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ABSTRACT

Factors that can powerfully affect an educator's ability to manage school change are culture, leadership, and readiness. Movement from bureaucracy to community, from isolation to collaboration, involves cultural changes. Managing the change process within a cultural context is influenced by the structural, human resources, political, and symbolic frames of reference that a leader employs when analyzing the organization. Leadership in schools continues to revolve around the role of principal. Principals need to develop a clear, unified focus, create a common cultural perspective, and support a constant push for improvement. Creating readiness for change is a precondition to restructuring. Several models suggest stages that leaders should understand before they begin a transformative change process. Ten commitments to change that a school staff might embrace are identified, and a series of questions are provided that can be used to assess current practices and ascertain which restructuring goals a school is ready to undertake. One effective means of building readiness is to provide staff the opportunity to visit schools that are actively involved in restructuring and ask questions about meaning, organization, and effects of change. (Contains 23 references.) (MLF)

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Preface

Before pulling up anchor and setting sail for the land of restructuring, it is important for educators to adequately prepare for the voyage. By taking time to examine a number of variables, administrators and teachers can become more adept at avoiding the rocks and shoals of restructuring and making the most out of favorable winds and currents. This Bulletin examines three factors that can powerfully affect an educator's ability to manage, and effectively navigate through, the waters of change: *culture*, *leadership*, and *readiness*. If given due consideration, these elements can help keep fundamental change efforts afloat. Conversely, if not taken into account, they can cause the change process to founder.

David T. Conley begins by presenting four frames through which organizational culture can be viewed. He then highlights ways principals, by exercising appropriate leadership, can guide the reshaping and restructuring of school culture. Next, Conley focuses on how an administrator's conceptualization of power and authority profoundly affects the manner in which change is approached and largely determines whether a collective sense of ownership of the change process develops within the school community. Finally, Conley deals with readiness for change, a barometer of the probable success or failure of change efforts. He identifies ten commitments to change a school staff might embrace and provides a series of questions that can be used to assess current practices and ascertain which restructuring goals a school is ready to undertake.

Conley is an associate professor in the University of Oregon's Division of Educational Policy and Management. He has conducted studies of schools involved in restructuring, served as a consultant on restructuring for schools and districts, and spoken and written extensively on the topic of restructuring. Among Conley's numerous publications is an OSSC Bulletin titled *Lessons from Laboratories in School Restructuring: Oregon's "2020" Schools Take Control of Their Own Reform.*

This Bulletin has been excerpted with permission from Conley's forthcoming book *Roadmap to Restructuring*, which will be published in June 1993 by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, University of Oregon. Copies of the 400+-page book will sell for $18.95 each.

Contents

Introduction

Given that change in education is difficult, how can it be achieved? It's clear that schools are different in many ways from twenty, fifty, or one hundred years ago, naysayers notwithstanding. How did they change? In this Bulletin, I address several issues related to the question of how to manage systems change in education. Three important factors can be managed with considerable impact: culture, leadership, and readiness.

The discussion of school culture provides an overview of the concept and its importance in understanding the effect change has on those affected by it. I present four frames of reference through which organizations might be viewed and change might be effected.

Leadership in schools continues to revolve around the role of principal, even as the nature of the role is changing. The critical nature of this role is considered here. One of the key things a leader can do is create readiness for change—an often-overlooked dimension of the change process.

The Bulletin continues with two chapters that offer means to help faculties assess their readiness and identify current practices and desired direction. Such activities can precede more formal attempts at vision-building. One helpful step is to visit other schools that may serve as models for restructuring.

Chapter 1

Understanding Culture and Organizational Frames of Reference

One of the factors that must be considered when attempting to bring about fundamental change in an institution is its culture. The process of school restructuring cannot be thought of simply in terms of changes in organizational structure, or of a proliferation of isolated projects and programs. Ultimately, it must address issues of the culture of the school. Deal (1987) explains why culture is so important as a means to understand schools as stable environments:

> Culture as a construct helps explain why classrooms and schools exhibit common and stable patterns across variable conditions. Internally, culture gives meaning to instructional activity and provides a symbolic bridge between action and results. It fuses individual identity with collective destiny. Externally, culture provides the symbolic facade that evokes faith and confidence among outsiders with a stake in education (Meyer and Rowan1983). (Deal 1987)

The Power of Culture

Understanding the importance and power of culture can help educational leaders attend to the needs that participants in the organization are sure to have in times of rapid change, which evokes powerful psychological responses on the part of many people:

> Looking at the problem of change through a cultural lens, we see an entirely different picture. Culture is a social invention created to give meaning to human endeavor. It provides stability, certainty, and

predictability. People fear ambiguity and want assurance that they are in control of their surroundings. Culture imbues life with meaning and through symbols creates a sense of efficacy and control. Change creates existential havoc because it introduces disequilibrium, uncertainty, and makes day-to-day life chaotic and unpredictable. People understandably feel threatened and out of control when their existential pillars become shaky or are taken away.

On an even more basic level, change involves existential loss (Marris, 1974). People become emotionally attached to symbols and rituals, much as they do to lovers, spouses, children and pets (Deal, 1985). When attachments to people or objects are broken through death or departure, people experience a deep sense of loss and grief. Change creates a similar reaction....

