DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 250 815 EA 017 323

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TITLE Sources of Leadership for Change in High Schools.
INSTITUTION Texas Univ., Austin. Research and Development Center for Teacher Education.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO R&DCTE-R-3185
PUB DATE 84
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 23-27, 1984). This paper is alternately available as one of five symposium papers constituting a separate document, EA 017 311. For other related documents, see EA 017 309-310 and EA 017 320-324.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Assistant Principals; Department Heads; *Educational Change; *Innovation; *Leadership; Occupational Information; *Principals; Secondary Education; *Secondary School Teachers; Superintendents; Supervision; Teacher Evaluation

ABSTRACT

In examining the dynamics of change processes in high schools, this study makes initial interpretations about school officials who serve as change facilitators. The researchers found that a trend exists for the source of change to come from outside the high school. Principals, assistant principals, and department heads as well as central office staff and teachers are obvious role groups to take the lead in implementing change in high schools. Some principals do act as active change facilitators. Department heads, in most cases, do not facilitate change implementation. The role assistant principals play in facilitating change is defined by the principal. If principals are passive, then assistant principals maintain the status quo; when active principals involve assistant principals there tends to be a dynamic change facilitating team. The dynamic of the central office is similar to that within the school; if the superintendent or the assistant sets a priority for change, then the central office staff is active in that direction. In general, teachers rarely act as change facilitators. While it is difficult to make sweeping generalizations or to propose specific prescriptions, there is a need to further study the roles of underutilized staff, and to clarify potential roles that staff can assume. Without clarification and assistance, change will be treated as an event rather than as a process. (MD)

SOURCES OF LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE IN HIGH SCHOOLS

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In the last year and a half our research focus has shifted from the study of the role of the elementary school principal as change facilitator to examination of the dynamics of the change process in high schools. Unlike some of the past transitions that have occurred in our programmatic research, in this transition there was a much more restricted literature base that could be reviewed and our own clinical experiences were relatively limited. We certainly were aware of the many myths and stereotypes of what high schools were like and we had heard from many principals and others about how much more complex high schools were and how much more difficult it was for them and others to become instructional leaders. In fact, there was some suggestion that we would have a difficult time in identifying high schools where change was occurring and that collecting data in high schools would be problematic at best and in some cases, dangerous.

Much to the contrary, we have found our experiences in high schools during the last eighteen months to be challenging, fascinating, enlightening, and safe. High schools are indeed complex places and you certainly can understand how some of the impressions of high schools have developed.

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[1]Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, April 1984.

[2]The research described herein was conducted under contract with the National Institute of Education. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the National Institute of Education. No endorsement by the National Institute of Education should be inferred.

However, as we have attempted to examine more closely how the change process works in high schools, we are finding just as an onion is made up of many layers that descriptions and interpretations of high schools seem to change depending on how closely one is looking. At more distant viewing points high schools do indeed seem to have overwhelming complexity. Teachers appear to be subject matter bound, principals appear to have many things to consume their time and little opportunity to serve as instructional leaders. In addition, department heads seem to be an obvious choice for leading in the implementation of major changes. However, when high schools are examined more closely none of these generalizations appear to be accurate. Further there is an ether of additional subtlety that, for us at this point, is making it extremely difficult to develop generalizations about the real dynamics and designs of the change process in high schools. It seems as if every high school that we visit provides a new twist on what in one sense is the same set of variables.

We do believe that some patterns are beginning to take shape at this point and some of these are being shared in the papers that make up this report. In this paper, we share some of our initial interpretations, hypotheses and prescriptions about the various actors that can serve as change facilitators in high schools. We also explore some of our tentative proposals and hunches about ways that the roles can be reshaped for more successfully bringing about change in high schools in the future. We offer these impressions and emerging concepts as working hypotheses to stimulate discussion and as guides for next steps in peeling layers off the onion of change in high schools.

Sources and Forces for Change

To help us develop clearer understanding about the different purposes and organizational roles that change facilitators can have for this study we have identified three different functions that, at least in terms of definitions, can be distinguished. In practice one would expect that some change facilitators will combine some of these roles. However in our present study these roles appear to be distinctively separate in terms of the people who are carrying them out. These different change facilitator roles are:

Source of the innovation. This is the agent or agency that initially conceives of the innovation, its objectives, processes and products.

