

**ENABLING BUREAUCRACIES IN EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF
FORMALIZATION IN AN URBAN DISTRICT AND SCHOOLS**

by

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Table of Contents

	Pages:
Acknowledgements.....	iii
List of Tables.....	x
List of Figures.....	xii
List of Appendices.....	xiii
Abstract.....	xiv
CHAPTER 1 Introduction.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	1
Significance of the Problem.....	4
CHAPTER 2 Review of Literature and Conceptual Framework.....	7
Bureaucracy in the Context of Organizational Theories.....	7
Defining bureaucracy.....	8
Bureaucratic typology.....	10
Division, coordination, and POSDCORB.....	13
Function and dysfunction.....	13
Bureaucratic Tensions.....	14
Locus of power and authority.....	14
Strategy and tactics.....	15
Negotiated rulemaking.....	16
Deming's Total Quality Management.....	17
Beyond bureaucracy.....	20
Conclusions.....	22

Conceptualization.....	23
CHAPTER 3 Research Methodology.....	29
Overview.....	29
The Case.....	30
Instruments.....	32
Validity and Reliability.....	34
Data Collection.....	37
Data Analysis.....	39
CHAPTER 4 The Case Setting.....	41
A Change in District Philosophy, Vision and Mission.....	41
The District's Adaptation of Total Quality Management.....	46
The Structure of TQM.....	50
The School Quality Council (SQC).....	50
The Executive Quality Council (EQC).....	52
The Central Support Group (CSG).....	54
Teacher on Special Assignment (TSA).....	54
Instructional Planning Group (IPG).....	55
TQM in Operation.....	59
Securing a Contract Waiver.....	59
Solving a Disciplinary Problem.....	59
Changing a School Policy.....	59
Solving a Scheduling Problem.....	60
Dealing with a Curriculum Issue.....	60

Seeking Agreement on a Uniform Grading Policy	61
Selecting a Model School Design.....	61
Recapitulation.....	65
Transition to Distributive Decision-Making	65
The Transformed Role of Central Office Administration.....	70
The Transformed Role of the Principal.....	76
The Transformation of School/District Relationships.....	81
Assessment.....	84
CHAPTER 5 Findings from Quantitative Data.....	93
The Analysis of Data from the Enabling School Structure and the	
Enabling District Structure Forms.....	93
Analysis of the NYS Report Card Data.....	98
CHAPTER 6 Findings from Qualitative Data.....	108
1. Level of Collaboration.....	110
2. Level of Flexibility.....	112
3. Change and Improvement.....	114
4. Risk-taking.....	116
5. Approach to Mistakes.....	117
6. Level of Control.....	118
7. Approach to Challenges.....	121
8. Organizational Consequences.....	122
Summary.....	124
CHAPTER 7 Discussion of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	127

Summary of Findings.....	128
Discussion.....	133
Assessment of Key Elements of the Implementation Process.....	133
Strong Leadership.....	133
TQM Teams.....	135
Support for TQM Decisions.....	136
Inverted Pyramid of District Hierarchy.....	136
Curriculum Decisions through Committee.....	136
Centrally Determined Goals.....	137
Measured Level of Trust.....	137
Waiver Process.....	138
Consistent Assessment of Progress.....	138
TQM Control over Budget.....	138
TQM Control over Staffing.....	139
Understanding of the TQM Process.....	139
Continuous TQM Training.....	140
Access to Information about TQM.....	140
Effective Communication.....	141
Coordinated Information Exchange.....	141
Alternative Salary Schedule.....	142
Role of the Superintendent.....	143
Role of Principals.....	145
Role of Teachers.....	147

Limitations.....	149
Policy Implications.....	150
Recommendations for Further Research.....	155
References.....	187

List of Tables

	Pages:
TABLE 2.1 Deming’s 14 Steps of the Total Quality Management Process.....	19
TABLE 2.2 Bureaucracy Table: Contrasting Enabling and Hindering Bureaucracy...	25
TABLE 2.3 Formalization Table: Contrasting Enabling and Coercive Formalization.	25
TABLE 2.4 Centralization Table: Contrasting Enabling and Hindering Centralization.....	26
TABLE 2.5 A Typology of School Bureaucracy.....	27
TABLE 2.6 Revised Formalization Table: Contrasting Enabling and Hindering Formalization.....	28
TABLE 3.1 Table of Specification.....	36
TABLE 4.1 District Committees of Total Quality Management.....	51
TABLE 4.2 Committee List of the Instructional Planning Group as of 1/15/04.....	57
TABLE 4.3 The Organization of Central Office for 1994/5 and 2003/04.....	72
TABLE 4.4 Schedule for K—12 District Curriculum Development and Textbook Adoptions.....	74
TABLE 4.5 Correlates and Indicators of the Good School Tool.....	86
TABLE 5.1 Perceptions of the Level of Enabling Bureaucracy: Mean Scores on ESS and EDS Forms by School and Central Office.....	94
TABLE 5.2 Similar Schools Groups – Identified by District and School Demographics.....	100
TABLE 5.3 District Schools and Their New York State Similar Schools Group	

Classification.....101

TABLE 5.4 Percentage of Students Meeting and Exceeding State Standards in
District Schools and the Corresponding Similar School Groups (SSG)..103

TABLE 6.1 Section Titles and Corresponding Binary Formalization
Characteristics.....109

TABLE 7.1 Total Quality Management Implementation Template.....134

List of Figures

Pages:

FIGURE 4.1 Organizational Functions and Levels of Responsibilities.....70

FIGURE 5.1 Scatterplot of the Enabling School Structure scores for teachers and
principals for Schools with Complete Data.....97

List of Appendices

	Pages:
Appendix A. Enabling School Structure (ESS) Form.....	160
Appendix B. Enabling District Structure (EDS) Form.....	161
Appendix C. Formalization Interview Guide (FIG).....	162
Appendix D. Brief Description of Research Protocol.....	163
Appendix E. Voluntary Consent Form.....	165
Appendix F. List of District Documents.....	167
Appendix G. Overview of Schools' Performance on State Assessments with the Performance of Corresponding Similar Schools Group (SSG).....	171

Abstract

This study measures and describes the impact of policies at the central office level of a core city school district upon the functioning of schools as expressed by the perceptions of district and school personnel with regard to the level of enabling bureaucracy in the district and the district's schools. It is linked to the work of Hoy and Sweetland (2000, 2001, and 2002) who defined enabling bureaucracy and designed the Enabling School Structure (ESS) Form, a research instrument measuring school bureaucracy on a spectrum from hindering to enabling. Both qualitative and quantitative research techniques were used. Central office and school administrators as well as teachers were interviewed and asked to respond to the ESS Form and the EDS Form, an adaptation of the ESS to the district level. District and school documents were also studied. The quantitative part describes the district's academic achievement trends and presents an analysis of variance of the perceived level of enabling bureaucracy among schools. The qualitative part describes how and why expert witnesses reorganized the district to decentralize decision-making and what the perceived impact of their interventions was. The research findings have revealed that the formalization effort at the central office level to create a more enabling bureaucracy has a strong and congruent impact on the functioning of most schools in the district. After a decade of structural change initiated by the current superintendent, the central office bureaucracy and the bureaucracies of most schools in the district are perceived as enabling by the teachers and the administrators of the schools and at the central office levels. Concurrently, pupil achievement has improved on average for most schools.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

In urban core school districts especially, where the bureaucratic structure tends to be highly developed, the design of educational organizations and the efforts to change them are more complicated than those in charge of crafting educational bureaucracies originally believed (Fullan, 2001). Design and overall strategy are not enough to guarantee educational success since schools also need the capacity and ability to make necessary tactical decisions at the school level. Within the complex structures of our education systems, this simple truth has often taken a back seat to other important concerns (Morgan, 1986; Hanson, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994; Hoy & Sweetland, 2001; Fullan, 2001). The problem and the challenge are to make certain that well qualified teachers have appropriate working conditions and are able to exercise professional expertise and judgment to guarantee high quality of education for our children. As critical agents of educational enterprise, teachers should be empowered to participate in the process of decision-making. Thus, there is an urgent need to study what direct influence the central office bureaucracy of a school district exerts on the structure and functioning of its component schools and on the people who work and learn within them.

The creation of an education system involves a rational effort framed within the prescribed legal structure of a society. As such, the resulting organization is bureaucratic, i.e., the rationalization of legally permissible collective activities. Bureaucracies are praised as structures that, through their hierarchy of authority, division of labor, impersonality, objective standards, technical competence, rules and regulation, are

capable of attaining the highest degree of administrative efficiency (Weber, 1947). At the same time, bureaucracies are criticized for being rigid and non-responsive to their public's interests. Hoy and Sweetland (2001) cite confirmation of the positive aspects of bureaucracies:

Research also shows that bureaucracies can enhance satisfaction (Michaels, Cron, Dubinsky, & Joachimsthaler, 1988), increase innovation (Craig, 1995; Damanpour, 1991), reduce role conflict (Senatra, 1980), and lessen feelings of alienation in schools (Moeller & Charters, 1966) as well as other organizations (Jackson & Schuler, 1985). [...] The bright side shows a bureaucracy that guides behavior, clarifies responsibility, reduces stress, and enables individuals to feel and be more effective (Adler, 1999; Adler & Borys, 1996; Hoy & Miskel, 2001). (p. 297)

Hoy and Sweetland (2001) also cite evidence as to the opprobrious nature of bureaucracies:

[bureaucracies] produce overconformity and rigidities (Gouldner, 1954; Merton, 1957), block and distort communication (Blau & Scott, 1962), alienate and exploit workers (Aiken & Hage, 1968; Scott, 1998), stifle innovation (Hage & Aiken, 1970), and are unresponsive to its publics (Coleman, 1974; Scott, 1998). Moreover, feminists attack bureaucracy as a male invention that rewards such masculine virtues as competition, power, and hierarchy and eschews such feminine values as collaboration, care, and equality (Ferguson, 1984; Martin & Knopoff, in press). (p. 296)

Thus, there are those who praise and others who criticize bureaucracy as the means to enable teachers to do their work. On the one hand, bureaucracies are structures capable of the highest degree of administrative efficiency; on the other hand, they have the potential to stifle, hinder, and corrupt organizational life (Mises, 1944).

Although there has been a lot of skepticism that a bureaucratic organization can improve the structure of education, recent research seems to be more optimistic. Rather than giving in to the thought that little can be done to change the nature of bureaucracy, which stifles teachers, depleting them of initiative and energy, some researchers focus on an effort to control, shape and change educational bureaucracies so that they will better serve teachers in the process of educating students. Among these researchers, Hoy and Sweetland argue that there is a need to introduce the concepts of enabling bureaucracy and hindering bureaucracy in order to reconcile two theoretically opposing perspectives of bureaucracy (Hoy & Sweetland, 2000; Sweetland, 2001; Hoy & Sweetland, 2001). The purpose of these concepts is similar to Fullan's intention to reorient bureaucracy from "control" to "support" (Fullan, 2001, p. 233); from interference in the process of teaching towards the understanding of the process and enabling teachers to be more proactive and effective professional agents. This intention follows Glaser's argument that a well managed organization needs to focus both on the "production of goods and services" and the "production of human satisfaction" in order to improve its output (Glaser & Glaser, 1981).

The interaction between central office and school bureaucracies is a critical juncture where the tire of tactical concerns meets the road of strategic intentions. This study focuses on the dynamics of this interaction with the intent that it will contribute to a

better understanding of how to organize efficiently and effectively urban public school districts.

Significance of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to measure and describe the impact of a deliberate change in the central office policies from “hindering” to “enabling” as defined by Hoy and Sweetland (2001) and the perception of school personnel on how empowering these policies are in the functioning of their schools. How do the intentions and actions of the central office personnel impact the school level organization and behavior? Are there any predictors that might help us understand central office and school interaction? It is important that we ask and answer the question whether bureaucracy can be effective in creating enabling school structures. If it cannot, we should look for a concept that would help us replace bureaucracy. If it can, we need to look for ways to create an education bureaucracy that would enable teachers to do their best possible work. As the society demands that the quality of education improves, we need to provide teachers with the conditions where they can effectively function as professionals. If they were only to follow directives to be successful, we would have no problems. However, the tasks that teachers perform are unpredictable, complicated and rich in operational detail. We need to bring more prominence to the issues related to the professional status of teachers and the tactical concerns of their day-to-day activities no matter how seemingly unimportant or distant they may be from the concerns of the legislators and central office strategists (Wise, 1979).

Although all schools and school districts are bureaucratic, urban core public school districts seem to be the places where bureaucratic entanglements are potentially

most pronounced and the negative impact on schools is the greatest. The influence of distant loci of bureaucratic control in local, state, and federal administrations further complicate division of power and clarification of duties in urban districts and schools. Charged with the education of the most imperiled children, teachers in urban schools often work in complicated, rigid and autocratic systems that promote control and frustrate risk taking and problem solving. Thus, bureaucratic malfunction becomes most likely and critical in urban school districts.

Focus on the study of enabling bureaucracies is a step towards redirecting the attention of education administration from a top-down to a bottom-up approach to school structure. It concentrates on enhancing the role of a teacher as a professional in school bureaucracy. Hoy and Sweetland (2001) remark that:

For all the talk about flat structures, empowerment, teacher participation, and reform, schools like all organizations have hierarchies. In spite of all reform rhetoric, the evidence has suggested that hierarchy and authority in schools will continue. [...]. The key to avoiding the dysfunctions of centralization is to change the kind of hierarchy rather than try to eliminate it. We need to develop structures that enable rather than hinder, or as Hirschhorn (1997) has suggested, we must embrace hierarchy and enliven it with feelings and passion. (p. 300)

In Chapter Two, a theoretical context of bureaucracy is presented and the terms are operationalized by adopting Hoy and Sweetland's (2001) concept of enabling bureaucracy. The research question guiding this study is formally posed. Chapter Three describes the research methodology. After the urban core district selected for this research is described, the quantitative and qualitative research instruments are presented.

Chapter Four, the Case Setting, presents the vision and mission of the researched district and describes how its Total Quality Management (TQM) process was used to transform district decision-making from centralized to distributive. The outcome of the TQM process is presented in the sections describing the new organizational units and the transformed roles of the central office administration and the principals. The chapter continues by describing the changed relationship between schools and the district bureaucracy. It concludes with a discussion of the assessment tools used to measure progress of the district towards established goals. Chapters Five and Six present the findings from the quantitative and qualitative data collection. Chapter Seven discusses the findings and concludes with recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature and Conceptual Framework

The purpose of this review of literature is to analyze bureaucracy in order to identify its advantages and disadvantages as they apply to the organization of urban public education systems. The first section of this chapter describes bureaucracy in the context of organizational theories. It then addresses those facets of bureaucracy that are critical in improving bureaucratic efficiency. The section continues by presenting research that offers organizational theories that purport to improve organizations by reaching beyond bureaucratic structures. The second section presents the operational concept of bureaucracy selected for this research, which is the concept of enabling bureaucracy (Hoy & Sweetland, 2000, 2001, and 2003). It also presents the research question and describes the variables identified for the purpose of this research. Before we begin describing and discussing bureaucracy in education, let us place it in the context of organizational research.

Bureaucracy in the Context of Organizational Theories

According to Hanson (1991), there are three basic bodies of organizational theory: Classical Organization Theory, Social Systems Theory, and Open System Theory. *Classical Organization Theory* attempts to formulate “universal scientific principles” (Hanson, 1991, p. 5) that help prescribe rational procedures and behaviors to effectively manage organizations. Social Systems Theory stipulates that organization is not a mere machine where people perform efficiently fitted into their respective roles as workers and managers. In school settings, rather than simply performing their functions in a bureaucracy, people also represent a collection of social groups, each with its own

interests and agendas. Social Systems Theory attempts to understand and accommodate the needs of various social entities in order to create a positive work environment. Open System Theory focuses on the fact that organizations function in an environment where there are other organizations. Organizations interact with one another and through the exchange of information they create “value added,” a better understanding of the world around them, and new ideas for improvement and change.

Defining bureaucracy

Etymology of the word bureaucracy leads to two Greek words “kratia,” meaning power, and “bureau,” meaning administrative rule of written law (Morgan, 1986).

Following Crozier, Wise identifies three definitions of bureaucracy (Wise, 1979; Crozier, 1964). They address bureaucracy in political, rational, and vulgar contexts.

The first definition regards bureaucracy in its political context as the government by bureaus. Bureaucracy “is the government by departments of the state staffed by appointed and not elected functionaries, organized hierarchically, and dependent on a sovereign authority” (Wise, 1979, p. 62).

The second definition describes bureaucracy in its rational context. This usage originates with Max Weber and describes bureaucracy as the “rationalization of collective activities.” This definition stresses that for bureaucracy to exist; there is a need of a system of impersonal rules that define responsibilities and organization of its functionaries.

The third definition regards bureaucracy in its vulgar context. “It evokes the slowness, the ponderousness, the routine, the complication of procedures, and the maladapted response of bureaucratic organization to the needs, which they should satisfy,

and the frustration which their members, and clients, or subjects consequently endure,” (Wise, 1979, p. 63). Encyclopædia Britannica (2000) proposes the following definition: Bureaucracy is “a professional corps of officials in a pyramid hierarchy functioning under impersonal rules and procedures.”

In the European tradition, the German sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920) is recognized as the originator of the term bureaucracy. Weber distinguishes between three organizational types, which he labeled: “charismatic,” “traditional,” and “rational-legal” (Weber, 1974).

Charismatic organization follows a strong leader. This person is set apart from other people in an organization and is surrounded by a circle of disciples. The disciples are the group mediating between the leader and the masses. Examples of charismatic leaders might be Jesus Christ, Henry Ford, and Adolph Hitler. An organization loses its charismatic form when the time comes to replace the original leader and someone else takes over the leadership position. The chance for the successor to be truly charismatic is slim (e.g. the Reverend Jesse Jackson assuming leadership of the Southern Christian Leadership Coalition following the assassination of the Reverend Martin Luther King). In the case when the succession is hereditary, the organization becomes traditional in form; if the succession is determined by rule, a bureaucratic organization develops.

Traditional organization uses precedent and custom as the source of authority. Pugh and Hickson (1989) point out that, even in our times, some organizations follow a Weberian pattern of traditional organization when firms establish their own dynasties and promotions are based on friendship or kinship rather than expertise.

Rational-legal organization is called by Weber a bureaucracy. For Weber, bureaucracy is the dominant and the most efficient social structure of modern society. This organization is unencumbered by personal whims of the leader or the constraints of customs and traditions. It represents the “final stage of depersonalization” (Pugh & Hickson, 1989, p. 13). Weber recognized four elements of bureaucracy:

1. division of labor in an organization
2. authority structure
3. the position and role of an individual member
4. the type of rules that regulate the relations between the members of an organization.

According to Weber, bureaucracy means “the exercise of control on the basis of technical knowledge” (Weber, 1947, p. 339). This knowledge is both technical and experiential. The former comes from education and the latter from working in a bureaucratic system. Weber proposes an “ideal” bureaucratic system in the sense that “ideal” is a mental construct and it is not to be found in a real world. “Real organizations can be more or less bureaucratic according to their degree of proximity to their ideal formulation” (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2000). Weber’s ideas found many followers who further developed his thoughts. The section to follow addresses Mintzberg’s five part bureaucratic typology and Hoy and Sweetland’s two part bureaucratic typology.

Bureaucratic typology. Henry Mintzberg (1979, 1983, and 1994) looks at bureaucracy as more than one best system. He points out that there are five elements in a bureaucratic organization: strategic apex, techno-structure, operating core, middle line, and support staff. Each of the five parts exerts a “pull” upon the organization (Pugh &

Hickson, 1989, p. 45). Depending on the interrelation of the five parts in a bureaucracy, Mintzberg proposes five types of bureaucratic organizations: Simple Structure, Machine Bureaucracy, Professional Bureaucracy, Divisionalized Form, and Adhocracy.

Simple Structure is typical of young or small organizations. There are only two parts to Simple Structure: strategic apex and operating core (Bolman & Deal, 1991). The strategic apex exerts the strongest pull here. The examples of Simple Structure bureaucracy might be a car dealership or a brand new government department.

Machine Bureaucracy is not dependent on a single person. The strongest pull here is exerted by its technostructure. Machine Bureaucracy is second only to Simple Structure in the lack of complexity and is an ideal model for the performing of routine tasks. Examples of Machine Bureaucracies are a plant manufacturing automotive parts, a McDonald producing hamburgers, a post office, a prison, and a major airline.

Professional Bureaucracy is dominated by its operating core, which consists of professional experts. Professionals are already trained and indoctrinated to perform their tasks. Professional Bureaucracy is typical of universities, hospitals, schools, accountancy firms, or social work agencies (Pugh & Hickson, 1989). Professional Bureaucracy is resistant to standardization by means of policies, supervision, and output controls. Outside interventions often upset a delicate balance between professionals and their clients (Mintzberg, 1979; Bolman & Deal, 1991).

Divisionalized Form is the type where a powerful middle line exerts the most pull. It is typical of large universities with several campuses, a health administration in charge of several hospitals, and a socialist state where government ministries control numbers of enterprises. Each division in Divisionalized Form is relatively self-sufficient, which

causes tendency towards Balkanization. The autonomy of each division is limited and controlled by the headquarters, which watches the numerical performance and decides on the budgets of specific divisions.

Adhocracy feels the strongest pull from the support staff. This bureaucracy is built on the ability to change rapidly, following the requirements of research-based information, directing it towards new technologies or new markets. Two variations of Adhocracy are an Operating Adhocracy and an Administrative Adhocracy. An example of the former might be an advertising agency whereas the latter might be the National Aeronautic and Space Agency (NASA). Adhocracy creates both innovations and difficulties. It brings both internal competition and conflict.

Mintzberg writes that schools are a professional bureaucracy. Others argue against this position by pointing out that “slowly, inexorably, and incrementally, the federal government is taking over education. Especially since 1965, the country has moved – almost every year – towards a national system of education. Furthermore, the potential opposition has almost conceded the inevitability of the trend” (Wise 1979, p. 50). As the influence of outside agencies increases, school operations require increasing amounts of information in order to perform their duties. Answering to the demands of outside bureaucracies for numerical information limits operational independence of schools and boards of education. In this new situation, schools, especially in large urban settings, have moved in their structures from professional bureaucracies towards divisionalized forms. In divisionalized form, the role of the strategic apex is greatly diminished while the locus of power and decision-making moves towards the center located beyond the immediate bureaucratic structure of a school or even a board of

education.

Hoy and Sweetland (2000, 2001, and 2002) take a more positive view, seeing educational school bureaucracies ranging on a continuum from enabling to hindering. They postulate that enabling bureaucracies allow for professional growth and decision-making while hindering bureaucracies enforce centrally generated strategies and demand compliance thus inhibiting change and growth. Hoy and Sweetland conclude that successful schools should function as enabling bureaucracies. The sections that follow expand the discussion on bureaucracy beyond what it is to what it is supposed to do.

Division, coordination, and POSDCORB. Answering the question of what the chief of an organization should actually do, Gulick suggests that the chief executive should POSDCORB. This acronym stands for planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting. As civilization attains ever more complicated forms of organization, there are natural limits to what an individual person can do alone. Since nobody can be in many places at the same time and know everything, there is a need to specialize, and introduce chain of command in an organization. Limited individual control over space, time, and knowledge requires organization to divide its resources into operational units. POSDCORB addresses the challenge of structure, coordination, and division of labor (Gulick in Shafritz & Hyde, 1992).

Function and dysfunction. Analyzed from the perspective of its function, bureaucracy is concerned with attaining precision, reliability, and efficiency. Its proper functioning demands that a bureaucrat is methodical, prudent, disciplined, and reliable. Bureaucracy attempts to limit personal bias and imperfection in order to achieve technical efficiency. Technical efficiency reduces hostility, anxiety, and effectual involvements

(Merton in Shafritz & Hyde, 1992). Performance devoted to a specific bureaucracy is attained through the guarantee of personal security. Personal security warrants tenure, pension, incremental salary, and regularized procedures for promotion. Devoted performance protects a bureaucratic structure from external pressures.

Bureaucratic Tensions

This subsection addresses two continuing dilemmas: (1) where to locate power and authority in a complex multilayered bureaucratic structure and (2) how to balance strategic influence over the freedom to decide on tactical options needed to realize the strategy. It continues by describing two organizational solutions that attempt to negotiate the tensions between the allocation of power and authority as well as the balance of strategy and tactics: Negotiated rulemaking and Total Quality Management.

Locus of power and authority. Swanson and King (1997) address the delicate balance between centralization and decentralization in education. According to them, “centralization of authority over education policy decisions reduces the realization of individual interests, increases social stress, and makes decision-making and implementation more complex” (Swanson & King, 1997, p. 45). Decentralization of education, on the other hand, increases inequity, increases heterogeneity, and reduces social integration.

