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ABSTRACT
                This study investigates principals' perceptions of
the effect of teacher empowerment on their role as building
administrators. The researcher conducted structured interviews with
10 principals, 5 elementary and 5 secondary, in 2 school systems
characterized by wider applications of shared decisionmaking and
greater professional autonomy among teachers and administrators.
Findings are discussed with respect to the principals' understandings
of empowerment, the difference between these schools and more
traditional schools, advantages and disadvantages of teacher
empowerment, redefining the principal's role in teacher-empowered
schools, changes in the principal's role, and teachers' expectations
of principals in schools where teachers share in governance and
decisionmaking. The conclusion discusses nine important themes that
emerged from these interview data regarding teacher empowerment and
the principalship: (1) the language of shared governance and
empowerment; (2) readiness for professional growth and empowerment;
(3) the importance of the superintendent's leadership in empowerment;
(4) time as a key resource for empowerment; (5) boundary spanning for
school principals; (6) enhancement of teachers' and principals'
professional image; (7) the importance of hearing teachers' voices;
(8) shared professional thinking; and (9) dealing with power through
empowerment. References are included. (TE)

Redefining Leadership and the Roles of School Principals: Responses to Changes in the Professional Worklife of Teachers

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Redefining Leadership and the Roles of School Principals:
Responses to Changes in the Professional Worklife of Teachers

Introduction

What is apparent from the most recent in a series of educational reform reports is that leadership in public schools is crucial to realizing the major recommendations and hopes for reform. Though the role of the school principal is viewed differently depending on the perspective of the report and its authors, the building principal continues to occupy a unique organizational position for exercising influence in structural, operational and instructional matters in schools. In addition, the principal is responsible for creating, nurturing and shaping a school environment in which professional responsibilities are accepted and shared collegially among the staff.

This paper is a preliminary report of data from in-depth structured interviews with ten principals from two school systems in a large northeastern state. The respondents and schools examined in this study are currently involved in redesigning and redefining the professional worklife of teachers and principals characterized by wider applications of shared decisionmaking and greater professional autonomy. The paper is an examination of how the principals' leadership in these schools, elementary and secondary, has been reconceptualized, informally re-negotiated, and is continuingly being forged into new understandings of and working relationships with empowered classroom teachers. The following research questions guided the investigation. How do principals define, conceptualize and see teacher empowerment played out in their schools? What are the primary advantages and disadvantages to greater teacher empowerment and shared decision making? What are the primary sources of support and motivation for greater empowerment of teachers in their schools? What are these ten principals' perceptions of how teachers view empowerment and where teachers most want to contribute to organizational decisionmaking and governance? How has the empowerment of teachers in schools affected the principal's role as a building leader? How can principals most positively affect teacher empowerment in their schools?

Background

The American Heritage Dictionary defines empower in one of two ways: 1). to empower is to invest with legal power and/or to authorize; and 2). to empower is to enable or permit. Though collective bargaining since the 1960's has substantially affected school life issues for teachers and brought about significant changes in notions of power as it is exercised in public schools, the second definition of empower comes closer to current activities of shared decisionmaking and enhanced professional autonomy in schools. In a recent article, Lagana (1989) noted that "empowerment gives people the opportunity and necessary resources so they can believe, understand and change their world" (p. 20). In a study of greater teacher participation in decisions related to professional knowledge, practice and school management issues, Wise and Darling-Hammond (1985) concluded that, "When teachers begin to define and enforce professional standards of practice, the traditional roles of both management and labor are significantly reshaped." This reshaping is likely to be reflected as each role incumbent in the organization feels the stimulation of expansion and growth as well as the demand for responsibility . How is the role of the building principal being reshaped in teacher empowered schools? What does empowerment mean in terms of the daily worklife of teachers and principals?

Educational journals like designer clothes fashion magazines on store shelves continually project something new, something bold, and something different to talk about as the new season begins. To put the same images forward every year would doubtless bore consumers, reduce expectations and do little to enthuse the public market. Thus, the notion of empowerment has now become a fashionable and showy term in educational life and its literature. A quick empirical check of current professional education literature, conference themes and convention topics would conspicuously note this newest mode. Yet is this notion of empowerment new or is it simply a lexical restyling of good organizational management and professional practices and leadership in places called schools?

Though the term empowerment itself is a fairly recent addition to the contemporary educational lexicon, the concept of a process by which teachers would assume greater responsibility in their professional worklife is rooted in

literature on teacher job satisfaction, autonomy and efficacy, professional development, and in a large body of research in the area of shared and participatory decisionmaking (Bridges, 1967; Mohrman, Cooke, and Mohrman, 1978; Alutto and Belasco, 1972; Imber, 1983; Conway, 1981; and Freisen, Carson and Johnson, 1983). The findings from effective schools research is also part of the background fabric into which notions of enhanced professionalism for teachers have been woven. In addition to these investigations and their reported findings and implications, there is a plethora of educational reform reports and legislative mandates which have flooded profession_l journals since A Nation at Risk was released in 1983. Erlandson and Bifano (1987) conclude, "The considerable amount of research and informed opinion on shared decisionmaking in schools builds a strong case that a more professional, autonomous role for teachers could enhance the effectiveness of the public schools" (p. 33). As Freisen et.al (1983) point out, the literature while not conclusive does indicate that teacher participation in decisionmaking is "an emerging development in education and it is likely to affect both teaching role and expectations and administrative functions" (p. 11).

