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ABSTRACT

This paper examines transformational leadership, defined as follows: an influencing relationship between inspired, energetic leaders and followers who have a mutual commitment to a mission that includes a belief in empowering the members of an organization to effect lasting change. The article presents the results of a qualitative and quantitative study by M. P. Chirichello that analyzed and identified characteristics of the preferred leadership styles of principals in selected, successful public elementary schools in New Jersey. The purposes of the study were to analyze and identify the preferred leadership styles of principals in these schools, describe the schools' organizational climates, examine the relationships between principals' preferred leadership styles and the characteristics of transformational leadership, and explore the relationship between the preferred leadership styles in successful schools and the teachers' perceptions of the organizational climates in the schools. The study drew on indepth and detailed analyses of teachers' perceptions of their schools' organizational climates. The results indicated an apparent relationship between the preferred leadership style of principals and transformational leadership. The article offers suggestions for ways in which transformational leadership can facilitate change and for implementing a more collective design for school governance. Contains 39 references. (RJM)

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Building Capacity for Change: Transformational Leadership for School Principals

Presented at the 12th International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement, January 3-6, 1999,
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The greatest leadership challenge facing organizations is maximizing the development of human potential. Yet, the development of this human potential is a highly personal process involving an understanding of the nature of change. Current literature in the area of futurism and organizational behavior reveals that we are experiencing significant global changes. These changes are reflected in all levels of society. A loss of confidence in government, public and private educational institutions, health care delivery systems, religious institutions, all levels of business and in social agencies is apparent. Traditional values concerning gender issues and the role of the family in society are being challenged. Consequently, an individual's ability to assume a *proactive* posture to change through the process of *self-empowerment* versus a reactive position is crucial. Encouraging an individual to examine his/her thinking about leadership and the change process is of great importance because this process will enable the individual to create new systems rather than just resisting, coping, managing and struggling with life's changes. (Colella & Chirichello, 1998, p.2)

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Today we are witnessing major shifts in what leadership is all about. New paradigms are focusing on requirements, relationships, resources, and results (Smith, 1993). School restructuring creates a new role for principals in today's post-bureaucratic organizations (Leithwood, Jantzi, Silins & Dart, 1992). Principals must understand their new roles if school restructuring is to be successful (Bredeson, 1992). To meet the expectations for these new paradigms, schools need transformational leaders (Goens & Clover, 1991; Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood, Jantzi, Silins & Dart, 1993).

Transformational leadership provides a way to understand the leadership style of principals (Stone, 1992). Transformational leaders focus on developing a collaborative culture in the organization. To achieve this culture, transformational leaders guide the thinking and feeling of the staff (Mitchell & Tucker, 1992) and influence staff decisions (Leithwood, 1992). By encouraging values and beliefs that support collaborative cultures, transformational leaders maintain personal interactions with employees. These interactions support changes in the culture of the organization (Sagor, 1992). These changes become substantive and lasting within the

organization. Because the focus of transformational leadership is on developing a culture, Cunningham and Gresso (1993) reinforced the importance of cultural leadership that, in turn, "... creates the foundation upon which we can work together for world class schools" (Cunningham & Gresso, p. 276).

Successful schools must have strategic plans that support common values or beliefs. Those values or beliefs emerge from and are affected directly by the culture, climate, and leadership in a school (Goens & Clover, 1991). "To achieve successful schools, organizations, people, and leadership must be transformed" (Goens & Clover, p. 56). Goens and Clover concluded that successful schools need transformational leaders.

As a result of the review of literature and an analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of other researchers' published works, Chirichello (1997) defined transformational leadership as "... an influencing relationship between inspired, energetic leaders and followers who have a mutual commitment to a mission that includes a belief in empowering the members of the organization to effect, through a collaborative responsibility and mutual accountability, lasting change or continuous improvement that will benefit the organization's clients (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Koehler & Pankowski, 1997; Leithwood, 1994; Rost, 1991; Roueche, Baker & Rose, 1989; Silins, 1994a, 1994b)." (pp. 15-16)

Organization of the Study

Chirichello's (1997) study analyzed and identified the preferred leadership styles of principals in successful public elementary schools in New Jersey, and analyzed and identified the organizational climates in the selected schools. In the study, Chirichello also examined the relationships between the preferred leadership styles of the principals and the characteristics of transformational leadership. Finally, Chirichello examined the relationships between the preferred leadership styles of principals in successful public elementary schools and the teachers' perceptions of the organizational climates in the selected schools.

