed as decentralized systems. The literature and specific practices identified in this review related to the eight areas reported in Chapter II. Once the review was completed and the 74 practices were

identified, the COPSBI questionnaire was developed and then submitted to a panel of experts who provided recommendations related to content adequacy, wording and readability, and presentation format. As a result of the input from the panel of experts, the final draft was developed. Instrument reliability for the set of practices was assessed using Cronbach alpha techniques for internal consistency which produced a coefficient of .73.

Data for the study were collected through mailed surveys to a superintendent, central office administrator, principal, and teacher in each of 35 districts. An initial list of districts was identified by the IIDIEIAI staff based on their records of participants who had completed components of the IIDIEIAI SIP facilitator training programs. After contacting the districts to ensure adequate levels of implementation, 35 districts were selected for participation in the study. Surveys were mailed to a contact person in each of the districts who distributed questionnaire materials to participants representing each of the four roles. After two weeks, if questionnaires were not returned, district contact persons were called, asking for assistance with the return of surveys. Participants who had not returned the instrument after another two weeks were sent a replacement instrument with a cover letter reiterating the value of participation in the study. In all, 121 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a response rate of 86%. Classified by role, the response rate was superintendents, 29 returned (83%); central office administrators, 33 returned (94%); principals, 31 returned (89%); and teachers, 28 returned (80%).

Quantitative data and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to answer the two research questions. Means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were used to determine the importance ratings of the 74 practices. Analysis of variation procedures (ANOVA) were used to identify significant differences among the role groups. The Tukey-Kramer HSD test was used as a follow-up means comparison to determine the role groups between which the significant differences occurred at the .01 level.

Qualitative data, from the open-ended questions, was transcribed from the questionnaires. The responses were categorized and then compared to the original eight areas and 74 practices in order to identify additional important practices.

Major Findings

This section presents the major findings for each of the two research questions. The first research question dealt with assessing the degree of importance of 74 administrative practices included in the Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement (COPSBI) questionnaire as perceived by all respondents. The second section addresses the extent to which significant differences exist among and between the perceptions of respondents when data were analyzed by the four role groups. The discussion of the major findings related to each of the research questions were organized around the eight areas of administration responsibilities: goals and planning, policy and procedures, staff development, recognition and rewards, monitoring and evaluation, management of resources, organizational communication, and school-level involvement.

Importance of Central Office Practices

In examining the data related to question one, the ratings of importance for to each of the central office facilitating practices were examined at two levels. First, all practices with a mean of five (5) or greater were considered "important" for the central office in facilitating the implementation of school-based improvement. Next, the most important practices were identified. Such practices were determined to be "most important" when 75% or more of the respondents rated them as either a 6 or 7 on the seven-point scale.

The following discussion summarizes the major findings related to the importance of the facilitating practices in each of the eight administrative areas. The discussion for

each area first identifies the number of practices within the area that were considered important. Practices meeting the criterion of 75% are then listed as the most important practices related to that areas. The percentage of respondents rating the importance of the practice with a 6 or 7 follows each of these most important practices.

Goals and Planning

Responses on the nine administrative practices related to goals and planning indicated that respondents perceived all of the practices as important. This administrative area included practices that describe ways for the central office to focus attention of the district on school improvement by establishing a broad direction and then facilitating planning activities, processes and goals development. Five of these practices were determined to be "most important" for central office administrators when supporting school-based improvement in their district. The five practices meeting the criterion of 75% reporting a rating of 6 or 7 were:

- establish a district vision which communicates broad direction (93%);
- develop district goals in collaboration with district administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives (83%);
- establish a district-wide curriculum framework that indicates the expected broad learning goals for students in the district (79%);
- define, practice, and model the roles and responsibilities desired for school-level decision-making groups (79%);
- establish a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement (76%).

Policy and Procedures

The second administrative area examined nine practices in the area of policy and procedures reported in the literature as important for central office administrators when supporting the implementation of school-based improvement. The nine practices include three types of activities including development of policies, implementing policies in specific

situations, and helping schools obtain waivers to policies that will help them accomplish their goals. All nine practices had mean scores greater than 5, indicating that respondents perceived they were important. Three of these practices were considered to be most important. Most important practices were those for which respondents rated with a 6 or 7 at the 75% percent level. These were:

- support systematic improvement processes used by district schools (90%);
- provide greater freedom for schools to make decisions [for example: curriculum, personnel, budget, and facilities] (82%);
- establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures (76%).

Staff Development

The facilitating practices in the administrative area of staff development related to two types of activities: providing training for school improvement to role groups in the district, and providing services through a central unit. All nine practices in the area of staff development were determined to be important for central office administrators supporting the implementation of school-based improvement, each having a mean rating greater than five. In fact, all nine had mean scores of six or above. Eight of the nine practices also met the criterion of 75% giving ratings of 6 or 7. These most important practices were:

- ensure that training is available so that new teachers and administrators in the district use practices put in place by the school-improvement process (93%);
- establish in-service programs for principals which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement (90%);
- keep teachers and administrators apprised of the newest programs and practices in education (88%);

- prepare the school board so they understand and can carry out their role in supporting school-based improvement (84%);
- establish in-service programs for central office administrators which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement (82%);
- provide at least one trained facilitator in each school to guide school faculty through the school-improvement process (79%);
- establish or expand a district-wide staff development unit which is responsible for training personnel in school-improvement topics (79%);
- train district personnel as trainers or "coaches" to support school-based improvement (76%).

Recognition and Rewards

The area of recognition and rewards contained practices that described ways that the central offices provide feedback, motivation, or incentives that are linked to accomplishment of goals. Only three practices out of nine that were perceived as important, with means of 5 or above, for central office administrators when implementing school-based improvement. These three also met the criterion for most important practices, being marked 6 or 7 by at least 75% of the respondents. Two of these practices indicated that distribution of recognition to a subunit was appropriate. Those practices were to provide schools with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals, and to provide teams or groups with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals. Interestingly, this last item was directly related to staff development. These practices were:

- Provide schools with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals (75%).
- provide teams of groups with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals (77%).
- Link a system of expanded professional opportunities to accomplishment of school improvement goals (such as: release time, additional training, conferences) (81%).

Monitoring and Evaluation

The ratings from the study respondents indicated that all nine practices related to monitoring and evaluation were important for central office support of school-based improvement since all had means greater than five. These practices focused on ways that central office administrators could support school improvement by communicating expectations for the use of evaluation, adjusting personnel evaluation systems, and helping schools with school-level evaluation processes. Using the criterion of 75% to determine the most important practice, three items were identified. These practices were:

- collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals (83%);
- assist the school in the evaluation of its programs (78%).
- require schools to conduct annual assessment of site goals (75%).

Management of Resources

The fifth group of administrative practices were related to the management of resources for implementation of school-based improvement. These practices focused on two areas: district-level commitment of resources to support improvement processes and ways to facilitate school-level management that supported site goals. All seven central office practices in this area were identified as important with mean scores greater than 5. Five of the seven were considered most important for central office when supporting school-based improvement. Practices meeting the criterion of 75% were:

- provide resources and time to support the activities of readiness (e.g., team building, vision development, goal setting, and program selection) (90%);
- provide adequate time during the school year to support in-service education for school faculty (88%),

- ensure the school has a budget for in-service training that supports its school-improvement plans (86%);
- collaboratively identify and provide resources that schools need from the district to implement their school-improvement plans (78%);
- budget district revenues in "lump sums" to schools, allowing schools the flexibility to allocate these funds as needed (75%).

Organizational Communication

The practices in the area of organizational communication related to way in which the central office assists staff members and district stakeholders in reorienting their understandings about the district's organizational identity. These practices described ways that central office administrators could help people make sense of the changes by such activities as providing reasons, modeling new practices, listening to feedback, and readily conveying information. Responses on the ten administrative practices related to organizational communication indicated that respondents perceived all of the practices as important for the central office since the mean scores were five or greater. In addition, these ten practices, like the nine in staff development, all met the criterion for being most important. These most important practices were:

- communicate expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement (95%);
- seek to eliminate district barriers to school-based improvement (95%);
- communicate a strong rationale for continuous improvement to all school personnel (93%);
- model shared decision making in decisions throughout the district (93%);
- model the use of improvement practices and behaviors within the central office (91%);
- serve as a public advocate for having school-based decision making and improvement (91%);
- report progress annually toward district-level goals to the public (such as school personnel, parents, and community members) (90%);

- provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of parents and the community (88%);
- provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of school staff (85%);
- establish communication networks to keep stakeholders informed about implementation and outcomes of school improvements (84%).

School-level Involvement

The 12 practices, in the administrative area of school-level involvement, were developed to reflect two levels of direct involvement in schools. Direct participation indicated a higher level of involvement, while a resource role indicated a lesser amount of involvement. All of these practices were determined to be important for central office administrators supporting the implementation of school-based improvement. Each practice had a mean score of 5 or greater. Six of the 12 practices were identified as most important for this administrative area. Listed in order, starting with the highest importance rating, these most important practices were:

- work with principals and planning teams to locate additional resources to support school-improvement goals (87%);
- help the school obtain information needed to make informed decision about possible programs, research, or consultants (84%);
- model facilitative behavior in school-level interactions (79%);
- encourage expansion of changes to other areas of school programming (78%);
- deliver training in an area of expertise (75%);
- assist school faculty in communicating progress toward improvement goals (such as to parents, the school board, and the central office) (75%).

Section Summary

Analysis of importance ratings for the total questionnaire indicated that the practice, with few exceptions, were considered important by the respondents. Ratings for the

questionnaire's 74 practices yielded 68 practices (92%) that achieved a mean score of 5 or greater. Additionally, of the 74 practices, 43 practices (58%) met the criterion of most important practices, that is 75% or more of the respondents rating the practice 6 or 7 on a seven-point Likert scale. The practices determined to be most important were distributed across all eight of administrative areas: goals and planning, 5 practices; policy and procedures, 3 practices; staff development, 8 practices; recognition and rewards, 3 practices; monitoring and evaluation, 3 practices; management of resources, 5 practices; organizational communication, all 10 practices; and school-level involvement, 6 practices.

Differences Among and Between Responses

Data were analyzed by role to determine significant differences among and between the responses to each practice. Analysis of variance procedures (ANOVA) were applied to the responses in order to identify practices having significant differences among the group means. The Tukey-Kramer (HSD) tests were then used to identify role pairs between which the significant difference occurred.

The results of this analysis will be summarized in two ways. First, the major findings related to the eight administrative areas in the COPSBI questionnaire are reported. For each area, practices are noted which recorded significant difference between role-group means. The role groups that are reported in parentheses at the end of each practice (superintendents, central office, principal, and teachers) indicate which group of respondents were more likely to attribute a significantly greater level of importance to the practice for central office.

Next, the results of applying ANOVA procedures and follow-up tests to the responses for each role group will be presented. The discussion will review the number of most important practices and the number of significant differences. Then, the pattern for the differences will be discussed.

Results of the analysis of teacher responses will report additional information. The extensive number of differences between administrative role respondents and teacher respondents is reported extensively in the previous section. Thus, this discussion of these practices will not be repeated in this section. Instead, the practices rated as most important by teachers are reported. The rank ordering of these practices provides additional insight into the perceptions of what teachers believe is most important for central office administrators.