Impetus. The individual(s) that is responsible for pushing the adoption of the innovation by the district, school, department or individual teacher. This person(s) convinces and provides policy level support for the adoption and implementation.

Implementation facilitator. This is the person(s) who provides the ongoing training, consultation and reinforcement for teachers and/or administrators who have the job of establishing use of the innovation.

It is interesting to note that our fieldwork suggests a trend at this time for the source and impetus for change to be located outside of the high school. Increasingly, it appears that the source and impetus are coming to the high school rather than being located within the high school. This is not to suggest that necessarily in the past more innovative activity was initiated from within the high school. All that we can say from our fieldwork is that at this time the impetus for change and the sources of innovations more typically are external to the high school. This trend, if it turns out to be that, demonstrates a point that we have consistently advocated. That is, that "top down" strategies are not inherently good or bad, but rather just one of

several strategic options that carry with them particular advantages and disadvantages.

For our studies of the dynamics of change in high schools, the present practice of having the source and impetus outside the high school clearly has implications for the role options of those staff who are stationed within the high school. They clearly would have fewer opportunities to create and initiate changes and concomitantly would have major responsibilities to facilitate implementation of already selected innovations, which is what we have found. And within this we have found a variety of responses to the external expectations.

The Logical Facilitators

The obvious role groups to take the lead in facilitating implementation within a high school would, of course, be the principal, the various assistant principals and department heads. Also to be considered, but perhaps less obvious would be various curriculum coordinators and others from the central office and perhaps teachers. In our sample of study schools we have identified instances where all of these role groups have served as change facilitators and instances of various combinations of these role groups serving as change facilitators. At this point a case can be made for almost any combination or point of view or delineation of role responsibility that can be imagined. It is more difficult to identify trends, predictors and commonalities that can be used to design hypotheses and potential recommendations about the dynamics of change that cut across all high schools. If this general level of abstraction is maintained, it appears that all things are possible.

At more detailed levels of analyses, it first appears that there are no generalizations. Yet, as rational scientists we know that there have to be

some common answers, so we have continued to search for unifying principles that can be used to interpret how the change process works in high schools.

Our working conclusion at the moment is that yes, all of the different actors in and around a high school can serve as sources, impetus and implementation facilitators. Further, the conditions that make it possible for particular role groups to take on these roles varies and the way that the role is carried out greatly determines the chances for successful change. Thus once again, it appears that theory and research must acknowledge the multivariate and systemic nature of the change process in educational institutions and the importance of context. We cannot simply look at the change facilitator role of the principal, department head, or central office coordinator without understanding more about the persons in those roles and the context within which they are working. These contextual factors appear to be especially critical in high schools where there are more administrative levels and organizational sub-units.

Thus, in this paper we describe with illustrations some of the ways that these different role groups can serve as change facilitators, describe what they are doing when change is successful and address some of the situational factors that appear to be necessary for each of them to take on effective change facilitator roles.

To present our hypotheses and a few hunches, we have organized the next section of this paper around the standard roles that exist in high schools and in relation to high schools. For each we describe some of the potential strengths and inherent weaknesses in that role, review some of the folklore about that role and use excerpts from our field notes to illustrate successful change facilitator practices by persons in that role. We also provide some

information about the situational factors and conditions that appear to support persons in that role being effective as change facilitators.

High School Principals as Change Facilitators

Before launching this study, we had been impressed by the number of high school principals who reported that they had too many complications in their work, not enough time and could not serve as instructional leaders in their buildings. Contrary to these frequently heard testimonials in our field work we found many high school principals who clearly were effective as instructional leaders and change facilitators. In some way they had found time, they were in classrooms, things were happening in their schools and everyone would identify them as the key reason.

For example, the following excerpts from research field notes illustrate what we were observed and were told.

School A. ". . . it was my impression that he is the catalyst and controller of change in his schools. All people I interviewed immediately named _____ as having the most overall influence on what happens in the school."

