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A CASE STUDY: THE DEVELOPMENT, INFLUENCE, AND EVALUATION
OF A SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT/ADVISORY GROUP ON THE ROLE
OF THE PRINCIPAL AT THE DELAIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By
Curt R. Wrzeszczynski

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts Degree
of
The Graduate School
at
Rowan University
May 2004

Approved by _____
Dr. Ronald Capasso

Date Approved May 2004

ABSTRACT

Curt Wrzeszczynski

A CASE STUDY: THE DEVELOPMENT, INFLUENCE, AND EVALUATION
OF A SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT/ADVISORY GROUP ON THE ROLE
OF THE PRINCIPAL AT THE DELAIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2004

Dr. Ronald Capasso

Master of Arts in Educational Administration

This study traced the development and evaluated the effectiveness of a site-based management/advisory council at the Delair Elementary School, and sought to gain insight into the utilization of the advisory group's influence on the role of the principal, the school's daily operations, curricular concerns, and climate. A site-based advisory council composed of faculty members and support staff of the Delair Elementary School, and the community members of the Delair section of Pennsauken, New Jersey was developed, and periodic meetings were held to discuss critical issues. The members of the advisory group were surveyed to gather data on their roles and influences, community members, general faculty, and staff were surveyed to obtain information on the council's influence on the principal and the school's operations and climate. The data demonstrated that the site council had a positive influence on the school and the Principal. However, to develop its full potential, the site council needed more time so that the participants would recognize their ability to take on leadership roles within the Delair Elementary School.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the teachers of the Delair Elementary School, who provide a valuable service to the children of the Delair community. Also, the author would like to acknowledge the members of the site council for providing guidance and advice. Denise Wrzeszczynski is to be acknowledged for lending her great support and acted as a proofreader, advisor, and sounding board, and Elyse Wrzeszczynski for helping me realize why I became an elementary school Principal. Finally, the author would like to acknowledge Dr. Jean Costello for having faith in him and for giving him the opportunity to be the Principal of the Delair Elementary School.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Focus of the Study

Educational reform continuously embodies the basic principles of America, as in recent years, calling for the democratization of the administration of educational institutions. In conjunction with the No Child Left Behind Act, school districts have begun to utilize increased participation from community members, faculty, and support staff to administrate the daily operations of schools. This study traced the development and evaluated the effectiveness of a site-based management/advisory council, and sought to gain insight into the utilization of the advisory group's influence on the role of the principal, the school's daily operations, curricular concerns, and climate. A site-based advisory council composed of faculty members and support staff of the Delair Elementary School, and the community members of the Delair section of Pennsauken, New Jersey was developed, and periodic meetings were held to discuss critical issues. The members of the advisory group were surveyed to gather data on their roles and influences, and community members, the school's administration, general faculty, and staff were surveyed to obtain information on the council's influence on the principal and the school's operations and climate.

Purpose of the Study

The Practicing Principal wanted to develop a site-based management/advisory council at the Delair Elementary School, and to determine the effectiveness of this management style on the role of the principal, daily operations, academic achievement, and climate of the school. The study's findings were reported to community members,

the teachers of the Delair Elementary School, Central Administrators and building administrators of the Pennsauken Public Schools, and the graduate students in the Educational Leadership Department at Rowan University.

Definitions

Category I Schools: Category I schools are those schools that have scored below the New Jersey Department of Education's required school-level targets for two successive years. Parents of students who attend Category I schools are eligible for supplemental educational services or the choice of sending their children to another school in the district.

Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA): The assessment in language arts and mathematics that had been given to New Jersey's public schools fourth grade students. This assessment was replaced by the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge during the 2002-2003 academic year.

New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (ASK) The assessment in Language Arts and Mathematics for New Jersey's public schools third and fourth grade students. This expanded assessment replaced the New Jersey Elementary School Proficiency Assessment.

No Child Left Behind Act 2002 - A bipartisan law that was put into effect to improve the educational opportunities for all American children. The law called for greater accountability, local control, greater options for parents, and increased funding for public education.

Site-based Management – A system of local control of schools, moving the decision-making process from a central administration to the local school.

Stakeholders – People within the school, district, and community that would participate and benefit from actions taken by a particular group.

Total Comparative Cost Per Pupil – The average amount of money that a district spends on its students. These figures include items such as salaries, benefits, and extracurricular activity costs, but exclude amounts for judgments against the district and tuition for students sent out of district.

Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted for less than one year by the Practicing Principal of the Delair Elementary School. Data for this site-specific study was collected by means of formal and informal interviews, surveys, and research documentation. Information was gathered from teachers and support personnel who were members of the site-based management/advisory council and from those who did not formally participate on the school council, but were members of the school community, attempting to obtain a balanced review between self-analysis and outside opinion.

This case study was solely conducted within the confines of the Delair Elementary School, and its limits were determined upon the amount of participation provided by the advisory council. If there had been greater community involvement, PTA participation, and teacher activity (noting that there was no ratified settlement for the teachers' contract at the beginning of the school year) results may have been different.

The Practicing Principal was in his first year of building-level administration experience. The teachers, therefore, may have attempted to exert various influences upon the principal that would not have been attempted with a more veteran administrator.

Setting of the Study

The setting of the study took place in the Delair Elementary School, a Kindergarten to fourth grade building of approximately 430 students, within the Pennsauken, New Jersey Public Schools. Pennsauken Township is an urban/suburban community located directly across the Delaware River from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and is situated between Cherry Hill Township, one of New Jersey's wealthiest communities, and Camden, one of the state's poorest cities. Pennsauken, therefore, has a combination of the blessings and concerns of both of these surrounding areas.

At the time of the study there were approximately 37,000 residents in Pennsauken. 58% were white, 23% were African-American, 14% were Hispanic, 4% were Asian, and 1% was listed as "other." The township was in the state of flux as more affluent residents relocated to wealthier areas, and poorer people moved into Pennsauken. The township had a median household income of \$48,000, with 6% of its families living below the poverty line. (U.S. Census Bureau 2000)

Traditionally, Pennsauken Township's residents have supported its public school system, passing a \$35,000,000 building project referendum and all budget votes though the year 2001, except for 1990. However, since 2002, the township's residents had defeated two successive budgets. The 2002 budget defeat was a result of local property increases due to a leveling of state aid for New Jersey's school districts. The 2003 budget vote, however, was blamed on the deteriorating relationship among the School Superintendent, the Pennsauken Board of Education, the district's employees, the township's residents, and the Township Committee. The common belief was that a vote against the budget was a vote against the superintendent.

Pennsauken Township has been overwhelmingly Democratic in its political party affiliation. Republican Party representation or opposition has been non-existent for over twenty years. Recently, the Democratic Party had extended its influence on Pennsauken's Public Schools. Two of the Township Committee members were school system employees, and one committeeman was a former school board member. In the 2003 School Board election, the township's Democratic Party supported, and was able to help elect, three candidates, whose primary objectives were to increase the number of board members opposed to the superintendent, and to stop him from obtaining a second contract with the school district.

At the beginning of the 2003-04 academic year, the Pennsauken Public Schools was in state of change. Financial constraints had been placed on the district, and contracts, at times, had gone several years without being settled. Enrollments had increased and the number of teachers and administrators had been reduced.

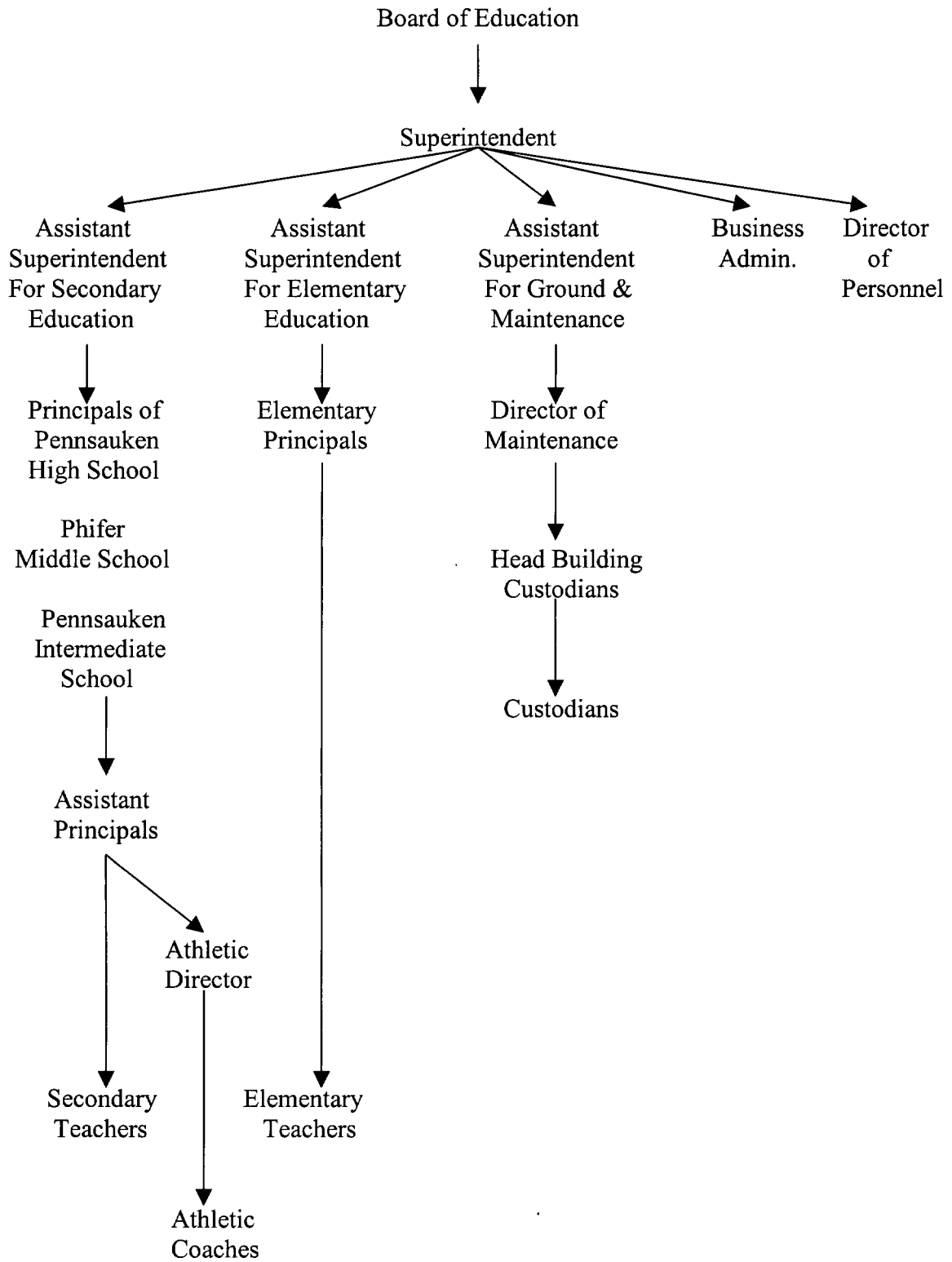
In 2002, the number of administrators per students for the district was 199 to 1, up from 170 to 1 in the previous year, and 30 students higher than the state average. The district's administrative salaries averaged \$95, 200 in 2002, and their average number of years in education was 29. The median faculty salary for 2002 was \$49, 250, and they average 10 years of years of experience in education. As required by state licensing procedures, all of the administrators had advanced degrees, and 24 percent of the faculty held Masters degrees. (The New Jersey School Report Card, 2002)

The Administrative structure for the Pennsauken School District had changed since the Dr. Walter C. Quint became Superintendent of the Pennsauken Public Schools. He believed that principals should have been the instructional leaders of their buildings,

and he eliminated the curricular supervisor positions that had existed in the district from the late 1960s, believing that principals and assistant principals could handle building organization, student discipline, and departmental curriculum, instruction, and supervision. In May of 2003, Dr. Quint announced that he would be retiring in April 2004, which created an organizational and leadership vacuum in the district. However, at the August 2003 meeting of the Pennsauken Board of Education, Assistant Superintendent Dr. James Chapman, was named to succeed Dr. Walter Quint as Superintendent. Dr. Chapman was a 31-year veteran of the Pennsauken School District, and had been a high school Language Arts teacher, Supervisor, Assistant and building Principal, and Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education. His varied experiences and district-wide respect was expected to help return cohesion to the district that had been lost. Also, the Executive Committee of the Administrators' Association of Pennsauken hoped that Dr. Chapman would return the district's administrative structure to its previous building level and curriculum/departmental form.