Summary of Significant Differences by Administrative Area

Goals and Planning

Analysis of the variance in the means of the nine administrative practices related to goals and planning indicated that five practices had role group means with significant differences. All of the five practices revealed that one or more administrator groups had significantly greater mean scores than did teachers. Thus, one or more of the administrator role groups attributed significantly greater importance than did teachers. The following practices for central office when supporting school-based improvement recorded significant differences:

- establish a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement (central office perceived greater importance than teachers);
- identify and adopt at least one systematic process or program that schools may use to plan and implement school improvement (central office perceived greater importance than teachers);
- develop district goals in collaboration with district administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives (superintendents and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- establish a district vision which communicates broad direction (superintendents, central office, and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);

- establish a district-wide curriculum framework that indicates the expected broad learning goals for students in the district (central office perceived greater importance than teachers);

Policy and Procedures

The second group of facilitating practices, related to policy and procedures, had five of the nine practices with significantly different group mean scores. The practices with significant differences among and between the group mean scores were:

- establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures (principals perceived greater importance than superintendents and teachers);
- identify criteria for the decisions to be made at the school level and the district level (principals and central office perceived greater importance than superintendents and teachers);
- support systematic school-improvement processes used by district schools (principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- define procedures and criteria that allow exceptions (waivers) to district policies that may restrict efforts to improve schools (central office and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- define procedures and criteria to obtain waivers to state policies and procedures that may restrict efforts to improve schools (central office and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);

Staff Development

The administrative area of staff development had nine practices, five of which were determined to have significant differences. All five of these central office facilitating practices had administrator group means that were greater than those reported by teachers. These practices included:

- establish or expand a district-wide staff development unit which is responsible for training personnel in school-improvement topics (central office perceived greater importance than teachers);
- establish in-service programs for central office administrators which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement (principals perceived greater importance than teachers);

- establish in-service programs for principals which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement (superintendents perceived greater importance than teachers);
- prepare the school board so they understand and can carry out their role in supporting school-based improvement (superintendents, central office, and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- train district personnel as trainers or "coaches" to support school-based in-service (central office and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);

Recognition and Rewards

Analysis of the responses in the area of recognition and rewards yielded four central office supporting practices for which significant differences were identified. Identified practices include:

- link district-wide teacher pay to accomplishment of school-improvement goals (central office perceived greater importance than superintendents, principals, and teachers);
- link district-wide administrator salaries to accomplishment of school-improvement goals (central office perceived greater importance than superintendents);
- provide schools with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals (central office perceived greater importance than teachers);
- provide teams or groups with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school-improvement goals (central office perceived greater importance than teachers).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Analysis of the variance of responses for the area of monitoring and evaluation indicated that six of the nine central office practices had significant differences among the group mean scores. Five of these identified practices had mean scores for one or more of the administrative groups significantly greater than those reported by teachers. Practices having significant differences among and between mean responses were:

- facilitate the district-wide administration of one or more standardized assessments for all students in selected grade levels (superintendents and central office perceived greater importance than teachers);
- communicate expectations for school's use of performance data in school-level planning processes (superintendents, central office, and principal perceived greater importance than teachers);
- adjust district professional teacher evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement (central office and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- adjust district professional administrator evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement (superintendents, central office, and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- provide access to centralized information systems for school planning teams (e.g., information databases, technical reports), (central office and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals (central office perceived greater importance than superintendents and teachers);

Management of Resources

The fifth area of administrative practices, management of resources, had three of the seven central office facilitating practices with differences between role group means that were significant. All three practices were found to have means for administrative respondents higher than responses from teachers. The practices included:

- assist schools in developing budgets which support school-improvement goals (principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- budget district revenues in "lump sums" to schools, allowing schools the flexibility to allocate these funds as needed (superintendents and principals greater perceived greater importance teachers);
- delegate authority for decisions about the budget to the school (for example: materials, facilities, and personnel allocations), (superintendents and principals perceived greater importance than teachers).

Organizational Communication

Analysis of the responses to the ten central office practices related to organizational communication identified five practices with significant differences. Again, the means for one or more of the administrator groups were higher than for teachers on all five. These practices were:

- communicate expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement (principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- establish communication networks to keep stakeholders informed about implementation and outcomes of school improvements (superintendents and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- serve as a public advocate for having school-based decision making and improvement (superintendents, central office, and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- seek to eliminate district barriers to school-based improvement (superintendents and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- report progress annually toward district-level goals to the public (such as school personnel, parents, and community members), (superintendents, central office, and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);

School-level Involvement

Of the 12 practices, related to direct involvement of central office administrators at the school level to support the school-improvement process, nine recorded significant differences. Seven of these nine practices had means for one or more administrative role groups that were greater than means reported by teachers. Two practices had means reported by central office and/or principals that were greater than those reported by superintendents. The practices with significant differences included:

- help the school obtain information needed to make informed decision about possible programs, research, or consultants (central office perceived greater importance than teachers);

- participate as a member of school planning teams (central office and principals perceived greater importance than superintendents);
- assist the school planning team with the development of written improvement plans (central office and principals perceived greater importance than superintendents; principals greater than teachers);
- serve as on-call resource person with expertise in content areas. (for example: science, bi-lingual education, special education), (principals perceived greater importance than superintendents);
- deliver training in an area of expertise (superintendents perceived greater importance than teachers);
- assist school faculty in communicating progress toward improvement goals (such as to parents, the school board, and the central office), (principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- assist schools in using data to make future implementation decisions, adjusting programs as necessary (central office and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);
- model facilitative behavior in school-level interactions (central office perceived greater importance than teachers);
- encourage expansion of changes to other areas of school programming (superintendents and principals perceived greater importance than teachers);

Section Summary

The analysis of variance procedures identified 42 of the 74 practices (56%) in which responses, when grouped by roles, contained means that were significantly different at the .01 level. Using the follow-up analysis of means, the Tukey-Kramer (HSD) all pairs comparison, significant differences were examined for each practice between the six possible role group pairs: superintendent and central office (*S-C*), superintendent and principal (*S-P*), superintendent and teacher (*S-T*), central office and principal (*C-P*), central office and teacher (*C-T*), principal and teacher (*P-T*).

The Tukey-Kramer analysis resulted in a total of 444 paired comparisons (six per practice) for the entire set of practices included in the COPSBI questionnaire. Of this total number of comparisons, 79 pairs (18%), were determined to be significantly different. These significant differences were distributed across all eight administrative areas: for goals

and planning, 8 pairs have significant differences; policy and procedures, 13 pairs; staff development, 8 pairs; recognition and rewards, 6 pairs; monitoring and evaluation, 15 pairs; management of resources, 5 pairs; organizational communication, 12 pairs; and school-level involvement had 12 pairs. In the following discussion, importance ratings and significant differences are summarized for each of the role groups.

The next section will summarize the significant differences by role group. The discussion of each role group's responses will review the level of importance for the practices. Patterns of the significant differences will then be presented. In general, administrators had many similarities in their patterns of response. Teachers, however, identified considerably fewer practices as most important than did administrators. Because of these differences, the discussion of teacher responses will include addition information related to their pattern of most important practices.

Summary of Significant Differences by Role Group

Superintendents

The superintendents in the study identified 68 of the 74 practices (92%) as important by rating the practices with a mean score of 5 or greater. In addition, 39 of the practices were rated by the superintendents as having a mean score of greater than 6.

Significant differences between the role groups were most frequently explained by discrepancies between the perceptions of those in the roles of administrators (superintendents, central office administrators, principals) and those in the role of teachers. However, superintendents were not in complete agreement with other administrators on all practices. Analysis of variance revealed that on eight facilitating practices principals and/or central office administrators rated them as significantly more important than did superintendents. Those practices were:

- Establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures (principals greater than superintendents).
- Identify criteria for the decisions to be made at the school level and the district level (principals and central office greater than superintendents).
- Collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals (central office greater than superintendents).
- Help the school obtain information needed to make informed decisions about possible programs, research, or consultants (central office and principals greater than superintendents).
- Participate as a member of school planning teams (central office and principals greater than superintendents).
- Assist the school planning team with the development of written improvement plans (central office and principals greater than superintendents).
- Link district-wide teacher pay to accomplishment of school-improvement goals (central office greater than superintendents and principals).
- Link district-wide administrator salaries to accomplishment of school-improvement goals (central office greater than superintendents).

Central Office Administrators

The central office administrators who responded to the questionnaire identified 69 of the 74 practices (93%) as important by giving ratings that were, on average 5 or greater. Of the 74 practices, 56 (76%) also received a mean rating of 6 or greater.

Central office responses, with limited exception, were similar to those of superintendents and principals. Like other administrators, importance ratings were greater than those of teachers on all practices having significant differences for central office administrators. Only one of the practices had importance ratings that were significantly different between central office and principals. However, as noted above, central office administrators had higher mean scores on seven practices than superintendents. Those practices were the last seven practices noted above.

Principals

Principals rated 69 of the 74 central office facilitating practices (93%) as important by giving mean ratings of 5 or greater. The principals further indicated that 55 of these practices (74%) were most important.

Principal ratings were similar to those of other administrators; as principals indicated the practices had greater importance than did teachers. Principals rated five practices higher than superintendents, as noted above. While only one of the practices had significant differences between central office and principals, there were 23 practices for which principal importance ratings were higher than those of teachers. It should be noted that this number of differences indicates a distinct discrepancy in the perceptions of importance for approximately one-third of the practices.

Teachers

Analysis of the teacher responses in the study found that 59 of the 74 practices (79%) were rated as important with a mean score of equal to or greater than 5. However, only 15 practices (20%) were rated with a mean importance rating of 6 or greater. This was considerably fewer practices of higher importance than reported by superintendents, the central office, or by principals. These fifteen practices fell into the three of the eight administrative areas. The first two areas were staff development, 3 practices; and management of resources, 4 practices. The third area, practices related to the area of organizational communication, can be divided into three subgroupings; (1) helping people make sense of change, (2) listening to feedback from stakeholders, and (3) modeling desired behaviors. The reader should note that all 15 of these most important facilitating practices relate directly to the personnel and activities at the school level. These practices were:

Staff development programs:

- Establish in-service programs for principals which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.
- Ensure that training is available so that new teachers and administrators in the district use practice put in place by school-improvement processes.
- Keep teachers and administrators apprised of the newest programs and practices in education.

Management of Resources:

- Provide resources and time to support the activities of readiness (e.g., team building, vision development, goal setting, and program selection.
- Ensure the school has a budget for in-service training that supports its school-improvement plans.
- Provide adequate time during the school year to support in-service education for school faculty.
- Work with principals and planning teams to locate additional resources to support school-improvement goals.

Organizational Communication - Making sense of change:

- Communicate a strong rationale for continuous improvement to all school personnel.
- Communicate expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement.
- Seek to eliminate district barriers to school-based improvement.

Organizational Communication - Listening to Feedback:

- Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of school staff.
- Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of parents and the community.