People develop attachments to values, heroes, rituals, ceremonies, stories, gossips, storytellers, priests, and other cultural players. When change alters or breaks the attachment, meaning is questioned. Often, the change deeply affects those inside the culture as well as those outside.... The existential explanation identifies the basic problems of change in educational organizations as cultural transitions. (Deal 1987)

Deal suggests that leaders must be adept at confronting the dilemmas that face organizations, not merely at solving problems. Dilemmas by their nature are insoluble. Leaders, rather than moving from problem to problem, attempt to create meaning by addressing recurring frustrations and seemingly unresolvable contradictions in ways that allow the organization to move itself forward and not remain trapped applying the same solutions over and over to problems that do not lend themselves to solution within the current cultural context of the organization:

Leaders reframe impossible dilemmas into novel opportunities. Leaders in organizations across all sectors are confronted with many of the same issues that educators now face: (1) How do we encourage meaning and commitment; (2) how do we deal with loss and change; and (3) how can we shape symbols that convey the essence of the enterprise to insiders and outsiders? Educational leaders must create artful ways to reweave organizational tapestries from old traditions, current realities, and future visions. This work cannot be done by clinging to old ways, emulating principles from effective schools and excellent companies, or divining futuristic images from what we imagine the next decades will be like. Rather, it takes a collective look backward, inward, and ahead—in education on the part of administrators, teachers, parents, students, and other members of a school community. It is a process of transformation akin to the one that produces a butterfly from a caterpillar—a cocoon of human experience in which past, present, and future are fused together in an organic process....

> Old practices and other losses need to be buried and commemorated. Meaningless practices and symbols need to be analyzed and revitalized. Emerging visions, dreams, and hopes need to be articulated and celebrated. These are the core tasks that will occupy educational leaders for several years to come. (Deal 1987)

School leaders need to be capable of reading school culture if they hope to manage fundamental change successfully. Good ideas are rarely implemented simply because they make sense. Rather, schools tend to accept ideas or programs that are consistent with the existing structure, assumptions, and culture of the school, so that a school that "believes in" tracking is much more open to a program that makes tracking more effective than one that calls for the abandonment of tracking. The restructuring process calls for the critical examination of fundamental assumptions, practices, and relationships. It implies a movement from bureaucracy to community, from isolation to collaboration. Such changes are cultural changes, not just programmatic changes.

Managing Culture

Managing culture is an imprecise process that is not easily prescribed. This is part of the art of leadership, knowing when to do what in ways that have an impact on members of the organization:

> Reading culture takes several forms: watching, sensing, listening, interpreting, using all of one's senses, and even employing intuition when necessary. First, the leader must listen to the echoes of school history....
>
> A principal must also listen to the key voices of the present. (The people in the informal leadership network of the school) may be thought of as cultural "players" at the school....The cast of characters include:
>
> - Priests and priestesses—long-time residents who "minister" to the needs of the school. They take confessions, preside over rituals and ceremonies, and link the school to the ways of the past;
> - Storytellers—recreate the past and personify contemporary exploits through lore and informal history;
> - Gossips—keep everyone current on contemporary matters of importance, as well as trivia of no special merit. They form the informal grapevine that carries information far ahead of formal channels of communication;
> - Spies, counterspies, and moles—carry on subterranean negotiations which keep informal checks and balances among various power centers in the school. Through such covert operations, much of the work of the school is transacted....

Most important, the leader must listen for the deeper dreams and hopes the school community holds for the future....

This represents emerging energy the principal can tap and a deep belief system to which he or she can appeal when articulating what the school might become.

A principal can get an initial reading of a school by asking these key questions about the founding, traditions, building, current realities, and future dreams of the school:

- How long has the school existed?
- Why was it built, and who were the first inhabitants?
- Who had a major influence on the school's direction?
- What critical incidents occurred in the past, and how were they resolved, if at all?
- What were preceding principals, teachers, and students like?
- What does the school's architecture convey? How is space arranged and used?
- What subcultures exist inside and outside the school?
- Who are the recognized (and unrecognized) heroes and villains of the school?
- What do people say (and think) when asked what the school stands for? What would they miss if they left?
- What events are assigned special importance?
- How is conflict typically defined? How is it handled?
- What are the key ceremonies and stories of the school?
- What do people wish for? Are there patterns to their individual dreams? (Deal and Peterson 1990)

Culture cannot be ignored. No program of change starts with a clean slate. The history of the institution must be recognized and dealt with. The current communication patterns and the implicit, unquestioned assumptions and value systems must be understood and acknowledged. The hopes and aspirations, dreams and fears for the future must be articulated and addressed. Understanding and responding to the school culture seems to be a critical dimension that has to be addressed in the development of a strategy for school restructuring and in the implementation of such a program.

Managing Change

Managing the change process within a cultural context is influenced by the frame of reference the leader employs when analyzing the organization. Leaders often have unconscious tendencies to apply one frame of reference

through which they tend to explain all of what occurs in the organization, and within which all of their solutions operate. Bolman and Deal (1991) have suggested four frames of reference commonly employed by managers and leaders as they attempt to manage organizations and bring about changes in them:

> The structural frame...emphasizes the importance of formal roles and relationships. Structures—commonly depicted by means of organization charts—are created to fit an organization's environment and technology.... Problems arise when the structure does not fit the situation. At that point, some form of reorganization is needed to remedy the mismatch.
>
> The human resources frame...starts with the fundamental premise that organizations are inhabited by individuals who have needs, feelings, and prejudices.... From a human resources perspective, the key to effectiveness is to tailor organizations to people—to find an organizational form that enables people to get the job done while feeling good about what they are doing.
>
> The political frame...views organizations as arenas in which different interest groups compete for power and scarce resources.... Problems arise because power is concentrated in the wrong places or because it is so broadly dispersed that nothing gets done. Solutions are developed through political skill and acumen.
>
> The symbolic frame...abandons the assumption of rationality that appears in the other frames. It treats organizations as tribes, theater, or carnivals. In this view, organizations are cultures that are propelled more by rituals, ceremonies, stories, heroes, and myths than by rules, policies, and managerial authority.... Improvements in rebuilding the expressive or spiritual side of organizations come through the use of symbol, myth, and magic.
>
> Each of these frames has its own vision or image of reality. Only when managers, consultants, and policymakers can look through all four are they likely to appreciate the depth and complexity of organizational life.