No administrative organizational chart existed, nor were there job descriptions for the various administrative positions. From experience and conversations with various central administrative personnel, the administrative organizational chart on the succeeding page was representative of the district's administrative structure. The chart represented the structure at the time of the study, and did not include Curricular Supervisors because those positions no longer existed. There were plans, however, to recreate those positions, but not during the 2003-2004 academic year.

Unofficial Organizational Chart of Pennsauken Public Schools



Pennsauken Public Schools spent slightly less than the state average for “per pupil costs.” During the 2002-2003 school year, the total comparative cost per pupil paid by Pennsauken School District was \$8,925, compared to the state average of \$10,042. (The New Jersey School Report Card, 2002) Pennsauken offered a comprehensive kindergarten through twelfth grade education for all of its students. The elementary level provided the state required courses, and offered special education services. As a special program, the district provided instruction in strings. The Intermediate and Middle Schools continued the strings program and incorporated a jazz ensemble into the music program. It also offered a wide range of extra curricular activities. The high school provided college preparatory and non-college preparatory, honors, and Advanced Placement academic offerings, and a wide range of extra curricular activities.

The Delair Elementary Schools provided the same general education and extra programs as the other elementary schools in the district. However, as a result of the building program, Delair went from being one of the smallest schools and the oldest, to being the largest elementary school and the newest. The Delair School opened its doors in September 2001.

Pennsauken’s students had not been as successful as people would have wanted them to be. The results for the Pennsauken High School eleventh grade students who took the New Jersey High School Proficiency Assessment in March 2003 were as follows: Language Arts – All students: 59% Proficient, 5.7% Advanced Proficient (Only General Education students: 67.5% Proficient, 6.8% Advanced Proficient). Mathematics – All students: 38.8% Proficient, 6.8% Advanced Proficient (Only General Education students: 44.3% Proficient, 7.6% Advanced Proficient).

The eighth grade students at the Phifer Middle School performed equally as dismal. The 2003 Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment results were as followed:
Language Arts Literacy – All students: 58% Proficient, 2.4% Advanced Proficient.
Mathematics: 26.1% Proficient, 5.1% Advanced Proficient.

In previous years the results of the state’s elementary assessment had not been as favorable as the staff and community would have liked them to be. However, in the last year of the ESPA, the Elementary School Proficiency Assessment, Delair’s fourth grade students scored much better than expected: 80% Proficient and 2.5 % Advanced Proficient. Both of these scores were slightly higher than the district’s scores: 79.8% Proficient and 2.0% Advanced proficient.

For the 2003-2003 school year, the state changed the assessment process, expanding the testing to include third grade students, and utilizing the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge. Because it was the first year of testing for the third grade students, the state did not report the results of the assessment. The New Jersey Department of Education, however, did report the results of the fourth grade test. The students scored 73.9% Proficient and 1% Advanced Proficient on the Language Arts assessment, and 59% Proficient and 1% Advanced Proficient on the Mathematics test. At the Delair Elementary School, the students scored 69% Proficient and 31% Partially Proficient on the Language Arts assessment, and 4.6% Advanced Proficient, 50.6% Proficient, and 44.8% Partially Proficient on the Mathematics assessment. The New Jersey Department of Education required a “Target School-Level” score of 68% in Language Arts and 53% in Mathematics portion of the NJASK. In the cases of both the district and the Delair Elementary School, the scores that were obtained exceeded the

required state target scores. Two other elementary schools in the district, the Fine School and Theodore Roosevelt Elementary School, fell below the required state target scores. However, this was the first time either school fell below the target level, and they were not labeled as a Category I schools unless they would continue to score below the required levels. Central Elementary School, previously labeled as a Category I School, far exceeded the state's target levels.

Significance of the Study

The educational profession constantly seeks reforms to improve the quality of our nation's schools. The democratization of the administrative decision-making process, through site-based councils and in conjunction with the No Child Left Behind Act, had been implemented in many school districts to provide greater community and institutional support, improve instruction, and increase the academic levels of the students. Schools exist for the children and the community, and for the schools to be effective centers of learning, various stakeholders, such as faculty, support staff, and community members, must be included in the decision-making processes of the building. The days of the autocratic administrator are over, and it is critical that various stakeholders have an impact on the daily operations and curricular concerns of the building. Educational organizations, therefore, must address the needs of the future, and for communities and schools to survive and flourish, concerned participants must be utilized to impact the school setting and climate. This case study will make a contribution to concerns of social issues focusing on the democratization of the educational environment, and as a secondary aspect, the roles of the principal and other stakeholders in the school buildings decision-making process.

Organization of the Study

The remainder of the study is organized in the following manner: Chapter 2: Review of Literature, Chapter 3: Design of Study, Chapter 4: Presentation of Research Findings, and Chapter 5: Conclusions, Implications, and Further Study.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Educational reform continuously embodies the basic principles of America, as in recent years, calling for the democratization of the administration of educational institutions. In conjunction with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, school districts have begun to utilize increased participation from community members, faculty, and support staff, through site councils to administrate the daily operations of schools. It is valuable to practitioners to trace the development and evaluate the effectiveness of a site-based management/advisory council, and to gain insight into the utilization of the advisory group's influence on the role of the principal, the school's daily operations, curricular concerns, and climate. A site-based advisory council composed of faculty members and support staff of the Delair Elementary School, and the community members of the Delair section of Pennsauken, New Jersey needed to be developed, holding periodic meetings to discuss critical issues.

Throughout most of the twentieth century, American school systems performed relatively efficiently using traditional centralized techniques. However, as the educational environment began to radically change in the latter part of the century, educational organizations were forced to restructure themselves to ensure efficiency and success. As many school systems' populations grew and academic successes declined, centralized control of the decision making process began to be questioned. Organizations focused on centralization's effectiveness as a management style, and its ability to provide students with an education that prepared them to live in a democratic and a complex society.

Site-based management became a popular political approach for school systems that wanted to adapt to the changing educational landscape. This management style refocused the point of control from a central administration to the local schools, providing educators, parents, students, and community members the opportunity to participate in the local school's control of the decision making process. (Wohlstetter, 1996)

Although not implemented by educational organizations until the 1960s, site-based management can be compared to the concept of "enlightened suzerainty," the medieval political structure in which the state controlled the larger realm of foreign affairs, and the local units focused on town and family matters. In this comparison, a school system's central administration focused on district policies, and the local school, having been given the opportunity to operate relatively on its own, deals with the concerns of the local unit. (Ubben, Hughes, and Norris, 2001)

As the American educational scene began to change, and student achievement and behaviors were called into question, educators looked to business and industry to provide direction on how to organize more efficiently. Factory workers were empowered to change their worksites to obtain economic success and higher quality in manufacturing. These triumphs in industry spread to education in the 1960s. (Education World, 2000) John Prash, a School Superintendent in Lincoln, Nebraska organized 45 of his principals to participate in local control of their schools, focusing on purchasing, hiring, and staff development. (Brandt, 1996)

Although the tasks that Prash wanted his principals to focus upon are still very important components of site-based management, today's educational climate has forced

other factors to be of primary importance. Researchers have noted that most school districts have cited a quest to increase academic achievement. Jane L. David noted that most educational organizations have employed a site-based management style to promote student achievement through a more efficient and deregulated system, providing greater opportunities for enhanced student learning through the participation of educated professionals in the curricular and instructional decision-making process. (David, 1996) Because practitioners are part of the group that is involved in making instructional and curricular decisions, one of site-based management's primary goals should be a passionate quest for academic improvement. (Wohlstetter, 1997)

Traditionally, the Pennsauken Public Schools have been dissatisfied with their students' results of the fourth grade New Jersey state assessment. Therefore, academic achievement within the classroom and on state-mandated assessments should be a primary goal of the school's administration, faculty, and community.