Organizational Communication - Modeling desired behaviors:

- Define, practice, and model the roles and responsibilities desired for school-level decision-making groups.
- Model the use of improvement practices and behaviors within the central office.
- Model shared decision making in decisions throughout the district.

Practices having significant differences among responses, or .01 or less, occurred more frequently for teachers than any other role group. Of the paired comparisons recording significance, a total of 83 in all, 71 were recorded between teachers and another role group. For each of these comparisons, teacher perceptions of importance were significantly lower than the other group. The number of significant differences, however, were approximately even for the role groups; there were 19 significant difference between teachers and superintendents, there were 26 significant differences between teachers and central office, and there were also 26 differences between teachers and principals.

The significant differences were not distributed evenly across the administrative role areas. The comparisons having recorded significance included 8 pairs in Goals and Planning, 10 pairs in Policy and Procedures, 8 pairs in Staff Development, 4 pairs in Recognition and Rewards, 14 pairs in Monitoring and Evaluation, 6 pairs in Management of Resources, 12 pairs in Organizational Communication, and 9 pair in School-level Involvement.

Additional Practices

Respondents were asked to suggest any additional practices for each administrative area on the COPSBI questionnaire. Sixteen of the 121 participants who completed the questionnaire provided a total of 35 responses to the open-ended questions. The data were analyzed using the constant comparative techniques described by Bogden & Biklen (1992). Analysis of the new information from the open-ended responses identified two additional practices that addressed training in the areas of managing site resources and in site-level evaluative processes. Thus, the following two practices were added:

- Provide training for schools in site management of resources (for example: site-based budgeting, use of discretionary funds, and allocation of site personnel).
- Provide training in the process and use of site evaluation for school improvement (for example: developing and measuring performance goals, data collection, analysis).

Conclusions and the Relationship to the Literature

This study examined the importance of central office facilitating practices as perceived by superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers in school districts that were implementing a systematic process of school-based improvement, the IIDIEIAI School Improvement Process. The analysis of the respondents importance ratings combined with the examination of differences among and between role groups provides the basis for the conclusions from this study. In this section, conclusions for the study will be presented. Each conclusion will then be referenced to the professional literature that was presented in Chapter II. These conclusions should be considered in light of the assumptions and limitations posed for the study in Chapter I.

- Even when a school district decentralizes decisions about improvement to the school level, there is still an important role for the central office administrators in supporting and implementing school-based change. The role of the central office, however, changes from directing, controlling, and deciding to practices of facilitating, helping, and locating resources. This conclusion about the importance of central office administrators was identified in the literature related to general administrative roles (Blumberg, 1986; Cox, 1983; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Pajak, 1989). This conclusion also supports scholars who indicated the importance of central office administrative roles in decentralized school-based improvement (Asayesh, 1994; Goldman et al., 1993; Wood, 1997)

- In the area of goals and planning it is important for central office administrators to assist in establishing a broad district-level vision and goals statements. These should be developed in collaboration with constituents of the district so that a majority of the district stakeholders support a strong rationale for continuous improvement. It is also important for the central office to add a degree of specificity to the broad vision through the collaborative development of a district curriculum framework and long-range district plans. In addition, it is important for central office administrators to demonstrate the improvement and decision-making processes that they expect at the school level. This conclusion supports scholars who identified practices for working with goals in decentralized change (Axelrod & Keohane, 1986; Corner et al., 1994; Fischoff & Johnson, 1990; Gioia et al., 1994; Hamel & Prahaled, 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Wood, 1997).

- Central office administrators should show observable support for the use of a systematic approach to decision making. For example, in the area of policy and procedures, it is important for central office administrators to work with the school board and the unions to establish written policy that supports school-based improvement. This can also be accomplished by providing greater freedom at the school level in making decisions about selection of instructional materials, use of facilities, and allocation of budget resources including personnel. This finding is consistent with the work of First (1992), Mitchell (1981), Reyes (1994), Sykes & Elmore (1988), and Wood (1997).

- In the area of staff development it is important for the central office to establish training programs for groups within the district (new teachers and administrators, principals, the board of education, and the central office staff) which will support

them in their new roles and responsibilities in school-improvement processes. This supports scholars who found that training programs for school improvement needed to include a broad spectrum of participants from across the district (Fenstermacher & Berliner, 1983; O'Brien & Reed, 1994; Van Dyne et al., 1994; Wood, 1997).

- It is important for central office administrators to ensure that there are trained personnel in each school who have competencies necessary to guide the school through the school-improvement process, and by developing a written improvement plan, managing the site budget, and monitoring and evaluating the achievement of school-improvement goals. This conclusion concurs with scholars who report that in addition to increased autonomy in the process of decentralization, schools also need high levels of support and guidance (Bauchner et al., 1982; Louis & Smith, 1990; Manz & Sims, 1990, 1987; Strike, 1980; Wood, 1997).

- In school-based improvement, the reward system should focus on non-monetary recognition of group accomplishments rather than individual contributions; for example, linking recognition of teams and schools to accomplishment of school-improvement goals. This finding is similar to scholars who have examined reward systems in other types of complex work designs (Block, 1993; Conley & Levinson, 1993; Cummings, 1981; Freiberg & Knight, 1990; Hart, 1990; Hatfield et al., 1985; Katzenbach & Smith, 1993; Lortie, 1975; Martin & Shehan, 1989).

- Monitoring and evaluation are important to the implementation of school-based improvement. Central office administrators should articulate clear expectations for quality of services at the district level. Within this framework, schools should evaluate their own progress toward their improvement goals using data from the

district, parents, community, and students. The central office staff should then serve in a consulting role for this process. These conclusions support the work of other scholars who found that monitoring and evaluation activities should be a clearly articulated feedback process that is seen as highly relevant to the site (Argyris, 1993; Bandura & Cervone, 1983; Cousins & Leithwood, 1993; DeStefano, 1992; LaRocque & Coleman, 1989; Levitt & March, 1988; Wood, 1997).

- Site-based budgeting and allocation of resources in an important part of school-level initiative and autonomy. The role of the central office in this decentralized change includes providing resources to the school and allowing sites to have control over the management of their budget. The central office must then provide assistance to schools to plan, initiate, and implement their school-improvement processes. This supports findings reported in the literature by Bimber (1994), Conley & Bacharach (1990), Hackman (1986), Hannaway (1993), O'Brien & Reed (1994) and Wood (1997).

- In school-based improvement, the central office administrators are highly visible members in the organizational network. Thus, it is important for them to serve as public advocates for school-based improvement and to model desired behaviors such as shared decision making and the use of improvement practices in their work at the central office. This conclusion is also borne out in the literature that indicated that successful innovation initiatives should utilize persons with strong influence to assist initiating changes (Brass, 1992; Gabarro, 1987; Ibarra, 1993; Kotter, 1986; Krackhardt, 1992).

- Central office administrators need to facilitate extensive communication to the key stakeholders within the schools and the community they serve about plans for change and the subsequent results of school-improvement processes. This conclusion concurs with scholars who indicate that a process of ongoing communication enables constituents to view changes in the organization's perceived identity as purposeful and necessary, thus producing smoother transitions during large-scale organizational change (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Wood, 1997).

- Among administrative role groups, principals and central office administrators are more likely than are superintendents to support the direct involvement of central office administrators in school-level improvement processes. This conclusion was similar to the results of a study of superintendents who work in district that had implemented school-based improvement processes (Ennis, 1996).

- It is important for central office administrators to be directly involved school-level activities during the planning and implementation of school improvement. At the school level, their most important role is to assist in locating resources, facilitating in-service, evaluation, and communication related to school-improvement goals. This confirms findings from the literature (Bellie & van Lingen, 1993; O'Brien & Reed, 1994; Wood, 1997).

- The two administrative areas where central office should give the greatest support to facilitate school-based improvement on the district level are the areas of staff development and communication. This conclusion was not found in previous studies, and thus represents an addition to the literature.

- With limited exception superintendents, central office administrators, and principals support the practices noted in the literature as important for central office in facilitating school-based improvement.

Implications

The information gleaned through this study appears to have many implications for practice. This section presents two audiences for which the findings have particular relevance. The first group includes school districts that have implemented or are considering implementation of school-based improvement. The second group includes those who are responsible for developing training programs for administrators. These implications will be discussed in the following section.

Implications for School Districts

District Planners

The findings and conclusions of this study have primary relevance for school districts that have embarked on a decentralized approach to school improvement or are considering a similar approach. Such districts could use this information to gather data from their own central office administrators, principals, and teachers to assess the extent to which these important practices are being used to support improvement. This information could then serve as a basis for the district planners to examine and develop new roles for central office administrators in their district.

Superintendents

The superintendent and those who participate in district planning are responsible for the overall strategy for deployment of personnel and resources that will accomplish

organizational goals. They must decide if the central office should assume the roles of directing, controlling, and making decisions for schools; or if the central office should focus on facilitating, assisting, and supporting schools as they pursue school-improvement goals.

The results of this study also suggest important information for the superintendents and the central office related to setting up conditions within the district to implement school-based improvement. Particularly important is the articulation of an overall strategic direction for the district. This strategic plan should not be one that dictates what schools should improve; instead the plan should identify how school improvement will happen, for what purpose, and with what structural changes.

School Boards

The results of this study also suggest that school boards should be knowledgeable and comfortable with the administrative approach for school improvement. School Board could use this information to develop and adopt policies and procedures that will support improvement efforts. Since school board members have extensive interaction with the community, it would be important for school board members to be able to communicate results of the improvement process and its' results to patrons and seek their support.

School personnel

School-level staff could use this research as a framework to look at school-improvement practices that involve an interface with the central office. Some of the most relevant areas to consider are related to managing resources, linking staff development to site goals, and communicating with stakeholders. In addition, school planning teams could use this research to develop clear expectations for monitoring and evaluating the school improvement plans. The school planning teams and central office should have a clearly

articulated system for working with information that helps improve service to students and is considered valid.

Staff Development

The next implication relates to those who are responsible for developing and implementing training programs in the district. In order to support school-based improvement it is very important to, first, provide training to role various groups within the district that would enable them to implement school-improvement processes. These role groups should include new teachers and administrators, principals, central office administrators, school board members, as well as teachers. In addition, it is important to work with administrators to ensure that there are adequate personnel at each school who have the competencies to guide and assist the school through the school-improvement process. This may include training a cadre of facilitators, mentors, or school-improvement "coaches" to support implementing new practices.

Unions

For those responsible for negotiation of teacher contracts, this study provides information about practices that were perceived as important to the implementation of school-based improvement. Of particular interest would be the increased levels of participation in self-management at the school level. For districts with a unionized workforce, negotiators would need information about how schools may have unique differences based upon the respective site goals. Clear understandings and agreements with school administration would be important to ensure contractual arrangements could support improvement processes. These agreements should articulate how to make decisions and adjustments when there is conflict between a school's goals and plans for improvement and the contract or a policy.

Centralized Districts

The practices identified in this study may have limited utility in districts that are currently committed to a highly centralized approach to school improvement. Block (1993), cautions that implementing facilitating practices in organizations that are committed to high levels of centralization is inappropriate. Centralized organizations, he contends, give most of their administrative attention and resources to maintaining control, consistency, and predictability. People within lower levels of the organization exist to execute and implement the directives of the leader. Block (1993) noted that in such a system, workers characteristically treat "their boss as the most important customer". The primary function of the central office, in this approach, is to utilized policy, budgets, information, communication, and training mechanisms to insure that policies and strategies are being implemented correctly.