Restructuring schools, then, is not simply the process of bringing about change in one of these frames while ignoring the others. Structural changes alone, such as forming a new committee or rewriting the role descriptions of department chairs, are not likely to be successful. Neither will activities that simply improve the quality of teacher worklife with no linkage to job performance; in other words, happier teachers are not automatically better teachers. Nor will more adept manipulation of the political system present in the school lead directly to restructuring. Political maneuvering can help or hinder progress but needs linkages to other frames, as well. Careful management of symbol systems, rituals, and myths can also contribute to successful change

but does not guarantee it in isolation. However, if educators understand that change must occur to some degree in each of these frames, restructuring is more likely to occur and to transform schooling. A leader's job is to make conscious decisions that have an impact on the culture of the school in a way that makes that culture more amenable to change and more functional in its delivery of services to students.

Chapter 2

The Critical Role of the Principal

Principals remain a key variable in modifying school culture and guiding the change process (Dwyer 1986, Dwyer 1984, Fullan 1985, Smith and Andrews 1989). However, many are unable to see how they will be successful in a new organizational structure where they may not be at the center of power. Hallinger and others (1991) report that "principals viewed the effects of restructuring on themselves almost exclusively in terms of power. They forecast new roles with fewer decisions to make by themselves leading to a loss of control and power."

Principals' Reactions to Restructuring

Bredeson (1991) considers principals' reactions to restructuring from the perspective of role anxiety. He discusses the degree to which "role strain" caused stress among the principals he studied.

> Even under the most optimal of conditions, shifts in role and role expectations produce varying degrees of role strain, defined... as acute affective/cognitive disturbance for an individual role holder manifested as anxiety, discomfort, uneasiness, perplexity and/or general distress.
>
> The response to interview questions revealed that each of these principals was experiencing varying states and levels of anxiety manifested in feelings of having lost control, fear of failure, self-doubts about personal competence and ability to be successful, impatience and frustration, loss of identity, and increased feelings of uncertainty brought about by significant changes in their professional worklife. The whole notion of letting go of one set of professional functions and identities while learning others was described as risky, wearisome, and frustrating.

One key link in restructuring may be to enable principals to see what their new roles will look like, and to help them to develop the skills necessary to be successful in these new roles. While this same recommendation also applies to teachers, it may be overlooked in the case of principals, who are expected, in many cases, to be largely responsible for their own professional growth and development. Given the ability of the principal to make or break innovations in schools, it is critical for them to see how they can be "winners" in any restructured system.

Developing Leaders for School Restructuring

The notion of principals and teachers as fellow voyagers in this journey toward restructured schools suggests new relationships between them. Charles Mojkowski and Richard Bamberger (1991), in their study of how to develop leaders for restructuring schools, list twelve activities in which such leaders should engage. These activities appear to be consistent with those being practiced by principals in schools where research on restructuring has occurred (Louis 1990, Goldman and others 1993). These leaders do the following:

- *Create dissonance.* Using a variety of methods, new leaders constantly remind staff and others of the gap between the vision that they have for their children and their current actions and accomplishments. They use this dissonance to create a press for improvement.
- *Prepare for and create opportunities.* They exhibit a constructive and creative opportunism. They pursue opportunities that will move the school closer to the accomplishment of its mission and ignore those that do not.
- *Forge connections and create interdependencies.* They create new roles and relationships. They dismantle the egg crate structure of schools and create opportunities and processes for connecting teachers within and across disciplines and for connecting all people inside and outside of the school community to one another. By skillfully creating interdependencies, leaders create the consensus for understanding and action that is required in restructuring environments. The analogy of an orchestra leader is often employed to describe the subtle ways in which these leaders bind independent entrepreneurs to a shared vision and mission.
- *Encourage risk taking.* School people typically are uncomfortable with taking risks. Premature and arbitrary judgments and punishments too often inhibit creativity and risk taking. Leaders of restructuring schools create environments and conditions that provide increased comfort with risk taking and with making

mistakes and learning from them. These leaders protect risk-takers from premature judgments of failure.

- *Follow as well as lead.* Leaders recreate themselves throughout the organization, nurturing leadership behaviors in all staff. They lead through service rather than position, providing support and good "follow-ship" to ad hoc leaders.
- *Use information.* Administrators in restructuring environments use a variety of information about student and organizational performance. They are clear communicators who use multiple channels for accessing and distributing information. They create new ways to think about and measure growth and productivity of learners and the learning process. Leaders use research and practice information to guide innovation and change. They monitor and document the implementation process.
- *Foster the long view.* Impatience is a prominent American virtue with serious side-effects. Leaders know when and how to delay judgment, tolerate and learn from interim set-backs, and invest for long-term yields. They know "when to hold them, and when to fold them," guided by their sense of mission and strategic direction. They work incrementally within a comprehensive design of restructuring, guided by their vision of learners and learning. The special requirements of restructuring—moving incrementally within a comprehensive design—require a highly skilled leader and facilitator.
- *Acquire resources.* They are particularly adept at resource acquisition and distributing, finding flexible resources through competitive grants and assistance from business and community organizations. They practice resource reallocation and cost containment. They have a simultaneous macro and micro orientation, identifying pockets of readiness and resistance and allocating resources accordingly. They find time for staff to plan and develop.
- *Negotiate for win-win outcomes.* They work constructively and creatively with teacher representatives within the collective bargaining agreement. They use the collective bargaining process to forge new professional agreements dealing with the teaching and learning process.
- *Employ change strategies.* The research on change management contains ample tools for analysis and intervention. Leaders are skilled in analyzing concerns and levels of commitment. They configure the right mix of strategies and tactics to keep new undertakings on track through all stages of an improvement effort. These leaders are change strategists, recognizing the dynamics of their organization and determining the potential for change.
- *Provide stability in change.* The elimination of function, the deliberate abandonment of elements of the organization that have not worked previously, needs to be accompanied by a framework