In the study, Chirichello (1997) interviewed principals in successful public elementary schools in New Jersey. A public elementary school was identified as successful in New Jersey if it was selected by the New Jersey State Department of Education as a Star School during the 1993-94 through 1995-96 school years. A school selected as a Star School meets five criteria:

1. The school has an identifiable specialization that addresses student educational needs and promotes high student achievement.

2. The school's faculty is engaged in professional development activities and research that contributes to exemplary teaching practices in their classrooms.
3. The school's educational program and management demonstrate administrative and fiscal efficiency.
4. The school has an outstanding record of performance measured in terms of student results and school accomplishments.
5. The school works collaboratively with parents, business, the community and/or higher education to create a positive school environment. (New Jersey State Department of Education, 1995, p.1)

In the study, Chirichello (1997) used qualitative research to focus on an in-depth and detailed analysis of the interviews that resulted in an understanding about the preferred leadership styles of the principals in the selected schools. The interviews focused on four sets of questions. The researcher initiated appropriate probes and follow-up questions during the interview process.

The researcher used quantitative research to focus on an in-depth and detailed analysis of teachers' perceptions of the organizational climates found in successful public elementary public schools in New Jersey. Teachers in selected schools were asked to respond to the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire-Revised Elementary (OCDQ-RE)(Hoy, et al., 1991).

Organizational Climate

Taylor (1989) defined climate as "... the prevailing conditions affecting life and activities" (p. 103). The climate of an organization may be analogous to the personality of an individual. School climate may be influenced by the formal and informal relationships between and among the members in an organization. School climate is also influenced by the personalities of the individual members in the organization and, in schools, climate is the teachers' perceptions of the work place (Hoy et al., 1991).

Hoy et al. (1991) believed that climate is a dimension of the social system in an organization. The "... social system deals with the patterns of relationships that exist between individuals and groups in an organization..." (Hoy et al., p.10). Using the social system dimension, Hoy et al. defined school climate citing Hoy and Miskel (1987) and Tagiuri (1968) as "... the relatively enduring quality of the school environment that is experienced by participants, affects their behavior, and is based on their collective perception of behavior in schools" (Hoy et al., p. 10).

To collect data about the teachers' perceptions of school climates, Chirichello (1997) used the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991), a questionnaire that has 42 items and uses a Likert-type scale. The instrument defines climate as open, engaged, disengaged, and closed. Hoy et al. described the characteristics of the four climates.

An open climate has the distinctive characteristics of cooperation, respect, genuineness, and openness between the teachers and principal, and among the teachers. Principals offer high support, low directiveness, and low restrictiveness. There are high collegial relationships, high intimacy, and low disengagement between and among teachers.

An engaged climate is the result of ineffective leadership by the principal and highly professional performance by the teachers. The principal is highly directive and restrictive, and offers low support. Teachers ignore the ineffective principal leadership and conduct themselves as productive professionals. They are highly collegial and have high intimacy between and among themselves. Teachers have high engagement. They are productive despite the principal's weak leadership.

In a disengaged climate the principal is highly supportive and gives the teachers the freedom to act. The principal has low restrictiveness. The teachers are unwilling to accept responsibility, have low intimacy, and little collegiality. The principal is supportive, flexible, and noncontrolling, but the faculty is divisive, intolerant, and uncommitted.

In a closed climate the principal is highly restrictive and the teachers exhibit high disengagement. The principal is highly directive and offers little support. The teachers have low intimacy and are not collegial. The principal is hindering and controlling, and the teachers are divisive, apathetic, and intolerant.

The principal behaviors were defined by Hoy et al. (1991) as supportive, directive, and restrictive. Hoy et al. defined teacher behaviors as collegial, intimate, and disengaged.