Implicit in the notion of empowerment of teachers is power itself. Practitioners and researchers often skirt issues of power because of notions of "win-lose" and understandings of power as they become entangled in organizational hierarchy and structures of authority, both of which complicate and threaten collegial and empowered professional work environments. Stinson and Appelbaum (1988) suggest that such understandings of power within schools and other organizations. is based on a competitive notion of power, that is, power is a finite and scarce resource. This competitive view of power has created a myth that tends to impede meaningful empowerment of teachers and principals. Stinson and Appelbaum's definition of power is simply the " real or imagined ability of one individual to influence the behavior of another." When power is viewed as an infinite resource with the possibility of unleashing untapped reserves of creativity and energy, the idea of shared power "encourages people at all levels of the organization to be involved in decisionmaking without feeling manipulated" (p. 314). They contend that such an understanding of power is especially important for principals as an antecedent condition for teacher empowerment and shared governance in schools. "If principals don't feel as if

they themselves have much control within the organization, how can they hope to empower their subordinates" (p. 316). As Chapman (1988) pointed out. "Clearly, the success of participatory decisionmaking has much to do with the readiness of the principal to share power and his/her ability to provide processes, information and resources necessary to make shared decision making work" (p. 55). Duke, Showers and Imber (1980) support the assertion that the principal is of critical importance in determining the extent, nature and pattern of participation in their schools. Stinson and Appelbaum conclude their examination of principals empowering teachers by recommending that, "Researchers should also study the point at which principals consider themselves empowered and are willing to share their power" (p. 316). The research reported in this paper focused on principals' perceptions of empowerment and their understanding of how it is evidenced in their schools.

Purpose and Design of the Study

This study is an investigation of principals' perceptions of the impact of teacher empowerment on their role as building administrators. The researcher conducted structured interviews with 10 principals, five elementary and five secondary, in two school systems characterized by wider applications of shared decisionmaking and greater professional autonomy among teachers and administrators. An interview schedule composed of structured questions was used for all interviews. The interviews ranged in time from 45 minutes to one hour and a half and were conducted over three days. The research recorded all responses on an interview protocol. Though tape recording of responses was possible, this investigator chose to record the responses in writing to put the respondents at ease in their interview and because the researcher had had previous experience in data collection using interviews. After the interviews and at the end of each day, the researcher checked each response set for accuracy and comprehensiveness and transcribed the interview data and notes. In terms of processual immediacy, the investigator repeated(where appropriate) previously given responses to the principals as a transitional questioning strategy in the questioning sequence and as a means of validating the accuracy of researcher recorded data.

Selection of the two school districts

Since the purpose of the investigation was to examine principals' perception of the impact of teacher empowerment on their role as building administrators, the two school districts were purposely selected because of their reputations within a large northeastern state as having teacher work environments with high levels of teacher involvement in participative decisionmaking and autonomy in their daily work lives. Because this study focused on just two school districts within one state and the data were gathered from a small number of respondents, the researcher is well aware of the limiations of the findings. Nevertheless, the data suggest important professional worklife effects for principals and implications for effective building level leadership in teacher-principal empowered work settings.

The two districts, though by no means completely representative of the diversity of school district type and size in this large and diversified state, do share common demographic characteristics with many school districts across the state. The urban small city school district (here after referred to as Centremont) is located in the eastern densely populated area of the state. Like many city school districts, its school population has declined significantly over the past 20 years due to economic restructuring and shifting demographic realities for this once dominant industrial center. Currently there are slightly under 10,000 students, primarily white, who continue to live in ethnic enclaves within the city. Less than 1% of the students are minorities. The enrollment level is currently stable. The comprehensive town/rural school district (here after referred to as Hillview) is located in the rural northwest of the state. With the exception of one major research facility, which dominates the town and its economic structure, the district serves 2800 students with a wide and diverse range of socio-economic backgrounds. There are rural and small town poor as well as affluent students from the town's dominant professional class who reside in "ruburban-type" clusters in comfortable contrast to the other community residents.

The Principals

After consultation with the two district superintendents, the ten principals were contacted by telephone to ask for their participation in this study. In Centremont, the five principals who were interviewed were identified by a key informant. Each of these principals, along with a cadre of teachers, had participated in a district sponsored training and development

series on shared decisionmaking and management techniques. The district has a formalized organization called the Alliance of Centremont Educators (ACE). The Alliance was initiated by the superintendent, the local teacher union president, and a consortia of business and labor leaders. Together they sought funding from professional education organizations, the local business and labor consortia and their own school board to support the training of administrators and teachers. Initial training was conducted by a management training/consulting firm. Each of the five principals, as well as groups of their teaching staff, had been trained/or are currently participating in the management training program.

At Hillview, the five principals represented all but one building administrator in the school district. No formal training had been conducted. However as one the respondents indicated, "The leadership comes from the superintendent and the school board. They set the tone. There has been a tremendous change in staff attitudes in the last five years. It's really simple. If you treat people in a professional way, they're going to be professional. We model that in our behavior. We've been able to influence people." Another added, "It starts with the superintendent. At administrator meetings we talk about administrative techniques. We talk about issues and procedures. We don't talk about nitty gritty problems." The superintendent's modeling of behaviors was cited as the key guide to his expectations of each of the principals as they worked with their professional staffs..