"During his six years as principal, he has turned the school around from a place no one wanted to go (including students, teachers, administrators) to a school that is known for the motto of "another success story." When he started as principal, teacher morale was low and students had the attitude they could get by with anything they pleased. The school was losing in all areas of their athletic program and this was contributing to low school spirit. The facilities were run down and thus there was little pride among students and teachers about their campus. The teachers had the reputation of being a rebel faculty and the school was a center for union activity. There was little collaboration or cooperation among the faculty. Teachers and

administrators did not want to be transferred into the school and many parents did not want their children to attend the school. There is a consistent opinion among persons inside and outside the school that he is responsible for the school's turn around."

"The principal runs this school. There is no question about his ultimate authority, perceived or real, but having said that, it is important to note that he is very supportive of staff initiatives, so long as they are conducted within the district and building and district rules and procedures."

Staff members who have taught at _____ high school for a number of years were remarkably uniform in their responses to the interview questions. Without exception in response to the question, "Who has the most influence in what happens in the school?" was an unhesitating "the principal." (This response was found in several other schools.) When asked if there was also an influential person outside the chain of command, only one person was able to name someone who might carry weight as an opinion leader. Students showed the same responses. Seniors, when asked these questions, named only the principal. Apparently power was held very centrally within this school to the satisfaction of nearly everyone.

Other quotes could be excerpted that further confirm that indeed in some instances high school principals are key change facilitators. More importantly we have been able to gain some insights into what these principals do to facilitate change that is strikingly different from what other principals do. The lists summarized in Figure 1 are illustrative of the priorities and activities of two contrasting styles of principals that we have found.

Interestingly the two styles of facilitating change that are represented in Figure 1 are very consistent with two of the change facilitator styles that we had earlier identified in our research with elementary school principals.

Figure 1

Sample Notes from Interviews About the Contrasting Styles of High School Principal

Active Change Facilitator

He hires everyone.

Once hired, individuals are given tasks and a great deal of autonomy to complete them.

He maintains close personal contact.

He requests written weekly summaries from department chairs each Friday and returns them on Monday with written reactions and requests for meetings or follow-up.

He meets weekly with his administrative council.

He makes a point of communicating clearly what the rules are; everybody knows the procedures, and diligently follows them. Yet, by his own admission he supports and frequently demonstrates "creative insubordination," if the rule bending is defensible as a means to a reasonable improvement for school ends, e.g. to students and/or staff benefit.

The principal carefully picks his battle fields, enlists his cadres (a selective array rather than as an organizing group). He initiates the effort and moves on to other things.

When staff roles are differentiated he clearly expects the incumbent to know their job and to do it and in turn he fully backs them up, even if he disagrees with the immediate application of policy.

He uses his two AP's equally. The three run things.

Less Active Change Facilitator

In the seven years she has been principal, I could identify only two changes that she had initiated. And, in both cases these changes were to eliminate existing programs, not to add or change.

"At the school level the three major changes that have occurred in recent years and one that is scheduled to begin soon, came from district level initiatives."

"There seems to be little interactions between the principal and teachers, or students and the principal."

The overall impression for me was that as long as there was no problems that had to be resolved from the principals' office everything was handled as it always had been by the teacher in the classroom, or the department head or others in charge of an area.

...the principal believes that the teachers can handle their own classrooms without intervention except in time of need.

"Change appears to come from outside to the principal's office as a decision. The actual movement around implementing change is left to the department head to do in greater or lesser fashion and some do it very superficially and some do not.

The principal typically initiates change by exploring existing resources, creatively reshaping them to create a new role and reassigning a person to become a "major mover."

The principal is close to teachers, other staff and students. In fact, she spends 2 to 3 hours, minimum each day visiting all parts of the building.

It is almost impossible (say 3 teachers) to say "no" to her.

The principal goes out of her way to involve people in decisions as often as possible, unless she identifies it specifically and only as her decision.

Teachers and students report her (prin.) as having the power.

principal is seen as the one most responsible for change.

The principal runs a tight ship doesn't see himself playing a direct role in instruction.