In an attempt to transform school communities into active site-based managed units, it is critical to have stakeholders involved in the decision making process. Emphasis must be placed upon the moving of authority to the individual schools away from central administration, and have a shared decision making process, engaging various stakeholders and facilitators rather than directive and authoritarian leadership. (Education World, 2000) Representative councils should be composed of teachers, parents, administrators, students, community members, and business representatives. Depending on the state or climate of the local unit, the site-based council can determine how it is to function, and set the roles for its members. (David, 1996) A critical feature in the representative council was a trust in the ability of the stakeholders to properly

perform their duties and responsibilities, a this trust that must be extended to the central and building administration to accept the decisions of the council. (Brandt, 1996)

Site-based advisory councils offer various advantages over central administrative structures. Site-based systems embrace a participatory decision-making process, which is reflective of America's ideals. Members of the planning/advisory council are involved in the entire decision process, identifying concerns, exploring options, making decisions, and assessing results. Because teachers are given the opportunity to participate in this process, they are more apt to employ democratic principles in their classrooms, creating student-centered environments. (Stewart, 1997) The result of this participatory process is a meaningful educational atmosphere, in which the students are engaged, and learning from the advisory council modeling a mini-democratic society. (Mohr and Dichter, 2001)

For site-based management to be implemented successfully, researchers focused on various elements. Power had to be shifted to the local school, and the representative council, whose decisions must focus on transforming the school's teaching and learning, must control issues such as hiring, staff development, budgetary control, curriculum, and instruction. Knowledge that enables employees to perform their tasks properly needs to emanate from the site council. The members of the representative council must be trained in the democratic workings of the council, and they must obtain background to make informed decisions, keeping in mind that professional development should be continuous and school wide Information about the performance, revenues, expenditures must be known by the council so that decisions are made correctly, and must be disseminated throughout the building. (Wohlstetter, 1996) and (Education World, 2000)

Many researchers agree that one of the most critical factors in the success of a site-based management system is the dedication, outlook, and attitude of the building level principal. In the democratization of the decision-making process, the principal must keep lines of communication open for all members of the site council. The principal and other stakeholders must recognize that a shift has taken place from the principal being a top-down manager to a supporter and facilitator, who maintains leadership responsibilities and has not given up control of the building. (Spilman, 1996) In a site-based system, the principal is a designer, who must have a clear vision of shared leadership, but certainly not stating to the site-based council that the school is their building to run, and should tell the principal what to do. (Mohr and Dichter, 2001)

When faculty, staff, and community members become involved in the decision-making process, the principal becomes a key figure, who must have good leadership and organizational skills, and a keen sense of delegating responsibilities. The principal is no longer authoritarian, but works cooperatively with staff members and shares the decision process and authority, which was at one time vested in that position. Sub-groups must be formed, keeping in mind interests and expertise, and communication must be free and constant, so that decisions can be made within the context of the school's clearly defined vision of curriculum and instruction. (Czubaj, 1999) The representative council must be led by a principal who can lead and delegate, and not be the final arbiter of the decisions, using a capricious will. Decisions, through his delegated authority, must be made in collaboration within the council. (Wohlstetter, 1996)

On a curricular level, site-based management should focus on exploring opportunities for staff members to teach for understanding, which encompasses activities

oriented toward higher-order thinking skills. The use of technology must be emphasized, so that students can obtain future workplace skills. Teaching must focus on the individual, incorporating individualized instruction, non-graded classrooms, and mainstreaming of special needs students. Services must also be integrated, focusing on team teaching and creating links to the community. (Wohlstetter, 1997) Working within the confines of a site-based managed organization, these goals and necessities can be accomplished, because the focus is more immediate, and the larger district concerns become secondary.

For site-based management to be successful there are several key factors that an educational organization must ensure are in place. Power must be dispersed throughout the organization so that all of the stakeholders participate in the decision-making process. This would include administration, teachers, community members, and custodians. Their goals are to have a successful school, and anything that could affect student outcome must be taken into consideration. Professional development must be a high priority. All stakeholders must participate in professional growth, and share the information with the council and school community. Informed decisions can be made, and data can be properly disseminated. The school's vision and goals, particularly in the areas of curriculum and instruction, are critical, and groups, within the organization, that attain or move toward the goals should be rewarded. All groups need incentives as motivating factors, and school districts are no different than other organizations. (Wohlstetter, 1996)

“Participatory democracy, much like rosebushes, may bring forth the positive results, but rosebushes also have thorns. If we can locate the thorns, then we can learn to handle the flower without injury.”(Conway and Calzi, 1995/1996) When people come

together in the decision-making process, it is inevitable that conflicts will arise. This, however, is a necessary part of the advisory group's democratic growth process. Without conflict, the council may be inhibited, and acquiesce to the leader of the group.

Throughout this process, every member must learn to be a negotiator, working through the conflicts. Otherwise, the group will easily revert to a top-down management style, leading to mediocrity and resentment (Mohr and Dichter, 2001)

Although conflicts will occur, the advisory group must focus on the ultimate goal of improving the quality of education for its students. They must not permit conflict to upset the process, and as important, must not get bogged down in making decisions. (O'Neil, 1995/1996) Otherwise, the site-based management council is doomed to failure.

Everyone involved, the school staff, administration, and community members need to recognize that site-based management is a long process. The concerns have taken years to develop, and there is no miracle cure or quick fix. Researchers recommend three to fifteen years of commitment for various roles, such as leader, facilitator, teacher involvement, community participation, and student achievement to produce successful results. (Oswald, 1995)

Site-based management has promoted democracy in the educational administrative setting, demonstrating participation and collaboration. (David, 1996) Schools in which site-based management is successful are committed to active interaction among staff members, providing a climate for all stakeholders to have a vital interest in the school's well being. Compared to struggling schools, site-based managed organizations promote a communal vision and unity. (Wohlstetter, 1996) In our dramatically changing, and increasingly pluralistic educational environment, America

needs schools that promote the very essence for which the country stands. Democracy, collaboration, and community participation are keys to the success of America, and to focus the practices of our country's beliefs on a school system, which is a microcosm of American society, is a rededication of America's principles. Participatory decision-making, standing as an example to the students, is vital to the success of educational organization and promoting American ideals in the twenty-first century.

The Delair elementary School is a prime example of a school that is in need of a new direction. The school's students are products of hard-working lower to lower-middle income families who do not openly participate in the school setting and traditionally, the results from the New Jersey elementary assessments have not reached acceptable levels. The school has never employed a democratic method of administration. If through greater community participation and shared governance, assessment results rise and academic achievement in the classroom is fostered, then the implementation of a site-based advisory council will have been worthy of the attempt.

Chapter 3

I. Description of the Research Design

Educational reform continuously embodies the basic principles of America, as in recent years, calling for the democratization of the administration of educational institutions. In conjunction with the No Child Left Behind Act, school districts have begun to utilize increased participation from community members, faculty, and support staff to administrate the daily operations of schools. This study traced the development and evaluated the effectiveness of a site-based management/advisory council, and sought to gain insight into the utilization of the advisory group's influence on the role of the principal, the school's daily operations, curricular concerns, and climate. A site-based advisory council composed of faculty members and support staff of the Delair Elementary School, and the community members of the Delair section of Pennsauken, New Jersey was developed, and periodic meetings were held to discuss critical issues. The members of the advisory group were surveyed to gather data on their roles and influences, community members, general faculty, and staff members who were not part of the site council were surveyed to obtain information on the council's influence on the principal and the school's operations and climate.

During the various phases of the study, interviews and surveys were conducted to determine goals and opinions. Anecdotal records and minutes from site council and subcommittee meetings were kept and analyzed and reflections from the Practicing Principal were also incorporated into the study.

II. Development, Design, and Nature of Instruments

The study was conducted utilizing an action research design at the Delair Elementary School in Pennsauken, New Jersey. To determine who would be prospective candidates for the Site-Based Management/Advisory Council, recommendations from the previous principal were considered. Also, an analysis of the staff's evaluation forms and Annual Reviews/Professional Improvement Plans was performed in August 2003 by the Practicing Principal.

The Teacher Evaluation Form (See Appendix A) utilized by the Pennsauken Public Schools has two portions: a checklist section divided into three categories, in which the evaluator has the option of checking off Proficient (P), Needs to Improve (N), Unsatisfactory (U), or Not Applicable (N/A) for each indicator. The second portion provides the evaluator with an opportunity to write commendations and recommendations. This form was used when a formal classroom observation was conducted, and was partly incorporated into the staff member's Annual Review.

The Evaluation form, Professional Improvement Plan, and the previous principal's recommendations were relevant indicators of who should sit on the advisory council. After the analysis was completed, the prospective council members were invited to join the advisory group. One prospective member declined acceptance, but was replaced with an alternate candidate.

The Professional Improvement Plan (See Appendix A) utilized by the Pennsauken Public Schools has two sections: an annual review and an improvement plan. On the Annual Review, the evaluator describes the performance of the professional, a review of the student assessments techniques and results, and commendations. The Improvement

Plan describes areas in which the professional needs improvement, activities in which the professional will incorporate the following year, and plans for assistance by the school district. This is a collaborative narrative that is completed in the spring of each school year.

During the opening phase of the project, questions were formulated to determine in which direction the site-based management/advisory council should take, and upon which areas the council should focus. Therefore, two separate sets of interview questions were created: one set of questions for members of the site-based management/advisory council (See Appendix A) and one for members of the school community but not formal participants of the site-based management/advisory council (See Appendix A).

The interviews were conducted on a voluntary basis, and were used to determine the participants' background knowledge of site-based management styles of educational administration. The second area of focus was to determine what type of subcommittee should be created for the advisory council. The third focus of the interviews was to determine the activities upon which the council, school, and community should be involved. The interview phase was primarily an informational gathering project upon which the site council could plan and act.

The third phase of the study was the dissemination of interview information to the site-based management/advisory council. Data was disaggregated, and used to determine the focus of subcommittees, which were formed, and began to take recommended actions. During this phase of the study, anecdotal notes minutes from meetings, and subcommittee reports were written and submitted.

During the review phase of the study, the same sample of school community members was voluntarily surveyed to evaluate the actions of the site-based management/advisory council. As in the opening interview phase, there were two sets of survey questions, one survey for the formal members of the site-based management/advisory council (See Appendix A) and a separate survey non-participants of the site-based management/advisory council (See Appendix A).

Survey questions were set up to evaluate the actions that were recommended by the staff members that were interviewed. Also, the programs that were focused upon by the site-based management/advisory council were evaluated. Because a major focus of the study was to determine the influence of the advisory council on the building principal, he was surveyed utilizing the same survey instrument as the participants of the site council since he was a member of the advisory group. His personal reflections on the purposes and outcomes of the advisory group were incorporated into the study.

III. Sample

To gain insight into the development, organization, and effectiveness of a Site-Based management/Advisory Council, and its influence on the role of the principal at the Delair Elementary School in Pennsauken, New Jersey, a sample of faculty and community members were chosen to voluntarily participate in the interviews and surveys. This sample included both participants and non-participants on the site-based management/advisory council, all of whom had a connection to the Delair Elementary School.

The site-based management/advisory council was composed of thirteen members. The administrative representative on the council was the building principal, who was in

his first year of building level service. Previously, he had district-wide supervisory experience. The school nurse and nine teachers represented the faculty. Each grade level, kindergarten through fourth grade, as well as special education had representatives. Also, two basic skills teachers sat on the council. Two members of the council represented the community. All of the faculty representatives were tenured staff members of the Pennsauken Public Schools, whose years of service ranged from six to thirty-five years. The Principal, however, was not tenured in his current position.

The sample also included faculty members, who were not formal participants on the site-based management/advisory council. These members of the faculty were included in the study to provide input into the organization and purpose of the council and to provide insight into the council's effectiveness. All of the faculty members were tenured teachers, and their educational experiences ranged from six to thirty-three years. Community members, who were not formal participants on the site-based management/advisory council, were also included in the sample to provide input into community desires and relations with the Delair Elementary School.

IV. Description of Data Collection Approach

During the opening phase of the data collection, the Teacher Evaluation Forms and the Professional Improvement Plans, which were kept in the teachers' professional files, were analyzed by the Practicing Principal. It was noted which teachers and support personnel were considered proficient in their fields by previous evaluators, and the Professional Improvement Plans were reviewed to determine if any teachers had requested to participate on any school-based committees for the 2003-04 academic year. Also, a list of prospects was provided by the previous principal, who retired in July 2003.