that provides stability while the changes are taking place. Restructuring leaders construct a scaffolding for the organization and its people so that they can experiment with new ideas, take risks and dismantle some aspects of the organization without losing a sense of the overall framework in which they are working. These leaders provide order and direction in an ambiguous and uncertain environment.

- *Grow people while getting the work accomplished.* Formal staff development is only one means of developing staff and others in the school community. Often the most powerful learning is accomplished while meaningful work is being done. Leaders help staff to move, in their thinking and behavior, beyond the limits of their own experience. They create self-managing and self-learning groups and invest heavily in staff development. They identify and nurture potential leaders to ensure that the foundation for restructuring will endure beyond their tenure.

Administrative Flexibility Is Key to Success

Sagor's (1992) study of three principals who "make a difference" suggests that simply assigning more authority to principals in the absence of role redefinition is unlikely to lead to major educational improvements. Principals need to be in the business of developing a clear, unified focus, creating a common cultural perspective, and supporting a constant push for improvement.

This new style of leadership may have as its hallmark the ability of the leader to sublimate her or his ego to the collective needs and potentialities of the organization. This does not mean surrendering decision-making responsibility or adopting a laissez-faire style of leadership. It does suggest a very difficult balancing act requiring the principal to have a vision of education, but allowing that vision to be shaped and modified by others. The ultimate goal is to have one collective vision with broad ownership that incorporates elements of the principal's vision and of other members of the school community.

Sergiovanni (1990) describes this new style as leadership by bonding, where the leader, having aroused human potential, satisfied higher needs, and raised expectations of leader and followers, then arouses awareness and consciousness that "elevates organizational goals and purposes to the level of a shared covenant and bonds together leader and followers in a moral commitment." The model is one of shared commitment and vision. This can be very difficult to accomplish in environments where the principal is "in charge" and is the primary, or sole, source of direction for school improvement or change.

Chapter 3

Creating Readiness for Restructuring

Readiness is an elusive and little-examined dimension of the change process that becomes much more important as the magnitude of the change increases. Fullan (1991) reminds us that "above all planning must consider the pre-implementation issues of whether and how to start, and what readiness conditions might be essential prior to commencing."

If people are being asked to make a small change in their routines and practices, little readiness is needed. Written instructions delivered impersonally may be entirely adequate, for example. However, when the nature of the change is substantive, very different procedures are suggested. In such a context, readiness for change becomes its own independent dimension of the change process.

Many school leaders appear to misjudge and underestimate the amount of time and energy that must be spent on readiness. The leaders have already adjusted their world view and accommodated themselves to the change they are proposing. More importantly, they can see how they will succeed, or at the least survive, after the change has taken place. They can put what they are suggesting into a broader context and are comfortable that they understand most of the predictable ramifications of the decision to change. They have been able to adjust their mental model of the world to accommodate what they are proposing.

Cultivating Acceptance for Change

For many, perhaps most, of the people in the organization who are being asked to change, this level of awareness simply does not exist, nor can it exist without difficulty. Readiness is not achieved by simply providing

information to participants and answering their questions regarding how the changes will affect them. Ultimately all participants need the opportunity to engage actively with the change process at a different, more fundamental level. They need to be given the opportunity to understand the rationale for change, the conceptual framework within which it exists. Readiness activities are those that allow participants in fundamental change to have the opportunity to reshape their mental model, their world view, to accommodate the proposed changes, and, most importantly, to understand how they will be able to survive and succeed in the new environment.

Schmidt and Finnigan (1992) discuss the difficulties and dangers of systems-level transformative change. They suggest that the leaders in an organization make certain they are prepared to develop a knowledge base in each of six key areas before they begin a transformative change process:

1. Understanding the dynamics of organizational transformation
2. Assessing your organization's readiness for change
3. Assessing your management team
4. Reviewing your own leadership style
5. Learning from other organizations' experiences
6. Getting started

Schmidt and Finnigan emphasize that organizations are social systems. They take input from their environment, process it, and deliver output. Systems are made up of interdependent component parts that shift or adjust to accommodate the demands of the environment but do not necessarily coordinate these adjustments. The adjustments function primarily to maintain equilibrium, or the status quo. Changes in one part affect all others in unintended, uncontrolled ways. Organizations maintain equilibrium only through the expenditure of great amounts of energy. All change requires energy. In times of rapid change, it makes more sense to enable the organization to become inherently more adaptive, manipulating the flow of energy so that it does not go primarily toward a return to equilibrium, but rather toward enabling the organization to become more adaptive as one of its integral features.

Preparing Strategies for Change

Significant change is difficult in any organization, say Schmidt and Finnigan, who describe some of the factors that leaders might keep in mind when preparing change strategies:

> Because changes are naturally disruptive, many people naturally resist them. Some of the factors that must be taken into consideration are these:

- The level of dissatisfaction with the present situation.
- The cost of change (short-term and long-term).
- How well people understand the proposed "future state."
- The consequences of not changing.
- The clarity of the path for changing.