The ten respondents included three female elementary principals who had from one to seven years of experience as principals. The average number of years of administrative experience for the male principals was 7.4 years with seven years of prior teaching experience. The three female principals had less administrative experience but doubled the males' average of prior teaching experience with 15.3 years. Seven of the ten principals had administrative assignments in other buildings prior to their current appointment. Of the seven male administrators, three carried the title of assistant principals. However, two assistants, who worked very closely with their principals, described their role as that of co-principals dividing equally the responsibilities with the principal. The assistant principal in Centremont carried out the more traditional role expectations- discipline, attendance, teacher evaluation, and work with parents. The student enrollments for these

10 principals ranged from 425 to 1010. The smallest was an elementary center in Hillview. The largest was a junior high school in Centremont.

Presentation and Discussion of Findings

Understandings of empowerment

Though · there was no a priori intent to set up a contrast between the two school districts and their experiences with empowerment, the understandings that these principals revealed through their individual responses suggest two very different definitions of teacher empowerment. In Centremont empowerment meant that teachers, " emphasize building level problem-solving, however, we don't talk about 'problems,' we talk about 'opportunities.'" This "opportunity finding" model, Alliance of Centremont Educators (ACE), was a jointly conceptualized and sponsored management training and development model for teachers and principals. Teams of educators were trained out of state and returned to their schools to lead professional site-based teams to identify, prioritize and resolve important real problems in their school. As one principal stated, "This is a systematic way to improve the educational climate of Centremont. This is connected to our district's goals and priorities for the products of learning, work environment, and relationships between people." The idea that principals understood from their superintendent and that they were to get across to teachers was that "teachers need to work smarter, not harder," and that teachers have ownership in some decisionmaking and with ownership comes commitment. As another principal stated, "Here the goal is for teachers to have ownership in decisions in their worklife. To make the workplace a better life and to solve real problems." However, the notion of "opportunity finding" and problem resolution was clearly circumscribed as one principal notes. "In this district the Assistant Superintendent has made it clear that the ACE project and teacher/administrator teams are dealing with technical issues and concerns that need resolution, not policies. This is not shared governance! We're not talking about policies. The idea is for teachers and administrators to share in the ownership on matters that affect us both. The focus is on daily worklife issues."

At Hillview the superintendent "invited" principals and teachers to empower one another. The model on which teachers and principals built was established five years previously through a comprehensive K-12 curriculum

review process. Guided by the superintendent and other administrators, twenty teachers were released for 15 work days "to write and think about curriculum. It was an expensive investment for the district." As one principal indicated the superintendent "allows" empowerment to happen. The notion of legitimacy was also cited as key to these five principals' understanding of empowerment and shared decisionmaking in their buildings. As the high school principal noted, "To me shared governance is involving professional staff in things that are related to their job and that impact instruction and quality of the workplace. I don't involve teachers in petty things like assigning parking places or the color of paint for halls. That doesn't make them feel professional." He went on to describe how teachers in his building had been charged through a district facilities committee to redesign an existing school building for high school occupancy by 1990-1991 school year and to allocate space and make key decisions on size and location of the library, shops and classrooms. "If they made the library bigger, then there was less room left of other spaces It was legitimate participation." The middle school principal reinforced the notion of legitimacy stating, "Teachers must feel that their participation is meaningful, not puppetry." The notion of empowerment across schools in Hillview was not even. Since some of the principals had been in there buildings longer, teachers and principals had had more time to develop levels of trust and confidence in one another. For the first year principal, the transition from a totally principal-dependent elementary staff to an empowered faculty of independent professionals took time and patience. As she states, "I had to start with little things. They had no strategies, techniques for making decisions. Some teachers are beginning to arrive at a level of confidence in their decisions. A really good example is in the area of staff development. Just last week they decided how to use their money allotted for the year for staff development. It took six months." Regardless of the levels of empowerment across schools, it was clear that issues and concerns had to be child oriented and for the improvement of teaching learning processes. "If it's good for kids, you get it." As one principal added, "We know teachers need time to relax and to have fun, but when they're in front of kids, they're expected to be good."

Nine of the ten respondents indicated that the superintendent was a primary motivating force for greater teacher empowerment and enhanced decision making in their schools. The superintendent's vision, personal

modeling of collegial behaviors, expectations and the weight of authority from the central office enthused others and often "set the tone" throughout the district. Principals also indicated that teachers themselves were inclined toward empowerment and that they motivated one another. School boards and the principals themselves were mentioned also as important sources of influence in greater teacher empowerment in their schools. Undergirding these motivators of empowerment were two critically important resources-time and money. As several of the principals noted, when you unleash the creative energies of teachers in the areas of "opportunity finding" and organizational change, they come up with incredible ideas. "Finances enable us to do things. When teachers are involved, they have ideas. We can pay of those things." Time to meet, to work, to plan and to carry out ideas and programs also costs money. And as one principal noted, "we need participation to improve the whole work environment and to tap resources. If this system has the time, it will work".

Another way to examine how these ten principals understood teacher empowerment was to ask them how shared governance and enhanced teacher participation was played out in their schools. Evidence of empowerment ranged from assuming responsibilities for little things, like when children could go outside for recess in inclement weather, to planning and implementing totally teacher-run building level professional development programs where administrators were used only as resource people. Levels of activity and wider ranges of decision latitude depended greatly on relationships of trust and collegiality established over time. In one school a compact of professional trust at the building level was forged around the use and administrative approval for an illegal lottery that teachers ran in the school to raise money for special events such as wedding showers, retirement parties, and special thank-you gifts. As the principal of this school said, "Well, teachers have something illegal going on here. Teachers got the idea planning a holiday party. They have a 50/50 game. They sell chances and raise money to support their activities. If the superintendent knew, oh, I don't know what he'd do. As principal I allow the chance sales to go on on the sly, for a good cause. It doesn't hurt anyone." For another principal in her first year as an administrator, trust, confidence and teacher decision initiative were emerging slowly and incrementally.