To obtain information about the Delair Elementary School staff's familiarity of site-based management and their views about the goals for and areas of focus of a site-based management/advisory council, interviews between the Practicing Principal and a sample of staff members were held. Because this was the Principal's first year at the Delair Elementary School, informal conferences were held. The interview questions for this study were incorporated into the conferences. All of the participants were told the purpose of the study, that answering the questions was voluntary, and that a second set of questions to obtain further information would follow.

Data from interviews was disseminated to the site-based management/advisory council. Data was disaggregated, and used to determine the focus of subcommittees, which were formed, and began to take recommended actions. During this phase of the study, anecdotal notes minutes from meetings, and subcommittee reports were written and submitted.

At the monthly meetings of the site-based management/advisory council, information obtained from the interviews was disseminated. The information provided areas of focus upon which the site council could focus their attention.

The working phase of the study took place between October 2003 and February 2004, during which the site council reviewed and analyzed the recommendations of the sample. Sub-committees were formed, and conducted their assigned tasks. Anecdotal reports were completed and made available to the Advisory Council.

Surveys were conducted at the end of the work phase. The sample that was utilized in the opening phase was also used to obtain follow-up information, and participation in the survey phase was voluntary. The surveys were distributed to the

sample, and the participants were given two weeks to complete the requested information. The surveys were returned to the Practicing Principal for analysis.

V. Description of Data Analysis Plan

The Practicing Principal disaggregated the data that was collected during the interviews. The information was disseminated to members of the site council and used to determine areas of focus and as a basis for the school community. The data was broken into themes, activities, and subcommittee topics.

The information that was obtained from the survey collection phase was synthesized by the Practicing Principal, who disseminated the results for analysis by the entire site council. This was done so that the site council, including the Practicing Principal, could have feedback upon which future activities and actions could be based. The data that was collected from the surveys was disaggregated into themes, results, influences, and future activities. The data that was obtained from the surveys served as benchmarks from which the site council based future direction, extra-curricular activities, community involvement, and curricular concerns. The results of the data analysis were compiled, organized, and shared with the committee, the school community, and Pennsauken Public Schools' Central Administration.

Chapter 4

Presentation of Research Findings

This study on the development and implementation of a site-based advisory council, and its influence on the building Principal, was performed at the Delair Elementary School in Pennsauken, New Jersey. The following information was found using the methodology described in Chapter 3 of this study, and was to be used by the teachers, administrators, and community members of the Pennsauken Public Schools. Fifteen people participated in the study, and the analysis of the data was conducted by the Principal of the Delair Elementary School.

How did the Principal Develop the Site-Based Management/Advisory Council and What Were the Participants' Familiarity With Site-Based management?

During the opening day teacher orientation meeting on September 2, 2003, the Principal provided an introduction to the proposed development of a site-based advisory council at the Delair Elementary School, giving the staff background information on the purpose and organization of a site council. Participants of the site council were identified, and through October 2003, interviews were conducted to obtain data that would outline the members and non-members' background knowledge and desires for the Delair Elementary School, and to provide a guideline for the newly developed site council.

During the interviews, the participants in the study, both formal members and non-members of the advisory council were asked to describe their familiarity with site-based management. 29% of the participants stated that they had no familiarity with this type of administrative structure. 71% of the participants noted that they had varying degrees of knowledge of site-based management. They described their familiarity as

limited, but "...it sounds democratic and interesting." "I have little background, but it primarily relates to urban education." "It deals with decisions made by people who work in a school and not by some central office." "I know it deals with managing the site of a school, and decisions are made about the school within the school." "I'm not too familiar. I only know it focuses on decisions being made in the school." (See Appendix B)

Although an introduction on site-based management had previously been made, 29% of the participants continued to believe that they had no familiarity with this type of administrative system.

What School-Related Areas Should be Focused Upon By the Site Council's Sub-Committees?

To provide a guide for the advisory council, the participants in the study were asked to explain what types of school-related areas and what subcommittees should be formed by the members of the site council. Both formal members and non-participants of the advisory council focused on three areas: academics, discipline, and community relations.

Regarding academics, the participants stated, "We have to worry about academics. Different schools start at different levels. We need to adjust the curriculum to meet the kids' needs." "We need to focus on the curriculum...With these tests that the kids need to take, we have to do anything within the curriculum to get the kids prepared for the test." "We need activities that will help the students with low income. We need to reach the kids who don't have anything. We need to create programs that will help the neediest." (See Appendix B) A focus on academics should be the primary focus of every

school, and the demand for an academic/curricular focus for the Delair School site council was evident from the responses.

The participants placed a large emphasis on discipline in the school. “Discipline, discipline, and more discipline consistently used.” “We need to focus on discipline. If you cannot sit, you cannot learn.” “Committees should be formed to focus on discipline. We need to create a system under which the whole school functions, not necessarily within the same classroom, but such things as removing students from class, and procedures for moving about the school.” (See Appendix B) The teachers felt that good discipline promoted good learning, and that a clearly defined discipline structure for the school was critical.

Improved community Relations was also a topic upon which the participants felt that the site council should focus. “Parent involvement is the most important thing for us to focus on. We need to look at school violence, safety, and bullying. We need to focus on things that will keep the school safe.” “We need to get some community involvement to get the people of the community excited about the learning that goes on in this place.” (See Appendix B) In the interviews and various discussions during the course of the study, staff members felt that the relations among the school community, PTA, and community-at-large was a major point upon which the site council should focus.

The participants who were interviewed were asked to describe what type of events or activities upon which the subcommittees should prepare for the school community. The responses were divided into two areas of focus: community relations and extra-curricular activities that involved the student body and school community.

Comments, reflective of the concerns about community relations focused on the following. “We definitely need more cooperation with the PTA, and we need more teacher involvement in the PTA.” “I think we should get the parents to come in to help with projects. Maybe once a month for help, getting the parents to do anything they can to help. We could put on plays with parent involvement.” “We need more involvement with the PTA, maybe have a McDonald’s Night.” We could have job fairs, international weeks that deal with multicultural ideas, and a career day.” We have to get more teachers to join the PTA. More newsletters need to go out to inform the community about this place.” “I’d like to see a ‘senior prom’ set up. It could be something for the senior citizens of the Delair community to see what we do.” “We need fundraisers to help put on plays. Maybe basketball games, food store sponsorship, shirts for ads and coupons. Things that would be good for morale. We need to feel a sense of community, a sense of belonging that is good and enriching.” (See Appendix B) The comments were reflective of a great desire to get the community involved in the educational process on the school. Traditionally there had been little involvement, but there was a hope that this would eventually change.

The participants in the interviews also commented on extra-curricular activities in the following manner. “We need the community and the school to push the kids more academically.” “We have to have the community be willing to take part in the educational process and to make things better. The community should be given a voice in the school and help make decisions for the school.” “We have to get more people involved. Try to get more parental involvement, more assemblies.” “We need parent involvement, especially for things like the KidWrite program.” “Maybe we could have a

reading night.” “We have to have a committee that works image building. Part of it could deal with curriculum. We need to show people we do a great deal of good for these kids.” (See Appendix B) The staff consistently noted that an increase in the number of curriculum-related extra activities, such as assemblies, would increase the academic level of the students.

The final area of focus for the interview session dealt with determining whether the participants believed that a site-based management/advisory council could help raise the academic achievement level of the students. 71.4% of those interviewed felt that greater academic achievement could be obtained with the implementation of a site council. The participants noted: “Yes it can be helpful because of grade level interaction.” “The more you add to the classroom, the more the students will get out of it.” “Yes. The group could help realign the math needs. We could look at the weaknesses that the kids have and figure out how to help them. We could focus on skills.” “The group could set high expectations.” “Yes academics can be raised. The groups need more than a voice. The more pushed the kids feel, the more they will work.” “If we form an academic committee, we can focus on weaknesses, and recommend specific strategies for improvement.” “Yes. When some the kids go home, that’s it. It’s important that we be here for them. We need to make them feel special and that help is always there for them.” “Absolutely. If we work together, we can help raise the bar for the kids.” (See Appendix B) The general feeling was that any attempt at focusing on academics would be beneficial for the students of the Delair Elementary School.

Fourteen and three-tenths percent of the surveyed participants stated that the site council might be able to help raise the achievement level of the students at the Delair

Elementary School. The comments were: “I don’t know if this council will help or not. I think grade level meetings are more helpful. If you cross grade level information and share it, that can be helpful too.” “I don’t know if it can help because the teachers are identifying doing what is needed, and we are restricted by Central Administration.” (See Appendix B)

Of those who participated in the interviews, 14.3% noted that a site council would not improve the academic achievement levels of the students. The participants noted the following: “I don’t think there will be a direct relation. More money needs to be put into parenting. Families are different.” “Grade level meetings to discuss strengths and weaknesses are a better idea. If we start now, we may be there by the time the test gets here.” (See Appendix B) Being a relatively small school of 19 teachers, there could have been a belief that the teachers were currently doing what was necessary to raise the achievement levels of the students.

After the interviews were conducted, the information was analyzed by the Principal, and the results were presented to the members of the site-based management/advisory council. Based upon interview question #1, regarding the faculty’s background on site councils, it was noted that despite an orientation on the topic, an overly large percentage of the faculty, still did not have an understanding of the working of site-based management. Of the 71% who stated they had varying degrees of familiarity, only 14% of the participants acknowledged having a deeper familiarity with this type of administrative structure. The remaining 86% of the participants felt they were somewhat familiar or had no familiarity on the topic.

To act as a guide for the Delair Elementary School's site council, the responses to interview questions #2 and #3, focusing on the subcommittee structure, areas of focus, and events that could be undertaken, were examined, and the results became the basis for the subcommittee structure of the site-based council. At the December 2003 meeting, the Principal announced that the following subcommittees were to be formed based upon the interview responses. The subcommittees focused on Academics, Community Relations, Activities, and Discipline. As a result of the suggestions made during the interview process, the Academics subcommittee was to be comprised of the grade level representatives, and it was decided by the group that curricular information would be channeled between the site council and various grade levels, and what was discussed at grade level meetings would be presented to the site council.

The Community Relations subcommittee would focus on events and activities that would promote the school within the general community. It was stressed at this and later meetings that a greater amount of information needed to be forthcoming from the Delair School. It was suggested that a newsletter and an internet website be created for the school to promote a positive image. Also, a beautification campaign, to create a warm and less sterile environment, should be pursued.

The Activities subcommittee was charged with developing and implementing school-wide activities that would promote an exciting and academically challenging environment. These activities would include various assemblies and events, which would be held either during the school day or at night, so that the Delair community could be included.

It was decided by consensus that the focus of the Discipline subcommittee should be on a general school-wide discipline procedure. It was noted that the teachers are veterans, and did not have many discipline concerns within the classroom. However, a procedure for outside of the classroom and a chain of command was suggested to be set up. It was determined that because the discipline problems are not very severe, this subcommittee would take up the issue of a discipline procedure in the spring of 2004, and implement the procedure in September 2004.