One of the examples that Swanson and King use to illustrate a global dimension of the “evolution of the allocation pattern of power and authority” (p. 33) in education is the case of the State of Victoria in Australia, which prior to reform had two bureaucratic systems: a highly centralized public system and a highly decentralized private system. Private schools were regulated by market supply and demand forces while public schools

responded to bureaucratic and political accountability; both were funded at comparable levels with public monies. Public government schools in Australia were criticized “as being impersonal, uncaring, and institutional in character. Teachers and principals in government schools tended to identify with the Teaching Service (the state bureau for employing teachers) rather than with the schools and communities to which they were assigned. Assignments were “made on the basis of formula and longevity, not local conditions or merit” (Swanson & King, 1997, p. 39). Swanson and King quote Anderson (1993) who described the contrast between the two sectors as “choice versus equity, pluralism versus social cohesion, individual responsibility versus collective responsibility through the state” (p. 195). Eventually, in Australian school reform, “nongovernmental schools (the decentralized system) have come to serve as models for the reform of government schools (the centralized system)” (Swanson & King, 1993, p. 39).

Strategy and tactics. Analyzing bureaucracy in the army, education, and prison systems, Wilson concludes that in order for it to function better, “we have to deregulate the government” (Wilson, 1989, p. 369) and allow for more operational freedom for those performing complicated tasks. Wilson’s argument is built in part on his analysis of different objectives that the requirements of strategy and tactics bring to the functioning of an organization. Strategy is a general plan of action while tactics is a specific reaction to a real situation in the field. “In war, good tactics can often save a flawed strategy, whereas bad tactics can rarely make even an excellent strategy succeed” (Wilson, 1989, p. 18).

Wilson distinguishes two ways of looking at government agencies: “from the top down and from the bottom up.” Typically, the “political perspective draws attention to

the identity, beliefs, and decisions of the top officials” (Wilson, 1989, p. 11) in an organization. Such a perspective, although important, results in the neglect of what those who actually have contact with clients do and how they operate; what they feel and what they believe in.

In the case of schools, politicians know more about the perspective of the presidents of the universities or the superintendents of schools than the perspective of students, teachers and principals. Yet, the success of schools also depends on the day-to-day tactics of those employed in schools as well as on the overall strategy of central command. Wilson points out that organization matters in administration. If those in top managing positions have little understanding of the needs of those at the bottom, the operation of an organization often yields poor results. If the decision-makers are not able to allow for tactical freedom, an organization will become too bureaucratic and less effective in realizing its goals. How much of control and centralization is needed in an effective and efficient bureaucracy is the question of bureaucratic balance to be addressed in the next sub-section.

Negotiated rulemaking. Coglianese (1997) addressed the dilemma of decision-making from the federal perspective by analyzing “the promise and performance of negotiated rulemaking” (p. 1). It has been theorized (Bacharach, 1981; Kerwin, 1983; Susskind & McMahon, 1985) that consensus based process known as negotiated rulemaking might reduce rulemaking time and the number of petitions filed for judicial review during the process of crafting rules by various agencies of the federal government

Negotiated rulemaking, an aspect of shared decision-making, requires that an agency establishes a committee “comprised of representatives from regulated firms, trade

associations, citizen groups, and other affected organizations, as well as members of the agency staff” (Coglianese, 1997, p. 1) to negotiate publicly a proposed rule. During the hearing on the Negotiated Rulemaking Act of 1987, Representative Don Pease remarked that “roughly 80 percent of the 300 regulations issued each year by the Environmental Protection Agency end up in court [which is] unnecessary and costly litigation” (Coglianese, 1997, p. 3). Congress officially endorsed regulatory negotiation in the Negotiated Rulemaking Act of 1990 and it permanently reauthorized the Act in 1996” (Coglianese, 1997, p. 1). The executive branch actively supported negotiated rulemaking under both Bush and Clinton administrations. The surprising conclusion of Coglianese’s research, however, is that negotiated rulemaking “does not appear any more capable of reducing regulatory time and avoiding litigation than does the rulemaking process ordinarily used by agencies” (Coglianese, 1997, p. 26). Coglianese’s study is an example of how complicated and seemingly hopeless the search for efficiency and savings might seem in the decision-making process of a complex bureaucracy.

Deming’s Total Quality Management. Total Quality Management (TQM) is a system of continuous improvement that employs participative management which has been used in education in order to bring more authority to individual schools (Vincent & Johnson, 2000). When adopted for education, TQM is often called Site-Based Management or School-Based Management (SBM). It may also be called Shared Decision Making (SDM). Although the forms and methods of TQM, SBM or SDM may vary, “the primary goal is typically the same: to shift authority away from the district administrative hierarchy and into the hands of school groups (such as teachers and parents) that are more closely connected to the school and, theoretically, better equipped

to meet the specialized needs of students” (Vincent & Johnson, p. 1). TQM process generally follows a set of principles developed by Deming (1986, 1994). Denise G. Masters (2004) writes that “in the 1950s, the Japanese asked W. Edwards Deming, an American statistician and management theorist, to help them improve their war torn economy” (p. 1). After Japan had experienced dramatic economic growth, which was attributed to Deming’s assistance, Deming was rediscovered in the United States, especially after the American economy experienced reduction in the share of the world markets in the eighties. “TQM is now practiced in business as well as in government, the military, education, and in non-profit organizations including libraries (Jurow & Barnard, 1993)” (Masters, 2004, p. 1). Elements of Deming’s original fourteen steps of the TQM process can now be found in numerous permutations of the quality process that propose a recipe for organizational transformation towards a more distributive decision-making system. According to Vincent & Johnson (2000), by using the SDM process “schools and districts are hoping to mirror the positive results that participatory decision-making techniques have yielded for corporations during the past 30 years” (p. 1). Although not identical, both corporate and educational structures are “struggling to break away from the traditional organizational pyramid – typically characterized by its authoritarian, hierarchical, and restrictive tendencies” (Vincent & Johnson, 2000, p. 2). Table 2.1 presents Deming’s fourteen steps that need to be taken in order to implement TQM.

So far, there has been no research evidence that the SDM process and resulting distributive decision-making have a direct positive influence on the improved academic performance of the students in the schools and districts where the SDM has been utilized. Yet, State education departments have been actively promoting the TQM process and its

Table 2.1

Deming's 14 Steps of the Total Quality Management Process

1	Create constancy of purpose for improvement of product and service. Constancy of purpose requires innovation, investment in research and education, continuous improvement of product and service, maintenance of equipment, furniture and fixtures, and new aids to production.
2	Adopt the new philosophy. Management must undergo a transformation and begin to believe in quality products and services.
3	Cease dependence on mass inspection. Inspect products and services only enough to be able to identify ways to improve the process.
4	End the practice of awarding business on price tag alone. The lowest priced goods are not always the highest quality; choose a supplier based on its record of improvement and then make a long-term commitment to it.
5	Improve constantly and forever the system of product and service. Improvement is not a one-time effort; management is responsible for leading the organization into the practice of continual improvement in quality and productivity.
6	Institute training and retraining. Workers need to know how to do their jobs correctly even if they need to learn new skills.
7	Institute leadership. Leadership is the job of management. Managers have the responsibility to discover the barriers that prevent staff from taking pride in what they do. The staff will know what those barriers are.
8	Drive out fear. People often fear reprisal if they "make waves" at work. Managers need to create an environment where workers can express concerns with confidence.
9	Break down barriers between staff areas. Managers should promote teamwork by helping staff in different areas/departments work together. Fostering interrelationships among departments encourages higher quality decision-making.
10	Eliminate slogans, exhortations, and targets for the workforce. Using slogans alone, without an investigation into the processes of the workplace, can be offensive to workers because they imply that a better job could be done. Managers need to learn real ways of motivating people in their organizations.
11	Eliminate numerical quotas. Quotas impede quality more than any other working condition; they leave no room for improvement. Workers need the flexibility to give customers the level of service they need.
12	Remove barriers to pride of workmanship. Give workers respect and feedback about how they are doing their jobs.
13	Institute a vigorous program of education and retraining. With continuous improvement, job descriptions will change. As a result, employees need to be educated and retrained so they will be successful at new job responsibilities.
14	Take action to accomplish the transformation. Management must work as a team to carry out the previous 13 steps.

Note. (Masters, 2004, p. 2).

derivatives, the SDM and the SBM, across the nation. Like negotiated rulemaking, there is an intuitive belief that formalization through distributive decision-making improves the functioning of educational bureaucracy.

Although SBM, SDM and TQM advocate change, they attempt to improve rather than replace bureaucracy. There are, however, those in the research community who propose organizational theories that reach beyond bureaucratic structures. Their contributions are discussed in the next section.

Beyond bureaucracy

Some researchers posit that we should work on replacing bureaucracy with a better form of organization (Marshall, 1992, p. 2). Others go as far as to suggest that if we want to build innovative and dynamic organizations, we need to avoid bureaucracy (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Morgan, 1986).

Morgan proposes a “metaphorical analysis” as the means to produce a “diagnostic reading” of an organization. Thus organization is perceived as a machine, an organism, a brain, a culture, a political system, a psychic prison, a flux and transformation, and the instrument of domination. This multifaceted description is then “critically evaluated” in order to produce varied interpretations and reveal strengths and weaknesses of an organization. According to Morgan, metaphorical analysis is more flexible than most organizational theories which require following a strict and often complicated format of action. In order to place metaphorical analysis in the context of current research, Morgan describes what Contingency Theory and Organizational Ecology contribute to the better understanding of organizations.

Contingency Theory follows the Open Systems Theory premise and proposes that, for an organization to survive, it needs to be aware of its organizational environment and be able to change contingent on the changes in that environment (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). Following this thought, Population Ecology suggests that adaptation might not be enough for some organizations to survive and that through the process of change other organizations, better adapted to the new environment, might evolve and replace old structures regardless of how much the old organizations' management would try to change and adapt.

Organizational Ecology goes beyond Population Ecology's isolationism and states that organizational life is not a mere lonely survival of the fittest. Organizations coexist and cohabitate a given environment and, in the process of interaction, create a "pattern of relations" (Morgan, 1986, p. 69) between the environment and themselves (Emery & Trist, 1973). Rather than dominate and annihilate others in aggressive takeovers, organizations need to focus on how to collaborate. This thought reminds us of the value added concept advocated by the Open Systems Theory.

Focusing on the process of change, Fullan suggests that there is a need to "re-orient" education bureaucracy from a "control" to a "support" function (Fullan, 2001, p. 233). According to him, the efforts of the 50s and 60s were a "naive adoption era." Centrally allocated large sums of money were used to fulfill general strategies poor in detail and tactical flexibility. We have experienced enough to develop a better way to organize education. Fullan advocates that we need to put "capacity building" before "compliance" (Fullan, 2001, p. 233). More than 30% attrition rate in the first five years of teaching, with the number much higher in urban districts, should be a signal strong

enough to look closely into the working conditions of teachers in our schools. We need to begin our work from helping to “redefine and reinvigorate the teaching profession” (Fullan, 2001, p. 234).

Conclusions

The bureaucratic landscape of education in the 21st century has become complex and confusing especially for urban public schools and districts, and the discussion on the role and function of bureaucracy in education is far from reaching consensus. We need to recognize however that, as long as we agree that a way to proceed with education is to develop a rational blueprint and a set of written policies anchored in the law, we are building a more or less bureaucratic structure. Although scrutinized and at times severely criticized, bureaucracy still plays a prominent role in the structure of urban public education. We need to research and debate alternatives, but we also need to understand the functioning of education bureaucracy in its present form. If we believe that organization matters, we need to have a clear understanding of accepted best practices in the organization of education bureaucracy. Issues before us are: how large and how complex should an educational bureaucracy be permitted to become; and, what is the balance of influence between the strategic apex and the operational core. The belief that bureaucratic structure is capable of limitless strategic interventions from varied and poorly coordinated centers of power has proven to be false. We need to better understand and pay more attention to the influence of strategic thinking on tactical freedom and the ability of professionals to be effective in the field. Rather than following abstract plans and focusing on controlling implementation mistakes, we need focus on the development of positive and dynamic structures where well-trained teachers are positively motivated

and enthusiastic about their work.

Conceptualization

In order to operationalize the concept of bureaucracy, this study uses a conceptual model developed by Hoy and Sweetland (2001) for analyzing bureaucratic properties in schools with some modifications explained below. According to Hoy and Sweetland, the structure of school can be conceptualized on a continuum from enabling bureaucracy to hindering bureaucracy by examining the level of formalization and centralization in the system as predictors of the bureaucratic type.

An enabling bureaucracy is the structure that formalizes rules, regulations and procedures in such a way as to be helpful and lead to problem solving.

The prototype for an enabling school structure is a hierarchy that helps rather than hinders and a system of rules and regulations that guides problem solving rather than punishes failure. Although hierarchy can hinder, that need not be the case; in fact, in enabling school structure principals and teachers work cooperatively across recognized authority boundaries while retaining their distinctive roles. Similarly, rules and regulations are flexible guides for problem solving rather than constraints that create problems. In brief, both hierarchy and rules are mechanisms to support teachers rather than vehicles to enhance principal power. (Hoy, 2002, p. 35)

A hindering bureaucracy is highly centralized and rigid in its form and demands conformity. In such bureaucracy, creativity, risk-taking and change are not welcome.

The prototype for a hindering school structure is a hierarchy that impedes and a system of rules and regulations that is coercive. The basic objective of hierarchy

is disciplined compliance of teachers. The underlying administrative assumption in hindering structures is that teacher behavior must be closely managed and strictly controlled. To achieve the goal of disciplined compliance, both the hierarchy and rules are used to gain conformity. Indeed rules and regulations are used to buttress administrative control, which, in turn, typically hinders the effectiveness of teachers. In sum, the roles of hierarchy and rules are to assure that reluctant, incompetent, and irresponsible teachers do what administrators prescribe. The power of the principal is enhanced, but the work of the teachers is diminished. (Hoy, 2002, p. 35)

The dichotomy of bureaucracy is presented in Table 2.2 contrasting enabling versus hindering bureaucratic characteristics. Table 2.2 has been compiled by this researcher from the study of Hoy and Sweetland's discussion of bureaucracy (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001), which focuses on presenting a binary opposition of advantages and disadvantages of bureaucracy.

Hoy and Sweetland (2001) used two predictors to describe how bureaucracy is formed in an educational organization. The first bureaucratic predictor is *formalization*, which focuses on written rules, regulations, procedures and policies, and the degree to which they have been utilized in an organization. Depending on the rules and procedures utilized in a system, formalization may be enabling or coercive. Gouldner (1954) postulated that formalization had two aspects: representative and punishment-centered. Adler and Borys (1996) suggested enabling and coercive forms of formalization. Hoy and Sweetland used Adler and Borys' theoretical framework to generate two columns of rules and procedures under the headings of enabling and coercive as shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.2

Bureaucracy Table: Contrasting Enabling and Hindering Bureaucracy

Enabling Characteristics	Hindering Characteristics
Flexible	Rigid
Collaborative	Autocratic
Trusting	Cautious
Empowering	Controlling
Problem solving	Problem avoiding
Decentralized	Centralized
Goal oriented	Status oriented
Facilitating	Coercive
Encouraging communication	Requiring compliance
Encouraging professional judgment	Enforcing administrative rule

Note. The table is based on Hoy & Sweetland's research (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001).

The rules are grouped to show that a bureaucracy may empower decision-making and creativity or it may impede it by focusing on command and control aspect of an organization.

Centralization, which is the second bureaucratic predictor, describes the locus of control for organizational decision-making and the degree of employee

Table 2.3

Formalization Table: Contrasting Enabling and Coercive Formalization

Characteristics of Enabling Rules and Procedures	Characteristics of Coercive Rules and Procedures
1. Engage in interactive dialogue	1. Frustrate two-way communication
2. View problems as opportunities	2. View problems as obstacles
3. Foster trust	3. Foster mistrust
4. Value differences	4. Demand consensus
5. Learn from mistakes	5. Punish mistakes
6. Delight in the unexpected	6. Fear the unexpected
7. Facilitate problem solving	7. Blindly follow the rules

Note. (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001; p. 299)

participation.

Table 2.4 lists characteristics of centralization in two columns, one enabling and the other one hindering. The key argument is not against centralization, but against a specific kind of centralization that hinders and stifles rather than promotes and enables (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001).

Originally, Hoy and Sweetland conceptualized four types of bureaucratic school structures based on the dimensions of formalization and centralization. They proposed the following “typology of school bureaucracy” (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001, p. 302):

1. Enabling Bureaucracy, with enabling formalization and enabling centralization
2. Rule-bound Bureaucracy, with coercive formalization and enabling centralization
3. Hierarchical Bureaucracy, with enabling formalization and hindering centralization
4. Hindering Bureaucracy, with coercive formalization and hindering centralization.

Table 2.5 is a visual presentation of Hoy and Sweetland’s four bureaucratic types. After testing these four types in three studies, Hoy and Sweetland concluded that only Enabling Bureaucracy and Hindering Bureaucracy tested to be valid and reliable.

Table 2.4

Centralization Table: Contrasting Enabling and Hindering Centralization

Characteristics of Enabling Hierarchy	Characteristics of Hindering Hierarchy
1. Facilitates problem solving	1. Frustrates problem solving
2. Enables cooperation	2. Promotes control
3. Collaborative	3. Autocratic
4. Flexible	4. Rigid
5. Encourages innovation	5. Discourages change
6. Protects participants	6. Disciplines subordinates

Note. (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001, p. 301)

Table 2.5***A Typology of School Bureaucracy***

CENTRALIZATION	FORMALIZATION	
	Enabling	Coercive
Enabling	Enabling Bureaucracy	Rule—bound Bureaucracy
Hindering	Hierarchical Bureaucracy	Hindering Bureaucracy

Note. (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001, p. 302)

Careful analysis of Table 2.3 and Table 2.4 reveals that some of the concepts are close in meaning and others repeat themselves. For example, characteristic number one from the Formalization Table (Table 2.3), “engages in interactive dialogue” is conceptually close in meaning to characteristic number two from the Centralization Table (Table 2.4), “enables cooperation.” Characteristic number seven from the Formalization Table, “facilitate problem solving” is identical to characteristic number one from the Centralization Table, “facilitates problem solving.”

This research proposes to merge two of Hoy and Sweetland’s predictors of centralization and formalization into one set of formalization objectives with two extremes of enabling and hindering. Formalization objectives are used to gauge whether a district has developed an enabling or a hindering bureaucracy. Table 2.6 is the revised Table of Formalization that serves as the conceptualization model for this research.

The basic assumption of this research is that school structure matters and that it influences the professionals working in schools. Rather than analyzing only school bureaucracies, it is focused on how much the action of the school district bureaucracy and its formalization strategy influence school bureaucracies in the district. It is hypothesized

Table 2.6

Revised Formalization Table: Contrasting Enabling and Hindering Formalization

Characteristics of Enabling Rules and Procedures	Characteristics of Hindering Rules and Procedures
1. Collaborative	1. Autocratic
2. Flexible	2. Rigid
3. Encourage innovation	3. Discourage change
4. Value risk-taking	4. Value compliance
5. Learn from mistakes	5. Control mistakes
6. Facilitate problem solving	6. Promote adhering to the rules
7. View problems as opportunities	7. View problems as obstacles
8. Protect participants	8. Discipline subordinates

that there is a correspondence between the formalizations valued by the district and the type of school bureaucracies developed in the district, i.e., the district valuing enabling formalization will promote enabling school bureaucracies and the district valuing hindering formalization will promote hindering school bureaucracies.

This research will address the following research question:

Is the kind of formalization at the district level indicative of whether schools in this district operate as enabling or hindering bureaucracies?

In order to address the research question, the following variables are identified and their interactions studied:

1. formalization strategy, on a continuum from enabling to hindering at the district level
2. bureaucratic structure, on a continuum from enabling to hindering at the school level

The ensuing methodology chapter addresses case selection, instruments, data collection, and analysis.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

Overview

This study employed both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. In the qualitative (and first) phase of the research, criterion-based network sampling was used (Merriam, 1998). The superintendent of schools and Board of Education members of the subject district were asked to participate in interviews using the Formalization Interview Guide developed by this researcher (Appendix C) and to recommend expert witnesses that were knowledgeable about district educational strategy and processes. The expert witnesses could include current district employees as well as those who had worked previously in the district and, because of their experience, possessed valuable knowledge and insight. These expert witnesses in turn were asked to recommend other expert witnesses. Expert witnesses were interviewed and documents recommended by those witnesses were studied until the district formalization strategy was clearly established. The process continued until interviews yielded no new information. The district formalization strategy was evaluated against the contrasting characteristics of enabling and hindering formalization listed in Table 2.6, the Revised Formalization Table, and located on the enabling/hindering continuum.

The bureaucratic structure, as perceived by teachers, was established using the Enabling School Structure (ESS) Form (Appendix A), a survey instrument designed by Hoy and Sweetland (2001), which placed each school bureaucracy on the enabling/hindering continuum. All teachers in all schools were asked to complete the survey instrument. The average teachers' scores were calculated by school and used to

place each school on the enabling/hindering continuum.

The principals and other expert witnesses of the two schools ranking highest and lowest respectively on the continuum were interviewed with respect to the influence of district policy on school organization and practices using the Formalization Interview Guide. Reasons explaining deviation from the district strategy were sought.

All school principals and other expert witnesses in the district were asked to complete an instrument similar to the ESS Form, but modified by this researcher so that it was directed towards evaluating the district bureaucratic structure instead of school structure on the enabling/hindering continuum. The instrument is called the Enabling District Structure (EDS) Form (Appendix B).

The Case

An urban core school district that has experienced significant organizational change during the past decade was sought in which the study could be conducted. Full district cooperation was necessary for the study to be successful. The district selected for study was an urban core district located in Western New York State. The potential research subjects consisted of all school board members, teachers, administrators, and other staff working in the district as well as those who used to work in the district, but retired or were subsequently employed elsewhere.

Preliminary anecdotal evidence indicated that about ten years ago the central office hierarchy in this district identified inefficiencies in its bureaucratic structure as one of the elements that needed to be addressed to improve the delivery of educational services to students; as a consequence, it deliberately reorganized itself in order to decentralize decision-making and provide schools with increased ability to become active

agents in the process of change and improvement.

The district covers 17 square miles and enrolls 8,640 students with 58.2% of the students classified as white, 34.8% black, 2.1% Hispanic and 4.6% other. Free or reduced lunches are offered to 41.4% of the students. Over the years 2002-2003, 73% of the students who graduated from the district attended college or other post-secondary institutions (Doc. 33). There are nine elementary schools, three middle schools, and one high school in the district. The district employs 599 teachers and 78 other professionals with a total of 1,002 staff and classified personnel working in the district. Among the teachers in the district, 81% have Masters Degrees plus 30 credit hours or Doctorate Degrees. On average, 39.5% of the teachers in this county and 30% in the State of New York have an education of Masters plus 30 credits or Doctoral degrees (Doc. 34).

According to the Property Tax Report Card for 2003/2004 school year (Doc. 3), total district spending was budgeted at \$103,448,874 with 26% of total revenue coming from local taxes, 71% from state aid and 3% from other sources. Total Estimated School Tax Levy was at \$25,076,688. In 2000-01, the School District Total Expenditure per pupil was \$13,273, while the average New York State Public Schools Total Expenditure per pupil was \$11,871.

The district has been described as a district “located in the Northeast’s rust belt, in a city that has experienced a steady erosion of people and jobs over the past two decades. The city’s population has dropped by half since 1960, to 55,000. School enrollment has plummeted from a high of 19,000 students to 9,000. Roughly 72 percent of voters have no children in the district, and over 60 percent of residents receive government aid,” (Granto, 2002).

Instruments

To gain insight into the research question, three research instruments were used:

1. Enabling School Structure (ESS) Form (see Appendix A)
2. Enabling District Structure (EDS) Form (see Appendix B)
3. Formalization Interview Guide (see Appendix C)

The ESS Form and the EDS Form are based on the Enabling School Structure (ESS) Form developed by Hoy and Sweetland (2001). Each consists of 12 items to which the respondent indicates a level of agreement/disagreement using a Likert-type scale. The higher the score, the more enabling is the school structure. The lower the score, the more hindering is the school structure. The Enabling District Structure (EDS) Form uses the same 12 items as does the ESS, but the respondent is asked to rate the school district structure rather than the school structure. The ESS instrument used in this study is Hoy and Sweetland's original 12-item ESS Form with one additional question asking the length of employment with the district. The ESS Form was used to measure the teachers' perception of the level of enabling bureaucracy in their schools as it was used by Hoy and Sweetland. The EDS instrument is an adaptation of the ESS so that it can be used to measure district level and school level administrators' perception of the extend of enabling bureaucracy at the district level.

In their first study, Hoy and Sweetland used an expanded version of the ESS Form with 24 items to measure the construct. They selected 61 teachers from 61 different schools who attended three educational administration courses at the Ohio State University as their sample. All teachers were students of graduate schools of education and mostly represented urban school districts. Rather than the four constructs that they

had predicted, Hoy and Sweetland found two constructs that emerged as clearly distinct in the study. “School bureaucracy varied along a single continuum with enabling bureaucracy at one extreme and hindering bureaucracy at the other” (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001, p. 304), with a one-factor solution loading ranging from .40 to .81 and the coefficient of reliability ($\alpha = .94$).