Important activities in which teachers were engaged were curriculum matters, staff development, student discipline and special events. Curriculum concerns ranged from the coordination of end of the year testing schedules at a junior high school to near complete responsibility for scheduling classes in a high school. "They decide by department student groupings and they decide how and who to teach." When asked specifically which areas teachers in their school most want to be involved in shared decisionmaking, principals cited concerns of curriculum and teaching overwhelmingly (40% of listed professional responsibilities in school). Worklife issues (5%) and student discipline (16.6%) centered around their classrooms much more than building level management (20%)or work beyond the classroom or school which includes staff development (8.3%). As a high school principal put it, "Teachers don't want to be bothered with the nuts and bots decisions of running the building. They'd burn out." An elementary principal added that teachers do make choices as they invest in their own empowerment. "Teachers don't want to do some of the things principals do like getting the heat turned on in a child's home, or standing in a welfare line or bathing a smelly kid." In Hillview in the area of staff development, teachers assumed complete responsibility for planning and implementing their own priorities and ideas for systematic professional growth. For teachers issues of discipline centered on classroom as well as school-wide concerns such as lowering cafeteria noise levels, dealing with student absenteeism and vandalism. Finally, special events frequently were areas in which teachers generated ideas and chose to become actively involved. As one elementary principal offered, "Elementary people are very innovative. We've not tapped their creativity. They come up with great ideas. For example, my staff came up with the idea of Community Day. They organized and planned the day. They invited elderly citizens who live around the school and other neighbors in for coffee and tea. People who didn't have kids in schools." Other teacher planned and executed special events included personal gifts, thank you's, certificates for a dinner for two as a gesture of recognition and appreciation, mathathons, and hopathons for charities.

Empowered teachers-Different Schools?

The respondents were asked what made their school different from a more traditionally organized and operated school. To be sure, characteristics such positive climates, satisfied and contented teachers, high levels of commitment and professionalism, ownership in decisions and their outcomes, and independent problem solving can be found in many schools. However, combined with these qualities these schools show evidence of distinct character in contrast to more traditional schools. One characteristic is the blurring of traditional lines of organizational hierarchy and notions of authority. Teachers don't think about principals as "the boss". One respondent explained. "I see a blend so that one could not distinguish teachers from principals in schools. If a person walked into the building and watched for an hour and then said, 'I still can't see who's the principal and who're the teachers'. That would be great!" Other respondents noted how there was "lots of communication," interplay, and peer to peer interaction that tended to break down traditional teacher isolation in the classroom. Teachers in these schools were learning how to work in groups, to reach consensus. "When teachers are involved in decisionmaking, a voice is heard. There's a tendency to be silent in the traditional school." Thus, more concerns are addressed and perhaps there's "more griping and bitching. Everything is open to discussion."

Other differences and benefits for the school and district were cited as by-products of increased levels of teacher involvement in governance issues and decisionmaking. The professional staffs were described as a "team", "staff working together as a whole", with positive, energetic people who ignored cynics and critics or who were able to deal with them through group consensus building. As one principal noted, "People here solve problems themselves. They don't come in here for every little issue. For example, if a teacher would go to a classroom and find someone already there, they'd make the adjustment. With any kind of problem, they feel comfortable in making those decisions themselves." In fact, this principal expressed confidence that his building really operates on its own without teachers being totally dependent on the principal. In another building in Hillview, faculty meetings were set, agendas determined, and the business of the meeting was totally run

by the teachers. The principal was part of the meeting and was used as a resource person.

Nor were the principals in Hillview intermediaries for teachers and their concerns with the superintendent and with the school board. If programs were be to reported on or successful results to be shared publicly, the teachers made the report. One powerful example of teacher teams supported by the principal centered around one of the elementary centers in Hillview. The teachers along with the principal had met over several months to identify and suggest ideas for dealing with critical issues at their school. Together they requested a closed session meeting with the school board to lay out their plans and ideas. After the session, the school board responded quickly to their requests by providing money to hire six new teaching aides and to purchase new playground and instructional equipment, and gave this building team permission not to discuss their building's test scores publicly in comparison to other schools in the district. The teachers were very positively reinforced by the board's actions. The principal added, "One really neat thing happened the other night. After our final session together for hiring teacher aides and after agreement on who to hire for aides was completed, the teachers all hugged and there were tears. It was really emotional." Finally, principals in both districts recognized that increased involvement of teachers in decisionmaking was an as excellent mechanism for professional training within the organization and for enrichment of the pool of future administrative candidates.

Advantages and Disadvantages of teacher empowerment

The perceptions of these ten principals is that the advantages of greater teacher empowerment in schools far out weighs the disadvantages. As if to summarize for all respondents, one principal stated, "There really aren't many disadvantages. Those things are really irrelevant." The positive effects of empowerment are most evident in the areas of teachers' attitudes about their professional work and workplace, in their work behaviors, in benefits to the schools themselves, and in benefits to the principal. Empowered teachers are positive, energetic and have "enthusiasm for school and for kids." They have ownership in decisions and support those decisions and their implementation and they are prepared to deal with criticism of their decisions. Empowered teachers are more willing to take on projects, to work together on teams,

develop consensus building and group process skills. These teachers are innovative, creative, and provide motivation and support for one another.