Organizational Climate and Principal Leadership

Many researchers support the importance of the role of the principal in improving school climate. Taylor (1989) believed that the principal is the key to improving school climate. The principal must provide the leadership in a school if one wants the school to have a wholesome climate. Principals pass their vision onto the staff and gain support for a positive climate. Taylor believed that the principal is the leader and facilitator in this participatory process.

Lake (1991) concluded that, in middle schools, where teachers are given empowerment and are recognized by the principal, and, where the principal leads and lets others lead, the school climate will be effective.

Hoy and Tarter (1992) concluded that the principal of a healthy school is a dynamic leader. In healthy schools, the principal supports teachers, is reflective, and provides high standards for performance. The principal also creates a sense of trust, an environment where teamwork is valued, and has a commitment to the organization. In healthy schools, Hoy and Tarter stated that there is a sense of cooperation and loyalty between teachers and the principal. The principal of an unhealthy school provides little direction, exhibits little encouragement and support for teachers, and has low influence both within and outside the organization (Hoy & Tarter).

Buell (1992) discussed the relationship of the principal's values and goals with the implementation of other variables, such as school climate. He stated that the principal creates a shared sense of mission and can empower everyone to achieve this mission. The principal who becomes the author and choreographer of the shared vision creates a synergy within the school.

Taylor and Tashakkori (1994) concluded that it would be a mistake to overlook the role of the principal in effective school restructuring.

The principal is the key in establishing the learning climate in a school community (Lashway, 1995). This climate is based on establishing a community where relationships are based on shared values. These shared ideals and ideas bind individuals together so that I's become we's (Sergiovanni, 1992, 1994).

In this type of climate, Sergiovanni (1994) believed that leadership is nothing more than a means to make things happen. In establishing a community, the leader and the followers have an equal obligation to make things happen. Both must share in the responsibility to lead. Leadership becomes the power to accomplish shared goals rather than the power over events. The school then becomes a community of leaders (Sergiovanni).

Jensen (1995) used the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and the OCDQ-RE to study principals' transformational leadership characteristics and school climates in elementary schools in West Michigan. Her research supported a relationship between outcome measures of transformational leadership and teacher openness. There was a positive correlation between the sum of transformational leader behaviors, and leadership outcome factors and school climate; and the principals' transformational leadership behaviors and school climate ($r = .5871$ ($n = 18$, $p = .01$)).

Data Analysis Qualitative and Quantitative Research

Chirichello's (1997) qualitative and quantitative study focused on principals' preferred leadership styles and teachers' perceptions of organizational climates in each of the selected schools. Chirichello examined and analyzed each case within its unique school context, and made comparisons across cases. The study analyzed the interviews with six principals in selected schools to identify the characteristics of their preferred leadership styles. Also, the researcher analyzed the results of the OCDQ-RE to identify the type of organizational climate in each school. Chirichello examined the relationships between the preferred leadership styles of the principals and the characteristics of transformational leadership; and the relationships between the preferred leadership styles of principals in successful public elementary schools and the teachers' perceptions of the organizational climates in those schools.

As a result of the analysis of the interviews and of the matrix developed by Chirichello (1997), there appeared to be a relationship between the preferred leadership style of the six principals and transformational leadership. Each principal's leadership style had a tendency to exhibit many of the characteristics of transformational leadership. One could say, therefore, that the preferred leadership style of these principals appeared to be transformational. Additionally, each principal may have exhibited some characteristics of transactional and cultural leadership.

Because the study included schools that were defined by Chirichello (1997) as successful public elementary schools, there may be a nexus between successful schools and principals who exhibit the characteristics of transformational leadership. Additional research should be undertaken to explore the possible nexus.

There appeared to be some relationships between the preferred leadership style of each principal and the teachers' perceptions of the organizational climates in the public elementary schools that were selected for the study. In all six cases, each principal's preferred leadership style tended to be transformational. Organizational climates in each school were not disengaged or closed. In each of the six schools, teachers perceived themselves as more intimate or collegial than disengaged. The principals believed the teachers were also more collegial or intimate than disengaged.