In their second study, Hoy and Sweetland selected 116 teachers from different schools in five states Ohio, Michigan, New Jersey, Virginia, and New York. Professors of educational administration collected data from teachers who were graduate students in five major universities. As in the first study, all the items loaded strongly on a single factor (range .53 to .81), and the alpha coefficient of reliability was .96.

With the original four bureaucratic types reduced to two, Hoy and Sweetland decided to change the original 24-item scale to a 12-item Likert-type scale, with six enabling and six hindering items to measure enabling and hindering bureaucracy. In their third study, Hoy and Sweetland used the 12-item ESS Form. They invited 150 high schools in Ohio to participate. To address the limitation that only one teacher per school had participated in the first and second studies, the researchers increased the number of participants in each school by selecting schools with 15 or more faculty. Out of 150 high schools, 98 responded and 97 met the selection criteria. The 12-item ESS Form replicated the results of the earlier two samples analyzed by a 24-item ESS Form, with the correlation between the two forms at near 1. Hoy and Sweetland (2001) concluded that the “12-item short form is a good parsimonious measure of enabling bureaucracies” (p. 309).

Hoy and Sweetland’s research focused on high school teachers who were graduate students attending schools of educational administration at state universities.

Through their research, they established that three demographic variables often related to school outcomes, size, urbanicity, and Socioeconomic Status (SES), made no significant contributions to the measure of enabling bureaucracy (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001, p. 313). This indicates that the results of the ESS Form should not be skewed or otherwise influenced if the instrument were used to measure these concepts in an urban district.

The Formalization Interview Guide (FIG) is an open-ended interview protocol designed by this author to address the concepts developed in the Revised Formalization Table, Table 2.6. The form and sequence of questions were determined in advance. All participants were asked the same basic questions in the same order.

The strengths of the open-ended interview are that it: (1) increases the comparability of responses, (2) reduces interviewer effects and bias, and (3) facilitates the organization and analysis of data. The weaknesses are that it: (1) provides for little flexibility, and (2) limits the naturalness and relevance of questions and answers (Tuckman, 1999; Patton, 1990). Open-ended interview format was selected in order to improve the reliability, generalizability, and replicability of the FIG. Both these concepts are discussed in the next section.

Validity and Reliability

To test the validity of enabling bureaucracy during their first study, Hoy and Sweetland theorized that enabling bureaucracies would not promote dependence on hierarchy or dependence on rules and regulations. Having measured these two relationships, they concluded that “dependence on the hierarchy ($r = -.62, p < 0.1$) and dependence on rules ($r = -.25, p < 0.5$) were negatively related to our measure of enabling bureaucracy,” (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001, p. 305). These findings were similar to the

findings of Aiken and Hage (1968) who concluded that a social welfare agency organization dependent on superiors resulted in professionals being alienated and dissatisfied.

As an additional measure of validity, in their second study, Hoy and Sweetland tested two hypotheses. For the first hypothesis, they theorized that enabling bureaucracy should promote teachers' sense of trust. The concept of trust in an organization was researched by Bennis and Nanus (1985) who concluded that trust is needed when an organization undergoes change, which might cause initial confusion. According to Covey (1990), trust is critical because it improves the productivity of an organization. For the second hypothesis, Hoy and Sweetland theorized that "the more enabling the bureaucratic structure of schools, the less the sense of powerlessness among teachers," (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001, p. 306). The concept of powerlessness followed the work of Etzioni (1961, and 1975) who in his theory of complex organizations posited that coercive organizations tended to alienate workers. Both of these hypotheses were supported. "The more enabling the bureaucracy, the more trust teachers have in their colleagues ($r = .61, p < 0.1$) and the less the sense of powerlessness among teachers ($r = -.74, p < 0.1$)" (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001, p. 306).

Hoy and Sweetland concluded that the 12-item short ESS form has "high reliability in all samples (never lower than .9); it correlates almost perfectly with its longer version in the first two samples (.96 and .99 respectively), and finally, it has good factor and predictive validity," (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001, p. 309).

Table 3.1 was developed to address the object validity of the FIG by relating the questions on the questionnaire to the items from Table 2.6, the Revised Formalization

Table. It was theorized that since the concepts in the table proved to be valid in Hoy and Sweetland's research, they would hold their validity in the FIG. The section that follows explains the steps that were undertaken in the collection of data for this research.

Table 3.1

Table of Specification

Questions From Formalization Interview Guide	Corresponding Formalization Table Items
1. Does the district have a vision and/or mission statement? If the answer is "yes," describe the statement and explain how the district has shaped its organization in order to realize the vision and mission.	General
2. Describe your perception of how the policies and procedures are being made in the district and who the key decision makers are.	1
3. Explain how much control the central office has over schools and how it is manifested.	2
4. In your opinion, how does the district address change and at what point are schools involved in the change process?	3
5. What are the organizational consequences of not following directions at different levels?	4
6. How does the district address mistakes at different levels of the organization?	5
7. Have you noticed any changes in the philosophy of the district during your tenure? If yes, when, and what changes?	3
8. Have you noticed any changes in the organization of the district during your tenure? If yes, when, and what changes?	3
9. Are there any mechanisms that address unforeseen problems or surprises in the functioning of the district?	6,7
10. Are there any policies that address unforeseen problems or surprises in the functioning of the district?	6,7
11. Do you always agree with decisions made at the district level? Are you allowed to voice dissent? If yes, what is the district policy regarding criticism?	7,8
12. Describe the structure and function of the central office administration in the district as you see it.	General

Data Collection

Data collection was both of a qualitative and a quantitative nature and proceeded in the following manner:

1. Identify initial group of expert witnesses by interviewing the superintendent and the board members (qualitative).
2. Identify the district's formalization strategy on the continuum from enabling to hindering based on the responses of expert witnesses to the FIG (qualitative, supplemented by quantitative analysis in step 4).
3. Analyze district documents (qualitative).
4. Measure the perception of the level of enabling bureaucracy in the district by administering the EDS Form to the administrators in the central office and to the principals in all schools (quantitative).
5. Measure the teachers' and the principals' perceptions of enabling bureaucracy in their schools on the continuum from enabling to hindering based on the responses to the ESS Form (quantitative).
6. Select the two most enabling and two most hindering schools by analyzing data from the ESS instrument (quantitative).
7. Administer the FIG to key witnesses from two most enabling and two most hindering schools (qualitative).

In the quantitative aspect of this research, the ESS Form and the EDS Form were used to assess whether the district had developed an enabling or a hindering bureaucracy in its schools and in the district. Central office personnel were contacted to provide assistance in the distribution and the collection of the ESS Form to all teachers in every school.

Teachers were asked to deposit their responses in a drop box at the school site in an unmarked sealed envelope. The researcher collected the envelopes keeping the responses grouped by school. Teachers were approached three times to respond to the ESS survey. First, information regarding the survey, the surveys, and the drop boxes were delivered to each school principal to distribute to the teachers. Second, the leadership of the teachers' union appealed to union representatives from each school soliciting their help in convincing teachers to respond to the ESS questionnaires. Third, the principals were asked to appeal to the teachers to respond to the surveys.

The principals were approached five times to complete both the ESS and the EDS surveys. They were first approached when the information, the surveys and the drop boxes were delivered for the teachers' survey. Second, the superintendent and the deputy superintendent appealed for assistance during a district administrators' meeting. Third, this researcher was given a chance to present the research proposal during a district administrators' meeting three month later. Fourth and fifth were individual e-mail appeals.

In the qualitative aspect, this researcher asked expert witnesses during an interview to respond to the FIG and analyzed available district documents. The purpose of the qualitative data collection was to understand the cause and effect of actions at the central office level on school policy and practice. What items from the Revised Formalization Table, Table 2.6, were of interest to central office decision-makers and why? To what degree and how did they want to control, delegate, or devolve to schools items specified in the table? District documents mentioned by expert witnesses were analyzed to identify formal policy as to how the central office administrators intended to

reconstruct the district in order to achieve their formalization objectives.

Data Analysis

In the analysis section of the research, the responses to the FIG, the ESS Form, the EDS Form, and the document analysis are triangulated with the literature review to evaluate the intentions and actions of the district against the template of Table 2.6, the Revised Formalization Table.

The quantitative part of the research presents sample descriptions and analysis of variance of the perceived level of enabling bureaucracy as reported by (1) teachers' responses to the ESS, (2) principals' responses to the ESS and the EDS, and, (3) the responses of the central office administrators to the EDS. The data for schools, where the percentage of teachers' responses was less than 50%, are tabulated as one mean score to see whether they differ from the mean scores of schools with the teacher response rate of over 50%. Teachers' responses are also disaggregated between the teachers employed before 1990 and those employed in 1990 or later to discover differences in the perception of enabling bureaucracy between teacher cohorts employed before and after the changes in the district were initiated.

In the qualitative description, an answer is sought as to why and how the expert witnesses reconstructed the district with respect to schools and teachers and whether their interventions made any difference.

The requirements of the Investigation Involving Human Subjects, as defined by the Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board at the University at Buffalo, are that the anonymity of the persons who are interviewed is protected. To respect this requirement, all interviewed persons have been assigned a number and are

cited in the text by their number. For example, “Int. 3” means that interview number three has been cited. In case when an interviewed person is quoted directly, the page number of the interview transcript is provided. For example, “Int. 4, p. 3” means that page three of the interview number four is cited. The cited documents are listed in Appendix F and are cited in a manner similar to interview citations: (Doc. 3, p. 5) indicates that the citation comes from page five of document number three.

The data thus generated and presented are of heuristic value. Repeating Hoy and Sweetland, the concept of enabling bureaucracy is valid, reliable, and replicable. The purpose of this research is to contribute information that would enhance generalizability and further the knowledge of enabling and hindering bureaucracies to better understand the role of district policy in “enabling” teachers to use their professional judgments in conducting the district’s educational mission. The specific intention is to answer the question whether, how and to what degree does a school district’s central office bureaucracy influence school bureaucracies in an urban public school district.

CHAPTER 4

The Case Setting

This case study has been performed in a mid-sized urban core school district in Western New York State which, for over a decade, has been transforming its bureaucratic structures from a centralized top-down orientation to a bottom-up and distributive orientation. The district refers to the new structure as the Total Quality Management (TQM) process. This chapter is based on the examination of district documents and interviews of expert witnesses. To place the current superintendent's actions within an historical setting, the chapter begins with a brief overview of the tenure of the past three superintendents and their contributions to the new process. The philosophy of the current superintendent that motivated him to initiate changes in the vision and mission of the district are described followed by a description of the particular Total Quality Management format used to implement organizational changes in the district. The transformation from a centralized to a distributive decision-making structure and the resulting transformations in the roles of central office administrators and principals are presented. Ensuing sections discuss transformed school/district relationships and the district's approach to assessment. Analysis of the impact of these changes is deferred to Chapters Six and Seven.

A Change in District Philosophy, Vision and Mission

Almost all who were interviewed agreed that the key leader in the district is the superintendent. The organizational memory of key witnesses reaches back to three superintendents before the current one. The first of them, in the nineteen seventies, was a "nice, hands off" person who experienced two teachers' strikes and retired because he

took labor conflicts personally (Int. 3, p. 5). The second superintendent was a dictatorial top-down “hatchet man” who was employed to “clean house” and “remove dead weight,” (Int. 3, p. 2). He was used to reorganize the district and was especially effective in improving the structure and function of the business department. The third superintendent was “a bear” whose motto was “this is the way things are done because I know it all” (Int. 3, p. 2). Although energetic and decisive, he was a transitional superintendent who brought little change. Another person described him as a forward thinker albeit more cautious and conservative than the current superintendent. He recognized the potential of the current superintendent and groomed him for the position (Int. 20). Each superintendent played important and useful roles in the district (Int. 3 and 20); but, the transformation in district decision-making of interest to this research was initiated by the current superintendent.

The current superintendent was born in the city where the district is located and began his educational career in 1957 as a junior high school social studies teacher in the district. He subsequently became a high school history teacher. His administrative career began as an assistant principal in a junior high school and then as a principal. In 1980, he began working as a central office administrator. He served as a deputy superintendent immediately before his appointment to the superintendency in 1992 (Int. 2, 3, and 7). He is a charismatic visionary with strong political skills. He is “the seeker of best practices” (Int. 20, p. 1). His motto is “you are the expert, you do the job. I will give you bits of information. I will give you vision, ideas, go out and do it” (Int. 3, p. 6). “The new superintendent started in 1992-93 and he brought his philosophy and there was a change there. He was very progressive, much more progressive than the previous

superintendent” (Int. 9, p. 4). The new superintendent stated that although it sounds “like an oxymoron” but “you need a centralized person do decentralize. You are asking the organization to commit suicide and it won’t do it. The organization won’t destroy itself. You need someone who is willing to take the risk of destroying the organization that he or she is in charge of to build a better one” (Int. 7, p. 4). The section that follows describes the role of the superintendent in the formulation of the tenants of the district’s philosophy.

At the beginning of his superintendency, the current superintendent tried to bring focus to various tasks performed by the district bureaucracy. His intention was to identify the point of delivery for the district and tie all activities performed by the employees of the district to that point of delivery. The superintendent defined the point of delivery as what happens with the students in their classrooms and how successful they are in their educational endeavors (Int. 7). Anchored in the point of delivery, the philosophy of the district in the nineteen nineties was built on the following key concepts:

- Children first, adults next
- Change from selecting and sorting of children to their learning
- Work with the unions, not against them
- Treat teachers as professionals, not technocrats
- Reduce central bureaucracy
- Build the process, not personalities (Int. 7)

Before the changes initiated by this superintendent, the decisions in the district focused mainly around what was convenient for the adults (Int. 2 and 7). When doing scheduling, budgets, staffing, or developing policies and procedures, district decision-makers would

often begin with how convenient the structure would be for the adults working in the system. This approach neglected students' needs, especially those students requiring additional assistance. If someone remarked that too many of the students were not achieving academically, an excuse of low motivation, low economic status or poor parenting skills would be used to explain the problem. As a consequence, the system was left relatively intact and it simply selected and sorted students according to their ability to fit the existing structure. An argument to keep the structure intact was based on how successful the structure was in other districts with "better" student cohorts. The fact that such reasoning ignored district customers, the students that the district actually worked with, was often conveniently left out of the discussion.

The superintendent decided that such reasoning was flawed and unacceptable and that in order to help the students, the district would have to change the existing organization (Int. 2, 7, and 9). This change in philosophy was consistent with *A New Compact for Learning* published by the New York State Education Department in 1991. That document stated that the "legions of dedicated people who work in our schools /.../ are caught in the system that has become obsolete" (Doc. 22, p. 7; New Compact for Learning, 1991). About ten to twelve years ago, the Board of Education concurred that the system should be changed so that all students would be able to succeed (Int. 2). This resulted in changes in the vision and mission of the district brought about by the new philosophy.

The current vision of the district is "to be a world-class quality educational organization" (Doc. 6, p. 2). Its mission is to "guarantee educational excellence by creating strategic goals which will be monitored, analyzed, assessed, and evaluated

utilizing the quality process and ensuring customer satisfaction” (Doc. 6, p. 4). The vision and mission statements are continually disseminated throughout the district. Many central office and school administrators carry wallet size cards with the district’s mission (Int. 13 and 14). A local newspaper contributes in the dissemination effort by distributing the district newsletter free of charge to 75,000 of its readers (Int. 18). Farther away from the head of the organization, the vision and mission are less clear. Whereas most persons in the central office during interviews were able to recite the mission or produce the district mission card, some of the teachers in schools were not that sure about the exact words of the mission. Nevertheless, they were able to explain its spirit and intent.

To accomplish the vision and mission, four strategic goals have been identified by the district:

1. To exceed and continuously improve learner outcomes against academic standards
2. To achieve the highest level of employee empowerment, trust and cooperation
3. To control effectively financial costs while maintaining quality education
4. To achieve the highest level of partnership with the community. (Doc. 6, p. 6)

The first strategic goal is realized through the continuous effort of all stakeholders organized in committees addressing specific sub-goals. The second strategic goal is measured through the Survey of Empowerment, Trust and Cooperation (Doc. 20). The third strategic goal is achieved by adjusting the budget to the needs of the district, which currently requires continuous reductions in the number of faculty and staff employed by the district due to diminishing student population (Int. 2 & 7). For twelve consecutive years, all budgetary needs of the district have been achieved without raising property

taxes (Int. 2, 3, 7, 9, and 21). The fourth strategic goal is measured by how schools perform on needs assessment instruments developed by the district to measure the level of community involvement (Doc. 6, p. 11).

The Board of Education, in agreement with the superintendent of schools, sets the sub-goals for each of the Strategic Goals and the pace at which they are to be achieved. The superintendent of schools, with staff, determines the implementation procedures and informs the Board of Education of the process at the time of sub-goal setting. The principal of each building and the council of each school determine the “How To” of achieving the sub-goals through the use of a Quality Plan process (Doc. 6). The administrators in the central office and the superintendent assist the schools in achieving their goals in any manner requested.

The District’s Adaptation of Total Quality Management

One of the first executive decisions leading to decentralization made by the superintendent was to employ a Quality Coordinator around 1993 (Int. 7 and 17) who, among other tasks, began the district’s study of private business organizations in search for a key factor that differentiated successful ones from unsuccessful ones. The conclusion of the study was that successful businesses consistently followed a quality process, often called Total Quality Management (TQM), to address change and introduce distributive governance whereas the process was consistently missing in the unsuccessful ones (Int. 7).

The superintendent’s decision was to empower a committee to search for a process and tools that would facilitate change in the district. According to the testimony of a key witness, “years ago, the superintendent charged a few individuals with looking at

our organizational structure and trying to eliminate the top-down bureaucracy in our district” (Int. 6, p. 1). The search for an objective framework of change led the district to the Effective Schools Movement. The search was initiated by the superintendent. He attended a conference organized by the National School Boards Association in Arizona in the early nineteen nineties where he heard a lecture by Dr. Lawrence Lezotte, one of the founders of the Effective Schools Movement (Int. 2). As a result of this encounter, Dr. Lezotte was invited to the district to introduce the Quality Process. Before that visit, “nobody in the district thought about any process or strategic goals” (Int. 2, p. 11).

Lezotte explains (2004) that The Effective Schools Movement viewed the conclusions of the Coleman Report (1966) as a key influence on the present structure of public education. The report concluded that family background was “the major determinant of student achievement,” (Lezotte, 2004, p. 1). This report and the research that followed was “the catalyst to the creation of “compensatory education” programs,” mainly through Title I programs, which “taught low-income children to learn in ways that conformed to most schools’ preferred ways of teaching.” These programs “made no effort to change school behavior.” Lezotte and his group disagreed with the generally accepted interpretation of Coleman’s findings and stated that “all children can learn and that the school controls the factors necessary to assure student mastery of the core curriculum” (Lezotte, 2004, p.1). They then articulated the basic beliefs of the Effective Schools Movement:

- All children can learn and come to school motivated to do so.
- Schools control enough of the variables to assure that virtually all students do learn.

- Schools should be held accountable for measured student achievement.
- Schools should disaggregate measured student achievement in order to be certain that students, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status are successfully learning the intended curriculum.
- The internal and external stakeholders of the individual school are the most qualified and capable people to plan and implement the changes necessary to fulfill the Learning for All mission. (Lezotte, 2004, p. 3)

Subsequently, the superintendent proposed that the philosophy of the Effective Schools Movement be adopted as the foundation of the district's operation.

The superintendent changed the function of the central office from command and control to support (Int. 2, 7, and 9). He identified a bloated central office bureaucracy as an obstacle to change and improvement. Rather than identify a person in charge to improve the organization of the district, the superintendent selected a committee of all stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, union leaders, parents, and community activists to search for a process that could be used to improve the functioning of the district, with the intent to reduce subjectivity and enhance objectivity (Int. 7).

To avoid adversarial relations with its labor unions in the anticipated process of change, the superintendent made a decision to open lines of communication and seek help and cooperation from the unions (Int. 3). Rather than giving directives and controlling for compliance, the teachers were expected to develop professionally and have open and unambiguous ways to be promoted.

Historically, in 1990, Article 47 of a four-year contract between the District and the teachers' union contained an agreement that the District would use the Shared

Decision Making (SDM) process, “in which all members of the education community at school level collaborate in identifying problems, defining goals, formulating policy and implementing programs by consensus.” The district document (Doc. 9) states that the New York State United Teachers’ Union encouraged SDM and provided facilitators for the initial SDM training in the district. At the same time, SDM was an initiative that the New York State Education Department recommended to be implemented throughout the state. According to a presentation prepared by the Williamsville School District (Shared Decision Making, 1997), in March of 1991, the Board of Regents of the State of New York “Compact for Learning” endorsed site-based decision-making (Section 100.11)” (p.7) and required the districts across the state to actively promote the concept. “The SDM became TQM in the mid nineties, retaining all of the principles and processes of Shared Decision Making, including waivers and consensus” (Doc. 9, p. 7).

Another expert witness explains (Int. 4) that when he began working in the district in the nineteen eighties, the system was “very centralized” and “departmentalized” (p. 4). “Then, we went through the era of shared decision-making under the Regents plan. Things were supposed to be done on the site level and there was turmoil created because everything couldn’t fit in this nice little package. [Then] we went from SDM to TQM. That worked well because everyone bought into that,” (Int. 4, p. 4).

The preamble to the document establishing the TQM process in the district states that “the following major beliefs provide the foundation of the Total Quality Management process for our District:

1. TQM is a constructive step for our District which allows everyone to strive for excellence.

2. People bring to TQM a wealth of creativity and ability to work together toward a common goal.
3. TQM is a process which will take time and patience.” (Doc. 9, p. 1)

The Structure of TQM

In the new model, changes may be suggested by any person or any group in the district as long as they follow the TQM process. The ultimate decision whether to implement any of the suggestions lies with the superintendent. According to the district documentation last updated in 1975 (Doc. 1), the superintendent may organize any group of stakeholders into a committee which would serve at the superintendent’s discretion. The power of such a group is to make recommendations which may or may not be approved by the superintendent who is ultimately responsible for the operation of the district. The key groups and individuals involved in the TQM process are School Quality Councils, the Executive Quality Council, the Central Support Group, and Teachers on Special Assignment. Table 4.1 presents the list of TQM committees, their purpose and organizational level. Their roles are described in the following subsections.

The School Quality Council (SQC). The School Quality Council (SQC) is a decision-making body in each school consisting of the principal, three teachers, one support staff, two parents, and one community representative. Additionally, each middle school and high school SQC should include two students (Doc. 9). Each SQC develops its own timetable of meetings, procedures for reaching consensus, and priorities for the SQC and the school. The selection of candidates to an SQC should follow these guidelines established by the district: “Each site stakeholder group will determine its members who will be (s)electd specifically for the purpose of TQM, except that the

Table 4.1
District Committees of Total Quality Management

Acronym	Name	Purpose	Level
SQC	School Quality Council	To generate ideas and suggestions that would improve the functioning of the school even if it would require changes in existing policies	School
EQC	Executive Quality Council	To support SQC decision-making through the implementation of necessary policy changes	Central office
CSG	Central Support Group	To mediate between the SQCs and the EQC so that SQC proposals would be ready for implementation when presented to the EQC	Central office
IPG	Instructional Planning Group	To seek new ideas and best practices that would improve district operations	District-wide

community representative will be selected through a process determined by the rest of the committee,” (Doc. 9, p. 2). It is up to each SQC to keep minutes from its meetings and to develop documents, including the Charter and the Application Proposal.

The charter of the SQC in one of the middle schools (Doc. 18) states that its SQC membership consists of: one administrator, three teachers, one non-instructional staff, three community representatives, one facilitator, two volunteer parent representatives, and two appointed student representatives. The charter describes the following aspects of its SQC: the mission, the goals, the roles and the assignment of roles, the participants, attendance, the decision-making process, criteria for establishing priority issues, meeting time and dates, procedure to change the charter, ground rules, procedures for establishing a meeting agenda, any other business, and evaluation. The charter describes how the

SQC is organized but not what its powers are to implement change. Although the SQCs are empowered by the district as a key decision-making body charged with improving the functioning of each school in order to meet the district's vision and mission, their function is to search for new ways and propose them for approval by the superintendent. If any change suggested by an SQC exceeds established district policies, the SQC may apply for a waiver from this policy.

The Application Proposal reviewed by this researcher (Doc. 19) is a three page form used to officially introduce any suggestion to the SQC from any member of the SQC who might represent any of the following stakeholder groups: students, teachers, parents, support staff, administrators, and community activists. The form requests that an applicant (1) describe a proposal; (2) check which of the four district strategic goals it relates to, (3) specify who will carry on the proposal; (4) describe how will the proposal be evaluated; (5) specify the resources needed; (6) describe how does the proposal impact current policies or contracts; (7) specify how much time it will take to complete the plan; (8) explain how did the applicant's stakeholder group reach consensus regarding the plan; (9) specify which district committee will the applicant be working with to complete your proposal; (10) answer whether all stakeholder groups have been involved in the proposal; and (11) describe what changes need to be made in the ways things are done.