There were also advantages for the schools. "It makes the workplace a better place." "Two heads are better than one." "You get better decisions and implementation of those decisions at the classroom level." As lines of authority become blurred, communications become more open and teachers are more willing to share professional knowledge, insights and concerns. One respondent described the difference in communications. "Traditionally, everybody hid what was going on in schools. Administrators hid things from teachers. Teachers hid things from kids. We feel comfortable sharing ideas, thoughts with teachers. We don't hide our ideas, plans, thinking." Principals also indicated that teacher empowerment in their schools is helpful to them because, "It takes a load off the principal. I get to get out to be with children." And as the first year principal added, "It's got to make my job easier as teachers begin to make decisions."

Several disadvantages to teacher empowerment, though considerably less numerous, are in the areas of "time" and "comfort" levels felt by teachers and principals. Time was an issue in three respects: there really is not enough time for all of the new committee work, project implementation, and time for teachers to meet in groups, to work together, and to interact. Time could also be a problem, ".f decisions had to be made in a timely fashion." As most of the respondents noted, "It takes so long." Finally, principals felt there was inadequate time to listen to teachers, work with them, and often resented the time they had to be out of the building to work on district committees and community projects.

Not all teachers and principals in these two school districts were comfortable with enhanced teacher empowerment. Teacher participation on building teams and on work-site committees ranged from very high levels to no participation at all. In Hillview the local teachers union was uncomfortable about empowerment and what increased levels of teacher decisionmaking and shared governance meant in terms of their bargainable conditions of employment. Not tapping into the energies and possibilities of their total staffs also bothered the principals. As the high school principal in Hillview revealed, "It doesn't do any good to just improve the professionalism of 6 to 8 when you have 60 on the staff." Another disadvantage mentioned was the problem of teacher frustration and boredom with certain types of

problems. Some problems simply take long-term persistence and focus. In some cases teacher teams are unsuccessful in resolving problems due to a lack of adeptness at problem solving in some technical areas, such as legal issues and budget areas or because they lack the process skills to deal with problems in an efficient manner. Also, there is always the possibility of teacher boredom if empowerment means dealing with trivial, mundane things. One respondent indicated another potential problem was that on occasion teachers, who were leaders of groups, tried to put in another step in the organizational hierarchy and she (the principal) had to re-explain the teacher leader role to them. Finally, though these respondents were comfortable with the inevitable risks, teachers, were "bound to make decisions you would not make."

Redefining the principal's role in teacher empowered schools

Re-thinking and re-defining the principal's leadership role in schools where teachers exercise significant professional autonomy and share in governance and decisionmaking are critical to the nurture of empowerment and to the attainment of desired educational outcomes. Findings related to this notion of understanding the principal's role will be presented in three question areas: Does teacher empowerment signal the end of the school principalship? What changes and unique problems are there for principals working with empowered teachers? What expectations do teachers and other stakeholders have of principals in teacher empowered schools?

<u>Teacher empowerment as a threat to the principalship</u>

Perhaps the richest and most animated responses in these interviews came in response to the question, Does teacher empowerment signal the end of the school principalship? The quick answer from nine of these ten respondents was a definite "NO". These principals were not threatened by teacher empowerment nor did they fear for the security of their administrative positions. Most chuckled and then added,

> "Just the opposite. I think that's ludicrous!"
> "Teachers say, 'I don't want your job because of the problems on a daily basis and all the concerns that need to be dealt with."
> "That's baloney!"
> "I don't believe that."
> "No way! Never happen."
> "Oh, I think there's enough to do."
> "I can't imagine that happening."
> "No. Nah. I don't think that at all."
> "I don't believe that's true."

One respondent, with 18 years of experience in a parochial school setting and in his second year in his position in public school, said, "I wonder about that. Sometimes I think it's that way now because of the reform movement and *A Nation at Risk.*

Fuller responses suggest that these principals believe there's a continuing need for building level administrators and that the importance of the principal's role responsibilities will not be threatened by teacher empowerment. The following statements suggest confidence and a sense of how each views changes in his/her own role as teacher professional work changes.

> "Shared governance will help us do our jobs better, to meet student needs, community needs. We've raised the level of our acceptance in the community and this will not eliminate the need for principals. In fact, if [Centremont] is representative in terms of the amount of things principals do, what we're doing is increasing."

> "Teachers realize that responding to all the unique problems in the school requires someone to handle problems up front at the building. Teachers realize that the principal spends more time and effort on solving critical problems" (societal problems)

> "I don't see how you can possibly do it. You don't have time. Someone has to be responsible directly and have time to do it. I do not see the end of the principalship in our structure."

> "Teachers still need a person to handle the daily issues. I don't see those needs ever being erased. Even if teachers are able to take over major areas, there's lots of work with kids that still needs to be done."

> "Perhaps teachers have taken a greater role in the curriculum. Changes may occur here. Principals will have many more links with community agencies, Children's Youth Agency, Mental Health, Drug Abuse. Because of more and more problems for the children. Let me give you some examples. Sixty percent of my kids are from single parent families. I have 12 children whose mothers are in jail; 25 children in my school are currently under a court order that their other parent may not pick them up; I have 90 children who are under Children and Youth court supervision."