In general, people will support a change if (1) they are convinced that the present situation is not desirable; (2) the proposed "future" is clear, sensible, and desirable; (3) the path toward the future is clear and realistic; and (4) the cost of the change is not too high....[T]his involves asking four critical questions:

- How will the people in the organization be affected by the change? What will they gain and what will they lose?
- How clearly do they see the advantage of the changed situation?
- How dissatisfied are they with the present situation?
- How prepared are they to take the first steps to bring about the change?

Concerns-Based Adoption Model

The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (Hord and others 1987) suggests seven stages of concern that teachers may go through when implementing an innovation. The research done to develop this model focused on how teachers responded to discrete educational innovations, such as a new curriculum. In that sense the model may be of less value in understanding large-scale systems change. However, there are many lessons from the CBAM model that appear to be relevant.

The first five stages—awareness concerns, informational concerns, personal concerns, management concerns, and consequences concerns—relate most directly to issues of readiness. Although in the CBAM model some of these stages of concern—most notably management and consequences—were to be addressed in the context of implementing a specific program, they are also informative of the issues that need to be addressed before any major change is undertaken. The additional two stages of the model—collaboration concerns and refocusing concerns—while important to consider, are not directly related to readiness issues. Hord and others (1987) suggest ways to address concerns at each of the first five levels. The following statements relate specifically to readiness concerns and represent a subset of all statements offered by Hord and others.

Stage 0—Awareness Concerns

- If possible, involve teachers in discussions and decisions about the

innovation and its implementation.

- Share enough information to arouse interest, but not so much that it overwhelms.
- Acknowledge that a lack of awareness is expected and reasonable, and that no questions about the innovation are foolish.
- Encourage unaware persons to talk with colleagues who know about the innovation.

Stage 1—Informational Concerns

- Provide clear and accurate information about the innovation.
- Have persons who have used the innovation in other settings visit with your teachers. Visits to user schools could also be arranged.
- Help teachers see how the innovation relates to their current practices, both in regard to similarities and differences.

Stage 2—Personal Concerns

- Legitimize the existence and expression of personal concerns.
- Use personal notes and conversations to provide encouragement and reinforce personal adequacy.
- Connect these teachers with others whose personal concerns have diminished and who will be supportive.
- Show how the innovation can be implemented sequentially rather than in one big leap [when this is possible]. It is important to establish expectations that are attainable.

Stage 3—Management Concerns

- Clarify the steps and components of the innovation.
- Provide answers that address the small specific "how-to" issues that are so often the cause of management concerns.
- Demonstrate exact and practical solutions to the logistical problems that contribute to these concerns.

Stage 4—Consequence Concerns

- Provide individuals [with concerns about consequences] opportunities to visit other settings where the innovation is in use and to attend conferences on the topic.
- Don't overlook [individuals with consequence concerns]. Give them positive feedback and needed support.
- Share with these persons information pertaining to the innovation.

While this model is useful as a framework within which strategies to support change can be considered more systematically and thoroughly, restructuring may not lend itself to such a linear approach to change. Much of what comprises readiness is spread among the five levels presented in the

model. Consequently, several issues often must be addressed simultaneously before any consideration of a specific innovation can, or should, begin. For example, it may not be possible to answer all questions regarding the use of a new technique, such as authentic assessment, or of a new structure for time, such as block scheduling, before it is implemented. Furthermore, in some cases there are few models to observe or learn from, and some types of change cannot occur in increments; teachers must make the transition all at once if they incorporate different strategies of scheduling or grouping, for example.

The net result is that careful, predictable, staged strategies for change are of less value in such an environment. This is not to say that they are without use. The point is that much of the work necessary to ensure the success of large-scale change occurs before the innovation(s) are ever put into place. Helping participants develop a new world view and showing them how they will function effectively and successfully within this new context are key dimensions of ensuring success.

In addition to the suggestions contained in the CBAM model, there are other things school leaders can do to create readiness for change. The next chapter lists a set of commitments a school's faculty can make—involving both activities and attitudes—that can shape readiness in a school. These statements assume that, before launching a project or activity, it may be wise to acknowledge publicly that large-scale change is being contemplated and to spend some time getting to the point where there is acceptance of the need to change.

Chapter 4

The Ten Commitments: Prerequisites to Restructuring

A fundamental question to be asked before restructuring activities begin is whether the school is ready to attempt such a challenging, arduous process. Many times a highly motivated leader or group of leaders within a school has pushed strongly for the school to restructure, in spite of the wishes of most staff and community members. Although there is sometimes reason to be a "voice in the wilderness," particularly in situations where staff are too self-satisfied to ever change, there is also danger. The backlash can be so strong that it delays serious self-examination of a school's assumptions and practices for several years or more. Such a backlash can even eliminate the word and concept "restructuring" from the school's collective vocabulary.

One way to avoid the possibility of actually retarding the process of change in a school is to begin by discussing prerequisites to restructuring. This method allows the faculty and community to explore the implications and to establish the ground rules before beginning the process itself. Behaviors (and memories of what was agreed upon) often change when it is time to begin to implement new programs and structures. Making a commitment as a faculty to a series of principles can help create a forum for individuals to raise concerns and fears, as well as to begin to create a sense of common purpose.

The following ten statements are derived from research on the restructuring process specifically, and on change in organizations generally. These statements might be used by a school's faculty to help determine if they are ready and willing to continue a process of fundamental self-examination. The statements, dubbed the Ten Commitments, cause staff to reflect on their

values, the school's culture, and the process to be followed if the school chooses to begin or continue a restructuring process. These ten statements are designed to be presented to a faculty as a whole for consideration and adoption before any comprehensive program for school restructuring is initiated.