Each SQC decides individually on the procedures and documentation they will use in their decision-making process. The term of office for each member of the SQC is one year and begins in July with appointments made by June.

The Executive Quality Council (EQC). The Executive Quality Council (EQC) played two important developmental roles in the district. In the first stage, it identified

the Total Quality Management (TQM) as the Quality Process to be adopted by the district. In the second stage, once the TQM process had been adopted, its role became to facilitate the SQC initiatives. The present function of the EQC is to:

1. develop a system for effective communication among all members of committees and stakeholder groups;
2. evaluate and assess the performance of the process continually and to make recommendations for improvement;
3. encourage the development of plans which will meet the district mission and goals through the process at appropriate levels;
4. monitor, on its own initiative, plans and proposals of the site-based SQCs for compliance with negotiated contracts, laws, regulations, and policies;
5. respond to questions from SQCs concerning compliance with negotiated contracts, laws, regulations, and policies and to seek interpretations thereof, and further to help seek waivers from appropriate body where necessary (Doc. 9, p. 1).

The EQC consists of the seven union presidents, community activists, business leaders, a representative of a Higher Education institution, the President of the High School Student Council, and a school board member who has no vote. The EQC members are there ex officio with the exception of community activists, business leaders and a representative of a Higher Education Institution who are selected by the ex officio members. If an SQC decides on a change that is contrary to the provisions of present union contracts, the EQC is approached and the waiver may be granted to that contract for that school for that purpose.

The Central Support Group (CSG). The Central Support Group (CSG) consists of the superintendent, deputy superintendent, heads of central office departments and a Teacher on Special Assignment. The CSG is charged with supporting and coordinating the initiatives generated by School Quality Councils so that they can turn from plans into reality. The CSG serves as an intermediary between the SQCs and the EQC ensuring that the SQC proposals that eventually reach the EQC are thoroughly prepared, complete, and ready for implementation.

Teachers on Special Assignments (TSA). A Teacher on Special Assignments (TSA) is assigned to a school or the central office for a period of usually two years with quasi-administrative responsibilities. One set of TSAs are selected by school principals and the faculty of respective schools. These TSAs serve as deans of discipline according to the teachers' contract, which requires that a middle school has two or more teachers elected by the faculty from their group for the purpose of addressing discipline problems in their school (Int. 21). Most of the TSAs, however, are selected by the central office administrators. According to the teachers' contract, a TSA experience may not be considered as an administrative internship; nevertheless, this experience is critical in the development of knowledge, skills and experience needed to eventually become a successful administrator in this district.

TSAs are viewed as motivated, ambitious and dedicated professionals who understand that commitment and flexibility are their most valued assets (Int. 1, 15, 16, and 18) thereby providing additional organizational energy and enthusiasm to the district. Some TSAs are assigned to serve specific tasks, such as acting as the Chairperson of the Committee on Special Education, but most serve at the discretion of the superintendent

(Int. 1, 2, and 7). Interviewed TSAs deemed no job unsuitable for their position. One of the TSAs likened his experience to that of a medical resident in a trauma center. “In that trauma center, they get any and every medical situation that you can think of and it comes fast and furious. In the end of that period, they [the residents] have a wealth of experience that they can draw from as opposed to spending a specific time in each area of medicine” (Int. 1, p. 5).

To provide the TSAs with knowledge about the district, a 22 week program of in-services, named the Superintendent’s College, is designed to expose the candidates to specific aspects of the district such as finances, grant writing, scheduling, curriculum, community relations, educational law, etc. Each week, a candidate gains an insight into what working for the district as an administrator would be like. The Superintendent’s College proactively shapes the knowledge, culture and expectations of future administrators in the district (Int. 2, 7, and 15). Rather than hiring based on an interview and hoping for the best, the district has embarked on a precise proactive selection and education process during which the candidates to administrative positions are taught the culture and expectations associated with their new responsibilities (Int. 2 and 7). The district is open to and continually employs candidates from out of the district, but these candidates face an ever increasing challenge from homegrown competent candidates (Int. 20).

Instructional Planning Group (IPG). There are other committees besides SQCs, the EQC, and the CSG. The superintendent appoints chairs and co-chairs of these committees and charges them with the search for ways to improve the operations of the district in ways that would improve student learning (Int. 1). These committees,

collectively, are called the Instructional Planning Group (IPG). Currently, the IPG consists of 12 committees with a total of 196 members representing teachers, administrators, parents and community activists. Some members serve on more than one committee. To facilitate continuous communication between the IPG, chairs and co-chairs of each committee and the deputy superintendent meet regularly as the Steering Committee of the IPG. The policy describing the Board committees, revised in June 2000, (Doc. 1) states that “the Board may create such other standing or temporary committees as occasion may require for the better execution of its powers and duties. However, no committee of the Board shall exercise any administrative authority except under the specific directions of the Board” (p. 50). This stipulation underscores the fact that the committees ask questions and seek answers that might then turn into proposals, but it is not their function to institute any change in the district. The person ultimately responsible for any changes in the district and introducing them to the school board is the superintendent. Table 4.2 lists the standing IPG committees as of the January 15, 2004 report of the IPG (Doc. 10). The table lists (1) committee name, (2) its purpose, (3) the number of members, and (4) the role of members in the district.

Once a new area of need has been identified, the superintendent might make a recommendation to the Board of Education to create a new IPG committee; appoint its chair and co-chair who initiate the search for committee members. Membership is open to any interested party. A transparent process shows how an interested employee or a community activist can become a committee member (Doc. 10). The key witnesses did not know of any case of a person being denied a membership in a committee (Int. 3). Teachers access committees through their union, which disseminates information about

Table 4.2
Committee List of the Instructional Planning Group as of 1/15/04

Committee Name	Purpose	Membership	
		#	Role in the district
Math (12-K)	To research and recommend a comprehensive, uniform mathematics program that aligns with State standards.	25	TSAs, administrators, and teachers
Language Arts (Pre-K-8) (All Core Areas)	To monitor and support the implementation of the Language Arts Curriculum.	14	TSAs, administrators, and teachers
Assessment Alternate Assessment to New York State Standards	To recommend a valid and reliable criterion referenced test that measures students' mastery of the New York State Learning Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics.	9	TSAs, administrators, and teachers
Report Card	To determine the format and content of the report cards interfacing with the recommendations from the Grading/weighting Committee.	21	TSAs, administrators, and teachers
Exit Criteria	To develop and implement criteria required for students exiting grades two through eight as well as criteria for attending summer school.	13	TSAs, administrators, and teachers
Grading and Weighting	To define the grading (12-K) and weighting (12-6) policies.	24	TSAs, administrators, teachers, and parents
Middle School Block Scheduling	To provide larger blocks of instruction that will improve students' achievement by allowing greater flexibility in how instruction is delivered.	14	TSAs, administrators, and teachers
Consultant/Regular Education/Self-Contained Programs & Teacher Training	To review, research and determine efficiency of the consultant teacher services program.	20	TSAs, administrators, teachers, and a parent
District-Wide Accelerated Program	To design, recommend, and implement plan for district Acceleration Program.	21	TSAs, administrators, teachers, and parents
Academic Intervention Services (AIS) Programs	To research and recommend supplemental programs that will enable teachers to assist at-risk students in achieving success in targeted academic areas.	13	TSAs, administrators, teachers, and a parent
Mobility/Demographics	To determine whether student mobility is a factor influencing students' performance on New York State tests.	8	TSAs, administrators, and teachers
Homework Policy	To revise, amend, and update current homework policies and procedures.	14	TSAs, administrators, teachers, and parents

committees and recruits the candidates.

Commenting on the role of the district committees, a teacher stated “I agree that being on the committee is a pain but if the teachers are not there, things will be done without our input. Hopefully the teachers that are on these committees are voicing their opinions on things and not just going along for a ride with the chairperson because chairpersons are administrators” (Int. 4, p. 6). One of the principals commenting on who among various stakeholder groups in a committee is making key decision stated that “the product is produced by TSAs in conjunction with the teachers. I oversee the process,” (Int. 5, p. 8).

Waivers are the heart and soul of the TQM process. The district memorandum (Doc. 9) explains that:

In the SDM/TQM process, it was agreed that schools/teachers should have the freedom to try “new and different” ways of doing business in order to improve our delivery of educational services. It was theorized that “new and different” approaches were often blocked by the restrictions of education law, Board of Education policy and/or contract. The waiver process was adopted in order to temporarily remove these obstacles for one year. It was hoped that by gaining this freedom to experiment, we might find some unique and more effective ways of serving our students and their families. (p. 7)

In summary, the structure of TQM in the district consists of a number of precisely defined committees with roles that logically overlap. The committees serve as an organizational structure that encourages organizational initiative and change from the germination of an idea to its final implementation. A TSA position evolved over time to

assure flexibility and coordination among committees.

TQM in Operation

Several examples are presented below of how the TQM process functions. The SQCs and the IPG, by being proactive and continually testing what should and should not be done, are able to request and obtain waivers to contractual regulations through the EQC:

Securing a Contract Waiver. The Math (12-K) Committee of the IPG requested an EQC waiver to present only one program for their level and not at least two as needed by the contract. “If they decide to use that waiver, they will have that program on display for a week only (as a courtesy to their teachers) and no vote is required” (Doc. 10, p. 2). This waiver will considerably speed up the process of selecting a comprehensive and uniform mathematics program for the district.

Solving a Disciplinary Problem. Two schools had a bullying problem when older students from one school picked on younger students from another school. In order to remedy this situation, the SQCs of the schools asked the EQC for a waiver that would change the times these schools would begin and end instruction. The school with younger students would begin and end the day five minutes before what was stipulated by the contract while the other school would begin and end the day five minutes later than the contract required. The resulting ten minute difference was enough for the older students to go home without interfering with the dismissal of the younger students (Int. 3 and 5).

Changing a School Policy. In one of the schools, the superintendent did not want to have bells for the change of classes. For many teachers, no bells meant students

wandering the hallways. The SQC addressed the issue. A survey of all teachers and staff in the school was conducted with the outcome that the school has muffled bells in the hallways, which does not disturb the classes, but sends a signal to the students in the hallways that it is time to be in classes. After the waiver has been granted, one can hardly see a student wandering aimlessly up and down the hallways, (Int. 4 and 12).

Solving a Scheduling Problem. One of the interviewees reports (Int. 4) that for eight years now he is a witness to the vote on a waiver that changes the time when the Open House is held in his school. Instead of having an open house during the school year as prescribed by the Contract, typically in October, this school holds the Open House in August, before the start of the school year. It is especially useful to the new coming students and their families. The students find out about the new expectations and routines; learn the layout of the school; and are given the schedules for September. The families have enough time to purchase the necessary supplies. The teachers like the August Open House because once the school opens, everyone is ready to begin learning, which reduces time spent on organizational necessities.

Dealing with a Curriculum Issue. An example of a contractual issue being continually debated between the teachers' union, the principals, and the central office is the challenge of looping. Some schools have looping while others do not, depending on the position that the respective SQCs took on that issue. Some teachers in the district are for looping because it provides for instructional continuity and improves students' academic achievement. Others are strongly against, mainly because when changing grades while looping, tenured teachers with many years of practice might find themselves at the bottom of the longevity list, which is a concern in the times of continuous staff

reductions. The position of the teachers' union is against looping in the contract while the superintendent and most principals favor looping. The opinions are polarized but the dialogue and negotiations continue. All interested in looping wait for the recommendations of the Middle School Block Scheduling Committee on looping (Doc. 10, p. 8).

Seeking Agreement on a Uniform Grading Policy. Another challenge being tested at this time is how to consistently and fairly grade the students (Int. 2 and 5). Some teachers feel that students should be graded zero when they do not answer a single question or do not show up for a test. From the statistical point of view, such a score weights a student heavily down so the recommendation is to give a student with a zero result a grade of 50. The Weighting and Grading Committee (WGC) is debating this issue with the results and recommendations to be presented to the superintendent by March 1, 2004. The hope is that eventually grading will be uniform in the district across grades and schools. Someone seriously concerned about this issue might request the minutes of the WGC meetings and study what has been said and by whom and how the position on that issue has been formed in the district (Doc. 10, p. 7).

Selecting a Model School Design. An example of how the TQM procedures have shaped the district is the process of selecting America's Choice as the key school design for all schools in the district. "America's Choice Comprehensive School Reform Design is a K-12 comprehensive school reform model designed by the National Center on Education and the Economy. America's Choice focuses on raising academic achievement by providing a rigorous standards-based curriculum and safety net for all students," (Supovitz, Poglinco, and Snyder, 2001, p. 3). Rather than being prescriptive,

America's Choice provides tools for building a program based on the following principles:

- “High expectations for student performance
- An initial focus on literacy
- A common core curriculum
- Assessments
- The formation of a school Leadership Management Team
- Rescheduling for increased instructional time in literacy and mathematics
- A commitment to teacher professionalism
- Providing access to high-quality support” (Supovitz, Poglinco, and Snyder, 2001, p. 4)

One of the principals explains that America's Choice is a standards based design. “It's a structure where we have a non negotiable block for half hour skill every day, one hour readers' workshop, one hour of writers' workshop and within that workshop there is a specific format that's followed with a mini lesson and the work period and the closing” (Int. 6, p. 9). Each lesson begins with the anticipatory set which prepares the students for the main lesson. In America's Choice format, assessment drives instruction, which means that the planning of the lessons is based on the results of the formative tests given to the students. “There are class profile sheets that outline what the kids in that particular class look like and what their individual needs are and that structures the lesson and also frames what happens in the work period” (Int. 6, p. 9).

From the perspective of the superintendent and the EQC, the plan was to motivate the SQCs to search for a curriculum design in their schools that would improve student

learning (Int. 7). Once the designs had been selected and implemented in schools, to evaluate the designs and to select one that would serve as a model for the whole district. The designs selected and implemented by various SQCs were Success for All, America's Choice, and some original school-created designs. The EQC was focused on following the TQM process and not on which particular design would eventually be selected (Int. 7). The process involved six steps: (1) The SQCs were asked for the initiative in selecting school designs; (2) the designs were implemented and used in schools for two to three years; (3) the designs were analyzed and evaluated by a committee; (4) one of the designs, America's Choice, was selected for implementation throughout the district; (5) the superintendent made a recommendation to the Board of Education to adopt America's Choice as the district design, (6) the Board approved the recommendation (Int. 2, 5, and 7).

Schools applied for America's Choice using the Comprehensive School Reform grants. "The Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) is a competitive federal grant program designed to help schools and districts to increase student achievement by implementing scientifically-based research and effective practices to improve student achievement," (Comprehensive School Reform Program, 2004). Originally, it was called the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) and evolved from the Goals 2000 initiative in federal Fiscal Year 1998, Labor-HHS Education Appropriations Act. Over 1,800 schools nationwide received the CSRD grants as part of original 1988 cohort. In 2000 and 2001, an additional 3,500 schools received the grants. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 moved the federal CSR program from demonstration program to part of Title I appropriation. The Fiscal Year 2002 appropriation provided \$310 million for

the CSR grants nationally. For Fiscal Year 2003, Congress allocated \$308 million for schools interested in the CSR grants. These grants are renewable for up to three years (Comprehensive School Reform Program, 2004).

A principal of a middle school describes his involvement in the selection of the America's Choice in the following way, (Int. 5): Three years ago (2000), improving Language Arts scores was one of the key concerns for our SQC. We decided to use the CSR grant to bring America's Choice to our school. The SQC made a recommendation and 98% of the staff voted to accept the recommendation that America's Choice would be a comprehensive school design in our school. Nationally, we were in cohort five of America's Choice implementation process. Two elementary schools in the district brought America's Choice a year earlier and they were in cohort four. This year, America's Choice has been approved as the school design for all K-8 buildings in the district. It means that in the district, we will have a consistent model. "All our kids will come to us with the same vocabulary, same rituals, and routines," (Int. 5, p. 2). Now in the district, there are schools in three phases of America's Choice implementation: (1) two elementary schools are in the third year, (2) two elementary and two middle schools are in the second year, (3) the rest, one middle school and five elementary schools are in the first year. Once America's Choice has been selected as the district school design, a Language Arts Pre-K-8 Committee of the IPG has been charged with the task of developing a district curriculum that would follow the America's Choice design (Int. 6). Some principals feel at times that teachers in their schools do not have a lot of faith that their voice counts (Int. 5). Some feel that America's Choice was foisted upon their schools and they had little say in that decision (Int. 11). Those teachers do not see a

bigger district picture of how the process worked and frankly they do not care. Some principals feel that the district has to do a better job informing all stakeholders about the work of various committees and the reasons why and how critical decisions have been reached in the district (Int. 5). Information about the process and rationale is available, but the effort in disseminating the information to those without interest or initiative to search for it could be more pronounced (Int. 5 and 11).

Recapitulation. TQM has made an impact on how the district addresses improvement and change. Before the TQM process was launched, the superintendent with a small group of central office administrators were the sole decision-making group in the district. Now, the search for new ideas, new proposals, new structures or programs may begin anywhere in the organization. It is still ultimately the responsibility of the superintendent to make any substantive policy recommendations to the school board but, rather than making decisions alone, the superintendent listens to all stakeholders and encourages initiative. Those actively engaged in the process feel empowered and see that their voices matter.

The section that follows describes how the transition of the district from centralized to distributive decision-making took place.

Transition to Distributive Decision-Making

The initiative to transform the district decision-making practices and structures from a top-down to a bottom-up system where the energy and power is distributed throughout vertical and horizontal elements of the organization came from the superintendent. One of the expert witnesses (Int. 17) recalls that the superintendent “started it. [There were] no others involved at first. It was a noble effort,” (p. 1). In the

old centralized decision-making structure, the “Board of Education would tell the principals what they had to do and schools were responsible to the central office to do it. [The superintendent] realigned the system by empowering School Quality Councils. They had the power to hire more teachers and reduce the number of teacher aides. They had staffing flexibility. The message to central office personnel was that if schools do not ask for your services, it means that we do not need you” (Int. 17, p. 1).

Before the changes in the nineteen nineties, “we had so many administrators that we were tripping over each other, like in any large school district” (Int. 2, p. 6), stated one of the key witnesses. “For the longest time here, the job was about the adults first” (Int. 7, p. 6) and about children second, commented another expert witness. With a new focus on learning, any discussion on improvement begins from asking how this decision will impact better student learning. “It’s not only about kids either, it’s about learning” (Int. 7, p. 6). In order for learning to take place at all levels, new procedures should be in place so that the learning would not be dependent on a leader or a group of decision-makers but on a collaborative process. The process should be specific and have benchmarks for continuous evaluation and improvement (Int. 2 and 7).

To address the need for learning to be paramount, the function of the district changed from selecting and sorting to learning, which, in order to be successful, should involve the students, the teachers, the administrators and the district as an organization. In the old select and sort model, teachers evaluated students for their ability but did little actual teaching. Able and motivated students moved up the ladder of success while others were left behind. In the new learning model, everyone in the district is charged with searching for the ways for learning to take place. If students are not academically

successful, the district should find a new way to approach their specific areas of weakness (Int. 2 and 7).

The district began searching for ways to bring resources that would assist in learning about how to improve its organization and functioning. During the search, the National Schools Conference Institute (NSCI) was identified as an organization that was assisting school districts with professional development. The belief statement of the NSCI, headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona, is that “to change what people do you have to change what people know” (National School Conference Institute, 2004, p. 1). The NSCI gathered a team of world renowned researchers, presenters, and authors to be a part of their star firm. “They would develop customized contracts to include whatever professional development the district needed based on the district’s action plans and they would bring in these experts; otherwise it would be cost prohibitive to bring a Glaser or a Deming or any of those noted researchers and presenters” (Int. 20, p. 4). As the result of the cooperation with the NSCI, Bill Glaser was invited into the district (Int. 2, 7, and 20).

To the surprise of William Glaser, the superintendent decided to begin the transformation into a new distributive form of management through the TQM process with the maintenance department (Int. 20, p. 5). This department was selected to start the restructuring because the change there would be least invasive on the students’ life. An expert witness remarked that “the difference between the educators and the maintenance is that teachers need to be in classrooms. We can control the calendar of maintenance workers. If a wall doesn’t get painted today, there is no lasting harm if it’s done later. But you cannot say that about teachers. You cannot say, we are not going to teach English today but we are going to do it tomorrow” (Int. 13, p. 2).

The beginnings of building distributive decision-making structures in the maintenance department were not easy. “They knocked their heads together good. There were some good shouting matches and finally they reached consensus,” (Int. 13, p. 2). The superintendent had his direct input when he announced that “there no longer will be any foremen and there won’t be any additional supervisors. Those positions will be now waived and, he said, you can take that money and stick it down general repairs and senior general repairs,” (Int. 13, p. 1). During a meeting of the Maintenance Quality Council, plumbers, painters, and electricians “had to communicate back and forth to each other so by and large they were sitting where the foremen used to sit and doing essentially what the foremen used to do before. Now, but what they did, they got additional pay for that” (Int. 13, p. 2).

The discussions put new procedures in place which brought increased efficiency. “The cost of labor and materials decreased. A new work order procedure led to the measurement whether or not we were achieving our customers’ goals. We were running at 98-99% completion on our work orders” (Int. 13, p. 2). In the area of roofing alone, the TQM process helped to reduce sixteen different procedures into one. The maintenance department standardized the roofing materials and procedures used in all thirteen schools and the buildings of the central office and “we were able to use our employees rather than contract it out” (Int. 13, p. 7). The change in the structure of the maintenance department, different job descriptions of specific employees, and a new compensation structure had to be approved by the unions. An expert witness recalls that “we worked with the unions and there was some resistance. We went with three unions to Peak and Peak, a golf and skiing resort in the southwest corner of New York State by

Lake Chautauqua for a conference to figure out what it mean for them, hours and compensation. We had lively discussions and moved forward. It worked quite reasonably. They all signed up on it and agreed that they would enter into the process,” (Int. 13, p. 3). The experience of a successful transformation of the maintenance department through the TQM process has contributed to a better understanding of the processes and the forces that are at play while the district moved along with the transformation closer to the educational point of delivery, which is the classroom. In order to get there, the understanding of the process, the energy and enthusiasm of district administrators was critical.

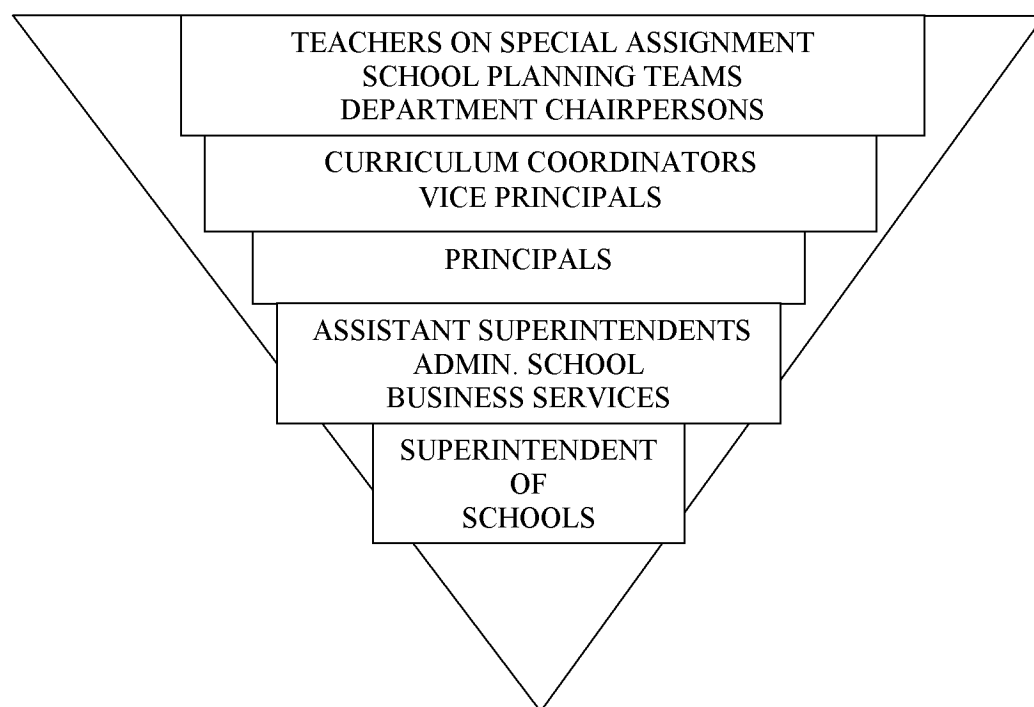
In “Managing by Design” (Glaser & Glaser, 1981, p. 124), Glaser distinguishes administrators into Theory X and Theory Y managers, as developed by Douglas McGregor (McGregor, 1960). Theory X managers are generally pessimistic about their employees’ ability to improve, learn, and grow on the job. They believe that command and control are effective managing tools. Theory Y managers are optimistic and believe that if you involve the employees in problem-solving and decision-making, they will dramatically increase their level of performance. Most administrators interviewed in schools and the central office seemed to present themselves as Y managers (Int. 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 12), with the exception of the ones who refused to be interviewed and to participate in the research. Changes leading to distributive decision-making were supported by the change in the structure of the central office, which is described in the next section.