School districts moving toward school-based improvement, conversely, have identified students as the "most important customer" and have adopted strategies to organize in ways that would support this approach (Block, 1993). In other words, in a decentralized approach the central office becomes a facilitating service unit that manages policy, budgets, information, communication, and training mechanisms in ways that enable schools to increase their productivity, adapt quickly and responsively to patrons, and create high levels of employee commitment. Thus an implication, complementary to the first, would be that the important practices for this study may not be appropriate for districts which are highly centralized.

Implications for Training Programs for Administrators

Higher Education

The results of the study also have implications for those who develop and implement training programs for administrators. First, pre-service training programs for

administrators, through institutions of higher education, need to consider these practices and this research. Future administrators would need to know the practices that are important for effectively implementing a program of decentralized change. Many administrators who complete certification programs will work in decentralized school districts, and will need to be aware of approaches that are important when working with various role groups.

State-level organizations

Many states conduct orientation training sessions and yearly inservice for new superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and school board members. Such organizations could use this research to acquaint decision makers with newly validated practices designed to support school-based improvement. These state-level organizations could use this information to discuss and improve competency requirements and certification criteria for school administrators.

Recommendations for Further Study

The results of this study suggests other research which could be conducted to increase the understanding of facilitative central office practices for supporting school-based improvement.

1. This study was designed as an exploratory study. Research using the COPSBI questionnaire should continue to examine the psychometric qualities of the instrument. Study of the instrument could yield additionally important results when examining the extent to which items consistently measure the importance of practices for superintendents, central office, principals, and teachers and the

differences between their perceptions. In addition, subsequent studies could analyze groupings of items based on the eight identified administrative areas. Statistical techniques, such as principal component analysis or factor analysis, could identify statistically significant combinations of central office practices that would could confirm the eight areas or could identify alternate construct groupings.

2. This study examined the importance of the central office administrators work in many areas such as work with the board of education, establishment of policy, and training. Future studies should gather more specific information about these areas from school districts that have successfully implemented school-based improvement. These studies would seek to determine the specific types of activities employed with the school board to enable them to understand and provide support in decentralized changes; the specific types of policies required to support school-based improvement; the development of procedures that facilitate school-based improvement programs; and the specific training required for various central office role groups to successfully implement school-based improvements.

3. Another study could address the same research questions as examined in this study using a more qualitative methodology. In-depth interviews could be conducted with participants from each of the four role groups. In these interviews, the researcher could use the results of this study to guide the development of questions to generate a deeper understanding of the most important practices identified by administrators and teachers in districts using the IIIDIEIAI School Improvement Process.

4. This study collected information from public school district that had adopted school-based improvement. Other studies could be conducted in districts having

differing administrative configurations. Contrasting populations might include parochial schools, private schools, schools involved in state mandated site-based management plans, schools in recently consolidated districts, charter schools, and/or incorporated schools.

5. Another study could focus on specific roles within the central office. This study could examine the central office administrator's responsibility for such roles as curriculum and instruction, finance, staff development, federal programs, and special education, to determine their role in supporting school-based improvement. One component of this study could document changes as a result of implementing school-based improvement. Another component could compare these roles to what others in the district believed as important. The COPSBI instrument might be used or adapted for use in such a study.

6. This study collected data about the perceived importance of central office facilitating practices from districts that had implemented the IIDIEIAI School Improvement Process. Other studies could be conducted to examine how these schools are evaluating the results of their school-improvement program and how these data were used by central office administrators and the principals and teachers in the schools.

7. This study identified a large discrepancy between administrators and teachers in the number of practices that were perceived as important to support school-based improvement. Other studies need to be conducted to determine whether these differences exist in other school districts involved with school-based change and, if so, the reasons why they exist and their effects on successful school-improvement efforts.

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

I|D|E|A| SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The I|D|E|A| School Improvement Program was the decentralized change process in which the population for this study were involved. This program description is included to acquaint the reader with that process. The following materials come directly from the I|D|E|A| facilitators training manual (1995). First, the materials will present the I|D|E|A| background information. Next, a section gives general descriptions of the needs that the I|D|E|A| SIP addresses in schools. The main components in the I|D|E|A| cycle of school improvement are then detailed. These components include the stages of Readiness, Planning, Training, Implementation, Monitoring, and Continuous Renewal. Last, a brief list of assumptions and strategies are listed.

|I|D|E|A| Background Information

The Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc., (|I|D|E|A|) was created in 1965 as the educational arm of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation in Dayton, Ohio. Its purpose was and continues to be to minimize the time gap between what is known about good education and what is actually practiced in classrooms of elementary and secondary schools in our country.

For the first seventeen years of its existence |I|D|E|A| had the same board of trustees and the same officers as the Kettering Foundation. Three major divisions were a part of |I|D|E|A| during that time.

The Research Program was headed by John Goodlad in Los Angeles. A number of major efforts were headed by this group to include a study of change in schools in Southern California and the massive study of schooling which resulted in the publication of *A Place Called School.*

The second division was the Information and Services Program headed by Frank Brown in Melbourne, Florida. The primary focus of their work was to get information, research and cutting edge practice into the hands of leading educators (superintendents, principals, assistant superintendents and other key administrative leaders). This division initiated the |I|D|E|A| Fellows Program in 1965.

The third division was the Innovative Programs division headed by John Bahner in the home office in Dayton, Ohio. This division developed Individually Guided Education (IGE) and was working with over 3,000 schools at one point. Other current programs initiated include The Principal's Inservice Program and the School Improvement Process.

For eleven of the years, the three programs were coordinated by Sam Sava as the Executive Director. In September 1982, it was decided that |I|D|E|A| would become a separate self-supporting institute. A new slate of trustees and a new slate of officers made it independent of the Kettering Foundation. |I|D|E|A| retains its 501 (c) (3) status as a private operating foundation and continues its work to assist elementary and secondary schools of the United States. John Bahner, who had become executive director in 1979, is currently the president of |I|D|E|A|.

The |I|D|E|A| Fellows Program continues to be a fundamental aspect of |I|D|E|A|'s mission. Each summer approximately 1,000 school administrators assemble on six college campuses during a week in July to hear outstanding presenters talk about issues in education and related fields.

In addition, special |I|D|E|A| Institutes are conducted periodically. In contrast to the regular |I|D|E|A| Fellows program, the |I|D|E|A| Institutes are usually devoted to one educational issue which is explored in depth.

A major aspect of |I|D|E|A|'s current mission is helping schools and school systems in planning and implementing school improvement processes and programs. This is accomplished through training programs and in some instances follow-up on-site work by |I|D|E|A| staff members. The initial emphasis sometimes is on groups of principals, sometimes on school staffs, and sometimes on a district-wide learning team that includes a school board, superintendent, central staff, building administrators, teachers, parents and community members. Key programs that are offered in this aspect are the School Improvement Process, Principal's Inservice Program, District Learning Teams, Focus Group Moderator Training, and an on-going annual institute on "Cognition, Teaming and Coaching to Enhance Student and Adult Thinking."

|I|D|E|A| continues to be involved with a small number of schools in development efforts. Working closely with school faculties, |I|D|E|A| staff members take an educational concept in its embryonic stage and develop it into a practical, useful program for schools throughout the country. Examples of this include staff development using peer observation at all levels of elementary and secondary education, insuring that much of the school day is spent at cognitive levels higher than the factual retention of knowledge, and using the entire community as an educating resource for students.

WHAT IS |I|D|E|A|'S SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS?

The Need For Meaningful School Growth

The pressures for improvement in education are increasing. New knowledge in education and other fields strains the ability of schools to incorporate what is known into existing educational programs. Technological advances that provide opportunities for new ways of learning remain underutilized. Social expectations create pressure for schools to respond to the diverse needs of pluralistic communities in ways for which schools are ill-prepared. Economic factors have the dual effect of creating pressures to better prepare students for the world of work and do it with less money. Districts need to improve learning opportunities for all students while seeing public commitment to increased student achievement, efficiency and effectiveness for the school system. As these pressures for improved schooling grow, many districts are seeking a systematic approach to school improvement. This search is one which should identify key processes that cause lasting and substantive change in schools.

SIP Responds To Key District Needs



|I|D|E|A|'s School Improvement Process (SIP) is a systemic, continuous and practical approach for achieving excellence in elementary and secondary schools. It is the culmination of more than two decades of research and experience in educational improvement. SIP is designed to respond to the following key needs now facing school communities seeking to lead their schools into the future:

- The need for a district and each school in that district to develop and remain committed to a vision of what their school(s) should become in order to significantly impact student and adult learning.

- The need to build continuous school improvement through sustained, long-term efforts.

- The need to celebrate retain what is valuable in schools today.

- The need for active involvement of students, parents, community, and all school staff members in developing positive relationships which are characterized by mutual support, open and honest communication, constructive response to varied needs, and interdependence.

- The need to have trained individuals (facilitators) at each school or work site who will develop specific skills and abilities to initiate, nourish, and sustain continuous improvement.

- The need to have a diverse and representative planning team at each school or work site who will work with each other and the rest of the school and community in planning and implementing a continuous improvement process.

Threads To Weave The Process Together

These efforts must be linked through a constant commitment to several key areas which provide a constant base for successful on-going improvement. Those areas are:

communication (how members of a school community listen and talk to each other),
cognition (how members of a school community, students and adults, grow in their ability to think and learn), and
collaboration (how members of a school community work together and how students and adults will learn to work together).

The Potential Results of SIP

Some key results districts have experienced while utilizing the SIP processes are:



<u>Students assume increasing responsibility for their learning.</u>
Knowledge, the world of work, and the needs of individuals and society are all changing at rapid rates today. More than ever, the ability to continue to learn is an important survival skill. Learning how to learn and to assume responsibility for one's own growth is a primary goal for students in schools using SIP.

<u>Schools celebrate learning and risk taking for student and</u>

adult learners alike. Individuals are able to look at the school as a vibrant learning organization which practices daily what it asks of students.

Schools use time and space in innovative and creative ways. A variety of teaching and curriculum tools are utilized as opposed to the "one right way."

Parents are more fully involved in the education of their children. SIP schools encourage and enable parents to participate in meaningful ways to plan and implement educational programs for their children. Parents work as welcome partners with the schools. Parents also become involved in learning as a natural part of these efforts.

The community shares a commitment to schooling and actively participates in the education of its young people. These schools utilize the resources of the local community and beyond to expand and enrich the opportunities for learning available to their students. Simultaneously, SIP schools encourage the community to utilize the resources of the school. Furthermore, members of the community are informed about the school's programs and act as knowledgeable and active supporters of the school's improvement efforts.

A tradition of continuous improvement is developed. Improvement as a continuous process is so central to these schools that it becomes a cultural expectation or tradition. All members of the school, parents, teachers, and administrators become learners. The cycle of dialogue, decision, action, and evaluation (DDAE) is a central feature of persistent improvement efforts. Inservice education is a high priority. Knowledge of how to identify and use resources for learning becomes as highly valued as the actual knowledge of specific disciplines.