Because the mission of any school is to promote academic achievement, research question #4 centered on the site council's ability to help raise achievement levels. 85.7% of the participants noted that the site council, at least in some manner could help raise the academic achievement levels of the students at the Delair Elementary School. Members of the site council felt that academic achievement levels could rise through a combination of grade level meetings, academic assemblies, and the promotion of positive school self-esteem, academic levels would rise.

What Role Did the Site Council Play in the School's Daily Operation and Climate?

In January 2004, surveys were sent to the same sample who participated in the interview process. The purpose of the surveys was to determine what type of affect the site council had on school's climate and how it influenced the role of the Principal of the Delair Elementary School. The information was found using the methodology described in Chapter 3 of this study. All but one of the original participants responded to the survey. Also, to describe the site council's influence on the role of the Principal, the practicing Principal responded to the survey. His comments were discussed apart from the comments of the other participants.

Survey research question #1 focused on the participants' view of the Delair Elementary School's version of site-based management/advisory council. The responses varied, with every response having a positive point of view. The participants in the survey commented on the Delair's version of a site council in the following fashion: "It has been a positive spin on our school." "...The council will be able to make a difference in our school, and the improvement in the community around us." "...The Delair Elementary School site-based council...provides educators of all levels a chance to gather, address, and offer constructive improvements. The process used gave a voice to educators of all levels and experiences with the Delair Elementary School." "I am finding the Delair Council to be a good beginning version. There is cohesion of goals among the members with a good sense of cooperation. More time will increase the level of teamwork." "It seems to be an effective team that will address different issues within our school." "I think a council such as this is a good way to improve communication in our school." In only one response was there uncertainty about the direction of the site council: "To be honest, I don't know exactly what the role of the site-based management is. I am starting to understand a little." (See Appendix B) The participants in the survey were overwhelmingly positive about the site council. However, there seems to be some inconsistencies compared to the participants' remarks concerning other work performed by the site council.

Members of the site council were asked to describe their roles on the council in survey questions #2 and #3. The comments were very general, as the subcommittee system had not developed its full potential. Comments were as follows: "I guess my role is to help establish 'norms' and 'procedures' of the school." "I am an active participant

who is willing to be helpful in any way needed.” “I am a member who has volunteered for the assemblies committee. However, I am able to contribute in all decision-making processes.” (See Appendix B) As the subcommittee a system further develops, the members will take on more clearly defined roles, and feel a greater sense of participation.

These same participants described their feelings toward the enhancement of their roles in the school community in relation to their participation on the site council. One of the participants believed that it was too soon to make an objective comment on the enhancement of the role in school. 29% of the participants stated that their roles in the school had been enhanced because of participation on the site council: “Yes. The council sets up a system in which people are discussing what is of importance among ourselves.” “Yes because I can make contributions that result in creating a positive atmosphere for the students who attend Delair.” 57% of the participants stated that their roles in the school community had not been enhanced by their participation on the site council. Examples of comments were: “No because I feel we all ask advice or opinions from each other, not just the people on the site-based advisory council. I’m sure there are some people who do not know we even exist.” “I’m not sure. I feel personally pleased to be involved with a group that can try to effect change. However on a whole staff level, it is the same.” “No, because we have not developed a plan yet. I’m sure my role will be enhanced when we develop the plan for next year.” (See Appendix B) The school community is small, and there is a great deal of interaction among all staff members. In reality, the staff may see themselves as a committee of the whole, and therefore, their roles in the greater school community would neither be enhanced nor diminished because they already play vital roles in the school.

Both members of the site council and non-members were asked to describe their opinions on the changes that have occurred in the amount of community involvement since the implementation of the site council (Research question #4 for members and question #2 for non-members). The members of the site council were unanimous in their belief that there has been more community involvement in the school since the inception of the site council. The members commented in the following manner. “Many more parents come to school sponsored events.” [We need] “things like pajama night, and more parent/staff involvement.” “This year the site council seems to be more together than the school planning committee that we had last year. Everything seems to be coming together slowly. I do notice, however, that we are having more assemblies.” “Every meeting involves ways to include the community in our activities and assemblies. The PTA works closely in helping the council initiate new ideas.”

87% of the non-members of the site council who were surveyed also believed that there has been increased involvement from the community since the inception of the site council, and their comments mirrored the responses of the members of the site council. “During extra-curricular activities, our parents are very involved.” There is an “...improved rapport and cooperation between the students, parents, educators, and community.” “One event, which I was part of, was the story/pajama night back in December. It offered the parents an opportunity to bring their child/children into the building in a very relaxed atmosphere, all for a good purpose, to promote literacy.” “Pajama night was very well received by the community.” (See Appendix B) Community participation in the school had increased during the 2003-04 school year. Many of the

suggestions made by the site council, which called for increased community involvement, were in the development stage.

Focusing on the environment of the school, the participants of the survey were asked to describe how the site council had affected the climate of the Delair Elementary School (Survey question #6 for members and question #3 for non-members). 66.6% of the members of the site council who were surveyed felt that the climate of the school had been positively affected by the site council. Their comments were as follows: “It gave people an opportunity to express their opinions, and that their opinions matter.” “Morale is great, and the students seem to really enjoy the academic and extra activities we’ve had this year.” “I think when everyone feels they are making a contribution, the climate is a positive one that gives the members a sense of pride and accomplishment.” “The climate has improves.” 33.4% of the members of the site council felt that the climate had not been affected by the advisory group. They commented that “...there seems to be a need to bring more people into the ideas to build whole school enthusiasm.” “...I think there are some people who don’t even know we have a site council and who is on it.”

The non-members of the site council, who participated in the survey were more positive about the council’s influence on the climate of the school. 83% of the participants who were non-members felt that the site council had positively affected the climate of the school. They commented: “I feel we have better communication because of the council.” “I think the council has begun to influence the morale of the school in a positive way.” “The school climate has been positively influenced by the site council, through broader examples of communication and empowered voice to express things

openly.” One participant who was surveyed felt that it was too early to evaluate the site council’s influence of the school’s climate. (See Appendix B)

When asked to provide comments on the site council’s influence on the school’s academic achievement, both members and non-members of the site council provided similar responses and percentages in relation to positive and negative attitudes. 43% of the members provided positive response and 43% of the members responded negatively to the council’s influence on the academic achievement of the Delair Elementary School students. Non-members of the site council provided similar responses and percentages to the research question focusing on academic achievement. 33.3% of the participants provided positive responses, 33.3% of the respondents provided negative responses, and 33.3% of the participants were uncertain about the influence of the site council on the academic achievement of the students. (See Appendix B)

How Effective Was the Site Council in the Decision-Making Process?

As a final area of focus, the participants were asked to describe their feelings toward the effectiveness of the site council on the decision-making processes of the Delair Elementary School. 100% of the members of the site council who were surveyed and 50% non-members felt that the site council was effective in making and implementing decisions for the school. The comments that were not positive were also not negative. The respondents felt that it was too early to make a clear evaluation. The participants who felt that the site council was effective commented in the following manner: “It has been fairly effective on a small scale. I think we have much more potential to make greater change, and are still lacking the motive to begin.” “Decisions are made and implemented on an on-going basis. We have been very successful in

brainstorming new and more innovative ways to resolve old problems.” “Apparently they have done a pretty good job. I have seen this through the character education program, and the citizenship awards.” (See Appendix B)

How did the Site Council Influence the Role of the Principal of the Delair School?

An important focus of the study was to determine what influence the site council had on the Principal of the Delair Elementary School. The participants who were surveyed were asked to describe how the site council had influenced the Principal (Survey question #7 for members of the council and question #5 for non-members). Of all participants surveyed, only one was uncertain about the council’s influence on the Principal. However, that participant believed the climate of the school had improved. 92% of the participants surveyed felt that the site council had a positive influence on the Principal of the Delair Elementary School. Their responses included comments such as: “The Principal feels that he has a team he can work with.” “ The members have given the Principal a great deal of insight into the school and community as well as resources. The Principal sees that it is necessary for the school to be consistent with its norms and procedures, as well as getting the community involved.” “I think the members feel at ease to express their agreement or disagreement with ideas or situations at hand because you [the Principal] treat us as equals; that we all help run the school effectively. (See Appendix B)

Because a major aspect of this study focused on the influence of the site council on the Principal of the Delair Elementary School, he provided responses to the survey questions. He commented that the council needed more time to develop into a true site-based management system. The members were cautious not to overstep their bounds,

primarily because they have never worked under this type of administrative structure. As the facilitator of the council, the Principal felt that no one had taken it upon him or herself to step into a leadership role.

The areas in which the Principal witnessed changes were in the amount of community involvement in the school and the morale of the staff. There was better communication between the school and the PTA than in the past. The morale and climate was very positive, and there was 100% participation of the teaching staff in the PTA.

Not all of the members of the site council had been influential on the Principal, who noted that because of logistics, some had a greater opportunity and willingness to be influential than others. Because several of the members of the site council were not teaching, they have had greater access to the Principal, and were perceived as more influential.

Developing a site council is a very slow process. Issues had to be discussed, state tests had not been taken, and members had not yet broken away from a traditional administrative structure. The Principal felt that eventually a site-based, decision-making system would take hold and be effective, but at this point the goal had not been achieved. (See Appendix B)

Chapter 5

Conclusions, Implications, and Further Study

The Effectiveness of the Site Council on the Delair School's Daily Operation and Climate

The experience of developing and implementing a site-based management council at the Delair Elementary School for the first year Principal seems to have been similar to the development of similar administrative structures in other educational systems.

Determining who should participate and having them volunteer for the assignment was a relatively easy exercise. The members of the Delair School community willingly participated in the monthly meetings, discussing academic, social, and community-related ideas that would enhance the educational experience for the Delair students. Most of the participants were enthusiastic and positive in their approach to the site council, and their willingness to give of their time and energy to make certain that this project was successful, was well noted.

As a representative committee of the school community, the site council was extremely influential on the Principal of the building. The members of the site council acted as a sounding board for ideas, events, and activities that would be later presented to the staff as a whole, PTA, or the community. At the monthly meetings, events, academic reports from grade level representatives, and general school concerns were discussed. Decisions were made and implemented. The site council acted as an advisory group that every first year principal should utilize. Often, first year principals work in isolation, and have no group to discuss critical matters. The site council filled in as a pseudo-administrative support group, and was vital in helping the first year principal in the decision making process.

Because of bonds that develop, educational experiences and philosophies, several members of the site council were more influential than others. With the development of the subcommittee system (Academics, Community Relations, and Discipline) the members of the site council were able to focus on specific assignments, advise, and influence the principal within the those areas. Because of logistics, there may have been fears that some educators, even outside of the council, would have access and influence on the Principal. However, in any educational setting, particularly a small school, the influence of staff members varies, based upon logistics and personalities.