The Transformed Role of Central Office Administration

To change a centralized organization, one must address the reality of the organizational life as well as the symbols of the organization (Int. 7). In an effort to present its decentralization effort, this district agreed on an upside down triangle as a visual way of presenting dramatic change in its organizational structure. Figure 4.1 presents the upside down organizational triangle, which was first presented in the district in 1990.

Figure 4.1

Organizational Functions and Levels of Responsibilities



Note. This inverted functional pyramid was first proposed in 1990 (Doc. 7).

In this model, the structure is driven by the SQCs and the TSAs. SQCs are site-specific groups expected to use local knowledge in order to come up with site-relevant initiatives. TSAs are selected to prove themselves as leaders and change agents on school and central office levels. The function of principals is to nurture their SQCs and influence them through the power of ideas and not the power of their position (Int. 7). The role of curriculum coordinators was to oversee the quality of instruction and to align it with the State standards. Between 1990 and 2003, the position of curriculum coordinators was eliminated. Their role shifted to the TSAs and the members of the Curriculum Committee. The function and levels of organizational responsibilities places the superintendent at the bottom of the triangle with the role to ensure that the TQM process is in place and is followed. “We had to dramatically do something to change the culture in which we operate and the upside down pyramid of an organization has helped us to create that” (Int. 2, p. 2).

Overall, the new structure of the district supports a decentralized, bottom-up organizational model in which each school is expected to follow the district’s vision, mission and goals established through the TQM process where all stakeholders’ input is welcome. Each school is empowered to organize itself in a way that is determined by the SQC of this school (Int. 2, 5, and 7). There is a transparent and consistent set of policies and procedures that allow for ideas and initiatives to be generated at many levels in the district. The central office is intentionally reduced in number and complexity in order to limit its power and render its function more transparent (Int. 2). Almost all key witnesses agreed that the role of the central office is that of assistance and support to schools (Int. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, and 21). The most important, however, is that all these

ideas are reflected in the functioning of each school (Int. 2, 5, and 7).

The district has undergone a profound organizational change during the last thirteen years. The number of persons employed in the central office has been reduced and some of the functions performed by permanent administrative employees are now assigned to TSAs who might work in the central office (Int. 2, 7, and 20). Over the years, “from 1992 when he [the superintendent] took office to now, we went from 55 administrators in the district to 23 and up to 25 at present” (Int. 21, p. 1). Table 4.3 presents the list of central office administrators for the academic years 1994/95 and 2003/04.

Comparing to the organizational chart of 1994/95, the number of persons employed in the central office in 2003/04 has been reduced. Rather than four

Table 4.3
The Organization of Central Office for 1994/95 and 2003/04

1994/95	2003/04
Superintendent of Schools	Superintendent of Schools
Assistant to the Superintendent	Deputy Superintendent
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction	*
Administrator for Business Affairs	Administrator for School Business Services
Director of Finance	*
Purchasing Agent	Purchasing Agent
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources	Administrator for Human Resources Personnel Manager
Director of Human Resources	*
Director of Management Information Systems	Administrator for Information Services
Director of Maintenance and Foremen (5)	Administration for Operation and Maintenance (3)
Student Services Manager	Administrator for Transportation/Cafeteria
Project Directors (11)	Project Directors, Coordinators, etc. (6)

Note. An asterisk indicates that the position has not been continued (Doc. 8 and 25)

superintendents in 1994/95, there are two in 2003/04. What used to be the role of eleven Project Directors in the central office in the academic year 1994/95 is now performed by six administrators. In addition, the central office in 2003/04 uses ten TSAs who are teachers assigned to the central office for a period of about one to two years. The role of Committee on Special Education Chairperson is also performed by a TSA who has been in this role for six years, which is a uniquely long period of time for a TSA to be in the central office (Int. 16).

The overwhelming majority of key witnesses from the central office understand and accept their new roles as facilitators assisting the initiatives generated by the SQCs. Central office should be a service and support group ready to facilitate, coordinate, cooperate, and communicate, not to command. “Now, if you believe that the customer is the point of delivery, the focal point of your organization in school systems should be schools and we really try to live that” (Int. 7, p. 3). “The biggest impediment to [organizational and student] learning is central office. The central office should exist to support the buildings and if they exist for any other reason, it is harmful to learning” (Int. 7, p. 9).

One of the consequences of flattening the organizational structure of the central office is a new approach to curriculum. Before reorganization, supervisors of each curricular area continually worked to refine their respective fields (Int. 1, 2, 5, 7, and 12). Now, the deputy superintendent is the only administrator in the central office in charge of curriculum. The leadership in the areas of curriculum falls on TSAs and those principals who head specific curriculum committees. With this new structure, the district had to change the procedures of addressing curricular

issues. “It was insane because we were looking at all curriculum areas [every year] trying to realign the curriculum with the State Standards so that what the students are learning, what they are being taught, and what they will be tested on” (Int. 2, p. 4) goes together. This was too much to process at one time. The deputy superintendent, with those principals and TSAs involved with curriculum, decided to follow the K-12 District Curriculum Cycle (Doc. 14). Table 4.4 presents the district curriculum cycle. “So, we are doing mathematics this year. Even if something is wrong in science, unless it’s dire emergency, we are not changing it. Science is next year. There is a whole five year curriculum cycle” (Int. 2, p. 2).

Technology is one of the aspects of the district where change is quick and the transformation is directed towards improved students’ performance (Int. 5, 13, and 14). Rather than hiring a person from within the district with little professional experience of latest technological challenges, this district decided to hire someone who would bring corporate expertise and history of accomplishment and success. At present, the district is phasing out VCRs as obsolete technology (Int. 14). Instead, each class is connected to

Table 4.4
Schedule for K—12 District Curriculum Development and Textbook Adoptions

Subject	Review	Design Development	Implementation	Evaluation Modification	Maintenance	Review
English Language Arts	2002	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2007
Math	2003	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2008
Science	2004	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2009
Social Studies	2005	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2010

Note. (Doc. 14, p. 12)

the Internet and each teacher has access to video streaming technology with a library of 1,000 video titles and more than 15,000 video clips with the ability to search content via keyboard search by subject, grade, and state curriculum standards (Doc. 16).

Once a teacher decides on content, the lesson plan is provided electronically with appropriate objectives, standards, and procedures. Each teacher in the district is expected to use the Internet technology and each student in the district's high school can have a take home laptop computer (Int. 7, 12, and 14). An expert witness commented that "five years ago when a teacher did a Power Point presentation, we thought it was pretty cool. Now, more of the six grade students come to know what at least Power Point is and by the end of the year, [they] use their own Power Points. Technologically, we made some great advances" (Int. 5, p. 3).

Systemic differences appear between corporate and educational organizations regarding technology, especially in the area of employee training and technology implementation (Int. 14). In the corporate world, the key question is what is good for the company. In the educational world, the question often is what is allowed by the contract. "You have to make sure that we can implement training within the contract. In the corporate world, if you are the employee and you have to go to the training class from five to six o'clock, you did and you were either compensated or you weren't; based on what salary structure you were. Here you kind of have to put things in place so that it's either happening in the context of the school day or they are compensated for their time," (Int. 14, p. 2). Although achieved differently, technological improvements are equally important for both corporate and educational organizations.

Some commented about the circular nature of reforms in education, hinting that decentralization and bottom-up decision-making are a trend, a flavor of the day, which in time might come to pass (Int. 10). Still, even they were willing to support it as long as it was the flavor of this superintendency. The superintendent understands that once he leaves office, there is no guarantee that the district would not return to a more centralized and top-down structure. For the current decentralized system to continue past this superintendency, the superintendent focuses on procedures and symbols that would be removed only with a lot of effort and time (Int. 7). Together with the implementation of distributive decision-making and a more transparent functioning of the central office, the role of the principal in the district changed as well. The details of this transformation are described in the next section.

The Transformed Role of the Principal

One of the monumental organizational changes was achieved when a new Administrators' Contract in 1989 was negotiated. The current superintendent served then as deputy superintendent but, together with the administrators' union leadership, he was an instrumental force behind the changes (Int. 20). Since the superintendent did not want to give up the right to move administrators from one position to another, the position of the union leadership was to reduce salary steps and pay all principals the same salary (Int. 21) so that changes in position would not translate to changes in pay. Contractual changes brought substantial pay increases with the principals' pay scale being reduced to two steps.

This change allowed the superintendent to move administrators with much less resistance. One of the key contract negotiators recalls that: "some of my colleagues did

not agree [to changes in the contract] and I heard about it not long ago over dinner [but] a principal is a principal, is a principal” (Int. 8, p. 4). Some of the colleagues of this key witness felt that a high school principal should earn more than an elementary school principal. They felt that longevity in the district, extra school credits or degrees should be recognized by salary steps in the pay scale. “Some of the old guard were very sensitive because they had that little piece of the contract and they didn’t want to give it up but we washed it all out” (Int. 8, p. 4). Assistant principals, supervisors or directors would also receive equal pay within their cohorts. The new contract “took us out of the dark ages and so it was just probationary and tenured assistant principal and the probationary and tenured principal; no steps” (Int. 8, p. 4).

The new contract was perceived by some as “the golden handcuffs” (Int. 20, p. 3) because it became risky to shop for a better position if you wanted comparable salary. The power of one’s position and security in a bureaucracy earned by years of service was drastically diminished. Some appointments were made through the interview process; others were created and made by the superintendent with little discussion and no postings (Int. 20). “There was a lot of questioning and second guessing, but it was of no concern to the superintendent because people are going to be put into positions to have a job done” (Int. 20, p. 3).

With the old contract, “we were paying for a person not the job” (Int. 8, p. 4). The new contract allowed for personnel to be moved from position to position according to the need at a given moment. With the pay scale leveled, principals can be moved from school to school on short notice (Int. 2, 5, 7, 8, and 20). “If I am moved next week, then I will have to look at challenges there. I don’t have control over that so I don’t spend

much time thinking about it” (Int. 5, p. 10) commented one of the principals.

With the establishment of the SQCs, the EQC, the CSG, and the new administrators’ contract in place, the function of principals in the structure of the district has undergone dramatic change. Before, they were to follow plans and ideas developed by the central office elite administrators (Int. 9 and 17). The principals managed schools by following procedures and formulating directives to be in turn followed by the teachers. In the new structure, the authority of principals in schools comes not from their office but from how they influence their SQC. Their power is not with the position they hold but with the ideas they bring to the table of the School Quality Council (Int. 7).

Some principals may still adhere to the old ways (Int. 3 and 4) although the quantitative data did not suggest it (probably because four elementary schools and five principals did not participate). In their schools, the SQCs are weak and the functioning of the school is mainly command and control driven (Int. 3, 4, and 19). Rather than collegiality and cooperation, lines of responsibilities are clearly drawn in these schools. “Teachers are in charge of teaching” and “principals are in charge of discipline” (Int. 19, p. 1). New suggestions are disseminated from the administrative core through memoranda and challenged by union representatives through the grievance process. One of the teacher respondents to the ESS survey wrote a note complaining that in her school new teachers were afraid of the principal who ruled with an iron fist (comment on an ESS survey).

Since the principal of this school did not respond to the ESS and the EDS surveys and declined to answer the questions to the FIG and the response rate of teachers in this school was below 50%, there are not enough data to corroborate one remark by one

teacher. Most of the principals, however, seem to follow the new system. One of the principals explained that “personally, I gain power by giving up power. The more I give up power, the more powerful I become because they [the teachers] will work with me and they will work together. This is how I chose to be an administrator” (Int. 12, p. 7).

Most principals in the district nurture their SQCs and are active on a number of district-level committees (Int. 4 and 5). “And again, money is not everything but, you know what, it is important and with this your level of responsibility has to grow” (Int. 5, p. 9).

Empowering all stakeholders through free exchange of information and ideas is a continuous challenge for principals. Some SQCs took two to three years debating whether to use majority or unanimous approval in the process of reaching a decision. Once the procedural differences had been discussed and accepted by the SQC, there were more stakeholders who would bring their concerns to the SQC. Still, some subjects are mostly taboo. One concern is to be able to have an open discussion about individual differences in academic achievement between teachers (Int. 5). There is a need to stay the course much longer and get used to the sharing of objective information without the feeling of being personally challenged in order to frankly discuss the tools of the teaching profession (Int. 5). Regardless of how effective an SQC is, there are other forces in each school that a principal has to take under consideration. Among them, the most pronounced are the union leadership and informal leaders whose opinion counts (Int. 5).

A pronounced difference emerged in the responses to the Formalization Interview Guide (FIG) between those who worked in the schools that rated their bureaucracy as highly enabling and those that rated their bureaucracy as being moderately enabling. In

schools with highly enabling bureaucracy, the interviewed principals stated that the key element in their influence over the schools' operations was the development and nurturing of their School Quality Council (Int. 5 and 6). The SQC was the forum where motivated teachers, parents and community members congregated in order to improve all aspects of school functioning. In schools with moderately enabling bureaucracy, it was difficult to arrange for an interview and those who were eventually interviewed were often not willing to be audiotaped (Int. 18 and 19). In these schools, everyone was busy following the guidelines and procedures from the office or downtown with little time for any frills (Int. 19). New ideas were initiated by the administrative core, which was in charge of disseminating them and controlling for compliance.

The interviewed teachers were satisfied with the level of empowerment they perceived in either situation (Int. 1, 3, 4, 18, and 19). The difference was in how they defined empowerment. In highly enabling schools, empowerment meant being active in the SQC and searching for better ways to organize the school (Int. 1, 3, and 4). In moderately enabling schools, empowerment meant having tools to perform their duties as teachers and having strong union representatives ready to grieve if the contractual protections were impinged upon by the administrators (Int. 19). The operation of the school and decisions about what should or should not be done were mostly in the domain of the principals and the administrative team.

It is over ten years now that the district has been systematically attempting to decentralize its structure following the Quality Process open to all motivated stakeholders in order to improve the functioning of the district. The section that follows deals more in depth with the interaction between schools and the central office administration of the

district.

The Transformation of School/District Relationships

Schools seem to be in the process of transition from closely following the central office leadership to leading as the agents of change in the district (Int. 2, 5, 6, 7, 12, and 13). In general, teachers seem to approve of the way the district is currently structured (Int. 1, 3, 4, 18, and 19). This researcher was not able to identify any dissent although he heard of teachers who were dissatisfied and decided to retire rather than continue working in the new environment where change was to be expected. One of the key witnesses observed that there is a marked difference between the younger and older teachers and their perception of working conditions in the district (Int. 3). The “old timers” remember devastating strikes and standing in the cold wind with the picket signs. They remember that the central office issued checks with no money just before Christmas to teach the teachers a lesson that striking does not pay. “My father walked those picket lines and got a check for \$2.13 or whatever. It was right after Christmas time” (Int. 4, p. 4), commented an expert witness. Although those who made the decisions about teaching the teachers a lesson are mostly gone, the memory lingers on. The new teachers seem to have everything “handed on a silver platter” not realizing how difficult it was to fight for the contract they now enjoy. They also do not understand that teachers need to be vigilant because what was given can be taken away (Int. 3).

Some expert witnesses, both teachers and administrators (Int. 2, 3, 4, and 7), remarked that it is more difficult for older teachers to work in the time of change. “We had to retire some people. It’s tough but the younger teachers that are coming seem more open to living on the edge” (Int. 7, p. 5). A principal commented that when (Int. 12)

“talking about cultural change, and it’s no disregard to the experience and knowledge of the veteran teachers, but it is little easier to shape beliefs of someone who is coming to a new building with a new style, putting a new wine in a new bottle instead of putting that old wine into a new bottle. It’s little easier to do it” (Int. 12, p. 6). Even if the younger teachers bring more enthusiasm, there is also the factor of their temporary or probationary status. One of the expert witnesses remarked that “there are some schools in the district where these principals are just hammering new teachers, especially at the elementary level. They are non-tenured people who are afraid to speak up, in a way rightly so but on the other hand these principals are really sticking it to these teachers, but they [the teachers] don’t want to say anything” (Int. 4, p. 3). Regardless of the difference between older and younger teachers, expert witnesses agree that the old cadre of teachers should be able to retire with dignity after they have contributed their most productive years to the organization. “You teach every day and it will kill you. [Kids] are tough today. We have teachers banging every day. So, I think that they deserve to go at 55 with all benefits” (Int. 7, p. 7).

Despite some bad memories, teachers are satisfied with working conditions in the district today. We have a “really good working relationship: the union, the superintendent and the district” (Int. 3, p. 3). From the perspective of the union, “there is nothing that we would like to change in our contract other than increase the salaries” (Int. 3, p. 3). The New York State United Teachers’ Union (NYSUT) regards this district’s contract as a model to be emulated by others (Int. 3). The contract contains provisions that other districts do not have such as class size limits, good medical insurance, and pay for unused sick days (Int. 3, p. 3). Contract negotiations are conducted with few

adversarial conflicts among the parties (Int. 2, 3, and 7). “When we have a problem, we sit down and talk it out,” (Int. 3, p. 3), stated one key witness. Rather than give the powers up to lawyers or negotiators, the involved parties have a continuous dialogue on contractual issues. Consultants and lawyers are good at what they do, but they address an issue and then leave the district. That issue might be solved to the satisfaction of one of the negotiating parties but the damage to relations, cooperation and trust stays for ever. “In essence, we are negotiating all the time. Now, we haven’t had formal negotiations in 12 years,” (Int. 7, p. 2). Because of a clear process and the ability for all stakeholders to access the process, malcontents have little pull (Int. 3). Even if someone is hurt or not happy with a decision, it is difficult for that person to convince others that malevolent forces of the central office are to be blamed and that nothing could have been done or that they were hurt in the process and that revenge or at least mistrust is in order. It seems that engaged and proactive participants from any level of the organization may and do influence the functioning of the district (Int. 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7).

The district makes an effort to look at the teaching profession from a new perspective. An expert witness explains that “we are the organization in transition and we are coming from the attitude of teachers as technocrats to teachers as professionals, as an art as opposed to science. It takes awhile but I think that we passed a critical mass point where most teachers feel that their classroom and their learning are works of art as opposed to just a routine kind of thing” (Int. 7, p. 7).

The relationships between schools and the district have been transformed over the last decade from a top-down command and control model to a more collaborative relationship where the teachers are expected to assume a proactive professional role. The

next section describes the evaluation methods and instruments used in the district to measure progress towards defined goals.

Assessment

Although schools are empowered to operate in a manner their SQCs see as optimal, they do not function without checks and balances. Schools are evaluated on the Good School Tool (Doc. 10), which measures a school on seven correlates of effective schools:

1. “Safe and Orderly Environment
2. Climate of High Expectations
3. Instructional Leadership
4. Clear and Focused Mission
5. Opportunity to Learn and Student Time on Task
6. Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress
7. Positive Home-School Relations” (Doc. 10).

Each correlate is measured with a set of specific indicators. For example, Safe and Orderly Environment is measured by the following indicators: pupil attendance, pupil tardiness, faculty/staff attendance, class size, incidents of aggressive/violent behavior, number of reported unsafe conditions, and health related incidents. The district reviews the indicators and updates them to its current need. For example, indicator 6.1 from 1999 “use assessment procedures” (Doc. 26, p. 10) was changed in 2001 into “instructional strategies are modified based on data from diagnostic assessments” (Doc. 21, p. 10). Table 4.5 presents the seven correlates and 39 performance indicators of the Good School Tool.

A Power Point Presentation prepared by the district representatives for the 6th Annual Conference of National School Board Association in San Diego, CA on March 2001 (Doc. 22) explains that the district used the Good School Tool to “align a system for continuous improvement from accountability to responsibility.” In order to achieve the realignment, the district decided to move from a “boss managed” to a “lead managed” system. The boss managed system “drives” the workers by: depending on authority, thinking “I” versus “they,” instilling fear, fixing blame, having strong desire to be in charge, working on improving people, setting adversarial atmosphere, and using coercion. The lead managed system “leads” the workers by: depending on cooperation, thinking “We,” eliciting confidence, facilitating fixing of programs and processes, allowing workers to make decisions, working on improving people, setting friendly atmosphere, and constantly searching for better ways to do things.

The Survey of Empowerment, Trust and Cooperation (ETC), (Doc. 20 and Doc. 28), is a tool developed by district employees used to measure the achievement of the district’s strategic goal number two (Int. 20), which is “to achieve the highest level of employee cooperation, trust, and empowerment” (Doc. 6, p. 6). The person charged with the initial evaluation of the level of empowerment, trust, and cooperation recalls that the superintendent told her: “This is the directive from the Board, now you gotta evaluate it. I am thinking to myself, my goodness, I need something to evaluate and collect the data. When I researched, there was nothing out there for school districts or organizations” (Int. 20, p. 4). Eventually this person identified Corporate Pulse, a “breakthrough survey software for survey construction, administration, reporting, and analysis” (Corporate Pulse Surveys, 2004).

Table 4.5

Correlates and Indicators of the Good School Tool

#	Correlate	Indicators
1	Safe and Orderly Environment	(1.1) pupil attendance, (1.2) pupil tardiness, (1.3) faculty/staff attendance -- certified, and faculty/staff attendance -- classified (1.4) class size, (1.5) incidents of aggressive/violent behavior, (1.6) number of reported unsafe conditions, and (1.7) health related incidents
2	Climate of High Expectations	(2.1) teachers have appropriate materials & tools to meet standards & deliver instruction successfully (sufficient textbooks, and instructional materials, computers and other technology, lab/library materials), (2.2) Interventions are available when learning does not occur (focused interventions, pullouts, tutoring, extended day/year, bridge programs, class reduction and reorganization), (2.3) staff participates in ongoing professional development (in-service, TRC training, circles of learning, graduate work, conferences, and personal growth plans), (2.4) functioning SQC (updated charter, stakeholders groups represented, roles designated, training provided for new members, and SIP focused on student achievement), (2.5) schools adapt to change when there is a need, explores and evaluates new ideas, restructure to assure learning (ad hoc committees, pilot programs, grants to explore new methods/develop more tools, SIP is monitored and adjusted when students do not meet success, (2.6) percent of students at or above district standard on benchmarks, (2.7) percent passing State exams, (2.8) percent passing all subjects, (2.9) percent of students on Honor Roll Secondary only
3	Instructional Leadership	(3.1) SQC assures that goals and values are clear, shared with school community and focused on student learning, (3.2) administrator seeks to improve performance through review, revision, and implementation of SIP, (3.3) school climate is improving in terms of trust, (3.4) School climate is improving in terms of empowerment, (3.5) school climate is improving in terms of cooperation
4	Clear and Focused Mission	(4.1) instruction is aligned with District 12-K model, (4.2) teacher planning and instruction allows students to develop basic skills, (4.3) planning and instruction reflect a continuous meaningful measurement of student progress, (4.4) instruction is responsive to changes in State standards and higher level learning, (4.5) school offer academic extra curricular activities, (4.6) school celebrates and recognizes contributions of stakeholders consistent with school mission
5	Opportunity to Learn and Student Time on Task	(5.1) instructional time is varied for students who require additional support (pullouts, tutoring, scheduling changes within school, multiage classrooms, and booster programs), (5.2) a process exists for organized abandonment of non-essential content, practices and procedures, (5.3) there are multiple opportunities to learn, (5.4) early childhood programs are available for four year olds
6	Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress	(6.1) instructional strategies are modified based on data from diagnostic assessments, (6.2) parent/guardians and students receive continuous reports on progress in subject areas, (6.3) assessment data are accessible electronically through data warehouse, (6.4) students receive consistent, continuous feedback relative to learning standards
7	Positive Home-School Relations	(7.1) parents/guardians and teachers attend scheduled conferences, formal and informal, (7.2) parents/guardians access data warehouse, (7.3) school partners with parent/guardians of students in need of intervention, i.e., AIS, attendance, tardiness, (7.4) opportunities exist for parents/guardians to volunteers and/or participate in school activities as classroom monitors, reading coaches, shared expertise, fund raising, SQC/PTA, take home volunteer work, information flow is timely, (7.5) school develops and maintains community partnerships

Note. Adapted from district documentation (Doc. 21 and 26)

After a training session in Provo, Utah, with the help of consultants from Data Dome Products, this person was ready to bring Corporate Pulse to the district. “We had stakeholders from the whole community: teachers, administrators, community members, parents, seven or eight focus sessions and asked them focus questions. As they spoke, I scripted to capture a theme or themes and key words that were used to come up with definitions” (Int. 20, p. 5) of empowerment, trust, and cooperation. “Now, there are key terms in the definitions based on climate and culture that existed then in the district” (Int. 20, p. 5).

Every year, each employee in the district is asked to rate his or her school, the central office, or the Maintenance Department on a 24-item Likert-type scale, with eight questions devoted to empowerment, eight to trust, and eight to cooperation. The 25th question is an open ended question asking for a suggestion that would improve empowerment, trust and cooperation in the district. The three concepts are defined in the survey as follows:

Empowerment explores the extent to which individuals make suggestions, present ideas, fix problems, and otherwise engage in improvement activities without having to be asked by their supervisors or administrators.