The principal is the number one person and coordinates the other three key people.

"Part of his responder like behaviors include high personal concerns, low instructional leadership, low visibility, high affective response to teachers, especially new ones, the tendency to believe and act towards teachers as an autonomous group (they know what they are doing), and low involvement with teachers on a professional level.

On the other hand he is an effective school administrator with budget, administrative tasks and delegating responsibility.

Rather than maintain his autonomy as a leader of the school, setting priorities and realistic expectations for it, he was overwhelmed by district pressure and and felt immobilized by them. He superficially did what was expected but with no overall The plan.

He can make decisions and at times will decree things. However he continually is uncertain about what his priorities should be and is attempting to respond to the pressures from parents, teachers, students and what he perceives to be the intentions of his superintendents and others in the central office.

While the principal believes in the underlying philosophy of the school and its comprehensive program, he does not take an active role in pushing the school in new directions. He relies on the combined concerns of staff to set the focus and direction for the school.

In that research we had identified three different change facilitator styles, Initiators, Managers and Responders (Hall, Rutherford, Hord & Huling, 1984; Hall & Rutherford, 1983). We were not certain that these change facilitator styles would be present in the high school situation. However indeed we have found excellent support for the existence of these change facilitator styles in high schools. The description of the more active change facilitating principals is very consistent with the Initiator style and the descriptions of the less active principal is consistent with what we had earlier identified as the Responder style.

Other Role Groups as Change Facilitators

As can be seen from the descriptions provided in Figure 1 it does appear that in some instances high school principals do serve as change facilitators, while in other instances they seem to abdicate or be more passive with regard to facilitating change. When the high school principal is not the primary source, impetus or implementation facilitator who does these things? Well based on our field work to date, the answer is not as straight-forward and logical as one would expect. One role group that many see as being active as change facilitators is department heads. Other possibilities include assistant principals and central office coordinators.

The Role of Department of Heads

One answer that is emerging out of the field trips and data analyses is that department heads in most instances are not prime movers for change and do not typically facilitate implementation. This finding is surprising, and somewhat discouraging, especially since we had proposed two years ago to conduct a concentrated study of change in departments and to analyze the role of department heads as change facilitators. If we had not

listened to the advice of several consultants with extensive experience in high schools and our NIE program monitor we would have very merrily launched a major study of what in general appears to be a non-event. With rare exceptions department heads are primarily passers of information, orderers of books and maintainers of inventories. In general, they are not serving as leaders and facilitators of change, although there are exceptions. A classic example of the exception is reported by Hord (1984).

We have found an amazing array of job descriptions and compensation procedures for persons who become department heads. Compensation ranges from no released time to teaching only one class period a day. Financial support ranges from no additional salary incentive to in excess of a thousand dollars differential from a teacher's salary. Another key finding about department heads is the universal absence of training for the position. When persons are selected to serve in the position, there is no training in leadership, administration, curriculum, staff development, teacher evaluation or any other imagined dimension of the position. The right of passage typically occurs in the spring and entails the incumbent passing to the new head the tattered card file of the department's inventory, a few boxes of administrative meeting notes, the district course syllabus' and a few old textbooks.

Another consistent finding was that the definition of the job of being a department head is not well articulated and definitions are not available in the literature. There may be some reference to the position in labor contracts but when there is it generally brief. Based on our observations to date one must hypothesize that it is not at all clear what the scope and thrust of the role of department head is or can be in terms of leadership.

Interestingly, the overall job seems to be defined more by how the principal of each school designates it than any formal policies within the

district. The role of being a change facilitator appears to be much more related to the personal characteristics and interests of individuals who are serving as department heads.

We have seen some exciting and wonderful examples of department heads taking the lead and being initiatory in terms of change. Business Education department heads have been particularly progressive in terms of their use of micro-computers, for example. Yet this has not been the overall pattern. One tentative generalization would be that the heads of English departments appear to be less innovative, with math, science and fine arts departments falling somewhere in the middle. Perhaps there is a similar dynamic at work for high school departments that is observed in colleges and business. Those departments with guaranteed enrollments (or revenues) are less innovative than those who have to constantly be attuned to market needs.