> "What empowerment really means is getting more input. It requires more, not less. More time, more patience. There are still mundane daily things that somebody must do and decide about.

There is still a whole body of instructional expertise that people rely on the principal for."

"Someone still has to be there to allow things to happen. I don't find this as a threat."

"There are so many nuts and bolts things to do. Promoting professionalism, that's what promotes productivity, a quality program. I can't conceive that it's a threat to any principal."

"You need a person that anyone can call. If for nothing else, just to begin the process, the contact. You have easier access to principals than to classroom teachers."

Changes in the principal's role: An additive model

If principals are hoping that teacher empowerment will ease the rapid pace of daily events, high levels of fragmented activities, and work dominated by interpersonal interactions, these ten principals do not offer much comfort or support for that happening. In fact, most of these respondents saw their role becoming more demanding, not less. Comments such as, "We're spreading ourselves too thin." "Our paperwork has tripled." "The district is engaged in so many projects, too much at one time." "What we're doing is increasing. So many balls in the air, so many things we're doing." "Not enough time to devote to two or three issues and see them through." are illustrative of the sense of role overload that other researchers have described in their research on principal worklife (Kmetz and Willower, 1982; Martin and Willower, 1981; and Peterson, 1978). There was the general perception that the principal's role was an additive one in which new demands and responsibilities became critically important to effective leadership but where few if any of the former role demands were taken away. "We continually add to a principal's job, never subtract." However, as one principal noted, "these things are expanded out to others or now are so routine that they take no time at all." Despite the add-on nature of the principal's role, each has his/her own method for prioritizing the things that most need attention. "I can spend a half an hour solving nuts and bolts issues or I can spend two minutes." A sense of conscious

engagement, rather than a job dominated by busywork, emerged as each described how his/her role had changed.

Five areas highlighted the changes these principals saw in their roles in schools: the need for highly developed communications skills; expansion of the principal's role beyond the school site; role perception (or misperception) by others; a re-emphasis and clarification of role expectations; and, the demand for time. Many of these changes appeared to be the result of changes in teacher involvement in decisionmaking and governance while others may be due to changes in schcols and society in general.

Each of these respondents noted the importance of people skills. With more meetings, more teacher/teacher interaction and more small group planning, these administrators recognized the need for more highly developed interpersonal communications skills. "Principals go through growth phases just like teachers. I'm much more process oriented than six years ago." An elementary principal stated, "Management is ok, but I think that's secondary to personal skills and what' good for kids." One respondent noted that, "It takes a great deal more persuasion." Another adds, "Ten, fifteen years ago it was different. The principal operated in isolation. He didn't need people skills. Really good personal skills, if you don't have them, your time is limited. You won't enjoy a level of success and quality in school without them. I've come a long way in that area." The willingness and capacity to listen was cited as, "the top quality for an administrator." Principals need to be "great listeners."

The principals' responsibilities are also expanding beyond the school site. "There is a desire for more involvement of principals with the community, forming parent partnerships." Another principal adds, "All of these things are pulling principals away from observing teachers and kids. More and more I'm working with families and the community." "I'm out of the building more than I'd like to be. There are more needs out there." District level meetings, evening meetings with parents and community groups, and cooperation with other social agencies are required for effective leadership and problem solving in their schools. The junior assistant principal explained. "Schools are looked to to solve all of society's ills. These have drastically changed my

job."   The middle school assistant principal added, "The process in school life becomes harder to adjust to for children because of the norms based on regulation and a large portion of the students we serve don't have the same regulation norms in their homes."   "Today it seems to be a daily battle."

As the roles of principals are redefined in these schools, each principal needs to understand the nature of these new role dimensions as well as be able to explain them to others.   Failure to do so creates role conflict and role misperception(s).   At times some teachers remain uncomfortable with the environment of empowerment and the responsibilities it lays on them.   One principal stated that some of his teachers still think he should just tell people what to do.   Another example of the need for role articulation was explained by the assistant (co-principal) at the high school in Hillview.   "Occasionally people outside the organization don't understand the process of shared governance.   For example, I might get a call from outside.   A parent wants to know what's going on.   I'll say I need to talk with the teachers about what they're doing.   They think, ' why the hell don't you know what' going on in your school?'   They think I'm not doing my job.   I need to tell them I'll talk with the teachers who are handling it."   Finally, an elementary principal described how newly empowered teachers might misconstrue and misrepresent their role and position in the organization to others by trying to add a step in the hierarchy.   "I need to explain it to them."

In addition to enhanced interpersonal skills, principals described personal as well as organizational characteristics that influenced their role.   "It takes for me a lot of patience because I'm a type A personality. I want for the committee to get something done.   I have a tendency to overlead.   I want to tell them that's stupid.   Do it this way!"   Another explained.   "I see myself wanting to hurry things up and get it done." The middle school principal added, "Initially everyone has a messianic complex that comes from the compulsion to do everything.   One grows out of that because of necessity one can't do everything.   One's success as principal depends on helping others be successful.   I'm becoming more trusting of groups.   Groups don't make the same mistakes individuals do."   Trust, collegiality, comfort level, allowing

decisionmaking latitude, a general belief in teachers and in the shared governance process, and patience were climate factors and leadership qualities that each principal needed to nurture and develop further.