Trust reflects a fundamental commitment to do what you say you will do in an appropriate and responsible way. Interactions are predictable and consistent because of this foundation of trust and mutual respect of each other’s perspective and goals.

Cooperative behavior consists of pitching in and helping others (co-workers, other groups, and other departments) in non-crisis situations, even when it is not

officially part of their job. (Doc. 20)

The ETC survey is anonymous and the results are used as a platform of discussion between the administrators in the central office and schools on the subject of empowerment, trust, and cooperation as well as a longitudinal measurement of trends in the district on these three aspects of organizational life (Int. 5 and 6). Both the Good School Tool and the ETC survey are used as objective tools to focus school leadership on areas of concern for the district. Although nobody was fired because of poor performance on the surveys, when it is time to replace a principal, new hires have consistently improved school climate, teacher morale, and stimulated their SQC to be more active (Int. 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7).

Each administrator in the district, regardless of whether working in a school or the central office, is systematically evaluated. According to district documentation issued 11/2/73 and last revised 4/23/04 (Doc. 1),

each probationary and acting administrator is to be evaluated in writing once each year, in the spring, by his or her immediate supervisor. All evaluations will be sent to the Superintendent no later than May 1. The Superintendent will review the evaluations and forward to the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources for permanent filing in individual personnel folders. Names of persons whose performance is of dubious competence will be reported to the Superintendent at least one month before the above deadline. (p. 103)

Principals are evaluated every ten weeks (Int. 6) during a meeting in the central office with the superintendent and the CSG. It is a discussion focusing on whether a principal has met the goals established by herself and the school SQC and on how the

students have been performing on the district and the State assessments. A principal explains that “every ten weeks, we have a meeting at the central office to look at our test scores and what’s happening in the building. We have discussion back and forth with the Central Support Group. [These are] the superintendent drills. We call them Ten Week Reviews. It can be intense. I’ve been comfortable but if my test scores go down, I will be intimidated, I am sure” (Int. 6, p. 11). One of the key elements of the Ten Week Review session is to bring prominence to the results of the State assessment for each school in the district (Int. 12). For example, the results of mathematics and language arts scores on the State examinations may be discussed and compared with other school results over time.

They are also compared to the results of other schools in the district and similar schools in the State. The discussion is not about how a principal should proceed but about how central office can help to improve the scores (Int. 5 and 6). One of the principals explains that the superintendent will say “you need to improve academic achievement” expecting me to do what “I feel is important” (Int. 5, p. 10) in order to increase the scores for the students in my school. The superintendent attempted to use the results of State and district assessments as the only indicator of principal’s effectiveness in order to bring the evaluation closer to the point of delivery, which is how successful the students are in their academic progress; but the leadership of the administrators’ union was against it arguing that there are many other factors that also have to be considered (Int. 21). To further motivate the principals, the superintendent uses competition as one of the reasons for improvement arguing that if we do not improve, the charter schools might move in.

The approach to teacher assessments in the district changed as well. One expert witness explained that before, “as long as there were no kids flying out of the room or jumping out of the window, it was a good day. Not any more. I want to see your daily and weekly results, your data. If it’s good, we need to have a conversation. If it’s not good, we need to have a conversation” (Int. 12, p. 9). The frequency and the quality of teacher/administrator dialogue has increased. Rather than being used to identify and rectify mistakes, the assessment is focused on looking for areas of both strengths and weaknesses that might be used in a reflective dialogue between a teacher and an administrator in order to improve the teacher’s performance. One of the principals commented that “they [the new teachers] know that the economy is tough, jobs are tough [to get]. People are hungrier. All that makes you wonder that, even with residency requirement, we are getting some good people and we are going through a pretty strenuous evaluation process. If they are not cutting it, we are writing a remediation plan. If it doesn’t work, we are counseling them maybe to a different career, different place” (Int. 12, p. 6).

To assist the non-tenured teachers in their professional development, they are assigned a mentor through the Teacher/Mentor Committee for a period of three years. The Teacher/Mentor Committee is a part of the district’s Teacher Resource Center. It is comprised of teachers and administrators, with the teachers holding a membership majority of over 50% on the committee. Mentors are selected from the list of available candidates who agreed to participate in the process. The Teacher/Mentor Committee reaches a decision about whom to select through dialogue leading to consensus. Every teacher/mentor team produces a quarterly report of its collaboration and sends the report

to the Teacher/Mentor Committee for review. A principal explains that “in case of an unsatisfactory performance, we gather evidence from all the evaluations; we have created remediation plans; we’ve called in the mentors; we’ve called in the central office. They come [to school] to do observations and then counseling forms are created and filled out and Human Resources takes it from there and the [school] board finally grants or denies tenure” (Int. 6, p. 10).

It would be easy for the employees of this district to feel depressed about the sagging economy, continuous demographic drain, and the pressure from the State to improve results on high stake tests. Instead, there is a sense of optimism among the faculty and the administration in the district. Not all teachers would accept a position in this district, citing mostly the residency requirement as an obstacle (Int. 3); but most of those who decide to be employed are satisfied with working conditions, contracts, salary, infrastructure, technology, and a professional educational environment apparent in the district (Int. 1, 3, and 15).

Evidence presented in this chapter has demonstrated that the district’s goal of improving teacher and community involvement in the decision-making process is being accomplished through reorganization. The flow of ideas and energy in the district has been redirected from top-down to bottom-up. School Quality Councils (SQC) generate ideas at the level of schools. The Instructional Planning Group (IPG) takes over if initiative involves the whole district. The Central Support Group (SCG) assists SQCs and the IPG in their initiatives while the Executive Quality Council (EQC) turns ideas into district policies. The new district structure allows and welcomes distributive decision-making. The role of the central office administration is to serve and support

schools and the committees of the IPG. Principals no longer manage only by following strategies generated by the central office. The principals help to generate and support the initiatives of their SQCs. Key witnesses feel that as the relationship between central office administration and schools has improved, the old adversarial relations between them have been replaced by new enthusiasm and energy focused on improved academic excellence among students.

CHAPTER 5

Findings from Quantitative Data

This chapter examines quantitative data gathered through the survey instruments and from examination of state and district documents. The first section is directed toward the question of whether the researched district as a whole and each school in particular are enabling or hindering bureaucracies as defined by Hoy and Sweetland (2001). The question is addressed by presenting and analyzing data derived from the responses to the Enabling School Structure (ESS) and the Enabling District Structure (EDS) survey forms, which are described in Chapter 3 and presented in Appendices A and B respectively. The second section provides longitudinal and cross-sectional data analyses of students' performance on New York State assessments for all schools in the district and in comparison with similar schools in New York State.

The Analysis of Data from the Enabling School Structure and the Enabling District Structure Forms

Table 5.1 sums up responses to both ESS and EDS surveys. A score of more than three indicates an “enabling” school bureaucracy while a score below three indicates a “hindering” bureaucracy. Schools are identified by randomly assigned numbers and are grouped by level. The table reports the total number of teachers employed in each school, the percentage and the number of teachers responding to the ESS survey, the mean scores (*M*) of all teachers' responses to the ESS survey, and the standard deviation (*SD*) to illustrate how variable the group was. Teachers' ESS responses are also reported for those who were employed before 1990 and those employed 1990 or later. In the last four columns, the scores on the ESS and the EDS survey forms obtained by each

Table 5.1
Perceptions of the Level of Enabling Bureaucracy: Mean Scores on ESS and EDS Forms by School and Central Office
(strongly disagree=1,..., undecided=3,..., strongly agree=5)

Schools by Level		Total teacher count	ESS responses of all teachers				ESS responses by teachers' appointment date			Principals' responses		
			Reporting		Mean score	SD	# reporting	Mean Score	# reporting			Mean Score
#		#	%									
Elementary	1	19	11	58	3.97	0.48	5	3.93	5	3.92	*	*
	2	15	9	60	4.32	0.40	2	4.13	5	4.38	4.33	4.08
	3	26	26	100	4.35	0.57	11	4.20	12	4.35	4.83	3.03
	4	39	5	13	*	*	2	*	3	*	*	*
	5	13	8	62	3.60	0.99	4	3.39	3	3.67	4.5	3.42
	6	20	6	30	*	*	2	*	4	*	*	*
	7	20	3	15	*	*	1	*	2	*	*	*
	8	30	16	53	4.27	0.39	8	4.39	7	4.12	*	*
Middle	9	16	5	31	*	*	2	*	3	*	4.58	3.75
	10	58	31	53	4.37	0.49	13	4.45	15	4.47	4.92	4.42
	11	59	31	53	3.18	0.83	10	3.33	21	3.10	4.00	3.92
	12	47	30	64	3.82	0.79	13	4.05	13	3.61	4.67	4.25
High School	13	170	150	88	3.52	0.70	36	3.55	93	3.49	4.33	4.67
TOTAL:		532	331				109		186			
AVERAGE:				62	3.93	0.43		3.94		3.90	4.52	3.94
=====												
Central Office Response to EDS		10	10	100			8	4.05	2	3.66		3.98

Note. (1) An asterisk (*) indicates no response: fewer than 50% of faculty responded to the ESS Survey or the principal did not respond to ESS and EDS Surveys.
(2) Total number of teachers responding may not equal the sum of teachers responding disaggregated by employment date because not all respondents answered question #13 of the ESS providing this information.

principal are reported. The last row in the table provides information on the mean score and standard deviation of responses to the EDS form from the employees of the central office.

The reason to disaggregate teachers into two groups by date of employment was to test for differences of perception regarding the level of enabling bureaucracy between teachers who were employed before and those employed after the policies devolving decision-making were put into effect. Since the current superintendent, who initiated the new policies, began his work in 1992, teachers employed in 1990 or later have little reference to the district bureaucracies that preceded the current one.

The sum of teachers employed before and after 1990 does not add up to the total number of teachers in some schools because not all teachers responded to question number 13 which asked for the year the respondents began their employment with the district. When asked why anyone would not respond to number 13, some answered that they wanted to preserve their anonymity. Sixty two percent (62%) of the teachers, 61% of the principals, and 100% of the central office administrators responded to the surveys. The percentage of teachers' responses in each school ranged from 13% to 100%. Full data in the table are provided for schools where more than 50% of faculty responded to the ESS form.

Mean teachers' scores on the ESS form aggregated by school ranged from a low of 3.18 in school number eleven to a high of 4.37 in school number ten. Principals' scores on the ESS form ranged from a low of 4.00 in school number eleven to a high of 4.92 in school number ten. Principals' scores on the EDS form ranged from a low of 3.03 in school number three to a high of 4.67 in school number thirteen.

Differences among groups were determined using t-tests. There was no statistically significant difference ($p=0.87$) between how teachers appointed prior to 1990 rated their schools ($M=3.94$) and those appointed 1990 or later ($M=3.90$). The difference between how the principals and the central office staff rated the district bureaucracy ($M=3.94$ and 3.98 respectively) was not statistically significant ($p=0.86$). The differences between the principals' rating of the bureaucracy of their schools ($M=4.52$) and the bureaucracy of the district ($M=3.94$) was significant ($p=0.02$). Also statistically significant ($p=0.005$) was the difference between the principals' rating of the bureaucracy of their schools ($M=4.52$) and the teachers' rating ($M=3.93$). In each instance, the principals' ratings were higher.

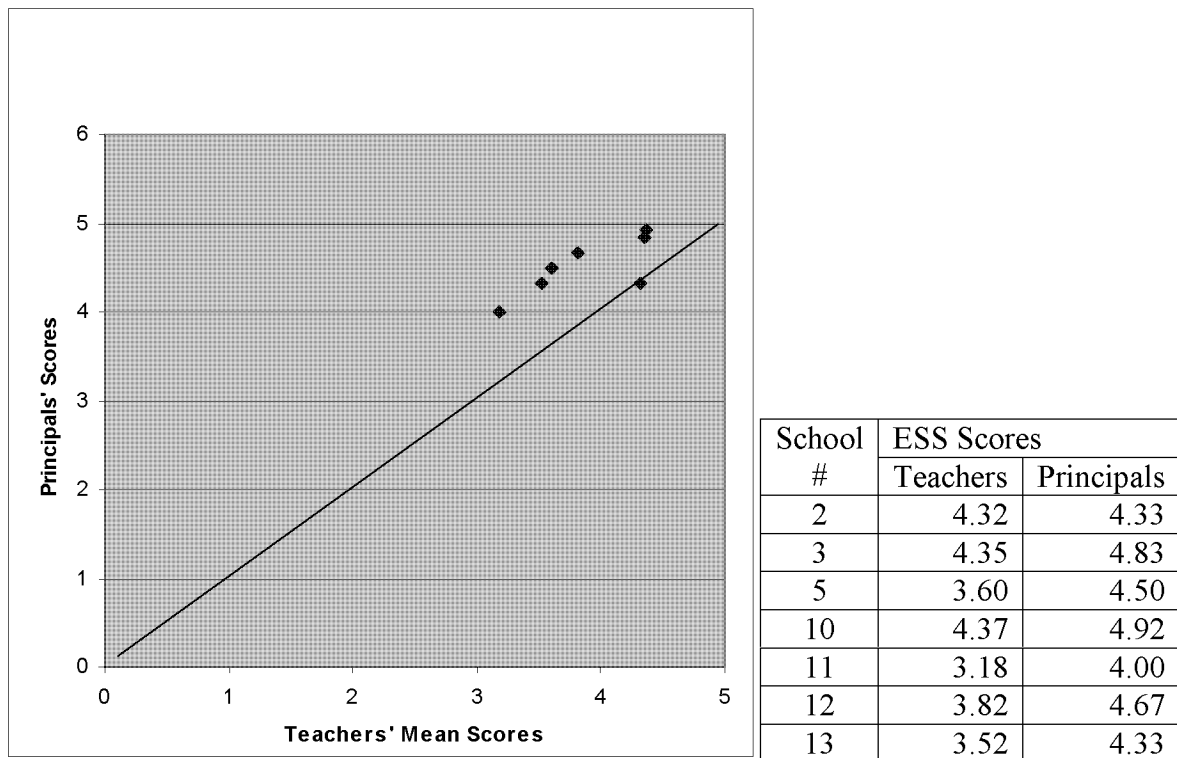
In comparing the results of the ESS surveys between teachers and principals, it is worth noting that all school principals rated the bureaucracy of their schools as more enabling than did the teachers in these schools. In school #12, the principal viewed the school bureaucracy as much more enabling (4.67) than did the teachers ($M=3.82$). In school #2, the perception of the principal (4.33) was closest to that of the teachers ($M=4.32$). The principal of school #13 was the only one who rated the district bureaucracy as more enabling (4.67) than his school bureaucracy (4.33). Four principals rated the district bureaucracy as more enabling (schools #2, 10, 12, and 13) and four as less enabling (schools #3, 5, 9, and 11) than did the employees of the central office. Focusing on mean scores and standard deviations of ESS scores among teachers, there are three schools where deviations in the scores at the minimum extreme extend below the score of three: school #5 ($M=3.60$) ($SD=0.99$), school #11 ($M=3.18$) ($SD=0.83$), and school #13 ($M=3.52$) ($SD=0.70$), which indicates that there is a subgroup in these schools

that rated their school bureaucracies as hindering.

Figure 5.1 presents the scatterplot of principals' scores and teachers' mean scores on the ESS survey for the seven schools where both the principal responded and more than 50% of the teachers responded. The difference between the total mean scores of the principals ($M=4.51$) and teachers ($M=3.88$) is statistically significant ($p=0.01$). There is, however, a positive linear correlation ($r=0.75$) between the scores of principals and the

Figure 5.1

Scatterplot of the Enabling School Structure Scores for Teachers and Principals for Schools with Complete Data



Note. The scatterplot represents these seven schools from the thirteen presented in Table 5.1 where both the principals and the teachers responded to the ESS survey, with the teachers' response rate of over 50%.

mean scores of teachers on the ESS Form indicating that when a principal rated her school bureaucracy as relatively low or high so did the teachers in her school.

Since the mean scores for all groups of professional employees are consistently above a score of three, it is concluded that the bureaucracy of this district tends towards “enabling” as defined by Hoy and Sweetland. However certainty is not possible because there is incomplete information for six elementary schools. Five out of nine elementary school principals opted not to fill out ESS and EDS survey forms and in four elementary schools, less than 50% of the faculty completed the ESS surveys. Because these data are lacking, there is a possibility that there are elementary schools in the district where the teachers might rate their school bureaucracies as hindering, i.e., below the score of three, and that there are elementary school principals that might rate their school bureaucracies or the district bureaucracy as hindering.

Analysis of the NYS Report Card Data

Since the ultimate objective of the district reform was to improve student academic achievement, and this is a consideration in review of principal performance, it is important to analyze the academic achievement of schools in the district. The district’s first strategic goal is “to exceed and continuously improve learner outcomes against academic standards.” One set of standards that guide district evaluation of this policy goal is that established by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). To trace the recent history of student achievement in the schools under study and in similar schools, this researcher referred to data available from the New York State School Report Card in English Language Arts and Mathematics, (Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March 2004) prepared by the NYSED. To allow comparisons among

schools, the NYSED has placed all schools in the state into comparable categories named “Similar School Groups (SSG)” based on the educational needs of their students and available resources of the district. The SSGs are calculated by using an algorithm that includes three factors: (1) grade range of students served by the school, (2) school district capacities, and (3) the extent of supplementary educational needs among the school student population.

For the purpose of describing school district capabilities, the NYSED places school districts into seven categories of their “need / resource capacity.” The district under study is among 357 districts in the State of New York that are classified as “High Need / Resource Capacity – Other Urban and Suburban districts. Within this general category, schools are classified as low, average and high in student need of special academic support. The degree of educational needs of students in schools was measured using the proxies of free lunch eligibility and students with limited English proficiency (Overview of School Performance, March 19, 2004). Table 5.2 presents the Similar Schools Group (SSG) classification scheme as developed by NYSED. The vertical dimension recognizes seven groups of districts based on their need for and availability of resources. The horizontal dimension recognizes the level of need for educational services of students within school by grade level classification. Cells that contain schools similar to those in the district studied are highlighted in the table. Similar School Groups are assigned a number which indicates (1) a need category of district, (2) school level: elementary, middle or secondary, and (3) relative educational need of students in the school: low, middle or high.

Table 5.2

Similar Schools Groups – Identified by District and School Demographics

District Need/Resource Capacity (N/RC) Group	Relative Needs Indicated by Pupil Needs Statistic															Alternative	Special	Other
	Elementary Schools					Middle Schools					Secondary Schools							
	Low	Mid	High	Low	Mid	High	Low	Mid	High									
New York City	C-1	C-2	C-3	C-4	C-5	C-6	C-7	C-8	C-9	C-10	C-11	C-12	C-13	C-14	C-15	C-16	C-17	C-18
Other Large Cities	#4	#5		#6	#22	#23		#24	#40	#41		#42		--	#55	#59		
High N/RC Urban/ Suburban	#7	#8		#9	#25	#26		#27	#43	#44		#45				#60		
High N/RC Rural	#10	#11		#12	#28	#29		#30	#46	#47		#48				#61		
Average N/RC	#13	#14		#15	#31	#32		#33	#49	#50		#51				#62		
Low N/RC	#16	#17		#18	#34	#35		#36	#52	#53		#54				#63		
Special Act Institutions	#56																	

Note. Numbers in the cells identify each group of schools for State reference purposes. K-12 schools are compared with other schools, grade range by grade range (Overview of School Performance, March 19, 2004).

The NYSED explains that this set of comparison groups provides a framework that balances the need to consider each school's particular circumstances and the need to evaluate the performance of the school in comparison with schools in other communities. The model enables reasonable comparisons among schools and districts accounting for many of the differences in challenges which they face (Overview of School Performance, March 19, 2004).

The classifications of schools in the district under study within the Similar Schools Groups schemata are presented in Table 5.3. Tables 5.2 and 5.3 together allow a comparison of the relationship of the schools in the district to each other and to similar categories of schools in New York State. Table 5.3 shows that district elementary schools

Table 5.3

District Schools and Their New York State Similar Schools Group Classification

School Number	Similar Schools Group Classification	The Range of Student Needs Statistics
1	#7	From 20.0 to 92.0
2	#8	From 92.4 to 160.0
3	#8	From 92.4 to 160.0
4	#9	From 161.2 to 279.0
5	#8	From 92.4 to 160.0
6	#8	From 92.4 to 160.0
7	#7	From 20.0 to 92.0
8	#8	From 92.4 to 160.0
9	#7 in 2003 Report #8 in 2004 Report	For #7: from 20.0 to 92.0 For #8: from 92.4 to 160.0
10	#26	From 82.3 to 119.7
11	#26	From 82.3 to 119.7
12	#26	From 82.3 to 119.7
13	#44 in 2003 Report #43 in 2004 Report	For #44: from 50.4 to 88.9 For #43: from 35.9 to 45.9

Note. Student Needs Statistics (SNS) ranges from 0 to 337.5 and is calculated

$$\text{SNS} = (2.375 \times \text{Free Lunch Percent}) + \text{LEP Percent}.$$

number 1, 7, and 9 are in the SSG number seven. These schools are in the lower range of student needs for elementary schools. District elementary schools number 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9 are in the SSG number eight, which contains schools that are in the middle range of student needs for the specified district category. The professional staff in these schools are faced with greater educational challenges than those in schools 1, 7, and 9.

Elementary school number four is the only school in the district that is in the SSG number nine category, which indicates schools with a high range of student needs for elementary schools. The children in this school provide its professional staff with the greatest educational challenge in the district. All middle schools in the district, i.e., schools number 10, 11, and 12, are in SSG category number 26 which is in the middle range of student needs for middle level schools. School number thirteen, the high school,

was in the SSG category number 44, middle need, in the 2003 report (Overview of School Performance, April 10, 2003), but was moved to group number 43, low need, in the 2004 report (Overview of School Performance, March 19, 2004).

Information regarding scores on the State assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics for school years 1999-2000 through 2002-2003 for all schools in the district and for the corresponding SSG groups is presented in Appendix G where students are grouped into four levels of academic performance. According to the NYSED (Overview of School Performance, March 19, 2004), level one students demonstrate “serious academic deficiencies;” level two students “need extra help to meet the standards;” level three students “meet the standards;” and level four students “exceed the standards.” It is the expressed intent that students systematically move from lower level achievement groups to higher level groups, which indicates improved academic results. The ultimate goal is to eventually reduce the number of students in levels one and two to zero and to have all the students at levels three or four, thus meeting or exceeding the Regents’ standards.

Table 5.4 is a compilation of data drawn from Appendix G showing the percent of students meeting or exceeding state standards for school years 1999-2000 through 2002-2003 for all thirteen district schools and for their corresponding SSG. This information has been calculated by adding the percentages of levels three and four students in the schools and the SSGs. Differences between the scores of district schools and corresponding SSGs are calculated by subtracting SSG percentages from district school percentages for each of the four years. A positive difference indicates that the district school is achieving above the SSG average. A negative difference indicates that

Table 5.4

Percentage of Students Meeting and Exceeding State Standards in District Schools and the Corresponding Similar Schools Groups (SSG)

Number and Level of Schools		% Meeting English Standards ⁵				% Meeting Mathematics Standards ⁵				NYS Similar Schools Group (SSG)								Difference between % District School Meeting Standards and the % Corresponding SSG Meeting Standards ⁶								Average Difference English				Average Difference Mathematics				Average % English		Average % Mathematics	
Corresponding SSG Number										% Meeting English Standards				% Meeting Mathematics Standards				English				Mathematics															
Elim-try ¹		1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	15.3	12.3	82.5	87.8				
1 ³	7	80	82	86	82	78	93	87	93	66	69	66	68	70	77	71	84	14	13	20	14	8	16	16	16	9	15.3	12.3	82.5	87.8							
2	8	43	50	60	72	43	72	71	91	51	55	55	59	59	65	60	75	-8	-5	5	13	-16	7	11	16	1.3	4.5	56.3	69.3								
3	8	64	55	52	78	76	76	62	94	51	55	55	59	59	65	60	75	13	0	-3	19	17	11	2	19	7.3	12.3	62.3	77.0								
4 ⁴	9	60	58	69	55	69	69	63	69	45	53	56	60	57	64	64	77	15	5	13	-5	12	5	-1	-8	7.0	2.0	60.5	67.5								
5	8	73	42	86	78	75	61	85	91	51	55	55	59	59	65	60	75	22	-13	31	19	16	-4	25	16	14.8	13.3	69.8	78.0								
6 ⁴	8	72	73	70	80	83	88	77	88	51	55	55	59	59	65	60	75	21	18	15	21	24	23	17	13	18.8	19.3	73.8	84.0								
7 ⁴	7	80	73	86	89	73	95	96	100	66	69	66	68	70	77	71	84	14	4	20	21	3	18	25	16	14.8	15.5	82.0	91.0								
8 ³	8	59	53	51	55	46	73	62	65	51	55	55	59	59	65	60	75	8	-2	-4	-4	-13	8	2	-10	-0.5	1.8	54.5	61.5								
9 ^{2,7}	7	57	53	73	*	57	75	55	*	66	69	66	68	70	77	71	84	-9	-16	7	*	-13	-2	-16	*	-3	-10.3	61	62.3								
Mid-die ¹	8	*	53	73	81	*	75	55	87	51	55	55	59	59	65	60	75	*	-2	18	22	*	10	-5	12	12.7	5.7	69	72.3								
10	26	25	24	34	37	20	13	32	60	34	33	33	35	31	27	34	43	-9	-9	1	2	-11	-14	-2	17	-3.8	-2.5	30.0	31.3								
11	26	33	25	28	35	30	34	36	50	34	33	33	35	31	27	34	43	-1	-8	-5	0	-1	7	2	7	-3.5	3.8	30.3	37.5								
12	26	35	40	39	51	38	39	49	60	34	33	33	35	31	27	34	43	1	7	6	16	7	12	15	17	7.5	12.8	41.3	46.5								
High Schl																																					
13 ⁷	44	*	75	64	*	*	71	64	*	*	70	72	66	*	72	66	62	*	5	-8	*	*	-1	2	*	-1.5	0.5	69.5	67.5								
Note.	43	*	*	64	68	*	*	64	69	*	74	78	75	*	76	68	75	*	*	-14	-7	*	*	-4	-6	-10.5	-5	66	66.5								
1 – Average percentage of students meeting standards for schools in the category, i.e., elementary: Schools 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and middle: Schools 10, 11, and 12																																					

Note.