However, the primary key to department heads being effective change facilitators appears to be related to how the principal defines their role. District policy, the size of the salary differential, the amount of release time that is available and the subject area appear to be less important explainers than what the principal expects from the position. If the principal sees department heads as passers of information, that is what they tend to do. If principals have higher expectations then the department heads seem more as middle level managers. For example, in one high school the principal expected department heads to be involved in teacher evaluation as well as department leadership. District policy forbid this, however teachers and administrators in this one high school were consistent in understanding how department heads worked in their school. There was no indication that there were problems with this expanded role or comments about the school not being in compliance with district policy.

A related set of data that we do not have which would be important in further amplifying the role of department heads would be to analyze the process and content of department meetings. Frequency of meetings and the related forms of intradepartmental communication would also have to be monitored, since we have found that many departments presently meet irregularly or rarely. At this point it appears that department heads meet less often in high schools that are less innovative and the meeting agendas have less to do with instruction and change.

Some contrasting examples of the role and activities of department heads who are and who are not active in facilitating change are presented in Figure 2. The amount of change facilitating activity of department heads in some cases appears to be related to the encouragement and support of more active principals. For example, in one high school the principal was redesigning the role of the department head by having them trained in staff development. We have also observed active department heads within schools where principals were not particularly active. Some department heads appear to be able to make a difference within the vacuum of opportunity that is presented them.

In terms of any nationwide movement or readiness for department heads and departments to be key units of change, we have not found the indicators. It appears that much will have to be done to define the role, select promising persons to fill the role and provide them with related training, support, incentives and opportunity before they can become effective change facilitators in any sort of large scale change efforts.

Having said all of this in support of the potential of department heads to become change facilitators does not mean that the opposite point of view is not tenable. In fact we have interviewed some highly credible and skilled principals and central office personnel who maintain that departments are too

Figure 2
Department Heads as Change Facilitators

Active

With a responder principal reacting to changes directed from Central Office and outside the school, the D.H. led the actual implementation.

In curr. issues, the path of change is T -- D.H. -- C.O., with the D.H. playing the key role for up and down communication.

The principal didn't initiate change -- this is done by the teachers (somewhat) and the DH.

This manager style principal relies heavily on the VP and the DH to run the school.

D.H. share in the summative evaluation of teachers with A.P.'s.

Non-Active

This initiator principal has a team approach and uses his two A.P.'s. The DH do not appear to be employed in change efforts.

D.H., by and large, do not exert much control on the quality of instruction.

D.H. exert a high degree of influence on the operation (reporting, inventory, communicating directives) of the schools.

D.H. leadership appears to be minimal.

There is very little interaction between D.H.'s.

In a district with many changes coming from C.O. the DH is expected to facilitate the change (but doesn't necessarily).

All teachers and administrators interviewed commented on the decreasing power of DH and teachers in matters which were traditionally school managed and the increased role the C.O. has in these.

The D.H.'s interviewed said that the cabinet meetings invited suggestion but had little real discussion.

District level interventions had impact on the D.H. level -- none had been initiated by or within the department.

narrowly focused and should not be used as units of change. The persons who hold this point of view are working to create alternative mechanisms to facilitate change and are deliberately bypassing departments. This may in part explain some of the confusion and inconsistency that exists about the department head role.

Clearly our understandings of present practice and the promise of departments and department heads in relation to their role in change is incomplete. More concentrated field work must be done before we can begin to develop full descriptions of present practice. We also must develop clearer descriptions of the potential, or absence thereof, for department heads to facilitate change and for departments to be key units of change. Strategies for more effectively facilitating change within and between departments must also be more clearly thought out and planned for than is typical of present practice.

Assistant Principals and Deans

Another group that can play a role in facilitating change is that of assistant principals, vice principals and deans. Again the picture is mixed, we have some cases where assistant principals have taken the lead unilaterally to facilitate change. There also are instances as described above where the principal was very active and formed a close working team with his/her two or three assistant principals. In this situation there appears to be change facilitating team at work with all of the senior administrators in the building taking part and sharing responsibilities for change leadership (Figure 3).