The site council played less of a role in the daily operations of the school. It was logistically impossible for the council to meet on a daily basis or when a decision needed to be made. Fortunately, the Delair Elementary School was small enough that if an issue arose, and input from members of the council was necessary, representatives could be called upon to provide needed information.

For activities that occurred during the school day or after school hours, the site council played a significant role. Activities were suggested, dates were confirmed, and volunteers were engaged, based upon the advice of the council. In this light, the site council positively enhanced the climate of the school. The morale of the staff had improved, but this may be due more to the disciplinary beliefs of the current Principal or to fact that the District had a new Superintendent.

Impact on Leadership and the Role of the Principal

The site council played an extremely important role in the developmental experience of the first year principal. They were his eyes and ears on many aspects of the atmosphere of the school. As a first year Principal, the site council provided valuable

insight into the school and community culture, and enhanced the Principal's ability to make decisions for the school. As a forum for educational ideas, the site council assisted the principal in making many decisions that benefited the students of the Delair Elementary School.

At this point, it was too soon to determine if the academic levels of the students had increased because of site council. State tests had not yet been taken, and the results would not be returned to the school district until very late spring 2004. At that time, an analysis of the results of the third and fourth grade assessments was expected to be made, and presented to the site council, whose suggestions, along with the assessment results, would be given to the entire faculty. The site council acted as a forum for ideas to be shared among the various grade levels. As representatives made their reports, ideas were taken back to other grade levels to be shared; thereby, providing curricular ideas for all grade levels.

Further Study

The development and implementation of a site-based management/advisory council was expected to take several years. For the members of the site council and the Delair community to accept this as a fruitful administrative structure, a great deal of faith in the members, hard work, and time will be needed. The faculty and staff of the Delair Elementary School has always worked under a traditional administrative structure, and had never had the opportunity for democratic input, in which there was an open forum for various ideas and opinions to be voiced. The site council provided this type of structure, and if the staff and community member buy into this system, all will benefit.

Further study should occur on the continued development of the site council at the Delair Elementary School. Roles will be further enhanced, and the participants will feel more open in their ability of voice their opinions on various topics that are critical to the educational environment of the school. As more people recognize the value of faculty and community participation in the educational decision making process, the more meaningful the educational product will be. Success is contagious, and as the community recognizes the work and spirit of the school staff, who in turn recognize the intrinsic values that the community can provide, academic, social, and community achievements can be made.

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Appendix A
Instruments

PENNSAUKEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TEACHER EVALUATION FORM

Teacher: School: Grade/Dept.:
Evaluator: Evaluation Date:
Subject: Social Studies Conference Date:

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: Students will be able to

A. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND MANAGEMENT P N U N/A

1. The classroom environment is conducive to learning.
2. The classroom arrangement/grouping is appropriate.
3. Bulletin Boards/Chalk Boards are attractive and relevant.
4. The lesson starts on time.
5. Rules and procedures are understood and enforced.
6. Instructional time is fully and effectively utilized.
7. The Teacher consistently monitors students' attention to task.
8. The Teacher communicates high expectations for each student.
9. The students are active participants in the learning process process.
10. The Teacher clearly communicates and enforces safety regulations.

KEY: P = Proficient N = Needs To Improve U = Unsatisfactory N/A = Not Applicable

P N U N/A

B. INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS

1. Lesson plans are complete, current and based on the approved curriculum.
2. Student performance objectives are clearly communicated and understood.
3. The Teacher uses motivational techniques to focus the learner.
4. Information presented is correct and accurate.
5. The Teacher uses effective questioning techniques.
6. Techniques used are appropriate for the lesson's objectives.
7. The lesson is well-paced.
8. Effectively uses instructional aide/current technology in the classroom
9. The Teacher regularly monitors students' progress during the lesson.
10. The lesson concludes with an appropriate summation.
11. The Teacher follows the lesson plans as stated.
12. Homework assignments are clearly stated and are appropriate to lesson's objective.
13. Homework is graded and returned to students.

KEY: P = Proficient N = Needs To Improve U = Unsatisfactory N/A = Not Applicable

P N U N/A

C. TEACHER AS A PROFESSIONAL

1. Maintains an effective working relationship with staff.
2. Maintains a supportive and positive relationship with students.
3. Maintains a relationship with parents that promotes effective communication.
4. Meets administrative deadlines.
5. Adheres to School District Policies
6. Keeps current with new educational trends.

D. COMMENDATIONS

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

F. The overall evaluation of the lesson is as follows: _____ satisfactory
 _____ unsatisfactory

G. If significant improvement is not demonstrated in subsequent lessons, the following recommendation may be made:

- _____ non-renewal of teaching contract (non-tenured teacher)
- _____ withholding of salary increment (tenured teacher)

Teacher's Signature Date Evaluator's Signature Date

Signature indicates that the Teacher Evaluation was read and discussed but does not mean agreement.

PENNSAUKEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Professional: Years in District:
Administrator: DATES OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS
Conference Date:

I. Performance of Professional in His/Her Position

II. Review of Student Assessment Techniques/Results

III. Commendations

IV. Comments by Professional

Signature: Professional _____
Administrator _____
Date _____

Absences as of 02/28/04: Accumulated Days as of 09/01/03:

SIGNATURE INDICATES THAT THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW
WAS READ AND DISCUSSED BUT DOES NOT MEAN AGREEMENT

PENNSAUKEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Professional:

Administrator:

Conference Date:

VI. Performance Area(s) Needing Improvement

VII. Professional Improvement Plan

A. Activities

B. Plans for Assistance

C. Timelines

VIII. Comments by Professional

Professional Development Hours Accrued from September 1, 2002 to February 28, 2003:

Professional Development Hours Accrued from March 1, 2003 to February 28, 2004:

Signature: Professional _____
Administrator _____
Date _____

Interview Questions for Participants of the Site-Based Management/Advisory Council:

1. Describe your familiarity with site-based management.
2. What type of school-related areas should be focused on by the members of the site-based management council?
3. What sub-committees should be formed by the members of the site council?
4. What events or activities or be implemented to enhance community involvement in the school?
5. Can greater academic achievement be a result of a site-based management system?

Interview Questions for Non-Participants of the Site-Based Management/Advisory Council:

1. Describe your familiarity with site-based management.
2. What type of school-related areas should be focused on by the members of the site-based management council?
3. What sub-committees should be formed by the members of the site council?
4. What events or activities or be implemented to enhance community involvement in the school?
5. Can greater academic achievement be a result of a site-based management system?

Survey Questions for Participants of the Site-based management/Advisory Council

1. What was your opinion of Delair elementary School's version of a site-based council?
2. Describe your role on the site-based advisory council.
3. Do you feel that your role in the school had been enhanced due to your participation on the site-based advisory council? If so, how?
4. What changes have you witnessed regarding community involvement because of the implementation of a site-based council?
5. How has the site council influenced the climate of the school?
6. Do you feel that the site-based advisory council has helped increase the academic achievement of the students of the Delair Elementary School?
7. What influences have the members of the site council had on the principal of the Delair Elementary School?
8. How effective was the site-based management/advisory council in making and implementing decisions?

Survey Questions for Non-Participants of the Site-based management/Advisory Council

1. What was your opinion of Delair Elementary School's version of a site-based council?
2. What changes have you witnessed regarding community involvement because of the implementation of a site-based council?
3. How has the site council influenced the climate of the school?
4. Do you feel that the site-based advisory council has helped increase the academic achievement of the students of the Delair Elementary School?
5. What influences have the members of the site council had on the principal of the Delair Elementary School?
6. How effective was the site-based management/advisory council in making and implementing decisions?

Appendix B
Interview and Survey Responses

Interview Questions for Participants of the Site-Based Management/Advisory Council:

1. Describe your familiarity with site-based management.
 - A. I have no familiarity with site-based management.
 - B. I have a little background, but it primarily relates to what I learned in Urban education.
 - C. I have somewhat of a familiarity with site-based management. I know it deals with managing the site of a school, and decisions are made about the school within the school.
 - D. I think I have somewhat of knowledge of it. I think it focuses on decisions being made in school.
 - E. I am not very familiar with site-based management at all. I've never worked in a school that had it.
 - F. I do not know much about site-based management
 - G. I am not familiar with that type of administrative system.

2. What type of school-related areas should be focused on, and what sub-committees should be formed by the members of the site-based management council?
 - A. We need to focus on the curriculum. A Curriculum Committee would be good. With these tests that the kids need to take, we have to do anything within the curriculum to get the gets kids prepared for the test.
 - B. We need activities that will help the students with low income. We need to reach the kids who don't have anything. We need to create programs that will help the neediest. But in this school parents, who won't get involved, are our greatest problem.
 - C. The group needs to focus on community relations, school activities, such as assemblies, discipline and resources for the kids. These should be about activities and the community.
 - D. We need parent involvement. We have to find ways for the school to look better inside and out. Academically, we have to have the grade levels working together to get the kids to their ability levels.
 - E. Committees should be formed to focus on discipline. We need to create a system under which the whole school functions; not necessarily within the classroom, but such things as removing students from class, and procedures for moving about the school. We also need inter-school mingling: both teachers and students planning and working together. We also need to continue to have plans flow from first grade through the other grades.
 - F. Parent involvement is the most important thing for us to focus on. We need to look at school violence, safety, and bullying. We need to focus on things that will keep our school safe.
 - G. The committees need to focus on more activities, such as assemblies for the students. We need more community involvement. We need to promote citizenship, and make it more concrete for the students. We also have to make certain that Special education is kept in the loop.

3. What events or activities or be implemented to enhance community involvement in the school?
 - A. We definitely need more cooperation with the PTA, and we need more teacher involvement in the PTA. We need the community and the school to push the kids more academically.
 - B. Although we have no control over this in school, we need a better busing system for the kids. The four levels are killing us. We also need to get buses for any programs we want to implement. There has to something in place to help the students with transportation. Maybe we can bring the parents in to help.
 - C. We have to have the community be willing to take part of the educational process and to make things better. The community should be given a voice in the school and help make decisions for the school
 - D. We need to get the community involved more. There are a great number of resources out there. We could have a career day, parent/student craft day. We could have parents share things with the kids, like a reading day.
 - E. I think we should get the parents to come in to help out with projects. Maybe once a month for help, getting the parents to do anything they can to help. We could put on plays with parent involvement. Most important, create an after school homework program.
 - F. We need more involvement with the PTA, maybe have a McDonald's Night.
 - G. As I said before, we need more community involvement, having the kids gain a greater understanding of citizenship.

4. Can greater academic achievement be a result of a site-based management?
 - A. Yes. This group could help realign the math needs. We could look at the weaknesses that the kids have and figure out how to help them. We could focus on skills.
 - B. I think so. We could focus on more than just getting books. The group could set high expectations. The kids need to have parents and teachers care. We also need more than just letter standards
 - C. Yes academics can be raised. The groups needs more than a voice. The more pushed the kids feel, the more they will work
 - D. If we form an academic committee, we can focus on weaknesses, and recommend specific strategies for improvement.
 - E. Yes. When some kids go home, that's it. It's important that we be here for them. We need to make them feel special and that help is always there for them.
 - F. Yes, definitely. Grade level representatives can enhance the academic areas. Also we need to cross-grade level coordinate to form a curriculum committee.
 - G. Absolutely. If we work together, we can help raise the bar for the kids.