These findings may lend some support to Jensen's (1995) quantitative research. Her study found a positive correlation between transformational leadership behaviors and school climate, and between the sum of transformational leadership behaviors, and leadership outcome factors and school climate.

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Chirichello (1997) included conclusions and recommendations that emphasized the interdependence and relationships among the topics in his study.

Conclusions:

1. Transformational leaders can build capacity for change, and initiate and support new paradigms for school governance.
2. Transformational leaders will embrace teachers as leaders.
3. Transformational leaders will encourage reflective study and professional development.
4. Transformational leaders will provide regularly scheduled times for collegial activities including professional development, reflective study, and collective governance.

Recommendations:

1. School districts must identify "want to be principals" who have the capacity to sustain the characteristics and model the behaviors of transformational leaders.
2. Policy makers must craft programs that require continuous professional development for principals and teachers. These requirements could give principals and teachers opportunities to participate together in these activities. These opportunities will promote influencing relationships among leaders and followers that could result in lasting change.
3. Leaders of colleges, universities, and assessment centers could consider revising the content and delivery system for principal preparation programs so these programs may focus more clearly on the dynamics of leadership, organizational theory, and the change process. Colleges and universities could offer cohort programs. These programs give working educators opportunities to complete a sequence of courses in a collaborative environment. Colleges and universities could offer programs that will bring teachers and principals together. As a result, teachers would have opportunities to develop a better understanding of the principalship, and principals would have opportunities to develop better understandings about the teaching and learning process.

4. What is appraised is more critical than how one appraises others. School governance teams could design an appraisal process for principals that include an assessment of behaviors that are characteristic of transformational leadership. Teachers should participate in the principal's appraisal process.

The impetus for reforms in the decades of the 80's and 90's that began with the publication of A Nation At Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) continues to be grounded in the science promoted by the Newtonian view of our world- a static, repetitive, linear universe (Marshall, 1995; Wheatley, 1992). We cannot transform schools using a Newtonian model- taking organizations apart, dissecting them, and putting them back together- with the hope of achieving substantive and lasting change. We must move toward new paradigms that speak to "... more fluid, organic structures, even of boundaryless organizations" (Wheatley, 1992, p. 13). We must begin to think of schools as "... conscious entities, possessing many of the properties of living systems" (Wheatley, p. 13). We cannot describe schools with organizational charts that contain neat boxes and lines. Schools "... are messy conglomerates of people, groups, aspirations, causes, and ideas- more akin to a rope with its strands interwoven and tied together" (Goens & Clover, 1991, p. 288).

Boundaryless organizations require a different style of leadership, one that encourages influencing relationships between inspired, energetic leaders and followers who have a mutual commitment to a mission. Included in that mission is a belief in empowering the members of the organization so they effect, through collaborative responsibility and mutual accountability, lasting change or continuous improvement that will benefit the organization's clients (Bass & Avolio (1994); Koehler & Pankowski (1997); Leithwood (1994); Rost (1991); Roueche, Baker & Rose (1989); and Silins (1994a, 1994b) as cited in Chirichello, 1997). To achieve this type of leadership we must begin to drift away from the bureaucratic model and focus on a post-bureaucratic, collective paradigm. We must rethink the role of principal as leader and create councils where the school and community assume leadership roles along with the principal. As we move toward this paradigm for leadership, the power relationships that exist in schools must also change. The bureaucratic notion that leadership is taking charge and getting things done will prevent us from focusing on collaboration which is an essential characteristic of collective leadership.

Building Capacity for Change: Transformational Leadership for School Principals

This new paradigm for school governance cannot begin without understanding the human dimensions of change (Evans, 1996). Transformational principals create risk-free environments, inspire others to think differently within the context of a common vision, and make change meaningful by being supportive role models through coaching, listening, and acceptance. Principals who are transformational leaders will promote new paradigms for governance. They will inspire support for change through the stories they tell, the beliefs that become part of this self-talk, and the behaviors they model. Transformational principals believe that people change in stress reduced environments. They are good listeners who seek to understand others before they are understood. They inspire, influence, support, create, problem solve, trust, and listen.