We also found assistant principals in more active schools assigned to evaluation of teachers and this assignment would be made in such a way that over time all assistant principals were involved with all teachers. So that over a two to three year period the principal and the various assistant principals would have first-hand involvement in evaluation and instructional

Figure 3

Examples of Change Facilitator Team

More Active Principals

Diffused leadership. The AP's are important leaders.

Principal is an Initiator and uses his two AP's equally. They run things. Everything is formalized.

In a school with a manager-style principal, this person relies heavily on the V.P. and D.H. to run the school.

An initiator principal is the number 1 person in the school and coordinates the other three key people.

Less Active Principals

With a responder principal, the AP's have specific roles.

Since the principal is a responder, the 2 AP's (and one in particular) hold the real power in the school.

The AP's have specific tasks and roles -- the school runs itself.

supervision of all teachers. It appears that in more active schools there is more job sharing between the assistant principals and the principals. In those less active schools the pattern frequently had the assistant principals doing many of the tasks that we found principals doing in the more active schools. For example, assistant principals in less active schools were often in charge of budgets and their allocation to departments. In the less active schools assistant principals were assigned full responsibility individually for certain tasks and these assignments were kept relatively constant from year to year. A contrasting picture was observed in several of the less active schools.

At this point it appears that the role that assistant principals play in terms of facilitating change is defined by the principal, as is the department heads role. If principals are passive in their assignment of change facilitating responsibilities then assistant principals do not typically translate the "opportunity" into new initiatives but rather use their positions to maintain present directions and momentum. When principals involve assistant principals there tends to be a dynamic collegial change facilitating team with differentiated roles but interconnected movement and continual exchange of information.

The Role of the Central Office

Repeatedly in our field work we have observed that the bulk of the innovations and the sources and impetus for change are coming from outside of the high school. It appears that district level initiatives are increasing and there also are a surprising number of state initiatives that flow to the high school for implementation.

The overall dynamic within the central office appears to be very similar to the dynamic that is being observed within the high school. When the

superintendent or assistant superintendent becomes active and sets a priority for innovation and change within the district, then the various coordinators and other staff within the central office become very active in supporting and moving the district in the identified direction. If the superintendent does not have change as a priority then each of the curriculum coordinators and other central office administrators appear to go their own way. Most appear to work at maintenance with occasional flurries of innovative activity but no concentrated efforts that systematically effect all high schools and all parts of high schools within a district.

The above is a fairly obvious observation. A larger mystery out of the data is trying to understand the optimal role and impact of central officer coordinators. We had expected them to be much more visible and their impact to be much more easily observed on the high school campus. This however has not been the case, with the notable exception of one district. At this point we would hypothesize that central office coordinators are spread so thin and involved in so many of the basic maintenance activities in relation to the curriculum that they are not able to serve as a dynamic force for change and facilitators of change.

In the one district that is the notable exception, there has been a 12 year history of districtwide movement towards improved instruction and instructional effectiveness. Most recently the priority has been on implementing an Effective Schools model, including Hunter's Essential Elements of Instruction. Two years ago the architect for ten years of this movement within the district became the superintendent. This event in and of itself is a surprisingly rare phenomenon. One consequence for the district is that the instructional effectiveness has been a consistent priority and has even resulted in career advancement for those who have been most active with it.

The role of central office coordinators is notable here since the district has recently created a new position at the district level titled Director of School Effectiveness. In addition, the district has created a new position within each of the district's high school for a "staff developer" who is responsible for facilitating implementation of Essential Elements of Instruction within each high school. These new positions are highly visible and active. The Director of School Effectiveness spends a great deal of time in the various high schools of the district, observes and makes suggestions. Whether this is because the person is particularly effective, the district is on the move, or because the role is new or some combination of these, is more difficult to interpret. However, this is a clear case where a central office person is highly visible and is having an impact on what goes on in one set of high schools. This then becomes another area in need of concentrated study; what are the conditions and functions that maximize the potential of central office coordinators to work as change facilitators?