Individuals who possess relevant information and are directly affected by decisions participate in the making of those decisions. Schools seek to develop a sense of both ownership and accountability for decisions among all those who are affected by them. Decisions are made as close as possible to those who must carry them out. SIP emphasizes synergistic involvement through participatory decision-making. Thoughtful dynamic interaction occurs when individuals gather together. Plans for growth are based on information rather than emotion.

Components In |I|D|E|A|'s Cycle of School Improvement

Facilitating teams participate in training to prepare them to work together to plan and implement carefully designed agendas for the school planning team and to lead the planning team, staff and school community through an on-going cycle of school improvement. Each component of the cycle is briefly described below.

READINESS:

The Facilitating Team engages their school and community in dialogue around basic assumptions and commitments underlying school change. The staff commits to moving into SIP and a planning team of approximately 18-42 people is selected representing the diversity of the school and community. The planning team engages in building trust and skills to allow them to be effective in their work. Additionally, a broad information base (to include articles, books, video/audio materials and local school site information on climate and demographics) is utilized to stimulate in-depth thinking and discussion and the possibilities for school. Many opportunities are provided to the rest of the staff and community to engage in dialogue and to furnish input to the process. School climate is carefully analyzed to seek, understand and build on current successes while identifying possibilities for growth that will help the planning team throughout the SIP cycle. Beliefs, climate and information are not a separate part of the cycle and continue to be identified and used as a school grows and uses SIP over a number of years.

PLANNING:

Vision Building - The planning team engages in a series of activities which extend the information base developed during Readiness, and incorporate communication with the staff and community to create a broad sense of vision for the school. This vision is all encompassing and identifies what people really believe school can and should become to promote real learning for students and adults alike.

Vision Focusing - A two-day retreat is held where the planning team clarifies the vision and identifies 3 or 4 key goals for specific action. This vision and the action areas are shared with the staff and community for verification and support.

Vision Action Design - A design team is established for each goal. This team creates a specific plan of implementation for this key area while continuing to have in-depth communication with the planning team, staff and rest of the school community. Several planning team members are on each design team. Additional members are selected from the school and community to broaden involvement in the process and to include people with critical knowledge or skills that will support successful implementation.

TRAINING:

This component is fundamental to the real success in implementing a school's desired vision. Training should be centered around the specific needs of the design plan and usually conducted at the school site. Training includes staff development, professional development, inservice, and activities that support parents, students and community members in implementing the planning team and design team goals. New knowledge, attitudes and skills are needed to implement new practices. SIP emphasizes the use of clinical and experiential school site training. Additional staff, parents and/or students are invited to help plan the training. Their added insights and day-to-day experience are invaluable in crafting the best possible inservice. Another key is the commitment by all concerned to do on-going training where additional sessions are conducted throughout the school year to allow participants to practice, reflect and extend their knowledge in the skills that they have learned.

IMPLEMENTATION:

This is a period of trying to seek meaning for new methods, tools and/or skills that staff, students and or par-

ents may be using. Support from the school planning team is key to help people avoid the feeling of being left "out there" on their own. On-going training during the year should be planned around the needs of those that are doing the actual implementation. This support will be directly related to actual long term systemic success for the school. As first year implementation occurs, the school's planning team continues to function as the "Keeper of the Vision." Steps are begun to modify plans and goals for the second year. Facilitators guide the group to continue to look to the future while improving the present as the planning team continues to engage in the SIP cycle.

MONITORING:

This part of the cycle focuses on the intelligent gathering of information about what is happening with the school's effort to achieve the various goals set by the planning team. Facilitators help the planning team design a variety of methods to gather data. Formal and informal measures are used to determine if desired en route steps are being attained and if the plan from the design team is actually in place. In all efforts to improve there are anticipated and unanticipated results. The emphasis in monitoring is to gather information to help guide the program in the right direction. Is the school and community accomplishing what was planned and what adjustments need to be made to help that plan become an even stronger tool in supporting student and adult learning? As shown in the graphic on page 15, monitoring is a key protection for vision. It allows schools to gather meaningful value-free data to nurture additional growth. When properly used, monitoring causes the light (vision) to become more tightly seated and thus grow brighter. Facilitators and planning teams get additional staff and community members involved by asking them to take a key role in the monitoring process.

CONTINUOUS RENEWAL:

Information gained in monitoring is used to modify the on-

going implementation efforts. New or additional staff development may be designed as a result of the data. School planning teams take the information gathered during monitoring to design and support needed changes that will allow the school to continue to grow towards its vision. Continuous renewal as a school-community mind set is the goal of SIP. A school will never arrive as a finished product! Needs will change with shifts in society and technology. Trust and communication skills which are built during the Readiness component of SIP hold the entire process together and are constantly utilized as a part of the process. Communication insures that staff and community stay continually involved in planning, training, implementation and monitoring. Trust is enhanced as more people become involved in the process. Periodically (anywhere between 15 and 24 months) members of the planning team will step down and new individuals will serve the school community. As this occurs over several years, more and more members of the school gain deeper understanding of ways to guide change in a positive and creative fashion. Frequently, planning team members who step down move on and serve the school and district in a variety of different ways. They take with them a caring, supportive and enhanced understanding of schools and schooling.

The facilitators' work as a team is key to the success of continuous improvement for site planning teams using the School Improvement Process. The next section describes the key components of facilitator training.

Facilitator Training

Schools train 3-4 individuals as a facilitating team which consists of a teacher, parent and administrator at a minimum. Many school districts have also trained support staff and/or students as members of the facilitating team. Preparation for facilitating teams consists of **two workshops** (4 1/2 days each) that are separated by four to six months. During the time between the workshops, facilitators begin work with their school planning teams. Additionally several key central office staff attend training in order to support the facilitating teams and to assist in communicating SIP efforts to the board and community.

The core of SIP training focuses on:

- the development of a broad set of facilitating tools to include: team/trust building, skills which support groups working together, vision building, focused planning skills, monitoring/ evaluation skills and methods to broaden school and community communications;

- a clear understanding of and the ability to implement a systemic continuous improvement process;

- methods of introducing new knowledge that will allow a team and a school staff to grow significantly as they plan and implement their vision for the future of their school;

- specific techniques will allow the facilitating team to work together to plan and guide their schools through the |I|D|E|A| School Improvement Process which includes the components described on the previous pages.

A FEW ASSUMPTIONS & STRATEGIES

- SIP demands the participation and commitment of all those affected by the quality of the school. A school's stakeholders include faculty, staff, administration, parents, students, and community members.

- Change takes time. SIP is a long-term, vision-driven process. The SIP cycle becomes a way of life. Each year school planning teams create a vision projecting five years hence. They design action plans for the next twelve months. Although some changes will be apparent immediately, comprehensive change will normally take three to five years.

- A school is the basic unit of improvement. Each improving school needs a diverse representative team of persons trained to facilitate a stakeholder planning team in the process of change. |I|D|E|A| believes the best facilitation team consists of a building administrator, a key teacher, a key parent, frequently a support staff member and students at the high school level.

- Successful school change is comprehensive. It ultimately improves the education of all the school's students and enhances the professional lives of all the administration, faculty and staff.

- The school district office and school board appropriately set high standards for the school district. They will also provide the necessary resources for the school to attain or surpass these standards.

- Teachers are caring competent individuals who are fully capable of making decisions that impact the future of children. Furthermore, teachers have been placed in isolation for far too long. SIP believes that long term growth must occur through enhanced opportunities for teachers to share their gifts with others to include peers, parents and community members. Teacher leaders must be involved in planning and implementing systemic change.

- The principal has been selected to provide leadership which will enable and empower a school as it strives to realize the high goals that have been established for it.

A FEW ASSUMPTIONS & STRATEGIES - Continued

- Any significant school improvement is preceded by and supported over time by a site-specific professional development program for all members of the school community.

- Evaluation of SIP efforts are both formative and summative: formative, to demonstrate the program or change is in place, and summative to determine whether or not the intended effects are realized.

- Parents are a key part of significant long term change that enhances and supports meaningful student learning.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B
SCHOOL DISTRICTS SURVEYED

Adrian Public Schools
227 N. Winter Street
Adrian MI 49221

Anderson Community Schools
30 West 11th Street
Anderson IN 46106

Austin Independent School District
1111 West 6th Street
Austin TX 78703

Barrington Community Unit S.D. #220
310 E. James St. - Admin. Offices
Barrington IL 60010

Barrington School District 220
310 E. James Street
Barrington IL 60010

Boulder Valley S.D. RE-2
6500 E. Arapahoe, P.O. Box 9011
Boulder CO 80301

Coleman High School
991 E. Railway, P.O. Box W
Coleman MI 48618

Community Unit S.D. 300
300 Cleveland Avenue
Carpentersville IL 60110

Cranston Public Schools
845 Park Avenue
Cranston RI 02910

Crawford Central School District
719 N. Main Street
Meadville PA 16335

Danville City Schools
313 Municipal Bldg., P.O. Box 9600
Danville VA 24543

East Lyme School District
P.O Box 176
East Lyme CT 06333

Glendale Union H.S. District
P.O. Box 37527
Pheonix AZ 85069

Hardin County Schools
110 S. Main Street
Elizabethtown KY 42701

Kenmore-Tonawanda Union Free S.D.
1500 Colvin Boulevard
Buffalo NY 14223

Lockport City School District
130 Beattie Avenue
Lockport NY 14094

Longwood Central Schools
35 Middle Island-Yaphank Road
Middle Island NY 11953

Manhattan Unified School District #383
2031 Poyntz Avenue
Manhattan KS 66502

Mansfield City Public Schools
53 W. Fourth Street
Mansfield OH 44902

Marlboro Public Schools
1980 Township Drive
Marlboro NJ 07746

Marshalltown Com. School Distict
317 Columbus Drive
Marshalltown IA 50158

Oak Park Elementary School
970 W. Madison Street
Oak Park IL 60302

Oklahoma City Public Schools
900 North Klein
Oklahoma City OK 73106

Ossining Union Free School District
190 Croton Avenue
Ossining NY 10562

Parkway School District
455 N. Woods Mill Road
Chesterfield MO 63017

Piscataway Public Schools
1515 Stelton Road
Piscataway NJ 08855

Pocone Mountain School District
P.O. Box 200, School District Rd.
Swiftwater PA 18370

Ritenour School District
2420 Woodson Road
St. Louis MO 63114

Tanawanda Public Schools
176 Willowgrove South
Tanawanda NY 14150

Transylvania County Schools
400 Rosenwald Lane
Brevard NC 28712

Trumbull County Schools
347 N. Park Avenue
Warren OH 44481

Union Township Public Schools
2369 Morris Avenue
Union NJ 07083

Valley Park School District
356 Meramee Station Rd.
Valley Park MO 63088

Volusia County School Board
729 Loomis Ave., P.O. Box 2410
Daytona Beach FL 32115

Worthington City Schools
752 High Street
Worthington OH 43185

APPENDIX C

Survey of Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement

OVERVIEW OF THE INSTRUMENT

The purpose of this questionnaire is to identify important facilitating practices that can be used by central office administrators to support school-based improvement. In this study, central office administrators, are the district-level administrators who work with the superintendent, but are not in a superintendent's role. The questionnaire is organized in two parts. The **first section** asks you to describe your role in the district's implementation of the school-based improvement process. The **second section** contains a variety of central office practices that have been proposed in the literature that could be important for the success of school-based improvement. You are then asked to rate the extent to which these administrative practices are important for successful implementation of school-based improvement programs. Your responses may be based on successful implementation experiences, or upon problems that you have encountered. Please mark a level of importance for each item whether or not the practice was implemented in your district.