Commitment 1: We commit to using data to make decisions.

Staff will employ information on current school processes and outcomes, best educational practices, and societal trends as their frame of reference when making decisions This analysis involves identifying what is not working along with what is working. It also involves acquiring the skills necessary to collect and analyze data.

Commitment 2: We commit to creating and sustaining a culture of continued self-examination, extensive and continual professional development, and experimentation.

In many schools, these are optional activities. In a school undergoing restructuring, faculty must lend their support for professional growth, both in principle and practice. If a school is to reshape itself, its staff members will have to be willing to examine their current practices and to acquire new skills and techniques. An important qualification is that this commitment to self-examination and professional growth will not result in any information being used against an individual.

Commitment 3: We commit to identifying deficiencies in the learning environment and accepting the challenge to help all learner's succeed.

In many schools, there is a tendency to blame the learner for his or her own problems and failures. Sometimes failure is attributed to the child's home environment or economic class, or even, perhaps unconsciously, to the child's race or sex. All these explanations end up removing the school and the teacher from a position of responsibility for the success of the student. Although many children do bring difficult, almost intractable problems to schools, these cannot be accepted as an explanation for lack of student success. The third commitment implies that everyone in the school knows that they have done everything in their power to help the student succeed before they attribute responsibility elsewhere. They must do everything possible to alter the design and practices of the school to meet the real needs of their clients before they assign blame to those clients.

Commitment 4: We commit to viewing children as human beings first, students second.

In the final analysis, the most vital and important activities in educa-

tion are those that occur during face-to-face interactions between teachers and students. Technology, innovative schedules, governance structures, and teaching materials are irrelevant if the quality of the human interactions that take place in the classroom are inadequate. The ability to transmit knowledge of content alone is not considered to be adequate to fulfill the expectations of the role of teacher. A primary prerequisite of learning is that students know that teachers care about them. Will the school be willing to assess the ways in which students are treated as human beings? Is the school organized in ways that allow adults and students to interact with one another as human beings?

Commitment 5: We commit to learning and employing a broad range of instructional methods and formats.

If schools restructure, teaching methods will become more varied than what has been the case. Goodlad (1983) found that the vast majority of students spend the vast majority of their time in passive roles, either listening to lectures or doing seatwork. If this commitment is made, instructional techniques will be selected and employed based on the needs of learners, not on the limited range of strategies the teacher has mastered. Will teachers be ready to expand their instructional repertoires not only by attending inservice trainings, but by making the much more important commitment to put new practices into place?

Commitment 6: We commit to discarding what doesn't work or is no longer relevant.

This commitment is very difficult for educators to make, since discarding any program or task generally means hurting a colleague. That is why it is very important to make a distinction between the person and what they do or teach, or between the person and the program being considered for elimination. Very often the individuals who might be affected are highly skilled and dedicated; the problem is that what they do may no longer be the best use of their time or the resources allocated to the task or program in question. Thus it is important to honor the person and make it clear they are still a valued member of the organization.

Given the goal conflict and ambiguity that exist in most schools as they attempt to be all things to all people, it becomes ever more urgent for educators to agree on what no longer belongs in the curriculum or school program. If schools continue to face stable or declining resource bases and increasing expectations for performance, resource reallocation is the only viable strategy for improving educational processes and outcomes. Learning how to do this may be traumatic for educators, but if everyone understands that such a process will eventually be necessary, staff will be more aware of

the importance and gravity of decisions to restructure, and will not be as surprised when such a process is initiated.

Commitment 7: We commit to viewing parents and community members as equal partners in the education of children.

This is a concept to which lip service is often paid. In practice, however, schools have established many structural barriers to parental participation. Are staff members willing to change this relationship and expect parents to be equal members of a team whose goal is to educate children? Particularly in situations where staff believe that more parental and community support for education is vital to their success, the commitment to include these groups, and to be more accountable to them, has to be seen as part of the bargain in getting their involvement, ownership, and participation in education.

Commitment 8: We commit to creating opportunities for broad-based staff involvement in decision-making clearly focused on change.

Schools cannot be restructured without the active cooperation of teachers. Although new governance structures in and of themselves cannot transform schools, it remains equally clear that schools will not change if teachers do not take ownership of and responsibility for new educational goals, methods, and structures. With this in mind, it is important for teachers to be actively involved in decisions that will change their work environment and job descriptions. This commitment assumes a genuine desire to use input in decision-making as a tool for change, not for obstruction.

Commitment 9: We commit to establishing a shared vision of education within the school.

Evidence that many schools lack clear purpose or direction seems to be mounting at the same time that the need for purpose and direction increases. Much of what occurs in schools is fragmented or even contradictory. Are staff willing to spend the time and make the commitment to develop some common direction that reflects shared beliefs and values about the purpose of an education? Are they willing to make decisions and judgments based on this vision first and their personal agendas second? Are they willing to focus the vision on improved student learning outcomes, however identified and defined?

Commitment 10: We commit to helping adults who are threatened or challenged by changes occurring in the school.

In return, all adults in the school agree either to be supportive or

constructively critical; no obstructionists are allowed once decisions have been made openly. It is not reasonable to ask people to change if they will be worse off as a result of their willingness to do so. Will the organization commit to providing resources for members who are at a disadvantage as a result of change? Will procedures be developed to ensure that staff will not be asked to do things or make decisions that are against their own best interests? Will those negatively affected be provided assistance? If so, the system may ask in return that after a certain point all members of the organization line up behind the new goals, purposes, programs, and structures of the school.