A note should be made at this point that the innovation that is being implemented in this case is generic and cuts across departmental lines. It may be that bringing about change in high schools requires innovations of this type so that the departmental and subject area interests of teachers are not compounding. This goes back to the issue described earlier. However, we remain unconvinced that teachers and departments are as subject matter bound as is suggested by the folklore, which brings us to the topic of teachers as change facilitators.

Teachers as Change Facilitators

Examples of teachers as change facilitators were few. It appears that in general teachers respond to suggestions for change that are initiated by department heads, principals and central office personnel. There appear to be

few opportunities for teachers to initiate change themselves. There were some noted exceptions. For example, we found a social studies teacher who was new to the school who conducted a staff development day workshop for all teachers within his high school on power writing. This workshop converted a large number of the teachers from resistance to power writing to active interest in it. In this instance a teacher turned out to be a most powerful implementation facilitator for a district initiated innovation. Other isolated instances were found where teachers identified innovations or became advocates for innovations. Yet the overall pattern seems to be that teachers are not frequently serving as change facilitators. When they do have ideas they can approach their department head or principal and may receive sanction to proceed with bringing about change. As one might expect many of these changes only affect the teachers' own classroom and responsibilities. The implications of this lack of activity and opportunity for teachers to facilitate change go far beyond school improvement and relate to the failure of teachers to have a profession and to have the related power to determine their own destiny (Howsam, 1984).

Summary Discussion

At this point in our study it is difficult to make sweeping generalizations and to propose prescriptions for where research and practice should go next. In the case of understanding the dynamics of change in high schools we believe that we are developing increasing clarity about the details and conditions that need to be present for successful high school change. However, the layers of the onion analogy must be kept in mind. At a more superficial level the conclusion has to be that it depends upon the principal and the superintendent. With several layers pealed off the onion, the

importance of the principal is still there, but the under utilization of the other actors is glaring. The appropriate role(s) of central office coordinators and their effects need to be examined as does the question of the potential of departments.

Also, the key role played by assistant principals needs further study. It was interesting to go through our field notes and to observe that in each of the more active high schools the principal and the assistant principals worked as a team. In those schools the various assistant principals' roles had differentiation along with inter-coordination. There isn't as apt to be one assistant principal for discipline and another for instruction. The roles of the assistant principals and the principals seem to be more co-mingled with all being involved in most parts of the school's life, and each knowing more of the bigger picture.

The dilemma of the department heads is even more perplexing. We continue to want to see the department heads as key change facilitators and departments as viable units for change. Yet, the job, the present job descriptions, the ways that department heads are selected (by vote, by seniority, in some instances by the principal), and the absence of training make it seem very unlikely that in the near future that department heads will be able to be much of a factor in facilitating change.

The structure and sociology of departments is even less understood. For example, it does not appear that teachers necessarily identify more strongly with "their" department. Thus, assumptions about the department being an intact social system will have to be more closely scrutinized. Some teachers who are members of subject matter departments identify more closely with a co-curricular/extra-curricular assignment. Others identify more with certain class responsibilities. Some identify primarily with their subject matter.

The problem then is that all of the teachers assigned to a particular department do not intensely identify with that department, which works against departments being a ready unit of change.

An even bigger issue is the role of the central office. Whether overall directions are set or not is one key. But who follows through? It is not at all clear what the normative actions and effects are of the typical central office curriculum coordinators. It is not at all clear what the ideal role can be. In terms of our study to date there presence has been surprisingly undernoted within high schools.

If high schools are going to respond to the kinds of concerns and directions that are being identified at this time, it is important that we identify not only principals who have the skills to be effective change facilitators, but that we clarify the potential roles that other actors within the district and the school can assume. We will also need to clarify their responsibilities and provide relevant training and support so that they can then carry out these change facilitating roles. Without these forms of clarification and assistance once again change will be treated as an event rather than a process, with all of the associated consequences.

High schools in some ways are indeed complex organizations. In other ways, high schools are more tightly organized and have a stronger potential for effective change facilitation than their elementary school counterparts. The potential is there, but the resources, the situation and the capacities are not sufficiently developed to readily accomplish the goals that they and others aspire for high schools at this time.

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