As noted earlier in the findings, the press of time weighed heavily on these principals sense of role and their workday as well as the workload of teachers. Six of the ten respondents listed either lack of time or the amount of time required to carry out shared governance processes as the major disadvantage of teacher empowerment in their schools. The four preceding factors all required more time of the principals and of the teachers on their staffs. As one elementary principal stated, " some people doing all of the things are starting to get tired." Another added, "Teachers get real gungho, then the reality of the length of time to deal with it sets in."

Teachers' expectations of principals

What do teachers expect from their principal in schools where they share in governance and in decisionmaking? These ten respondents had a clear sense of what their staffs expected. Teachers expect:

> "An honest hearing of their concerns."
> "They expect me to listen, be supportive, and work with them as a member of the committee."
> "Teachers want feedback on their ideas."
> "To be a sounding board." "Expect my opinion."
> "On occasion some dollars."
> "Let them have time to do things."
> "They expect I'll endorse their decisions. Initially that was the most frightening thing for me as a principal. They're smarter than I thought they were and that I trusted they would be."
> "Teachers still expect me to be in charge of everything."
> "They expect me to model a leadership style that's effective. They expect me to be somewhat knowledgeable."
> "Teachers expect me to be involved. They expect me to be supportive and promote professionalism and collegiality. They expect me to give them positive and realistic feedback. They expect to get a pat on the back, a note. They expect me to be able to listen. That's the most important thing."
> "At this stage, approval. We're in a transition."
> "If teachers invest in their professional growth, they expect administrators to create the best possible environment."

Two interviews questions dealt with what principals did to support and to affect positively teachers' professional work in school.

Support included providing and/or guiding teacher teams to resources of time, space, and dollars to carry out their ideas. " "Give them more leeway and creative use of time." Teachers also wanted support in conflicts with parents. And in their decisionmaking, "They want support without questions." Teachers also need reassurances in their professional growth and empowerment. As one principal put it. "There is a continual need to reassure them that their ideas, plans, even when questioned and challenged, are valued." Support also meant, that the principal should, "Stay out of their way." "Trust Them." "Have faith in them." "Establish no consequences." "Allow people to make mistakes." "Being patient and trusting enough to let things happen." "To let others go through a growth process. That's the one that kills me. It was hard for me. I want to direct them." Despite the notion of freedom and autonomy, teachers expected the principal to be highly visible and around the school becoming informed about concerns, issues, and programs and "to be available to them." Teachers also expected the principal to, "Provide an environment that is supportive, friendly, open and sharing."

Conclusion

As indicated in the introduction, one has to be very cautious in making definitive statements based on the responses of these ten principals from two school districts. The author is cognizant of the limitations of this investigation and of the possibility of idiosyncratic perceptions reflected in these data. Nevertheless, as a preliminary step in a long-term investigation of the effects of teacher empowerment on the multiple roles of the school principal, the data do suggest important themes and implications for further investigations as well as for practice in school leadership. Nine important themes emerged from these interview data regarding teacher empowerment and the principalship. They are:

1.) the language of shared governance and empowerment
2.) readiness for professional growth and empowerment
3.) the importance of the superintendent's leadership in empowerment

4.) time as a key resource for empowerment
5.) boundary spanning for school principals
6.) enhancement of teachers and principals' professional image
7.) out of the silence-teachers' voices are heard
8.) shared professional thinking
9.) dealing with power through empowerment

The empowerment of teachers in these two school districts reflected distinct sets of images and language regarding shared governance and enhanced professional autonomy. In Centremont the administrators clearly understood the limitations on empowerment as operationalized through the Alliance of Centremont Educators. The building teams worked on problem solving of daily worklife issues, not policy. This was not shared governance. Empowerment in Centremont was structured around a management training program dedicated to enhancing individual problem solving skills and to providing a systematic means for realizing the broad educational goals in the district. Principals spoke of "opportunity finding" and prioritization of "opportunities." The future of empowerment in Centremont suggested an ever expanding network of trained professionals working at unit and district levels on problem solving teams. In Hillview empowerment was steeped in the notion of "an invitation" to professionalism. The model was less a structured model for empowerment and more an intentional administrative goal to enhance teacher and administrator professional growth in all areas. The main messages of empowerment were delivered through modeling of professional behaviors and reflected in the daily worklife patterns and relationships between the superintendent and principals, teachers and principals, and teachers and teachers.

"Wanting teachers to make decisions doesn't mean they're ready. It's a slow process to teach teachers to make decisions." Readiness was an important antecedent to empowerment in these schools. Empowerment has to, "Be a process that evolves slowly. People have to be ready to participate." At times teachers were described as curious individuals cautiously peering into "the cave" to see what was there. Both principals and teachers needed to be comfortable with the realities of empowerment as they were expressed in their schools. As a Hillview principal noted, "We have been permitted here to seek our own comfort level in shared governance. It's not one model, one

superimposed system. That would be counter-productive" He goes on to say, "I wouldn't come home from a conference with an idea and try to impose it. It wouldn't work. Our superintendent let's us seek our own comfort level."

Levels of comfort and readiness also suggest that these principals recognize that a wide range of individual differences exists within any school and district. Thus, it is important to allow for varying levels of teacher engagement and commitment to team efforts and governance issues depending on career and adult stages of development. Hackman (1986) describes three things advocates of change in an organization need to do to move people along toward self-management. First, they must know where they want to go and be clear about organizational and human resource values and aspirations. Second, leaders need to understand the conditions which foster and encourage self-management. Third, leaders, "Must be sensitive to realities of timing and politics-factors that, perhaps more than any other, determine when one should take action and when it is wiser to lie in wait for a more favorable opportunity" (p. 130). Across both districts, the responses of these ten administrators suggest that they understood these criteria for moving teachers toward empowerment and self-management.