Section I

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Instructions: *Please describe your role in the district school improvement program. Respond to each of the following seven items. Space is provided for your comments at the spaces marked ✍. Feel free to write on the back of the paper if necessary.*

1. What is your role in the District? (check one)

   _____ Central Office Administrator _____ Principal

   _____ Teacher _____ Superintendent

2. How many years since your district began implementing school-based improvement processes?

   _____ years, including the 1995-1996 school year.
   (number)

3. What training have you **personally** received for the school-based improvement process?

   _____ 5 day session _____ 10 day session _____ None

   Other: ✍ (List course names, book titles, workshops, journal article titles, etc.)

4. Have you participated as a **school-level** planning team member for school-based improvement ?

   _____ Yes* _____ No ◆

   * Please describe your participation (How many years, your role, etc.) ✍

   ◆ What has been your connection with School Improvement Processes in schools?

5. Have you participated on a **district-level** team for school-based improvement ?

_____ Yes*

* Please describe your participation (How many years, your role, etc.)

_____ No ◆

◆ What has been your connection with the School Improvement in the district?

6. Including this year (1995-1996) how many years have you been employed by this school district?

_____ 0 years _____ 6-10 years _____ 16-20 years

_____ 1-5 years _____ 11-15 years _____ 21 years or more

7. What is the school district enrollment for the 1995-1996 year?

_____ 0-499 _____ 1000-4999 _____ 10,000 - 19,999

_____ 500-999 _____ 5000-9999 _____ 20,000 or more

Section II

Scale

Level of Importance

Low, Not Important — Moderate — Very Important, High

1 ..... 2 ..... 3 ..... 4 ..... 5 ..... 6 7

Instructions: *Circle the number that best represents your assessment of the importance of each central office practice using the scale noted above. The three terms on the above scale are strategically placed to allow you to indicate degrees of importance. Use your experience to assess the importance of each item, irrespective of the degree to which it was implemented in your district. Space is provided after each section for you to suggest other practices that you consider important.*

Central Office support through:

A. GOALS AND PLANNING

		Level of Importance Low High
1.	Establish a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2.	Identify and adopt at least one systematic process or program that schools may use to plan and implement school improvement.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3.	Conduct district level planning sessions with central office administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4.	Develop district goals in collaboration with district administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5.	Establish a district vision which communicates broad direction.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6.	Define the characteristics and skills needed by participants included in school-level decision making groups.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7.	Define, practice, and model the roles and responsibilities desired for school-level decision making groups.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8.	Establish a district-wide curriculum framework that indicates the expected broad learning goals for students in the district.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9.	Identify goals that will be required of all schools in the district.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

What other central office practices related to Goals and Planning, if any, would you consider important for successful implementation of school-based improvement?

Scale	Level of Importance		
	Low, Not Important	Moderate	Very Important, High
	1 ····· 2 ····· 3 ····· 4 ····· 5 ····· 6 ····· 7		

Central Office support through:

B. POLICY AND PROCEDURES

		Level of Importance (Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 High)
1.	Establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2.	Identify criteria for the decisions to be made at the school level and the district level.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3.	Support systematic school improvement processes used by district schools.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4	Identify procedures for the schools to use in the selection of improvement goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5.	Define the procedures for the school board and the central office to review, support, and approve school improvement plans.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6.	Define procedures and criteria that allow exceptions (waivers) to district policies that may restrict efforts to improve schools.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7.	Define procedures and criteria to obtain waivers to state policies and procedures that may restrict efforts to improve schools.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8.	Negotiate contractual items with the bargaining unit (union) which support school-based improvement.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9.	Provide greater freedom for schools to make decisions (for example: curriculum, personnel, budget, and facilities).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

What other central office practices related to Policy and Procedures, if any, would you consider important for successful implementation of school-based improvement?

✍

Central Office support through:

C. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

		Level of Importance (Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 High)
1.	Establish or expand a district-wide staff development unit which is responsible for training personnel in school improvement topics.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2.	Coordinate in-service programs so schools can share training when appropriate.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3.	Provide at least one trained facilitator in each school to guide school faculty through the school improvement process.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4.	Establish in-service programs for **central office administrators** which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5.	Establish in-service programs for **principals** which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6.	Prepare the **school board** so they understand and can carry out their role in supporting school-based improvement.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7.	Train district personnel as trainers or "coaches" to support school-based in-service	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8.	Ensure that training is available so that new teachers and administrators in the district use practices put in place by the school improvement processes.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9.	Keep teachers and administrators involved of the newest programs and practices in education.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

What other central office practices related to Staff Development, if any, would you consider important for successful implementation of school-based improvement?

✍

Scale	Level of Importance		
	Low, Not Important	Moderate	Very Important, High
	1 ..... 2 ..... 3 ..... 4 ..... 5 ..... 6 7		

Central Office support through:

D. RECOGNITION AND REWARDS

		Level of Importance Low High
1.	Link district-wide **teacher** pay to accomplishment of school improvement goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2.	Link district-wide **administrator** salaries to accomplishment of school improvement goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3.	Link "incentive" school funding to accomplishment of school improvement goals (such as lump sum incentives, per capita incentives).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4.	Distribute team or group monetary incentives for accomplishment of specific goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5.	Provide a district program that gives **individual teachers** special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6.	Provide a district program that gives **principals** special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7.	Provide **Schools** with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8.	Provide **Teams** or groups with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9.	Link a system of expanded professional opportunities to accomplishment of school improvement goals. (such as: release time, additional training, conferences).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

What other central office practices related to Recognition and Rewards, if any, would you consider important for successful implementation of school-based improvement?

✍

Central Office support through:

E. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

		Level of Importance Low High
1.	Establish criteria by which district-level goals will be evaluated.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2.	Require schools to conduct annual assessment of site goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3.	Facilitate the district-wide administration of one or more standardized assessments for all students in selected grade levels.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4.	Communicate expectations for school's use of performance data in school-level planning processes.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5.	Adjust district professional **teacher** evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6.	Adjust district professional **administrator** evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7.	Provide access to centralized information systems for school planning teams (e.g., information databases, technical reports).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8.	Collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9.	Assist the school in the evaluation of its programs.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

What other central office practices related to Monitoring and Evaluation, if any, would you consider important for successful implementation of school-based improvement?

✍

Scale	Level of Importance		
	Low, Not Important	Moderate	Very Important, High
	1 ..... 2 ..... 3 ..... 4 ..... 5 ..... 6 7		

Central Office support through:

F. MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

		Level of Importance (Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 High)
1.	Collaboratively identify and provide resources that schools need from the district to implement their school improvement plans.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2.	Provide resources and time to support the activities of readiness (e.g., team building, vision development, goal setting, and program selection).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3.	Assist schools in developing budgets which support school improvement goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4.	Ensure the school has a budget for in-service training that supports its school improvement plans.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5.	Provide adequate time during the school year to support in-service education for school faculty.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6.	Budget district revenues in "lump sums" to schools, allowing schools the flexibility to allocate these funds as needed.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7.	Delegate authority for decisions about the budget to the school (for example: materials, facilities, and personnel allocations).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

What other central office practices related to Management of Resources, if any, would you consider important for successful implementation of school-based improvement?

✍

Central Office support through:

G. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

		Level of Importance (Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 High)
1.	Communicate a strong rationale for continuous improvement to all school personnel.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2.	Communicate expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3.	Model the use of improvement practices and behaviors within the central office.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4.	Model shared decision making in decisions throughout the district.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5.	Establish communication networks to keep stakeholders informed about implementation and outcomes of school improvements.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6.	Serve as a public advocate for having school-based decision making and improvement.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7.	Seek to eliminate district barriers to school-based improvement.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8.	Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of school staff.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9.	Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of parents and the community.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10.	Report progress annually toward district-level goals to the public (such as school personnel, parents, and community members).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

What other central office practices related to Organizational Communication, if any, would you consider important for successful implementation of school-based improvement?

✍

Scale	Level of Importance		
	Low, Not Important	Moderate	Very Important, High
	1 ····· 2 ····· 3 ····· 4 ····· 5 ····· 6 ····· 7		

Central Office support through:

H. SCHOOL- LEVEL INVOLVEMENT

		Level of Importance (Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 High)
1.	Help the school obtain information needed to make informed decision about possible programs, research, or consultants.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2.	Participate as a member of school planning teams.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3.	Assist the school planning team with the development of written improvement plans.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4.	Serve as on-call resource person with expertise in content areas. (for example: science, bi-lingual education, special education).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5.	Work with principals and planning teams to locate additional resources to support school improvement goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6.	Deliver training in an area of expertise.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7.	Participate in school in-service sessions with principals and teachers.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8.	Assist school faculty in communicating progress toward improvement goals (such as to parents, the school board, and the central office).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9.	Meet in person with school-level teams to discuss relative standings of the school regarding assessment data.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10.	Assist schools in using data to make future implementation decisions, adjusting programs as necessary.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11	Model facilitative behavior in school-level interactions.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12.	Encourage expansion of changes to other areas of school programming.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

What other central office practices related to School Level Involvement, if any, would you consider important for successful implementation of school-based improvement?

APPENDIX D

David Knudson
1121 Westbrooke Terrace
Norman, Oklahoma, 73072
(405) 793-3188 ext. 328
(405) 364-8305 [HOME]
(405) 793-3022 [FAX]
dknudson@telepath.com [e-mail]

Dear Colleague:

This letter invites you to participate in a study that examines an important component of school-based improvement. You have been selected as a person who is knowledgeable about the school improvement process.

Purpose of the Study

Over the years the educational literature has reported much about school-based improvement. Most of the work, however, has focused on either on school-level activities or on superintendents as district leaders. One important group that has not been examined is the central office, the district-level administrators who work with the superintendent. **What are the important practices used by the central office administration to support school-based improvement?** What supports or facilitates school-based change?
The purpose of this study is to address these questions.

Your perspective concerning central office roles is very important because of your extensive first-hand experience. The number of people receiving the attached questionnaire is relatively small, thus it is important that the information you provide is included in the study. A questionnaire identification number is used to allow follow-up requests. I would appreciate your taking 15-20 minutes now to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the pre-addressed, stamped envelope.

This study is being conducted under the guidelines for the protection of human subjects at The University of Oklahoma. Thus, I am asking you to sign the *Statement of Informed Consent* and return it with your questionnaire. Be assured that your responses will be treated confidentially and no data and will be reported by individual or district response.

The end of the school year it is an important time to reflect on this work. The following pages are organized to enable you to quickly record your perceptions. So get comfortable, buy a soda, and spend a few minutes with me thinking about school-based improvement. I believe you will find it personally and professionally rewarding to share your expertise in contributing to a better understanding of school-based improvement. You may receive a summary of the results by completing the enclosed request card.