Interview Questions for Non-Participants of the Site-Based Management/Advisory Council:

1. Describe your familiarity with site-based management.
 - A. I am not familiar with site-councils.
 - B. I probably not too familiar with site-based councils. I think it deals with schools deciding school issues.
 - C. I know nothing about site councils.
 - D. I wish I knew more about site-based management. I think it sounds democratic and interesting.
 - E. I don't know much about site-councils
 - F. I'm somewhat familiar. It deals with decisions for each school being made by people who work in the school and not by some central office.
 - G. My knowledge of site councils is very limited. I only know it focuses on decisions being made in the schools

2. What type of school-related areas should be focused on, and what sub-committees should be formed by the members of the site-based management council?
 - A. We some community involvement to get the people of the community excited about the learning that goes on in this place.
 - B. The council needs to deal with discipline: to get consistency among the teachers. There also needs to be some form of communication with the parents and between the administration and teachers.
 - C. Committees need to be formed to focus on discipline, parent involvement, and communication between the regular education, special education, and Child Study Teams.
 - D. Discipline, Discipline, and more discipline consistently used.
 - E. We need to focus on discipline. If you can't sit, you cannot learn. We also have to work on image building. The kids and community needs to feel good about themselves.
 - F. We have to worry about academics. Different schools start at different levels. We need to adjust the curriculum to meet the kids' needs. We have to do what is best for our children. Character education is also important.
 - G. We need more assemblies that focus on bullying. We need more plays. Also we have to get parents in to help organize the classes.

3. What events or activities or be implemented to enhance community involvement in the school?
 - A. We could have job fairs, international weeks that deal with multicultural ideas, and career days.
 - B. We have to get more teachers to join the PTA. More newsletters need to go out to inform the community about this place. We have to get more people involved; Try to get more parental involvement. More assemblies are needed.

- C. I'd like to see a "senior prom" set up. It could be something for the senior citizens of the Delair community to see what we do. We need parent involvement, especially for things like our KidWrite program. The PTA should be more involved in this place, and we need more library volunteers.
 - D. We could have a May Fair to award the students and community members. We could get parents to help out with games. We could get involved in things like Toys-for-tots to teach sharing. Maybe we could have a reading night.
 - E. We have to have a committee that works on image building. Part of it could deal with curriculum. We need to show people we do a great deal of good for these kids.
 - F. We need fundraisers to help put on plays. Maybe basketball games, food store sponsorships, shirts for ads and coupons. Things that would be good for morale. We need to feel a sense of community, a sense of belonging that is good and enriching.
 - G. Maybe we could get guest readers for the students, authors perhaps. Open up science night for all of the students and parents
4. Can greater academic achievement be a result of a site-based management system?
- A. This council can't hurt. The more you add to the classroom, the more the students will get out of it.
 - B. I don't know if this council will help or not. I think grade level meetings are more helpful. If you cross grade level information and share it that can be helpful too.
 - C. Grade level meetings to discuss strengths and weaknesses are a better idea. If you start now, we may be there by the time the test gets here.
 - D. Yes it can be helpful because there will be grade level interaction.
 - E. Yes the committee can raise the levels of the kids. Starting in September is hard because we need to find out where the students were in June.
 - F. I don't know if can help because the teachers are identifying doing what is needed, and we are restricted by Central Administration.
 - G. I don't think there will be a direct relation. More money needs to be put into parenting. Families are different.

Survey Questions for Participants of the Site-based Management/Advisory Council

1. What was your opinion of Delair Elementary School's version of a site-based council?
 - A. We still need more input from the community to be successful.
 - B. I like how the council is broken down into committees, and we are addressing issues that need to be worked on. It seems to be a good team-working concept.
 - C. To be honest, I don't know exactly what the role of the site-based management is. I am starting to understand a little.
 - D. I am finding the Delair Council to be a good beginning version. There is cohesion of goals among the members with good sense of cooperation. More time will increase the level of teamwork.
 - E. The site-based council has brought together the teachers, parents, and community together, which makes the contributors feel they are part of the decision making process.
 - F. It seems to be an effective team that will address different issues within our school.
 - G. I think a council such as this is a good way to improve communication in our school.

2. Describe your role on the site-based advisory council.
 - A. My role was primarily a sounding board. I like we were able to express our opinions and solutions freely.
 - B. I serve as a member of the discipline committee.
 - C. I guess my role is to help establish "norms" and "procedures" of the school.
 - D. I am an active participant who is willing to be helpful in any needed way.
 - E. I am a member who has volunteered for the assemblies committee. However, I am able to contribute and participate in all decision making processes.
 - F. My role on the site-based advisory council is to be part of the discipline committee.
 - G. I am a general member, and I attend the meetings, in which I provide input.

3. Do you feel that your role in the school had been enhanced due to your participation on the site-based advisory council? If so, how?
 - A. Yes. This council sets up a system in which people are discussing what is of importance among themselves.
 - B. Not yet. I'm sure it will be enhanced when we develop a discipline plan for the school.
 - C. No, because I feel that we all ask for advice or opinions from each other, not just the people on the site-based advisory council. I'm sure there are some people who don't even know who we are.

- D. I'm not sure. I feel personally pleased to be involved with a group that can try to effect change. However, on a whole staff level, it is the same.
 - E. No, because we have not developed a plan yet. I'm sure my role will be enhanced when we develop the plan next year.
 - F. Yes, because I can make contributions that result in creating a positive atmosphere for the students who attend Delair.
 - G. I am new to the council.
4. What changes have you witnessed regarding community involvement because of the implementation of a site-based council?
- A. Many more parents come to school sponsored events.
 - B. Things like pajama night, and more parent/staff involvement
 - C. This year the site council seems to be together than the school planning committee that we had last year. Everything seems to be coming together slowly. I do notice, however, that we are having more assemblies.
 - D. The single evening event that we hosted was a fabulous beginning. The perception of the school within a community still needs to be bolstered. However, the beginnings are well-seeded.
 - E. Every meeting involves discussing ways to include the community in our activities and assemblies. The PTA works closely in helping the council initiate new ideas.
 - F. Parent involvement and events such as pajama night.
 - G. We have had assemblies and activities after school hours.
5. How has the site council influenced the climate of the school?
- A. It gave people an opportunity to express their opinions, and that their opinions matter.
 - B. Morale is great, and the students seem to really enjoy the academic and extra curricular activities we've had this year.
 - C. Once again I think there are some people who don't even know we have a site council and who is on it.
 - D. I'm not sure it has yet. There seems to be a need to bring more people into the ideas to build whole school enthusiasm.
 - E. I think when everyone feels they are making a contribution, the climate is a positive one that gives the members a sense of pride and accomplishment.
 - F. The students seem to enjoy coming to school, particularly in the activities that are planned, such as pajama night, the concerts, science night, and gaining awards such as the "good citizenship award," which is very positive.
 - G. The climate has improved.
6. Do you feel that the site-based advisory council has helped increase the academic achievement of the students of the Delair Elementary School?
- A. No. Not at all
 - B. If tutoring is included with this council, it will help to improve academic achievement.

- C. Once everything comes together and we fully understand our responsibilities, I 'm sure it will increase the academic achievement of the kids.
 - D. Well, we are trying. I don't know if the council has had an academic interest as its primary goal. I know it is in the back o each idea.
 - E. Yes, we discuss grade-level concerns and goals. There is a mixture of grade levels at our meetings so everyone's needs are addressed, ideas and activities are exchanged.
 - F. Not yet.
 - G. When students are motivated to come to school because of extra activities, academics are likely to improve.
7. What influences have the members of the site council had on the principal of the Delair Elementary School?
- A. The Principal feels that he has a team that can work with him.
 - B. It helps the Principal become aware of the issues that have to be addressed on a school-wide basis.
 - C. The members have given the Principal a great deal of insight into the school and community as well as resources. The Principal sees that it is necessary for the school to be consistent with its norms and procedures, as well as getting the community involved.
 - D. The Principal has responded quite nicely to ideas and needs expressed by the council. He has been very open and active in making changes.
 - E. I would hope a positive one in which he realizes his staff supports him in every effort that benefits and enhances the experience the students have n our school.
 - F. I think the site council has made the Principal aware of issues that need to be addressed.
 - G. The Principal and members of the council have a greater chance to communicate.
8. How effective was the site-based management/advisory council in making and implementing decisions?
- A. Many issues are discussed, but more things need to be implemented.
 - B. It seems to be fairly effective.
 - C. I believe the site-based management council was successful making decisions and implementing them. Now, if all the members of the school can be consistent and follow them, it would be even better.
 - D. It has been fairly effective on a small scale. I think we have much more potential to make greater change, and are still lacking motive and drive to begin. We still need to feel ownership if we want to begin to see more school and global changes.
 - E. Decisions are made and implemented on an on-going basis. We have been very successful in brainstorming new and more innovative ways to resolve old problems.
 - F. For the decisions that have been made so far, they have been productive. Things seem to be moving in the right direction to improve the school overall.
 - G. The council is somewhat effective.

Survey Questions for Non-Participants of the Site-based management/Advisory Council

1. What was your opinion of Delair Elementary School's version of a site-based council?
 - A. It has been a positive spin on our school. Anything is always helpful.
 - B. I am hopeful that when given the chance, the council will be able to make a difference in our school, and the improvement of the community around us.
 - C. I think it is a good idea as long as all parties vow to be honest and open with their opinions and feelings.
 - D. My opinion of the Delair Elementary School site-based council is it provides educators of all levels a chance to gather, address, and offer constructive improvements. The process used gave a voice to educators of all levels and experiences with the Delair Elementary School.
 - E. I think that the idea of this type of council is very beneficial for the school, its discipline code, and for the students to know what is expected of them.
 - F. I think it is a very worthwhile concept.

2. What changes have you witnessed regarding community involvement because of the implementation of a site-based council?
 - A. I have not observed any changes, but that could be because I am sometimes a walking zombie.
 - B. Hot chocolate and reading night.
 - C. During extra-curricular activities, our parents are very involved. However, during academic activities they still seem to get involved a great deal less.
 - D. An improved rapport and cooperation between students, parents, educators, and community.
 - E. One event, which I was part of, was the story/pajama night back in early December. It offered the parents an opportunity to bring their child/children into the building in a very relaxed atmosphere, all for a good purpose, to promote literacy.
 - F. Pajama Night was very well received by the community.