Yukl (1998) discusses the barriers that encourage resistance to change. Idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support will loosen the barriers that support the fear of failing, the quest for power, resentment, the lack of trust, and threats to values and beliefs. The four I's that are characteristic qualities of transformational principals will open up new possibilities (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Collective Leadership Councils

One such possibility is to move beyond Taylorism and the bureaucratic organizational structure defined by lines and boxes to a more collective design for school governance (Chirichello & Miller, 1998). The current organizational structure of schools continues to support the principal as the only leader. Frequently, principals are placed in an untenable position with overwhelming responsibilities as both leaders and managers of schools. Principals must be knowledgeable about students, curriculum, and teacher performance. They are the individuals who are expected to maintain open climates, and promote the values and beliefs that are a part of the school culture. At the same time, principals are expected to manage day-to-day activities that may include scheduling, building repairs, lunchrooms, and ordering. Often, the management activities of principals diminish their leadership responsibilities because there is little time left for reflective thinking, proactive planning, and modeling behaviors that support professional cultures.

Chirichello and Miller (1997) proposed a paradigm for leadership in schools based on the collective responsibility of leaders and followers. Collective leadership councils will begin to transform school organizations by assisting staff members to develop, maintain, and strengthen collaborative, supportive, and intimate school cultures (Figure 1). These councils will encourage

shared power and responsibility within organizations. In schools where collaboration is evident, professionals speak with each other about teaching and learning. They observe each other and support peer coaching. They are directly involved in the design, research, and evaluation of curricula, and they teach each other about teaching and learning (DuFour, 1991).

In the collective leadership council paradigm for school governance, the organization is transformed from lines and boxes to intersecting circles. These circles represent the in-groups of major stakeholders within the school and in the larger community. Administrators, support staff, community representatives (including business representatives), and students in high schools would each have one voting representative on the collective leadership council which is depicted in Figure 1 by the largest circle. Teachers would be represented by the chairpersons of the major subcommittees- budget, curriculum, and peer support. Each chairperson would be a voting representative on the collective leadership council. These chairs would also hold a dual membership on one of the other three subcommittees (staff assessment, student assessment, and special services) and represent the members' interests at the collective leadership council. The board of education would continue to establish district-wide policies and have a non-voting representative on the collective leadership council. Each subcommittee would work both independently and in collaboration with the other subcommittees. These subcommittees are depicted in Figure 1 by smaller intersecting circles.

A core value of the collective leadership council is substantive, participatory decision-making. Too often site-based councils are engaged in management activities rather than substantive leadership roles. The council must have the power to hire and dismiss staff, design and implement curriculum, allocate resources including personnel and finances, and set locally binding policy. Its members must be accountable to the larger school community for their decisions.

Collective leadership councils will create conditions that will provide new opportunities for staff-directed professional development. Staff development encourages lifelong learning and expands capacities for self-awareness (Bosler and Bauman, 1992). Staff development results in more professional autonomy for teachers and will provide the support teachers need as they take risks.

Collective leadership councils will focus on building influencing relationships between and among all members of the organization. The focus will be on the staff rather than the structure of the school. Members of the council will not be preoccupied with status, power, roles, and procedures. They will gain the confidence of colleagues by offering leaders and followers opportunities to design and facilitate substantive change and continuous improvement. As

collective leadership councils transform school governance, they will develop a self-sustaining, supportive organizational structure and create new paradigms for schooling. Collective leadership councils can provide opportunities for leaders and followers to work collaboratively to transform classroom experiences for students. The councils will inspire staffs to move beyond self-interests toward a collective purpose, mission, or vision. If leadership is " . . . an influencing relationship between inspired, energetic leaders and followers who have a mutual commitment to a mission that includes a belief in empowering the members of the organization to effect, through a collaborative responsibility and mutual accountability, lasting change or continuous improvement that will benefit the organization's clients" (Chirichello, 1997, pp. 15-16), then collective leadership councils can become the governance structure that will influence and empower followers through a commitment to shared visions and values that will provide opportunities for all students to excel. Collective leadership councils have the power to break the mold and transform schooling.