I look forward to your response. Thank you.

Cordially,

APPENDIX E

APPENDIX E

DAVID P. KNUDSON

1121 *Westbrooke Terrace*
Norman, Oklahoma 73072
(405) 364-8305
dknudson@telepath.com

Dear Colleague:

Greetings! The end of the school year is upon us. It is a good time to reflect on the accomplishments and challenges of the year. Several weeks ago I mailed you a letter and a survey related to the topic of the role of the central office in supporting school-based improvement. I hope you have had time to take a few minutes to look it over. Your perspective concerning this topic is important because of your first-hand experience.

If you are as busy as I am, you may not have had a minute to spare. However, I am hoping that you will be able to spend a few minutes responding to this instrument. I believe you will find it personally and professionally rewarding to share your expertise with your colleagues. We want to know what you have to say!

I have enclosed another copy of the instrument for your convenience, and send it with my utmost appreciation.

Sincerely,

David P. Knudson

Enclosure

APPENDIX F

APPENDIX F

PANEL OF JUDGES

Jon Paden
IIDIEIA| Executive Vice President
259 Regency Ridge
Dayton, OH 45459

Steve Thompson
IIDIEIA| Program Development Staff
259 Regency Ridge
Dayton, OH 45459

Frank McQuarrie
Associate Professor
The University of Oklahoma
820 Van Vleet Oval
Norman, Oklahoma 73019

Judi Barber
Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Norman Public Schools
131 S. Flood
Norman, Oklahoma 73069

APPENDIX G

APPENDIX G

INSTRUMENT RATING FORM

Dear Juror:

This is a request for your help in the review of a questionnaire which will examine practices used by central office administrators to support school-based improvement. You have been identified as an "expert" in this area, based upon your expertise and experience with school-based improvement programs.

The attached questionnaire contains a list of items that were derived from a review of the literature on school improvement and decentralized organizational designs. These items have been categorized into general areas of administration. Please examine these items and respond to the following questions:

1) Is the item worded clearly and is the item easily understood?
2) Is the item classified correctly; is the item relevant to the general area of administrative practice by which it is listed (e.g. Goals & Planning, etc.)?

To help simplify the review of the instrument, I am asking that you respond in two ways. First, please write directly on the questionnaire items any suggestions related to the two questions above. Items left unmarked will indicate that you approve of the wording and classification. Secondly, use the attached Review Sheet to judge the visual format, instructional cues, and to make summary comments. There may be practices not included on this list. Please note them on the review sheet and identify the source or publication that supports its use.

Please return the reviewed questionnaire and the completed review sheet in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope.

Thank you very much for your help. If you would like a summary of results please indicate this on the review sheet. I would be glad to answer any question that you have about the questionnaire or the study. Feel free to contact me at the numbers listed below.

Sincerely,

(405) 793-3188 ext. 328
(405) 364-8305 [HOME]
(405) 793-3022 [FAX]
dknudson@telepath.com [e-mail]

CC: Fred Wood
Attachments

Instrument Rating Form
for the
Survey of Central Office Practices for School-Based Improvement

Instructions: *After reading and editing the questionnaire*, check the boxes that represent your assessment of the following components of the instrument. Use the space below to write additional comments.

Cover letter						
Readability	easy☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	difficult
Motivation	high☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	low
Wording	clear☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	unclear
Demographic Information						
Assessment of Experience	adequate☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	inadequate
Definition of role groups	clear☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	unclear
Overview of the Instrument						
Purpose	clear☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	unclear
Wording	precise☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	unclear
Instructions						
Wording	precise☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	imprecise
Scale						
Response format	appropriate☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	inappropriate
Meaning of terms	clear☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	unclear
Meaning of scale	clear☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	unclear
Administrative Areas						
Terms used for areas	distinct☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	vague
Relevance to respondents	high☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	low
Visual format						
Sequence	logical☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	random
Complexity	low☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	high

Other comments:

APPENDIX H

Table 19
Mean Scores by Role Group for Goals and Planning

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1. Establish a district long-range plan which serves as a context for individual school improvement	6.19	1.26	6.03	1.08	6.63	0.69	6.29	1.10	5.71	1.18
2. Identify and adopt at least one systematic process or program that schools may use to plan and implement school improvement.	5.95	1.07	5.89	1.26	6.57	0.79	6.00	0.73	5.21	1.03
3. Conduct district level planning sessions with central office administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.	5.96	1.21	5.93	0.96	6.45	0.71	5.83	1.65	5.50	1.50
4. Develop district goals in collaboration with district administrators, principals, teachers, parents and other community representatives.	6.25	0.87	6.44	0.17	6.27	1.15	6.54	0.62	5.71	0.80
5. Establish a district vision which communicates broad direction.	6.52	0.71	6.68	0.60	6.69	0.46	6.80	0.40	5.85	0.93

Table 19
Mean Scores by Role Group for Goals and Planning

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
6. Define the characteristics and skills needed by participants included in school-level decision making groups.	5.42	1.66	5.48	1.82	5.87	1.11	5.64	1.76	4.60	1.70
7. Define, practice, and model the roles and responsibilities desired for school-level decision making groups.	6.13	0.93	5.82	1.07	6.48	0.71	6.16	0.63	6.00	1.15
8. Establish a district-wide curriculum framework that indicates the expected broad learning goals for students in the district.	6.18	0.98	6.27	1.22	6.51	0.71	6.22	0.66	5.64	1.09
9. Identify goals that will be required of all schools in the district.	5.58	1.64	5.13	1.76	5.78	1.61	5.83	1.63	5.53	1.52

Table 20
Mean Scores by Role Group for Policy and Procedures

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1. Establish school-based decision making in district policy and procedures.	6.01	0.94	5.89	0.85	6.33	0.73	6.64	0.48	5.07	0.89
2. Identify criteria for the decisions to be made at the school level and the district level.	5.27	1.94	5.00	1.77	5.75	2.06	5.74	1.80	4.46	1.89
3. Support systematic school improvement processes used by district schools.	6.51	1.01	6.65	0.93	6.63	0.60	6.77	0.42	5.92	1.58
4. Identify procedures for the schools to use in the selection of improvement goals.	5.37	1.31	5.00	1.75	5.75	1.39	5.45	0.92	5.21	0.95
5. Define the procedures for the school board and the central office to review, support, and approve school improvement plans.	5.79	1.37	5.58	1.08	6.33	1.31	5.87	1.11	5.25	1.75
6. Define procedures and criteria that allow exceptions (waivers) to district policies that may restrict efforts to improve schools.	6.00	1.08	5.93	1.25	6.51	0.71	6.16	1.03	5.28	0.97

Table 20
Mean Scores by Role Group for Policy and Procedures

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
7. Define procedures and criteria to obtain waivers to state policies and procedures that may restrict efforts to improve schools.	5.84	1.15	5.79	1.04	6.15	0.79	6.16	1.31	5.17	1.18
8. Negotiate contractual items with the bargaining unit (union) which support school-based improvement.	5.83	1.13	5.71	1.38	5.90	1.19	6.29	0.69	5.39	1.03
9. Provide greater freedom for schools to make decisions (for example: curriculum, personnel, budget, and facilities).	6.23	1.03	6.41	1.23	6.30	0.72	6.45	0.88	5.71	1.15

Table 21
Mean Scores by Role Group for Staff Development

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1. Establish or expand a district-wide staff development unit which is responsible for training personnel in school improvement topics.	6.12	1.06	5.93	1.23	6.63	0.60	6.12	1.23	5.71	1.04
2. Coordinate in-service programs so schools can share training when appropriate.	6.01	1.19	5.82	1.48	6.39	0.78	6.03	1.13	5.75	1.26
3. Provide at least one trained facilitator in each school to guide school faculty through the school improvement process.	6.22	1.19	6.31	1.31	6.51	0.71	6.16	1.34	5.82	1.29
4. Establish in-service programs for central office administrators which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.	6.23	0.92	6.13	0.99	6.27	0.83	6.64	0.60	5.82	1.09
5. Establish in-service programs for principals which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement.	6.57	0.66	6.82	0.38	6.63	0.48	6.61	0.76	6.17	0.81

Table 21
Mean Scores by Role Group for Staff Development

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
6. Prepare the school board so they understand and can carry out their role in supporting school-based improvement.	6.33	0.84	6.37	0.72	6.63	0.60	6.54	0.67	5.67	1.02
7. Train district personnel as trainers or "coaches" to support school-based in-service.	6.10	1.07	5.93	1.27	6.51	0.71	6.48	0.62	5.39	1.22
8. Ensure that training is available so that new teachers and administrators in the district use practice put in place by school improvement processes.	6.48	0.73	6.37	0.86	6.51	0.71	6.74	0.44	6.28	0.80
9. Keep teachers and administrators apprised of the newest programs and practices in education.	6.41	0.79	6.51	0.73	6.33	0.69	6.58	0.62	6.21	1.06

Table 22
Mean Scores by Role Group for Recognition and Rewards

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1. Link district-wide teacher pay to accomplishment of school improvement goals.	3.47	1.70	2.82	1.41	4.36	1.67	3.06	1.67	3.53	1.66
2. Link district-wide administrator salaries to accomplishment of school improvement goals.	3.52	1.68	2.96	1.52	4.39	1.67	3.12	1.60	3.53	1.62
3. Link "incentive" school funding to accomplishment of school improvement goals (such as lump sum incentives, per capita incentives.	4.28	1.93	4.31	2.30	4.69	1.77	4.45	1.74	3.60	1.81
4. Distribute team or group monetary incentives for accomplishment of specific goals.	4.09	1.77	4.17	0.30	4.18	1.68	4.38	1.70	3.60	1.72
5. Provide a district program that gives individual teachers special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.	4.86	1.93	5.13	1.70	5.15	1.62	5.03	1.97	4.07	2.29

Table 22
Mean Scores by Role Group for Recognition and Rewards

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
6. Provide a district program that gives principals special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.	4.67	1.95	5.20	0.35	4.87	0.33	4.58	2.01	4.00	2.37
7. Provide schools with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.	5.33	1.65	5.79	1.67	5.75	1.19	5.38	1.43	4.28	1.90
8. Provide teams or groups with special recognition (non monetary) for accomplishment of school improvement goals.	5.25	1.45	5.51	1.54	5.93	0.82	5.09	1.30	4.35	1.66
9. Link a system of expanded professional opportunities to accomplishment of school improvement goals (such as: release time, additional training, conferences).	6.04	1.21	6.10	1.26	6.45	0.61	5.93	1.31	5.60	1.44

Table 23
Mean Scores by Role Group for Monitoring and Evaluation

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1. Establish criteria by which district-level goals will be evaluated.	5.95	1.22	5.93	1.25	6.15	1.14	6.06	0.92	5.64	1.54
2. Require schools to conduct annual assessment of site goals.	6.06	1.11	6.20	1.01	6.21	1.13	6.19	0.74	5.60	1.39
3. Facilitate the district-wide administration of one or more standardized assessment for all students in selected grade levels.	5.09	1.67	5.55	0.28	5.75	0.26	5.03	0.27	3.92	0.29
4. Communicate expectation for school's use of performance data in school-level planning processes.	6.01	1.01	6.33	0.78	6.27	0.91	6.22	0.66	5.14	1.17
5. Adjust district professional teacher evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.	5.42	1.47	5.58	1.52	6.03	0.88	5.77	1.23	4.17	1.54
6. Adjust district professional administrator evaluation system to reflect school goals for improvement.	5.57	1.41	5.65	1.51	6.09	0.91	6.19	0.98	4.21	1.34