Though not the only source of motivation for greater teacher empowerment, clearly the superintendent in both of these districts was a major figure of influence. Both superintendents were described as visionary leaders and idea people. An important difference between them was the framework each viewed as an appropriate vehicle for teacher empowerment in their district. In Centremont the model was the ACE Project with structured components for training and development and for team level problem solving. Though beginning to have an impact on the identification of daily teacher/principal worklife issues outside the arena of policy, one principal saw the limitations to professional empowerment through the ACE Project. She confides, "It's a sham! Not between principals and teachers. We all want it. On the district level it's just a public relations thing. Teachers are supposed to have free reign of problem identification. They don't. The Assistant Superintendent controls the agenda and feedback on what we have done. Teachers haven't yet realized these limitations, but they soon will." In Hillview the superintendent was a primary motivating force based less on espoused beliefs and more on practiced and modeled empowerment enhancing behaviors.

Time was described as one of the most important resources and requirements for effective empowerment of teachers and principals. Though it sounds trite, time is money in teacher empowerment. Time to plan, to interact, to listen, to carry out plans is often translated into budget allocations with assigned costs. The press of time was reflected across these respond^nts' descriptions of the demands and requirements for realizing empowerment in their schools. Often there was simply not enough time to accomplish all of the work in schools. Recognizing the .:me constraints which limit teacher empowerment, principals and teachers need to make choices as how much time is devoted to which tasks. Finally, the notion of "wait time" was expressed as the capacity to have patience and to be able to wait for things to happen. Empowerment via the express route is unlikely to occur in schools.

A great deal about the internal environment of schools is predictable. Re-reading Willard Waller's Sociology of Teaching provides substantial evidence of the enduring characteristics of public schools and worklife in them. Regardless of these lasting qualities, professional worklife in schools is greatly influenced by dramatic changes in the external environment. Drugs and alcohol, the disintegration of the nuclear family, divorce, and poverty are but a few of the realities affecting the daily activities of teachers and principals. These respondents saw that their role as principal was expanding beyond the walls of the school to cooperative efforts with other social welfare agencies, with parents, and with an increasing number of non-parent educational stakeholders in the community.

The enhancement of teachers' professional image was important in all schools. Despite the fact that Centremont was more tightly constrained in terms of allowable decisionmaking latitude and problem definition areas than was Hillview, the principals in each believed that empowerment must be legitimate, be based on meaningful involvement, and be built on high levels of trust. There was a wide range of teachers' activities and behaviors which principals cited as evidence of shared governance and professional autonomy in their schools. Some staffs had moved beyond the "little things" to assume near complete responsibility for their own career and professional development. The degree of readiness and levels of trust established in buildings were the best predictors of level participation and level of empowerment. As teachers experienced greater latitude in their professional practices, they had opportunities to exercise judgment and risk taking

behaviors which were opportunities for further professional learning and development rather than occasions for authoritarian critiques.

Several principals indicated that their schools were different from more traditionally organized ones in that teachers' voices were heard. Out of the silence created by years of hierarchically operated schools and from years of education bashing from many groups, teachers have initiated the conversation of empowerment. As indicated in several settings the level of discourse is at times trivial and focuses on seemingly irrelevant issues. However, as professional trust, and successful experiences in shared problem solving occur in schools, teachers begin to gain confidence, reassurance, and motivation to sustain their own professional growth and empowerment. As the metaphor of conversation implies, communication in schools with empowered teachers and principals flows vertically and horizontally. A repertoire of interpersonal communication skills is important for effective leadership. The capacity and willingness to listen is perhaps the most important conversational skill that principals need to develop as teachers become more empowered.

The conversation metaphor also suggests that both teachers and administrators are revealing their professional thinking and insights regarding their work in schools. The conversation in Centremont was stimulated by problem identification and opportunity finding through networks of professional teams in and across schools. In Hillview, the conversation helped to blurr formal lines of authority in the daily work of professionals in schools and to discourage what might best be described as an "organizational shell game" in which everyone hides what they are feeling and thinking from one another. As levels of trust and collegiality are affirmed, the empowered teaching/learning cultures in schools help to dispel the cryptic verbal repartee of "guess what we're thinking."

This paper began with a definition of the concept of empowerment. The ways in which principals conceptualize and continually negotiate and forge meaning out of the daily events in their worklives suggest that each principal has developed implicitly, if not explicitly, a workable and comfortable sense of power, "the ability to influence the behavior of others." Because of their formal organizational positions, these principals obviously could never completely shed the stripes of authority and hierarchy and thus were never totally "just a member of the teacher work group." Each was comfortable with

his/her administrative role and believed that a principal's own behaviors and activities were important factors which helped to support and enhance teacher empowerment in their schools. McClelland's trichotomy of motivations contains three basic needs. They are the needs for achievement, power, and affiliation. In terms of power, principals as middle managers often rely upon mechanisms of control to satisfy the need for power in their position. Each of these principals was able to deal their need for control by translating the exercising of control into being well informed, oeing knowledgeable, trusting in others, being highly visible, and in monitoring the progress and accomplishments of others. These ten principals clearly had come to understand that power in schools was not a finite resource that had to be guarded and conserved but was a reserve of infinite energy, ideas and possibilities for bringing about the second wave of educational reform- the empowerment of teachers.

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