Collective Leadership Council

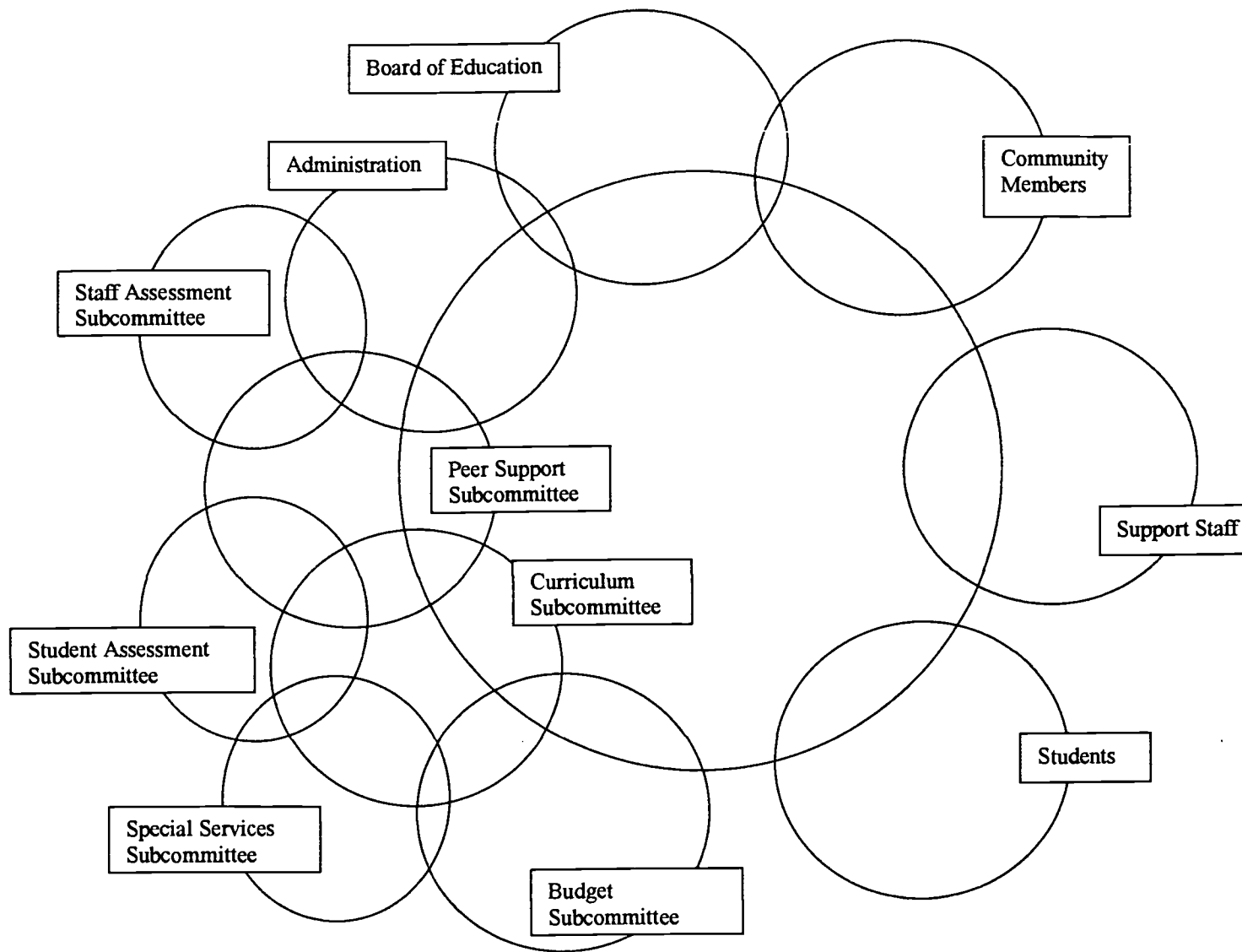


Figure 1

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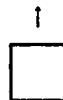


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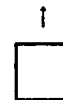


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