Table 23
Mean Scores by Role Group for Monitoring and Evaluation

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
7. Provide access to centralized information systems for school planning teams (e.g., information databases, technical reports)	5.98	0.99	5.75	0.73	6.39	0.78	6.45	0.62	5.21	1.25
8. Collect data from parents and the community related to school-level goals.	6.07	0.91	5.68	1.03	6.63	0.60	6.22	0.42	5.64	1.09
9. Assist the school in the evaluation of its programs.	6.09	1.07	6.13	0.23	6.39	0.21	6.19	0.22	5.46	0.23

Table 24
Mean Scores by Role Group for Management of Resources

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1. Collaboratively identify and provide resources that schools need from the district to implement their school improvement plans.	6.16	1.02	6.13	0.18	6.12	0.17	6.48	0.18	5.89	0.19
2. Provide resources and time to support the activities of readiness (e.g., team building, vision development, goal setting, and program selection.	6.45	0.86	6.48	0.82	6.57	0.61	6.54	0.72	6.17	1.21
3. Assist schools in developing budgets which support school improvement goals.	6.04	1.18	6.27	0.21	6.09	0.19	6.41	0.20	5.35	0.21
4. Ensure the school has a budget for in-service training that supports its school improvement plans.	6.34	0.95	6.41	0.17	6.39	0.16	6.32	0.18	6.25	0.18
5. Provide adequate time during the school year to support in-service education for school faculty.	6.42	0.79	6.44	1.02	6.45	0.71	6.61	0.61	6.14	0.75

Table 24
Mean Scores by Role Group for Management of Resources

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
6. Budget district revenues in "lump sums" to schools, allowing schools the flexibility to allocate these funds as needed.	6.23	1.03	6.58	0.77	6.12	1.08	6.67	0.59	5.50	1.17
7. Delegate authority for decisions about the budget to the school (for example: materials, facilities, and personnel allocations).	5.90	1.26	6.20	0.90	5.90	1.37	6.48	0.76	4.96	1.40

Table 25
Mean Scores by Role Group for Organizational Communication

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1. Communicate a strong rationale for continuous improvement to all school personnel.	6.58	0.91	6.55	0.73	6.75	0.56	6.80	0.40	6.17	1.54
2. Communicate expectations that support successful implementation of school-based improvement.	6.56	0.71	6.58	0.12	6.69	0.11	6.87	0.12	6.03	0.12
3. Model the use of improvement practices and behaviors within the central office.	6.52	0.94	6.65	0.17	6.69	0.15	6.67	0.16	6.00	0.17
4. Model shared decision making in decisions throughout the district.	6.59	0.95	6.75	0.43	6.69	0.58	6.80	0.54	6.07	1.65
5. Establish communication networks to keep stakeholders informed about implementation and outcomes of school improvements.	6.36	0.86	6.68	0.14	6.33	0.13	6.67	0.14	5.71	0.14
6. Serve as a public advocate for having school-based decision making and improvement.	6.42	0.81	6.72	0.13	6.45	0.12	6.74	0.12	5.75	0.13

Table 25
Mean Scores by Role Group for Organizational Communication

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
7. Seek to eliminate district barriers to school-based improvement.	6.58	0.64	6.82	0.38	6.57	0.50	6.74	0.44	6.17	0.94
8. Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of school staff.	6.45	0.78	6.44	0.73	6.33	0.92	6.79	0.41	6.25	0.88
9. Provide opportunities to listen to feedback and concerns of parents and the community.	6.49	0.82	6.37	1.04	6.39	0.14	6.74	0.44	6.50	0.74
10. Report progress annually toward district-level goals to the public (such as school personnel, parents, and community members).	6.47	0.80	6.82	0.38	6.57	0.61	6.61	0.49	5.82	1.18

Table 26
Mean Scores by Role Group for School-Level Involvement

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1. Help the school obtain information needed to make informed decisions about possible programs, research, or consultants.	6.33	0.91	6.13	1.32	6.63	0.69	6.58	0.50	5.92	0.81
2. Participate as a member of school planning teams.	5.28	1.56	4.44	1.63	5.90	1.01	5.83	1.34	4.82	1.74
3. Assist the school planning team with the development of written improvement plans.	5.61	1.27	4.89	1.47	5.90	1.01	6.48	0.72	5.07	1.15
4. Serve as an on-call resource person with expertise in content areas (for example: science, bi-lingual education, special education).	5.95	1.29	5.34	1.49	6.33	1.16	6.41	0.95	5.60	1.25
5. Work with principals and planning teams to locate additional resources to support school improvement goals.	6.36	0.81	6.51	1.05	6.33	0.85	6.51	0.62	6.07	0.60
6. Deliver training in an area of expertise.	6.14	0.96	6.65	0.61	6.27	1.09	6.03	0.83	5.57	0.92

Table 26
Mean Scores by Role Group for School-Level Involvement

	All Responses		Role Group							
			Superintendent		Central Office		Principal		Teacher	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
7. Participate in school in-service sessions with principals and teachers.	5.99	1.13	5.75	1.55	6.15	0.87	6.32	0.79	5.67	1.15
8. Assist school faculty in communicating progress toward improvement goals (such as to parents, the school board, and the central office).	6.09	0.98	6.06	1.09	6.21	0.81	6.51	0.62	5.50	1.10
9. Meet in person with school-level teams to discuss relative standings of the school regarding assessment data.	5.67	1.51	5.93	1.55	5.90	1.07	5.77	1.35	5.03	1.91
10. Assist school in using data to make future implementation decisions, adjusting programs as necessary.	5.84	1.27	5.56	0.22	6.33	0.20	6.22	0.21	5.03	0.22
11. Model facilitative behavior in school-level interactions.	6.24	1.19	6.13	1.09	6.63	0.60	6.48	0.96	5.64	1.72
12. Encourage expansion of changes to other areas of school programming.	6.21	1.13	6.55	0.68	6.27	1.03	6.51	0.62	5.46	1.64

APPENDIX I

Table 27
Open-ended Responses for Goals and Planning

Verbatim Response	Coding
1. Define specific expected curriculum benchmarks (with input from all stakeholders).	Monitoring and Evaluation: 4
2. Establish a district planning committee	Goals and Planning: 3
3. Identify standard that all students are expected to achieve.	Goals and Planning: 8,9
4. In conjunction with the board of education and employee groups-determine and clarify parameters.	Goals and Planning: 3,4
5. Provide a great deal of dialogue, communication and visioning in order to keep everyone in the district moving in the same direction.	Goals and Planning: 3 Organizational Communication: 9
6. Communication to the media so that interpretation to the community can support the effort rather than becoming a lightning rod to the board of education.	Organizational Communication: 5, 9, 10

Table 28
Open-ended Responses for Policy and Procedures

Verbatim Response	Coding
1. Support risk-taking principals	Staff Development: 5 Recognition and Rewards: 6
2. Creating a way to make faculty members in all of the schools in a district aware of any policies relating to school improvement.	Policy and Procedures: 1, 4
3. Evaluate and monitor these activities (practices listed on survey)	Monitoring and Evaluation: 1-9

Table 29
Open-ended Responses for Staff Development

	Verbatim Response	Coding
1.	School board members should have facilitator training.	Staff Development: 1, 6
2.	Financial support and expectations build into contracts that everyone in district does staff development.	Management of Resources: 1-5 Organizational Communication: 2 Monitoring and Evaluation: 5,6
3.	Evaluate and monitor the activities for adjustments and modifications	Monitoring and Evaluation: 1-9

Table 30
Open-ended Responses for Recognition and Rewards

	Verbatim Response	Coding
1.	A "wall of fame" in a public building (building owned by district but public uses a lot) for work in staff development.	Recognition and Rewards: 5-8
2.	Any awards should, in my view, be sincere, quiet, and personal versus being loud and glamorous events. I do not believe that $ will motivate people to work toward school improvement..	Recognition and Rewards: 5, 6
3.	School improvement should not be nurtured through competition but rather a change in beliefs.	Organizational Communication: 1-10
4.	Assist the schools and district to receive local, state, and national recognition.	Recognition and Rewards: 7
5.	Send parents, teachers, students, board members, administrators and others to other schools to speak about our progress and success.	Recognition and Rewards: 9
6.	Recognition of district wide accomplishments.	Organizational Communication: 10

Table 31
Open-ended Responses for Monitoring and Evaluation

	Verbatim Response	Coding
1.	The measurement tools need to be linked to what the District/Community values. This means that people will need to know how to develop new measures. It goes beyond "criteria".	* new information [need training in identifying and developing relevant measures]
2.	Help schools identify performance goals and how to measure them.	Monitoring and Evaluation: 9
3.	Provide training for building teams: interviews, surveys, data collection, analysis	* new information [training in evaluation needed]
4.	Buildings need to own their work but need the right tools.	* new information [schools increase ownership as they identify their own relevant measurement tools]
5.	School improvement is a team process. I would be careful of linking team process to and individual's evaluation unless that goal was one of collaboration. (related to practice 5)	Monitoring and Evaluation: 2, 9
6.	Publishing achievement data to the community.	Organizational Communication: 10
7.	Train staff on using monitoring and evaluation in successful and valid ways.	* new information [this expands the idea of assistance in practice 9 to training staff for school-level evaluation use]

Table 32
Open-ended Responses for Management of Resources

Verbatim Response	Coding
1. It is very important that central office allow school teams some say in replacing building level administrators.	Management of Resources: 7
2. In-service decisions are best left to the schools. To "ensure" is to employ a certain control over the budget. Schools should work on this individually. (related to practice 4)	Management of Resources: 4
3. Train them (school personnel) to spend discretionary budgets for in-service wisely - to see staff development as a process, not an event.	* new information [train staff in site budgeting]
4. Train staff in making decisions at the school level on budget and personnel allocations.	* new information [train staff in site budgeting including personnel allocation]

Table 33
Open-ended Responses for Organizational Communication

Verbatim Response	Coding
1. Limited from district. Buildings should be supported and actively involved in this effort. (related to practice 5)	School-level Involvement: 8
2. If the right processes are in place, staff and parents will have significant opportunity for this school site. Great caution is needed here. (related to practices 9 & 10)	Organizational Communication: 9, 10
3. Make sure media understands the program.	Organizational Communication: 1,2,5;6,10

Table 34
Open-ended Responses for School-level Involvement

	Verbatim Response	Coding
1.	Schools should engage in activity analyzing their own data and growth with their students. Cross-school comparisons can be very damaging. It is not a horse race. (related to practice 9)	Monitoring and Evaluation: 9
2.	Develop a way to monitor the school's continuous growth.	Monitoring and Evaluation: 1-9
3.	Emphasize the on-going nature of program and continuous improvement over a period of years.	Goals and Planning: 1 Organizational Communication: 1