- 1 – Average percentage of students meeting standards for schools in the category, i.e., elementary: Schools 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and middle: Schools 10, 11, and 12
- 2 – Principal responded to ESS and EDS forms but fewer than 50% of teachers responded to ESS.
- 3 – Principal did not respond to ESS and EDS forms but more than 50% of teachers responded to ESS.
- 4 – Principal did not respond to ESS and EDS forms and fewer than 50% of teachers responded to ESS.
- 5 – “Percentage meeting standards” is the sum of level three and level four students in a school or in an SSG.
- 6 – “Difference between % district school meeting standards and the % corresponding SSG meeting standards” is school score minus SSG score.
- 7 – School #9 was in SSG #7 for 2003 report and SSG #8 for 2004 report. School #13 was in SSG #44 for 2003 report and in SSG #43 for 2004 report

the district school is achieving below the SSG average. The columns “Average Difference English” and “Average Difference Mathematics” provide summative comparisons between a school and its corresponding SSG over the four academic years.

Notice the differences with SSG comparisons for schools #9 and #13. Because of changes in student demographics between 2003 and 2004 State reports, the classification for school #9 changed from “low need” to “middle need” while for school #13 it changed from “middle need” to “low need.” In mathematics, the difference between the percentage of school and SSG scores for school #9 in academic year 2000-2001 is minus two for SSG #7 and plus ten for SSG #8. For school #13 that difference is plus two for SSG #44 and minus four for SSG #43. The average difference in mathematics for school #9 is -10.3 when compared to SSG #7 and 5.7 when compared to SSG #8. In each instance, average achievement was better than respective SSGs of middle need, but poorer than SSGs of low need.

District elementary schools in SSG #7 (low need) category systematically decreased the number of level one students over the years. Those elementary schools that had some level one students recorded none in the fourth year of assessments, with the exception of school #1 in the area of mathematics (2% of students scoring at level one in the fourth year). These results are better than their SSG #7 comparison group where the range of level one students moved from five percent for both English and mathematics in the first year to four percent for English and three percent for mathematics in the fourth year. In the fourth year of assessments in mathematics, school #7 achieved the ultimate goal of having all of its students in levels three and four, the only 100% score in Table 5.4, which indicates that 100% of its student population met or exceeded the Regents

standards.

Schools #2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9 are in the SSG #8 (middle need students). With the exception of school #8, they exceeded the scores of their SSG. School #6 is a leader among them with the average score difference of 18.8% in English and 19.3% in mathematics.

School #4 is the only SSG #9 high student need in the district. Although average score differences for both English and mathematics are in a positive range, there is a strong downward tendency in the school/SSG percentage difference, which dropped from 15% to -5% in English and from 12% to -8% in mathematics over the four years. The trends for the percentage of level one students have been increasing in English and are flat in mathematics in school #4, while they have been decreasing for the SSG #9. There is a decreasing trend in English achievement and no change in mathematics for level four students, while those percentages have been steadily improving in its SSG #9 comparison group. As in the case of school #8 from SSG #8, the students of school #9 have been performing poorly on the State assessments relative to their SSGs.

Principals of low achieving schools #4 and #8 did not participate in the survey portion of this study nor did they agree to be interviewed. Fewer than 50% of the teachers in school #4 completed the ESS survey. Similarly, principals of high achieving schools #6 and #7 did not participate either, nor did 50% or more of their teachers.

School #8 is an example that relating high academic performance of students to teachers' perception of enabling bureaucracy should be done with caution. Although the teachers from school #8 rated the bureaucracy of their school as highly enabling ($M=4.27$), see Table 5.1, the students from school #8 performed poorly on the State

assessments. The example of school #8 indicates that the teachers' perception that the bureaucracy in their school is enabling does not lead directly to high academic achievement of the students in such a school.

Middle schools started below their SSG #26, but showed continuous growth so that by 2002-03 they exceeded their SSG. The most dramatic gain in the difference between the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards between a school and SSG #26 is school #10, which moved from 11% below the comparison group average in 1999-2000 to 17% above in 2002-2003. Although the "Average Difference English" shows negative numbers for schools #11 and #12 in English and for school #10 in mathematics prior to 2002-2003, no middle school has a negative difference in English or mathematics in 2002-2003. There is evidence of an effort to decrease and eventually eliminate level one scores on the State assessments among the middle schools. There is a movement of students over the years from level one to levels two and three. The percentage of level four students remains below the SSG #26 for middle schools in the last year of the assessments, with the exception of school #12 in mathematics.

In the only district high school, school #13, average student performance is consistently below their SSG. The "Average Difference" is -8.5% for English and -5% for mathematics. This poor performance may be explained in part by two facts: As mentioned before, the classification of school #13 was changed from SSG #44 (middle need students) in the 2003 report to SSG #43 (low need students) in the 2004 report. In 2001, students and faculty from two district high schools were merged and moved into a brand new building (Kurilovitch, 2003). The process of merging two distinct high school populations and cultures into one cohesive and academically successful unit began when

the 1997 cohort of students were taking their Regents examinations.

In summary, poor academic performance on the State assessments in schools #4, #8, and #13 require the district's attention. However, the other schools in the district perform at or above the level of similar schools in the State. The trends of academic performance indicate systematic improvement in these latter schools. The improvement is especially visible among the three middle schools in the district.

Chapter Five described the analysis of data from the Enabling School Structure (ESS) and the Enabling District Structure (EDS) forms, which measured the perception of enabling bureaucracy. It also presented an analysis of the New York State Report Card data. The bureaucracies of schools and the central office were perceived as enabling. Principals consistently perceived the bureaucracy of their schools to be more enabling than did the teachers in their respective schools. With the exception of the high school, students in the district performed better academically on State tests than did students from Similar Schools Groups in the State. Chapter Six will describe findings from interviews with district teachers and administrators.

CHAPTER 6

Findings from Qualitative Data

Chapter Four described organizational reforms carried out by the TQM process and organizational structures specific to the district which intended to decentralize decision-making and empower the teachers. The Chapter concluded that the evidence generated from interviews and document analysis suggested the district's goal of expanding teacher and community involvement in the decision-making process had been successful. This conclusion was verified by survey data analyzed in Chapter Five. Using an instrument developed by Hoy and Sweetland (2001) and a variation developed by the researcher, it was found that teachers, principals, and central office staff, alike, rate the district bureaucracy as being "enabling" as defined by Hoy and Sweetland. An enabling bureaucracy empowers all members of an organization to be involved in its decision-making process and frees them to exercise their professional authority within minimal administrative constraints.

Creating an enabling bureaucracy is only a means to an end, however. The ultimate objective is to bring students to an acceptable level of academic performance. In analyzing academic performance by district students on New York State tests, Chapter Five also concluded that all middle schools and most elementary schools were making good progress toward this end.

In this chapter, we delve deeper into the formalization process that brought about the bureaucratic transformation. Utilizing qualitative methodology, this portion of the research was guided by the question of what kind of formalization one might expect in the district when following the responses of key witnesses to the Formalization Interview

Guide (FIG), described in Chapter Three, and in analyzing district documents. Information thus obtained is organized and presented in eight sections describing the binary formalization characteristics of bureaucratic rules and procedures. The formalization descriptors of enabling and hindering rules and procedures are listed in Table 2.6, Revised Formalization Table, which was the basis of the questions contained in the FIG. Table 6.1 presents rationale used in this chapter for the organization of the findings from the qualitative data: the eight binary formalization characteristics (from Table 2.6) and generic titles for each which serve as sub-headings in this chapter. The eight sections are followed by the summary section.

The respondents to the FIG overwhelmingly stated that both the bureaucracy of the central office and the bureaucracies of each school generally followed the enabling formalization strategies and were perceived as “enabling” bureaucracies. However, as noted in Chapter Five, teachers’ response was too low in four of nine elementary schools. Those four schools might have contained a school, or schools, with “hindering” bureaucratic characteristics.

Table 6.1

Section Titles and Corresponding Binary Formalization Characteristics

#	Title of section	Binary Formalization Characteristics
1	Level of Collaboration	collaborative vs. autocratic
2	Level of Flexibility	flexible vs. rigid
3	Change and Improvement	encourage innovation vs. discourage change
4	Risk-taking	risk taking vs. compliance
5	Approach to Mistakes	learn from mistakes vs. control mistakes
6	Level of Control	problem solving vs. adhering to the rules
7	Approach to Challenges	problems as opportunities vs. problems as obstacles
8	Organizational Consequences	protect participants vs. discipline subordinates

1. Level of Collaboration

This section addresses the question of whether the district is more collaborative or more autocratic in its formalization strategies. One of the key objectives for this superintendent was to open lines of communication and increase collaboration within and between various sectors of the district (Int. 2, 3, 7, 9, and 20). Since “you can mandate compliance, but you cannot mandate commitment” (Int. 7, p. 5) the district attempted to increase collaboration in order to increase commitment. There was a need to bring everyone in the district closer together and get them out of their organizational boxes where they often stayed comfortably for years with little knowledge of and interest in the rest of the organization or the outside world (Int. 7).

From the beginning of his term of office, the superintendent was open about his intent to “flatten the organization,” but most of those aware of his intent did not realize to what extent he was willing to go to achieve his objective, explained one of the key witnesses (Int. 20). The organization that eventually emerged had reduced central office staff, increased involvement of the principals in the district’s affairs beyond their schools, and provided for a unique blend of interaction through committees where collaboration between schools and the central office is ubiquitous (Int. 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 20).

In case of surprises or problems, those interviewed agreed that a team approach was the way they were addressed (Int. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 20). It used to be that “the problem was yours and you had to deal with it” either personally or in your department. Now, we pick up a phone and consult horizontally or vertically (Int. 2, 10, and 11). A TSA who knows that help might come from the superintendent does not hesitate to make a call (Int. 1 and 15).

The momentum of collaboration in committee work and the scope of the SQC initiatives are increasing (Int. 1, 3, 5, and 6). The superintendent is a direct person and uses his charisma to encourage teachers to take more direct charge in the affairs of the district. He told some of the teachers that “downtown people do not work for him [the superintendent] but for the teachers out here [in schools]” (Int. 3, p. 2).

One of the key witnesses remarked that like in any organization there are rumors and unconfirmed comments whispered in the corners, which, if collaboration is reduced might cause considerable organizational complications. Some of the rumors are that the superintendent promotes a narrow group of friends and family and that collaboration reaches only as far as he wants. This key witness explained the reach of these innuendos in the following way: “There are people who have been stepped over and stepped over. They choose to believe that it is because the superintendent hired his friends, but that’s not true. You are not good enough and people tried to tell you that in a variety of ways you just choose not to see it” (Int. 8, p. 4). This key witness continued: “I think that there are malcontents in every organization. It is just a matter of how much influence they have. If you have a good climate in your school or the district, then the malcontents, as loud as they want to be, would be talking in the wind” (Int. 8, p. 4).

One of the key witnesses was late for his FIG interview and explained his tardiness in the following manner: “I was late because I attended the Steering Committee for the twelve [IPG] committees. We had our recommendations. He [the superintendent] accepted them all. We were all making recommendations: administrators, very few centrals, some building, mainly teachers” (Int. 3, p. 2). This key witness seemed satisfied with his involvement because his personal input and that of the others on the committees met with

full approval and support from the superintendent.

Continuous open dialogue between the teachers' union and the superintendent is another example of how the collaborative spirit influences what otherwise might be an uneasy relationship. We are "unique but there is really good working relationship between [teachers'] union, the superintendent, and the central administration. There is no adversity. When we get a problem, we sit down and talk about it and see whether we can have it worked out" (Int. 3, p. 3).

According to key witnesses, there is willingness on the part of key decision-makers in the district to keep lines of communication open and encourage collaboration. This effort is evident in the structure of the district where the flattened central office bureaucracy, ever increasing role of the SQCs, increased involvement of school principals, and the energy of the TSAs bring all elements of the organization closer together.

2. Level of Flexibility

This section is the discussion on how the key witnesses perceived flexibility as a formalization characteristic on the spectrum from flexible to rigid. Most of the interviewees stated that this superintendent encourages flexibility in the district. The superintendent is the keeper of the vision. He is the one who decides about the strategy, but leaves the daily tactical concerns to the principals in the schools and the committees of the stakeholders (Int. 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, and 12). "The superintendent does not know what I do as far as getting towards my goals" (Int. 5, p. 9) stated one of the principals. "He [the superintendent] says this is where we are going. It is where you are relative to last year on the eighth grade assessment. How I go about that is really my design" (Int. 5, p. 10).

Principals are expected to follow the superintendent's leadership and become flexible leaders in their schools and the district. One of the principals described how, because he wanted to be flexible, he allowed his SQC to move at a pace he deemed too slow (Int. 5). It took two years in this school to agree on the process of introducing and accepting proposals and motions. The principal was frustrated that it took so long and wanted to move quickly to the work on a consistent Progress Report for the whole school. "Everybody had their own progress report. If you had three kids [from one family] in the school, you had three different progress reports. I wanted a consistent progress report and went through the Quality Council process and I didn't get everything I wanted" (Int. 5, p. 6). The principal further commented: "I was thinking to myself this is really ridiculous. I'm not getting the thing that I want and I realized that I had to let it go" (Int. 5, p. 7). The quality process and the spirit of working together on reaching common goals prevailed over a personal idea so important to the principal. "I do think that it is my job to set a vision. The Quality Council becomes a vehicle through which we run a lot of stuff so that we get opinions but I don't think that I've ever given up the responsibility and the opportunity to set a vision" (Int. 5, p. 7).

Another principal commented on the flexibility of the central office and school cooperation: "The Central Support Group and the superintendent are not to tell the schools what to do or to give school permission, but to support them" (Int. 6, p. 5). Because of increased level of flexibility, some see that the new culture of initiative and collaboration between different levels of the organization takes hold. "I see a greater involvement than we had before. People are really stepping up to the plate. Union members are all part of the committees, which is so important" (Int. 6, p. 5).

3. Change and Improvement

This section focuses on change as the binary formalization characteristic on the spectrum from encouraging innovation versus discouraging change. Most of the key witnesses stated that “change is a status quo” in the district (Int. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 13, 14, and 15). The focus is not on change for change’s sake, but on change as a conscious improvement process (Int. 7). The culture of “we do it this way because we have always done it this way” has been replaced by self-evaluation and self-analysis of the progress leading to the realization of measurable outcomes (Int. 2). The initiative to embrace the change process was initiated by the superintendent. At the central office level, narrow areas of expertise with an expectation of staying on the same job for ten or twenty years are not to be expected in this district (Int. 2 and 7). All interviewed stated that their job description changed dramatically in the past five to ten years. “I don’t even keep track of my title anymore. It is absolutely irrelevant. What matters is what I am doing at any given moment,” said one of the key witnesses (Int. 13, p. 6). The key is to be flexible and prepared to be moved wherever there is a need (Int. 1 and 13). No administrator lost a job because of the changes, but some retired and others looked for employment opportunities out of the district when the expectation for continuous change became a norm in the district (Int. 2 and 8).

Key witnesses testified that, in order to have the ability to move principals to the areas of need, all principals have the same salary (Int. 2, 7, and 9) regardless of their longevity, the number of students in their school or whether it is an elementary, middle or a high school (Int. 2, 4, 7, 8, and 9). Principals are also assigned duties beyond their buildings, mainly participating in committee work. According to data from 2003/04

budget, thirteen principals earn \$107,003 and four principals earn \$103,791 (Doc. 3, p. 28). There are four employees in the district who earn more than the principals: the superintendent \$120,047, the deputy superintendent \$110,719, the administrator for human resources \$108,779 and the administrator for school business services \$108,312 (Doc. 3, p. 28).

The superintendent believes that change should be brought about systematically and gradually through “evolution” and not “revolution,” (Int. 2 and 7). To bring improvement, one should not replace people but give them opportunity to learn, grow, understand, accept and eventually adapt to new expectations or a new environment (Int. 7). If a principal is evaluated as satisfactory rather than exemplary, it means that the principal needs to improve and not that s/he needs to be replaced. Some people move faster, others slower and there are those who do not change. The latter are usually in the minority and time is the best remedy for any challenges they might cause. Since those relatively new on a job are more willing to experiment than those with decades of experience, replacement through attrition or early retirement are the best means of recycling personnel (Int. 2 and 7). Ergo, patience and a humane approach to personnel bring more success than quick fixes when change is needed. Finally, a person who does not feel threatened, manipulated or hurt is more open to change. The key element in the process of change in the district is not what actual program or policy is eventually selected, but how we got there and that all were empowered in the decision-making process stated one of the key witnesses (Int. 7).

4. Risk-taking

This section reports on whether risk-taking or compliance is more valued in this district. The prevailing opinion of the key witnesses is best summed up by the following quote from one of the key witnesses: “I don’t think that there are too many people here who would not take a risk” (Int. 2, p. 8). Most of the key witnesses agreed that risk-taking is expected and encouraged throughout the district (Int. 2 and 7). Still, there is a level of apprehension when addressing new issues through the SQC (Int. 5, p. 6). Commenting on the culture of his building, a principal noticed that still more time and practice is needed to convince more teachers that active involvement in the SQC does not carry risks.

It was risky from the perspective of the central office to open some of the decisions to a public debate in the committees. Decisions may go either way and the unknown is as nerve-wracking to the administrators in the central office as it is to the teachers in schools (Int. 2 and 5).

Regardless of the level of risk, there is no real danger that constructive initiative would be detrimental to anyone’s career in this district. An expert witness stated that: “If I feel that I can make change, make the decision, I’ll do that. If I feel that I need some more input, I will go to my colleagues. There is a structure in place so that we don’t have to do it alone but we can do it alone” (Int. 14, p. 3). However, one needs to be aware that if trying to bring about change, one needs to be prepared to back up one’s proposals or ideas with research and prepare them carefully for the scrutiny of others (Int. 6). In general, responsible risk-taking is more valued than compliance in this district.

5. *Approach to Mistakes*

In this district, mistakes are regarded as an expected consequence of being proactive and not being afraid to take initiative or responsibility (Int. 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 14, and 15). “Mistakes are made. We don’t have time to lay blame” (Int. 1, p. 3) was one of the comments about mistakes. “Sometimes people are afraid to do things because they are afraid to make mistakes. Don’t be afraid because you usually will be able to find help and correct it if it needs correction” (Int. 2, p. 8) commented another key witness. Yet another key witness stated that “the worst thing you can do here is not to try. Failure is part of trying” (Int. 7, p. 4). The prevailing attitude towards mistakes is not to dwell in the past; if you made a mistake, try to fix it if you can or ask for help. “Mistakes are generally accepted. Persons are reprimanded. Well, they are not reprimanded really. We work with everybody to try fixing a mistake. I know myself I made some mistakes, sometimes big mistakes and they were pretty much accepted” (Int. 9, p. 4). “If they are not serious, we use them as a learning curve” (Int. 10, p. 2) stated a key witness. Another key witness remarked: “I don’t think that there is any huge fear of making mistakes that I sense in the organization. I certainly try to minimize them by seeking help from my colleagues but still I make them. I learn from them and I go on” (Int. 14, p. 3).

Here is an example of how a mistake was addressed that caused conflicting and confusing information to be disseminated throughout the district regarding the timing of student assessments in various areas at the elementary level. It would have been easy to identify and punish persons on various committees who communicated poorly and released unconfirmed data. Instead, the deputy superintendent was quoted to have said: “I don’t want anybody to take blame. I want to know how we are gonna fix it and how

it's not going to happen again" (Int. 1, p. 4). According to an eye witness, "once that approach was taken, it was amazing how quickly you could dispense with the situation. Instead of having to waste time and energy to figure out whose fault this is, you could just solve the problem" (Int. 1, p. 4). Because nobody felt threatened or in need of protecting their mistakes, the weakness was identified and the procedure of who should contact whom and when in order to efficiently disseminate verified information has been established.

Answering the question whether flattening the district structure might be a mistake, a principal responded, "I don't know the answer to that but because it's been flattened out, I am getting a lot of experience in the areas where I wouldn't have before. I believe that because of all the different things that we sit on, I will be able to spin more plates as time goes on because I will have more experience. The question, and nobody knows the answer, is how many is too many" (Int. 5, p. 9).

The culture of continuous exchange of information between various levels of organization helps in preventing mistakes. Since the administrators from schools and the central office meet twice a month, they have a forum to address those issues that, if kept in isolation, might lead to mistakes. "If there are questions, they come up during the meetings to avoid mistakes. It's really problem prevention" (Int. 15, p. 4).

6. Level of Control

This section looks at the level of control on the spectrum from problem solving to adhering to the rules. Most of the key witnesses (Int. 1—21) agree that rules in this district serve as guidelines for improvement and not as obstacles to change. New proposals for policy and procedure changes are continuously emerging from different

places in the organization. “Policies and procedures are developed all over the place. Some are top-down; some are bottom-up; some come from the community, some from the Board” (Int. 7, p. 1). This district values empowerment more than control (Int. 1, 2, 3, and 7). “The control of the central office is one of shared authority and responsibility” (Int. 2, p. 6). Most of the directives are because of regulatory or auditory requirements of the state or federal agencies. The central office is the depository where the records of old and new policies are kept. Once the SQC, the EQC, any committee of the IPG or any individual stakeholder decides that a rule hinders student learning, that person or a group may find a process to propose a change. Once the proposal meets the approval of the EQC, the superintendent submits it to the Board for endorsement.

The role of the central office is that of support. “In our model, principals at the building level have been empowered [to do] whatever they decide to promote student achievement, to get their scores up while the central office is to facilitate that process” (Int. 1, p. 2) said one of the key witnesses. Rather than dictating from the central office and controlling for implementation mistakes, schools, through the Quality Process, are the agents of change. Teachers on Special Assignment, called “guardian angels” by some (Int. 15), are often the first line of communication between schools and the central office in case something is not done by the central office in a timely fashion.

Still, some teachers think that the central office does not really care for the teachers’ every day effort in schools (Int. 1). This sentiment is best illustrated by one of the Teachers on Special Assignment who stated that “from the perspective of the building, I was concentrating on my little world with my kids thinking that the central office was a faraway place that didn’t have a read on the pulse of what was going on in

the classroom” (Int. 1, p. 2). It was empowering for this TSA to find out that his feelings reflected his limited perspective. “Now I can see, because I am doing it, that there is a concentrated effort to support what’s going on in the buildings and to mesh with them as opposed to having them see things our way” (Int. 1, p. 2).

The perception that schools and principals are not manipulated or controlled by the central office needs to be continually nurtured (Int. 5 and 11). Not all principals who consented to the interviews were convinced that present hiring of teachers by the central office rather than by the principals in the buildings is not a grab for control (Int. 5 and 11). Principals used to be given a list of approved teachers and they would make a decision who they would hire from the list. For a few years now, due to a number of early retirements, staff reductions, and delicate union bargaining issues (Int. 2), the central office makes hiring decisions and informs the principals who will be employed in their schools (Int. 2, 5, 11, and 21). The central office administrators claim that this is a temporary fix and once the situation gets more stable, they will return to the procedure of principals making key hiring decisions in their schools (Int. 2). Still, the doubt whether the change is temporary or not lingers on.

The superintendent sums up his understanding of the dilemma of problem solving versus adhering to the rules in the following way: “Before it was select and sort. Those who could do our system did very well; those who didn’t had to work in plants. I think it switched from selecting and sorting to learning, which is a big cultural change and this has to change the way the organization is set up: The way you write contracts; the way you do processes, your policies and procedures. Because all the policies, all the procedures, all the State laws, all the contracts, all of that is meant to keep the status quo,

so, if you want to change the status quo, you gotta change all of these things and it happens gradually, like the iceberg; just chip away, chip away” (Int. 7, p. 6).