3. How has the site council influenced the climate of the school?
 - A. I feel we have better communication because of the council.
 - B. I think the council has begun to influence the morale of the school in a positive way.
 - C. The staff is much more comfortable in discussing matters that may hinder the school.
 - D. The school climate has been positively influenced by the site-based council, through broader examples of communication and empowered voice to express opinions openly.
 - E. I feel that, from speaking to them, the teachers on the council are much more pleased in the overall discipline in the school.
 - F. Too early to evaluate.

4. Do you feel that the site-based advisory council has helped increase the academic achievement of the students of the Delair Elementary School?
 - A. No. but maybe only an act of God can do that.
 - B. There is a constant awareness of the need to increase the academic achievement of the students throughout the school.
 - C. Yes! When we have involved the parents in activities, such as the pajama night, the parents can see the listening and participation skills that their child has acquired.
 - D. I believe that the site-based council has substantially enhanced the academic achievements of the students at the Delair elementary School.
 - E. I haven't really seen any evidence of this.
 - F. Any extra attention given to the students can only be beneficial.

5. What influences have the members of the site council had on the principal of the Delair Elementary School?
 - A. You all exchange ideas at your meetings. Therefore, many plans from the ideas can be formulated.
 - B. I am not sure if it has influenced the Principal, but the climate of the school behaviorally has improved. I think it may be due to the discipline reinforced by the Principal.
 - C. I think the members feel very at ease to express their agreement or disagreement with ideas or situations at hand because you (the Principal) treat us as equals; that we all help to run the school effectively.
 - D. The members of the site-based council have greatly influenced the principal.
 - E. Since the members are very knowledgeable about the Delair School and its students, they probably have helped the Principal know what to expect in certain situations and have helped familiarize the Principal with the elementary setting.
 - F. More ideas are brought to his attention. Helps to inform and enlighten the Principal.

6. How effective was the site-based management/advisory council in making and implementing decisions?
 - A. I haven't paid that great attention to the decisions made by the council.
 - B. I think I will be able to answer this question in May or June.
 - C. Very effective. There is a strong group effort to make our school a better place for the students.
 - D. The team was extremely effective in making and implementing decisions.
 - E. Apparently, they have done a pretty good job. I have seen this through the character education program, and the citizenship awards.
 - F. Too early to evaluate.

Principal's Responses to Survey Questions of the Site-based Management/Advisory Council

1. What was your opinion of Delair Elementary School's version of a site-based council?
We still need more time to develop as a cohesive group that is willing to take charge. I think the members of the group are cautious about over-stepping their bounds because they are not familiar with the workings of a democratic group. With time, they may feel more empowered and willing to take chances.
2. Describe your role on the site-based advisory council.
I am the facilitator and the organizer of the committee. At this point I am the leader of the group, and the person to whom the ultimate decisions fall. The members of the council have not yet stepped up to take leadership roles. I am trying to stress democracy, but when the group has been always been within a traditional structure, it will take time to make changes.
3. Do you feel that your role in the school had been enhanced due to your participation on the site-based advisory council? If so, how?
My role within the school has not been enhanced. I would be happier to share some of the responsibilities with other members of the group. However, I will not acquiesce in my authority of the building to the council.
4. What changes have you witnessed regarding community involvement because of the implementation of a site-based council?
There is certainly a greater connection between the PTA and the school. Previously, there was a great deal of bitterness between the former Principal and the executive committee of the PTA. I believe because of the members of the advisory council and a willingness between the executive committee of the PTA and me, the current Principal, to move on from the past, we are seeing positive results. To help a greater amount of night activities for members of the community have been added to the school calendar.
5. How has the site council influenced the climate of the school?
The school climate is very positive. The discipline is controlled and the staff, PTA, Central Administration, and community seem to be pleased with what is going on in the building. It is the first year that the PTA gaining 100% support from the teaching staff.
6. Do you feel that the site-based advisory council has helped increase the academic achievement of the students of the Delair Elementary School?
At this point it is too soon to tell because state test have not been taken. Some teachers feel that it has, but others are not so certain. Time will tell.

7. What influences have the members of the site council had on the principal of the Delair Elementary School?

Various members of the committee have had more influence than others on the Principal. It may be due to logistics. Some members are not in the classroom, and have greater access to the Principal, and some teachers, who are more vocal, seem to have some influence. I think there also may be a fear that other staff members, beside those on the committee have a great deal of influence on the Principal.

8. How effective was the site-based management/advisory council in making and implementing decisions?

It is a very slow process. Issues are discussed, but not necessarily implemented in a timely fashion. I think it is because the members of the advisory council have not yet learned how to work within the structure of a site-based council. They are traditional and are waiting for the Principal to make the decision, when they rally should be taking the ball and running with it. I know that research says that it takes anywhere from three to fifteen years for a site council become truly effective, and at this rate, it certainly seems so at the Delair Elementary School.

Appendix C

Site-Based Management/Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Delair Elementary School
850 Derousse Avenue
Pennsauken, NJ 08110
856-662-6164

To: Members of the School Planning Committee

Fr: Curt Wrzesczynski

Re: Minutes of the School Planning Committee Meeting – 9/25/03

Date: 9/26/03

1. Review of past events:

- Previous meetings focused on analysis of state test results, and activities that are being used by teachers to addresses needs.
- Grade level meetings were focal points for School Planning Committee

2. Expectations:

- Utilize Planning Committee as a site-based management/advisory group
- Committee will function as an advisory council, similar to a presidential cabinet
- Meetings will serve as a forum for ideas, and discussions on various programs will occur
- Innovative ideas and programs will be discussed, including implementation possibilities.
- Members of the committees will be “eyes and ears” for particular concerns, and issues will be brought the committee-as-a-whole

3. Grade level information

- Instructional ideas and curricular concerns will be discussed at grade level meetings
- Class management and discipline concerns may also be discussed

4. PTA information

- Students store will reopen on Friday, September 26, 2003
- Box top drive
- Various fundraisers will be considered
- We have an opportunity to build bridges with the community, for which various ideas were discussed:
 - ◇ Creation of a Delair School Website
 - ◇ A school newsletter
 - ◇ Utilizing the special talents of the teachers and community members to create programs for the students

- ◇ Beautification projects, similar to the memorial garden at the Middle School
- ◇ Luncheon for volunteers
- ◇ Grandparents day
- ◇ Luncheon to welcome new students
- ◇ Multicultural cover dish
- ◇ Bake sales at the PTA meetings or Open House
- ◇ Skating parties
- ◇ Incentive for 100% participation in the PTA
- ◇ Every parent should receive a PTA flyer: i.e. fundraisers, meetings, etc.
- ◇ Plan meetings with parents to obtain input on community involvement and activities

PENNSAUKEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DELAIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

850 Derosse Avenue
Pennsauken, New Jersey 08110

CURT WRZESZCZYNSKI
Principal

(856) 662-6164
Fax: (856) 317-0362

To: Delair Elementary School staff members

Fr: Curt Wrzeszczynski

Re: Site-Based Management/Advisory Council – School Planning Committee
Minutes of the October 29, 2003 Meeting

Date: 10/30/03

1. PTA Information

- A. Information from the October PTA meeting was relayed.
- B. PTA was pleased with the Character Education Program.
- C. A Hoagie Sale fundraiser will take place in November.
- D. Reading Night will take place on Friday, December 12, 2003.
- E. A multi-cultural covered dish dinner will take place in March.

2. Grade level Information

- A. 2nd and 3rd grades will meet during the November 4th In-service. Information will be disseminated by the grade level representatives to the entire council.
- B. Kindergarten, 1st, and 4th grades are to meet during November, and information will be disseminated accordingly.
- C. BSIP teachers need to be included in the Grade level meetings. At the least, information that is essential to BSIP teachers must be provided to them.

3. Subcommittee Formation

- A. Information was gathered, and critical areas, upon which subcommittees could be drawn and focus their attention, were identified.
- B. Subcommittees will focus on the following areas of concern
 - 1. Academics: Grade level representatives will focus on intra and inter-grade level curricular coordination.
 - 2. Activities: Coordinate activities that provide positive educational and social experiences for the children and families of Delair.
 - 3. Community Involvement, Image Building, and Beautification: There is a desire to make the building look less sterile and more appealing to the students, teachers, and community members. The areas of beautification would include periodic themes for decorations, making the building warm and welcoming, making the library more appealing as a center of learning, including more books, decorations, and theme displays.
 - 4. Discipline: Create a unified Kindergarten to 4th grade discipline procedure when dealing with such issues as out-of-classroom movement and activities, recess, involvement of Counselor, and involvement of Principal.

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To: Members of the Site-Based Management/Advisory Council –
School Planning Committee

Fr: Curt Wrzeszczynski

Re: December meeting – Minutes

Date: 12/10/03

1. Subcommittees

A. Academics: Grade Level Representatives

B. Community Involvement/
Activities: Kristin Jakubowwski
Kathy Shaloo
Elizabeth Cullin
Diane Papaycik
Debbie Soukup
Lind Pulaski

C. Discipline: Alexa Nicholaros
Tonya Hardy
Michele Gillis

Events, activities, or actions needed to be submitted for Board approval.
Therefore, plan accordingly.

The Activities committee has suggested putting on a play, which will be
organized by Marie DiAmore, in May.

2. Library beautification

PTA President, Paula Reeve has suggested contacting an artist friend of
Marie DiAmore for suggestions and help in the process.

3. December/January meetings –

Grade Level meeting – Organize activities and a time line of Language Arts and Mathematics skills that will be concentrated on by the grade level teachers

Curt will contact the grade level chairs to organize the meetings and alert them of the discussion topics.

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To: Members of the Site-Based Management/Advisory Council –
School Planning Committee

Fr: Curt Wrzeszczynski

Re: January Meeting – Minutes

Date: 1/23/04

1. Surveys: Mr. Wrzeszczynski asked that the members of the committee return the self-assessment surveys to him as soon as possible.
2. Grade level reports: Mr. Hauser and Ms. Rudd reported the topics and strategies for the NJ ASK that were discussed during the district grade level meetings.
3. NJ ASK 3 Scores were reviewed by the members of the school planning committee and points were discussed.
4. Assemblies: The Character Education assembly was a rousing success, and everyone agreed that it would have a positive affect on the children. The message and the actions that followed were well received.

The date of the Wildlife refuge assembly has been changed to 2/20/04

Because of the success of the Winter concert, the Spring concert may need to be moved to the high school.

5. Beautification projects: Paula Reeve has contacted an artist who will meet with the beautification subcommittee with suggestions for ways to liven up parts of the building. This project would be completed through the PTA.

The suggestion was made to have posters with the word peace expressed in various languages, and have them placed around the building.

6. Major concerns: There are some concerns about the people picking up the walkers at the end of the day.

Biographical Data

Name	Curt Wrzeszczynski
High School	St. Joseph's Preparatory School Philadelphia, PA
Undergraduate	St. Joseph's University Philadelphia
Graduate	Villanova University Villanova, PA Master of Arts in History
	Rowan University Glassboro, NJ Master of Arts Educational Administration
Present Occupation	Principal Delair Elementary School Pennsauken Public Schools Pennsauken, NJ