Open, participatory decision-making (as specified in the eighth commitment) provides a forum within which concerns can and must be aired. It is not acceptable to ignore the existing decision-making structures and work against change. Setting this ground rule can help diffuse much of the passive-aggressive resistance that can sabotage educational change efforts.

Chapter 5

Key Questions to Frame Restructuring Efforts

After a faculty has succeeded in developing a strong sense of direction and identified where they are and where they want to be, what is the next step? All indications are that this next step varies from school to school. But in most cases it involves teachers developing programs or projects of some sort based on the vision. This chapter provides examples of questions schools might ask, dimensions they should consider, and principles they might discuss as they begin to think about their vision of restructuring.

The following questions can generate faculty discussion and analysis of current practices when a school is ready to consider taking "the next step." They suggest the areas where data might be collected regarding current practice, or where research on best available practice might be focused. They provide the framework within which a consideration of vision can take place after sufficient time for reflection on possibilities has occurred.

These questions suggest far more change than most schools can sustain. They do, however, offer a broader view of possibilities than can be generated from a brainstorming session, or from attendance at an educational restructuring conference. They are designed to cause a faculty to collect data and to test the accuracy of their assumptions before they proceed with restructuring.

Outcomes

- Are learner outcomes specified? Do they form the basis for assessment?
- Are outcomes consistent with the vision and goals of the school?
- Were outcomes developed with broad community involvement and with reference to the skills students need to succeed in the future?

- Are the outcomes a combination of intellectual processes, skills, and content knowledge that provide a clear framework within which assessment can occur?
- Are outcomes cumulative throughout a child's education—kindergarten through graduation? Are there benchmarks that suggest the acceptable range of performance at various ages?

Curriculum

- Is the content of all courses accurate and up-to-date?
- Does the curriculum prepare learners for the future or the past?
- Are facts and concepts balanced so that students integrate and apply information?
- Is the required course of study consistent with the school's vision?
- Do students have a role in determining what they learn?
- Do different social/ethnic/economic groups learn substantially different content?

Instruction

- Are students active participants in classroom activities and in choosing how they learn?
- Are individualized learner goals developed?
- Is factual information used as a tool to enhance concept development, rather than as an end in itself?
- Is information integrated across disciplines using systems concepts?
- Do real-world problems serve as a focus for instruction?
- Is instruction designed so that all students can succeed?
- Do members of different social/ethnic/economic groups work together cooperatively to solve problems and apply knowledge?

Assessment

- Is assessment an integral part of learning?
- Is assessment holistic and integrative?
- Does assessment include public demonstration?

- Are students involved in setting personal assessment goals and selecting assessment activities?
- Does assessment provide formative as well as summative data?
- Does assessment involve the application of information to solve real-world problems?

Learning Environment

- Is the learner being placed at the center of the learning environment?
- Is the learning environment perceived as extending beyond the classroom? the school? the community?
- Are conceptions of grouping and organization being reexamined to determine their purpose and worth?
- Are personal relationships being stressed in the organization of the learning environment?
- Are curriculum, instruction, and assessment changing consistent with the learning environment?

Technology

- Is technology used both to transmit factual information in a structured manner and to empower learners to take control of their learning?
- Are teachers mastering technology personally?
- Is technology viewed broadly to include applications in addition to computers?
- Are there provisions for software and training when hardware is purchased?
- Are curriculum and instructional design changed in tandem with technology acquisitions?

School-Community Relations

- Are parents being included as partners in the establishment of goals for the learner?
- Are parents provided with enough information to participate as partners?
- Are the needs of parents considered in the organization of the school and in the expectations held for parents?
- Is the broader community invited to participate in specific ways?

- Is the community involved in and informed about changes in the school?

Time

- Is time being adapted to learning needs rather than vice-versa?
- Is time structured to respond to needs and realities of students' and parents' lives?
- Are staff and curriculum development preceding and accompanying changes in time?
- Are the boundaries of time being reconceptualized?

Governance

- Is decision-making participatory?
- Are decisions made in relation to a vision?
- Are existing decision-making structures modified and new structures added as necessary?
- Are changes in governance viewed as means to ends, not as ends in themselves?

Teacher Leadership

- Are new opportunities for teacher leadership being developed?
- Is training in leadership and group process provided when teachers need it?
- Are leadership opportunities offered to a wide range of teachers?

Personnel

- Is there an emphasis on excellence in the teaching staff, with no acceptance of mediocrity or tolerance of incompetence?
- Do the teachers want to be where they are? Are they excited about teaching and do they truly care about young people?
- Are people other than certified teachers becoming involved in teaching or in supporting the instructional process?
- Are the current distribution and allocation of staff within the school consistent with the school vision and mission?

Working Relationships

- Are there efforts to include the professional association as a partner in change?
- Is there exploration at the district level of alternative forms of bargaining?
- Is there agreement to leave much of the restructuring program out of the negotiated agreement, subject to specified guidelines?
- Are there good faith efforts to redefine the role of the professional association in a positive way?
- Are a variety of strategies being implemented to create collaborative working relationships throughout the organization?

Chapter 6

Looking for Models by Visiting Other Schools

One effective means of building readiness is to provide staff the opportunity to visit schools that are actively involved in restructuring. Sometimes these observations leave visitors with more resolve to change their own schools; other times they leave educators wondering why they even bothered to visit the site. Such visits can give educators a better sense of how (and why) their school should change its practices, or can lead to a rejection of restructuring by teachers who participate in the visit. Without careful selection of visitation sites and proper preparation for those who visit, the value of such visits is greatly diminished.

Chenoweth and Everhart (1991) suggest that visiting a restructuring school is like visiting a foreign country. "We liken the school visit to a visit to a foreign land.... [T]he practitioner is much like a tourist who is not familiar with the local customs and thus will find that a well-designed tour book is of considerable assistance." The "culture shock" that can confront visitors can be a powerful tool in enabling them to rethink the educational structure and methods within their own building.

Chenoweth and Everhart offer a "guide book" for visitors that discusses the meaning, organization, and effects of change. The following summary of these three areas suggests the type of questions visitors should be asking, and the kinds of things they should be looking for as they undertake their visit to a "restructured" school:

The Meaning of Change

- *Readiness for change:* Staff should want and choose to change.... [W]hat proportion of staff is dissatisfied with the previous or present situation, is

supportive of the restructuring effort, is willing to risk new action on behalf of the school, and willing to undergo training for new skills and behaviors?

- *School Vision:* There should be a clear school vision.... [W]hat is the school's "formal doctrine"? What are its statements of intentions, public announcements, promises, and so forth? Are the principal and teachers able to articulate the school's mission and goals? Is there a shared sense of purpose?
- *Language:* Is staff language "received," full of slogans, generalities, and a "party-line" or is it "interpreted" and full of the staff's own words and meanings?... Do staff talk about their future actions generally and abstractly or speak more specifically and behaviorally? Is staff language full of simplistic terms or is it dense, full of terms portraying more complex relationships? Are there physical displays and representations of language such as posters and banners portraying the school's mission statement and goals?
- *Understanding:* Do the principal and staff understand the complexity and delicate nature of the change process? Do staff have access to specific skills and knowledge necessary for a successful implementation? Are the staff able to articulate or describe a theory or knowledge base upon which the innovation is based?
- *Early Success:* Are there notable examples of success? Are the principal and staff confident and do they possess a sense of efficacy and job satisfaction? Is the school staff aware of both short- and long-term objectives?

The Organizational Structure of Change

- *Organization and Governance:* How are decisions made and who makes them? Are there procedures and processes for problem solving and school-based inquiry? What incentives or rewards exist to encourage a change in organizational behavior?
- *Culture:* Is collegiality evident through mutual sharing, assistance, and joint work? Is there fragmented individualism (traditional isolation), Balkanization (subgroups and cliques), contrived collegiality (unwanted contacts and use of scarce time), or a truly collaborative culture (deep, personal, and enduring)? Do staff members have adequate communication and group process skills? Are they able to work with diverse views? Are there norms of perseverance, self-disclosure, and acceptance of outside help?

- *Instruction and Curriculum:* Are instructional practices teacher centered or do they include opportunities for cooperative learning, peer and cross-age tutoring, and increased student responsibility? Does the curriculum present only abstract concepts or are concepts applied to real, personal, and concrete experiences? Does the curriculum require changes in teacher organizational structure or permit traditional patterns to persist?
- *Feedback and Evaluation:* Does the school openly solicit diagnostic information from multiple sources? Does the school reflect upon its practices? Does it tend to create more questions than answers?
- *Support:* Are adequate financial and time resources available? Is there support from key administrators? Is the required technical knowledge available and accessible? Are parents informed and involved? What sort of press coverage or information has the community received about the program?

The Effects of Change

- *Active Learning:* Do students take an active role in learning or do they largely "consume" what teachers have planned for them to do? What proportion of time are students involved in such an active framework? What are some examples of the student activities that are part of such an active framework?
- *Student-Centered Learning Agendas:* Do students help to define appropriate elements of the learning agenda? Is their participation varied and appropriate? Do students understand how to organize such agendas? What activities illustrate such student-centered agendas?
- *Positive Regard for Students as Learners:* Is a high degree of self-esteem evident both in and out of class? Do students evidence a healthy respect for their role as students?
- *Clarity of Role:* How do students define their role as students vis a vis teachers, administrators, and others? How do students visualize the role behavior of others who are supposed to improve their own learning?
- *School Context:* Do learning experiences in which students are engaged show evidence of the social context within which learning is involved, or are learning experiences predicated on assumptions of students as individuals? Is there evidence of a mutually supportive learning community?

A quick visit to a school with a reputation for restructuring can be useful if the visitor looks beyond the surface, not evaluating the program in

absolute terms, but understanding the effects of the philosophy and program in relative terms. The learning process is elusive; it is difficult to observe, particularly over a short time. However, a careful visitor can learn to see beyond the immediate physical environment, be it immaculate or cluttered, beyond the "official" party line of the host, beyond any prepared written materials that extol the program in its conceptually pure form. With this sharpened vision, the visitor can learn valuable lessons and glean useful ideas, both in terms of what to do and what not to do.

Learning is inherently difficult to observe; it occurs at the most unexpected times, and there is often no outward sign that it has occurred. Careful observation can strengthen an observer's confidence that he or she can discern the link between the environment and processes used with the learner and the likelihood that learning is occurring. Observers should clearly understand the outcomes the school is seeking, since these may be different from the outcomes actually observed.

Given the relative openness of schools to visits (compared to private industry where new techniques are hidden from competitors), staff at schools trying new programs and approaches have much to gain through visiting other schools. If visitors do not expect to see schools that have solved all of education's problems, but have taken a solid first step toward a new vision of teaching and learning, they will gain much. This form of dissemination is described by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) as "institutional isomorphism," the tendency for noncompetitive organizations to look to one another for solutions and to adopt approaches developed and piloted by innovators. Since schools demonstrate the characteristics of institutional isomorphism, visits to the many "lighthouse" schools making early strides in restructuring may be critical to the ultimate success of school restructuring at any given site.

This Bulletin has explored the importance of culture, leadership, and readiness as tools that set the stage for restructuring and that help define its possibilities and manage its development.

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