7. Approach to Challenges

This section considers whether the district views problems as opportunities or as obstacles. Following the leadership of the superintendent, this district seems to welcome challenges (Int. 1—21). The district received national recognition from the US Department of Education for its initiative to use federal and State sponsored assistance to build school wide planning (Implementing Schoolwide Programs, October 1998). In the process, the training was provided to school board members and district administrators, followed by training for principals and the School Quality Councils. One of the principals reported that “when we were planning, the district sent someone to help us. They gave us statistics that aligned our instruction with the State tests and helped us identify the skills we needed to focus on based on our New York State School Report Card,” (Implementing Schoolwide Programs, October 1998, p. 4)

More time is needed in some schools to bring tough issues to the SQCs. A principal feels that there is still not the right moment to discuss the differences between professional accomplishments of different teachers, or the reasons why their students achieve differently on the tests (Int. 5). Some still approach challenges in schools as the domain of the administrative core (Int. 3 and 19) but most of the schools and the central office use challenges as an opportunity to involve all stakeholders.

The district looks for challenges beyond its immediate structure. When challenged by the call of the New Compact for Learning to reform educational organizations, the superintendent did not go on the defensive. Instead, he reorganized the

district and allowed for a variety of innovative initiatives to reshape the district (Int. 7). The challenge of the No Child Left Behind and the potential to reorganize through the CSR grants has been recognized and embraced by the district. When there is a challenge, the most common practice in the district is to involve a group of people, get on the phone, form a committee, consult, make a dry run and ask for second opinions or look for experts in the district (Int. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7).

This researcher heard the superintendent addressing the principals during the administrators' meeting: "It is you and me now. There is no money to hire any experts in the central office and even if there was money, I would not spend it on central office anyways. If there is anything I need to know, tell me now. I don't want to find it out from a Board member." This district views problems as opportunities, which, if treated proactively, should lead to change and improvement.

8. Organizational Consequences

This section discusses whether the district is focused more on protecting the participants or on disciplining the subordinates. Since this district is continuously reinventing itself and seeking newer ways to improve its functioning, the perception is that if you do not take active part in the change process, you may feel left behind (Int. 1—20). The saying in the district is that if you don't like it; don't let the door hit you on the back, do something (Int. 8). The meaning behind the saying is that as the district continuously morphs itself, someone who is static might find that the opportunity of promotion passed her or him by.

Like any evaluation, the Good School Tool and a dialogue about your school in the central office are reasons for concern to principals (Int. 6 and 8). One of the

principals recalled talking with her colleagues about what kind of consequences to expect from the superintendent if her school were to be rated poorly. The principals formed a circle and agreed to think about the worst mistake or bad decision by a principal in the district they could remember. Once they all had something horrible in mind, they tried to answer the question what was the negative consequence to that principal and they could not think of any. “The worst that could happen to you would be that you would be yelled at,” said one principal. “The fear is within you” (Int. 8, p. 6) said another.

Another principal elaborated on the Ten Week Review, a session in the central office when a principal meets the Central Support Group to discuss how her school measures up on the matrix of the Good School Tool. “It is actually a good tool because you have time to communicate, the good things that you are doing, what’s not working. They look at instructional issues, maintenance issues, human resource issues and they are open and ask what they can do to help, what are our needs” (Int. 6, p. 11).

The superintendent contends that “the organization has gotta remain agile, mobile, and never hostile” (Int. 7, p. 7) which means that there is no reason behind using discipline and punishment as the means of operational intervention in the district. The new organizational structure calls for the ability of the administrators to address all facets of the organization rather than fulfill their prescribed restricted roles. “In the old structure, you had a limited scope of your responsibility” (Int. 2. p. 9). For example, you did not generally have the ability to make comments about business or information technology aspects of the organization when your job was curriculum. “That does not exist any more.” In the new structure, one has the opportunity to see and address “the whole picture,” in order to get into the areas beyond “just your desk or your department”

(Int. 2, p. 9). The organizational consequence of the new approach is that in order to be successful an administrator needs to be open and prepared to take action in a broad spectrum of matters rather than feel protected in a limited area of expertise.

Summary

The qualitative research question asked whether a formalization strategy at the district level might be an indication of the nature of the bureaucracy found in the schools of the district. The two variables were (1) formalization strategy at the district level and (2) bureaucratic structure at the school level. Gauging from the survey responses, the FIG interviews, and the district documents, variable one, formalization strategy at the district level, is strongly enabling. The district has been formalized in such a way as to support rather than control the school bureaucracies. The expert witnesses testified that the intention of the central office administrators was to empower the schools to become the agents of innovation and improvement in the district.

The evidence also suggests that variable two, bureaucratic structure at the school level, is empowering as well. Principals and teachers in most of the schools of the district work cooperatively across recognized authority boundaries while retaining their distinctive roles. The structure where SQCs are encouraged to request changes and waivers to current policies if they might bring improvement to the operation of schools indicates that the researched district has created an enabling structure where rules and regulations are flexible guidelines for problem solving. In an enabling bureaucracy “rules and mechanisms should support teachers rather than [be the] vehicles to enhance principal power” (Hoy & Sweetland, 2002, p. 35). In most schools of the district, principals avoid ruling by a decree. In one documented instance, a principal removed his

demand for a uniform report card system in the school from the agenda of the SQC. The principal's motivation was to support his teachers rather than enforce his will. If the principal pushed too hard, the feeling of empowerment, trust, and cooperation on the SQC might have suffered damage.

One example of a school where the principal ruled by directives and young faculty felt threatened might be an example of coercive rules, which would indicate hindering bureaucracy at work. Here the rules were used to gain conformity rather than cooperation. Such actions might bring compliance but they would hardly produce commitment; "the power of the principal would be enhanced but the work of the teachers would be diminished" (Hoy & Sweetland, 2002, p. 2). However, this behavior in one school is not typical of the tactics used in most of the district's schools.

Answering the question of why the central office administrators tried to create an enabling bureaucracy in the researched district, the answer is that they believed that increased school empowerment would result in achieving the district's strategic goals one and two, which were to improve learner outcomes against academic standards and achieve the highest level of employee empowerment, trust and cooperation. Analyzing the intentions of the central office administrators and the actions of school principals, this researcher finds cause and effect relationship between the intention of the central office to empower schools and the resulting enabling school structures in the majority of the schools in the district.

The overall perception is that both the district and the majority of schools in the district use enabling formalization strategies. The level of collaboration in the district is more collaborative than autocratic. The rules and procedures are flexible rather than

rigid. Both the structure and the practices of the district and the schools encourage innovation more than they discourage change. Risk-taking dominates compliance. Mistakes are used as learning moments rather than as a warning of problems that need to be controlled and avoided at all costs. Being a proactive problem solver is valued more than being cautious and adhering to the rules. Challenges are welcomed as opportunities rather than avoided as obstacles. The organization is structured so that rank and file does not matter as much as action and results. Motivated participants are protected and encouraged even if they make mistakes rather than being treated as failing subordinates who need to be disciplined to stay in line. Enabling formalization strategies are encouraged. The central office and the schools in the district are structured in the way that promotes enabling bureaucracy.

CHAPTER 7

Discussion of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to probe the cause and effect relationships between the actions of a school district's central office administrators to decentralize decision-making throughout the district and the perceived consequences of these actions at the school level as they relate to Hoy and Sweetland's (2001) concept of enabling bureaucracy. Guiding the study was a research question asking if the kind of formalization at the district level is indicative of whether its schools operate as enabling or hindering bureaucracies. The study was motivated by a general premise that the quality of education is often hindered by inefficiencies in school administration attributed to the opprobrious nature of district bureaucracy. If this pessimistic perception of bureaucracy were true, we see little hope that anything can be done to improve the quality of public education as presently organized, especially in urban public schools where bureaucratic inefficiencies are the most pronounced. This research was based on Hoy and Sweetland's argument (Hoy & Sweetland, 2000 and 2001) that it is not the inherent nature of bureaucracy that causes inefficiencies and ineffectiveness, but the way we go about its organization. Educational bureaucracy can be formalized in an enabling or a hindering way. If formalized in a hindering way, an educational bureaucracy will be detrimental to the achievement of its educational goals. On the other hand, if it is formalized in an enabling way, the bureaucracy will positively contribute to the quality of education. Hoy and Sweetland tested the concept of enabling bureaucracy and found it to be both valid and reliable.

Summary of Findings

A research instrument developed by Hoy and Sweetland was used to measure the perception of teachers with respect to the nature of bureaucracy in schools on a scale from enabling to hindering. A modified and expanded version of this instrument was developed by the researcher to measure the perceptions of central office administrators, principals, and teachers in a district with respect to the nature of bureaucracy at the district level using the same scale. In order to understand this relationship and probe cause and effect of intentions, actions, and results, the research used both quantitative and qualitative methods. First, it quantified formalization efforts in the district as measured by the level of enabling bureaucracy; second, it described the formalization efforts and the results of these efforts by interviewing expert witnesses and by studying district documents. The district selected for the study was chosen because anecdotal evidence suggested that there had been an extended formalization effort to transform the bureaucracy of the central office and the schools in the district through a Total Quality Management (TQM) process into a structure that would support rather than control schools in their effort to improve students' academic achievement.

The quantitative study revealed that the bureaucracy in the central office, as perceived by the central office administrators, is enabling with a mean score of 3.98 on a scale ranging from one to five and a standard deviation of 0.40. The school bureaucracies as perceived by the teachers are also enabling with the mean score of 3.93 on a scale ranging from one to five and a standard deviation of 0.43. The mean scores of schools ranged from 3.18 to 4.37. The principals perceived the bureaucracies of their schools and the central office as enabling with mean scores of 4.52 for their respective

schools and 3.94 for the central office.

Since the ultimate objective of the governance reform was to improve student achievement, the quantitative review also examined the recent history of student academic achievement for the schools of the district and comparable schools in the State of New York. The analysis revealed that at the elementary and middle school levels, most schools were achieving better than similar schools in the State and showed systematic and sustained improvement, see Chapter Five. At the high school level the results were erratic with no detectable improvement.

The qualitative section of this research confirmed that the concept of enabling bureaucracy had a strong foundation in the philosophy and the strategic goals of the district. This district belief is that the structure of its bureaucracy may hinder or enable the accomplishment of its vision and mission. Rather than top-down and controlling, the bureaucracy itself should be oriented so that it does not grow beyond its desired function and thus stifle organizational effectiveness and creativity. The district focuses the attention of its administrators and systematically measures employee perception of enabling characteristics of bureaucracy.

The research revealed that from the beginning of his superintendency in 1992, the current superintendent was determined to transform the district bureaucracy from the old top-down centralized structure into a bottom-up distributive bureaucracy with focus on a clearly defined point of delivery, the quality of interaction between students and teachers in their classrooms. He decided that any effort that does not have a direct and positive impact on the point of delivery deters the organization from the achievement of its goals. After 37 years in education, the superintendent feels strongly that an elaborate multi-

layered bureaucratic system with a bloated central office administration often focused on responding to the needs of the State and federal educational bureaucracies rather than supporting teachers and schools in their work. He considered this to be one of the main reasons why schools do not improve the academic performance of their students, the ultimate purpose of the reform. At the core of his belief is the conviction that, in order to be successful, teaching should not be perceived as a mere technical skill, but as a profession. He viewed teaching as an art that grows with the experience of the teachers and is nurtured by positive working conditions, appropriate motivation, and the availability of tools and materials. Its humane aspects deteriorate if teachers are treated as secondary to bureaucratic necessities of the educational enterprise. Thus, for any strategy aimed at improved academic results to be successful, there is a need to give teachers and principals in schools tactical freedom within prescribed boundaries of schools and tie the measure of their effectiveness to their students' academic achievement.

In over a decade of systematic change anchored in the district's Total Quality Management (TQM) process, this district empowered schools through their School Quality Councils (SQCs) to search for ways to improve academic achievement of students. These efforts were supported by changing district formalization strategies and changing the role of the central office from that of controlling schools to providing support for schools as it was sought. This was achieved by reducing bureaucratic layers in the central office, creating the Executive Quality Council (EQC) to grant waivers of district policy and the Central Support Group (CSG) with the mission to assist the SQCs in their decision-making efforts. The office of principal was changed from that of a

bureaucrat in charge of enforcing the directives emanating from the central office to a role of a leader who shapes a school and uses the resources of the central office to build a strong and positive learning environment focused on increased student achievement. The transformation of this district's bureaucracy was facilitated by the superintendent's recognition that both the State and the federal governments are searching for ways to empower schools in their efforts to improve education such as (1) the State assessment policies and the availability of the test results from other schools and school districts, and (2) the federal Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) grants that are focused on improvement plans generated by individual schools.

This research contributed information as to the cause and effect relationship between central office strategy and the tactical freedom of schools to form their operational structures in a way that would enable rather than hinder students' academic achievement. The district under study functions in the belief that enabling bureaucracy is important in the process of building a system focused on improving the academic excellence of its students. The superintendent used the resources offered at the State and federal government levels to promote the empowerment of all stakeholders in the district by focusing on schools rather than the central office as the key agents of improvement.

The results of the study supported the presumption that a district valuing enabling formalization could promote enabling school bureaucracies. In answer to the research question, it was found that an effort to move towards enabling formalization indicated at the district level was reflected in the bureaucracies of the nine fully participating schools in the researched district. The principals who opted to respond to the Formalization Interview Guide (FIG) indicated that the empowerment of the SQCs in their schools was

their prime objective, which, they hoped, would empower all stakeholders in their school community to take active roles in the decision-making process. Various committees of the Instructional Planning Group (IPG), consisting of teachers, school administrators, central office administrators, parents, and students, made decisions that shaped the district's curriculum, scheduling, grading policies, exit criteria from grade to grade, and the homework policy. It was a strong belief of the district that broader participation by persons at the point of impact would result in better decisions. From the study of this district, one may conclude that it is possible to reduce the control of the central office bureaucracy in an urban public school district. It is also possible to realign the bureaucratic structure in the district so that the tactical concerns of teachers and principals in schools take precedence over the strategic needs of the administrators in the central office.

The nine schools in the district (out of thirteen) that responded fully to the surveys have enabling bureaucratic structures and practices. Despite a bleak economic situation in the community, the district employees are positive about the district and their professional status. The policies and procedures for involvement by working on the SQCs and the district committees of the IPG as well as advancement through the Teacher on Special Assignment (TSA) position seem to be understood and accepted throughout the district as the means of change and advancement. The bureaucratic structure of the district is focused on a clearly defined and articulated point of delivery, which is what happens with the students in their classroom. This focus together with organizational restructuring fosters continuous improvement of the district towards predetermined and measurable outcomes of delivering quality education to all students in the district. The

reorganization has happened concurrently with improving academic performance by the students of the district at the elementary and middle school levels, but not at the high school level. This district is an example that an urban public school bureaucracy may be organized in a way that allows for the engagement in interactive dialogue, views problems as opportunities, fosters trust, values differences, learns from mistakes, values the unexpected, and facilitates problem solving and that this can result in improving student achievement.

Discussion

For the sake of clarity, consistency, and focus, a record of what has already been accomplished in the district and what still needs to be improved as the Total Quality Management (TQM) process continues to shape the district is presented in this section. This researcher designed a template based on Vincent and Johnson's analysis of the site-based implementation process (Vincent & Johnson, 2000) shown in Table 7.1. Elements identified by Vincent and Johnson as being critical to the successful implementation of the TQM process are listed in Column One. Column Two reports those elements that are now in place according to this researcher's analysis. Column Three suggests issues that still need to be addressed. Each element is discussed in turn in the next section, followed by discussions of the changed roles of the superintendent, principals, and teachers.

Assessment of Key Elements of the Implementation Process

Strong Leadership. Strong leadership of the current superintendent is the main reason why this district has used a deliberate implementation process in order to systematically and continuously improve its operation. The superintendent understands his role as the keeper of the process. He asks for suggestions and creates committees that

Table 7.1

Total Quality Management Implementation Template

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS		
ELEMENT	IN PLACE	IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT
Strong leadership	Current superintendent	More budget and staffing discretion to school sites
Well defined TQM teams	SQC, EQC, CSG, and IPG	A document describing each committee and how they complement each other
Support for TQM decisions	The waiver process to avoid overruling the SQCs.	Web based access to each TQM initiative and its adoption process
Inverted pyramid of district hierarchy	In place since 1990	Empower those at the top of the pyramid by devolving much staffing and budgeting authority to schools.
Curriculum decisions made through committees	Curriculum committees of the IPG	Make all aware of purpose and results not only activists.
Centrally determined goals and standards	Board approved strategic goals	Revise periodically. Establish revision calendar.
Measured level of trust	The Survey of Empowerment, Trust, and Cooperation	Coded results available to all stakeholders
Waiver process to relieve restrictive regulations	In place through the EQC waiver policy	Information about the process disseminated and explained to all
Consistent assessment of progress towards established goals	The Good School Tool (GST)	Specific information available to all stakeholders about the purpose and results of the GST
TQM control over budget	Limited supply funds available	Establish a mechanism of gradual devolution of budget control to school sites.
TQM control over staffing	District used to devolve hiring of teachers to school principals.	Central office recruits and checks credentials. School sites interview and hire personnel.
Understanding of the TQM process	Only experts with thorough knowledge of the process	Document describing the process. Regular in-services.
Continuous TQM training	Trained cadre of facilitators. Rudimentary in-services.	Regular in-services for all stakeholders. Three-tiered training for novices, TQM members, and experts.
Access to information about TQM	Only general 7 page TQM process memorandum (Doc. 9)	Central web-based depository of historic and current information including minutes from each SQC
Effective communication	Limited information available for each SQC team	Web-based data of all TQM initiatives and their detailed implementation process
Coordinate information exchange	Rudimentary information available when requested	At least quarterly meeting of the SQCs or annual conference
Alternative salary schedules	Hourly reimbursement for time spent on the committees	Open salary debate with unions regarding salary incentives

Note. The list of elements in the first column is based on Vincent & Johnson's research (Vincent & Johnson, 2000).

search for new and better ways, but it is he who ultimately decides how and when to distribute power and authority in the district. Strong leadership is evident as the district continues with the reform. However, there is no formal policy or structure to preserve TQM when the current superintendent leaves.

Strong leadership also requires that principals, and eventually the members of the SQCs, have input and control over staffing and budgeting in their schools. Those two aspects of strong leadership are currently lacking in the district. An excuse that restrictive policies hinder the devolution of staffing and budgeting to schools should not stop the decentralization effort if the momentum of distributive decision-making is to continue.

TQM Teams. Well defined TQM teams are in place in the district. The purpose of the teams is to encourage the initiation of decision-making from the schools through their SQCs; to use the CSG in the role of a facilitator aiding the SQCs in the process of drafting proposals for specific policy changes; and to use the EQC as a body that would remove policy obstacles standing in the way of the SQC recommendations. In order for the SQCs to improve in their decision-making capacity, they should draw on a collective knowledge of their accomplishments. A detailed, centrally stored account of the TQM process, preferably in an electronic web-based format, should be accessible to all stakeholders, but especially those involved as SQC members and the members of the IPG committees. The description of each team should be presented in a logical order which would explain clearly to a novice how the TQM committees complement each other in order to create an organizational framework leading to the systematic improvement of the district functioning.

Support for TQM Decisions. The authority of the SQCs is limited at this time, but their decisions are not overruled within the scope of their operations. The waiver process serves as a mechanism to grant the SQCs freedom to operate beyond the prescribed organizational parameters. Hopefully, as more powers are devolved to the SQCs, the support for their decisions will continue.

Inverted Pyramid of District Hierarchy. The pyramid of the district hierarchy has been inverted to reflect the intention that schools should be the center of decision-making, while the central office should function in a service and support capacity (See Figure 4.1). In the current structure, schools are at the top of the pyramid and the superintendent with the central office is at the bottom. This structure is still fragile and built mainly on the charisma of the strong superintendent. In order for the inverted pyramid to be fully embedded in the system, there is a need to devolve more power to the upper echelon of the structure; for example, by assigning the control over staffing and budgeting to schools. Swanson and King (1997) state that the primary issue to be determined in decentralizing districts is “the degree of control to be granted to schools over personnel expenditures that account for between 60 and 80 percent of school and district budgets,” (Swanson & King, 1997, p. 398).

Curriculum Decisions through Committee. Curriculum decisions in the district are made through committees. The old way of using expert supervisors who were the central depository of knowledge and power regarding curriculum matters has been changed. Now, it is up to specific curriculum committees comprised of practitioners, teachers and principals, who recommend curricular changes in the district. The knowledge as to the process and results of the committee work should be better

formulated and distributed to all stakeholders. The purpose of the dissemination of knowledge is not merely to inform, but also to empower those involved in the process and to solicit new committee members who are well-informed in the intricacies of TQM.

Centrally Determined Goals. Goals and standards of operation are centrally determined and disseminated in the form of brochures, so that operational focus is not lost. The district uses its point of delivery, the quality of student / teacher interaction in the classroom, as the standard that has to be met in order for any change to be contemplated. In order to keep district's goals in line with the TQM process, a cycle of revision for the vision, mission and goals should be established. Since Fullan (1982) estimates that ten years are needed for a cycle of educational reform to be complete, the goals could be redrafted every five years. The cycle of revision is needed in order to give enough time and focus to this important issue.

Measured Level of Trust. The level of trust is systematically measured in the district. The district has developed its own assessment instruments, the Survey of Empowerment, Trust and Cooperation (ETC), to systematically gauge these critical elements of its operation. The district's second strategic goal after achieving high levels of student academic performance is to "achieve the highest level of employee cooperation, trust and empowerment."

Some in the district regard ETC data as sensitive and guard survey results (Int. 10). Sensitivity issues may be addressed by coding the data so that personal information is not accessible. Withholding or limiting the amount of relevant information regarding the TQM process available to all stakeholders is detrimental to its ultimate success.

Waiver Process. A waiver process to relieve restrictive district and contract regulations inhibiting implementation of a proposed SQC innovation is in place. District documents specify that the waiver process is the most critical component in the successful implementation of the TQM process. The waiver process is the strongest prognosticator that the district's TQM process is sincere and meant to stay a long term. An effort should be considered to inform all stakeholders: those already involved, the novice, and the doubtful about the purpose and the success of the waiver process.

Consistent Assessment of Progress. Systematic assessment is used to measure that the four specific district goals are met. The Good School Tool (GST), the Survey of Empowerment, Trust and Cooperation (ETC), district and State student assessments, and a needs assessment evaluation are used to measure each of the district goals. Regular teacher observations and annual teacher evaluations are conducted by school administrators who have been trained to look for curriculum alignment and signs of student achievement in classrooms. Principals are evaluated during the Ten Week School Review conducted by the Central Support Group. Perception from some in the field is that the GST and ETC are cumbersome, redundant and irrelevant. Effective communication demands that the relevance of both instruments is clearly communicated and the results shared throughout the district.

TQM Control over Budget. Control over budget is currently in the hands of the school board and the superintendent and those in the central administration that he empowers to assist in the process. Money is allocated to various committees to support their operation, but no authority is devolved to the committees over how the district budget is structured or allocated. Swanson and King (1997) claim that decentralized

districts must first determine the scope of budgetary authority to be extended to schools. They note that even in centrally controlled districts, “schools are usually given discretionary control over a small allocation, primarily for purchasing instructional supplies and providing student enrichment experiences” (Swanson & King, 1997, p. 397). Chubb and Moe (1990) argue that “public school principals are systematically denied much of what it takes to lead” (Chubb & Moe, 1990, p. 56). The principals and the SQCs need more control over the budgets and the selection of personnel in their schools.

TQM Control over Staffing. The devolution of staffing to school sites is not in place in the district at this time. There was a brief period when principals were making staffing decisions in their schools. They were provided with lists of available candidates from the central office and used interviews to decide whom they would hire from the lists. This process has been stopped. No other staffing decisions have been devolved from the control of the central office to schools.

Budgeting and staffing functions are important elements of POSDCORB (see Chapter Two). Schools should be able to make staffing decisions in a distributive, bottom-up bureaucracy. It is conceivable that principals, and eventually SQC members, could have constructive input into who is hired at the central office level and why. Exception should be made only for the selection of the superintendent’s cabinet, which should be in full control of the superintendent.

Understanding of the TQM Process. Although all stakeholders are aware of TQM, the level of its understanding varies widely based on the amount of experience and training they have received. Bloom (Bloom, Mesia, and Krathwohl, 1964) suggested three domains of learning: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Bloom’s popular

cognitive taxonomy distinguishes six steps in an ascending hierarchy: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. From the perspective of Bloom's taxonomy, with the exception of a few district experts, the understanding of TQM in the district is limited to rudimentary knowledge and comprehension. The understanding of the TQM process goes along with continuous training and effective communication. Improved training and communication will enhance stakeholder empowerment.

Continuous TQM Training. There is a need for additional training in TQM. During the inception stage of the TQM, there was all stakeholders were extensively trained; but the momentum of the training has slowed and at present there is virtually no training – even for new employees. There are 186 teachers employed since 1990 out of the total of 532 employed. Many of the newly hired teachers, especially at the secondary level, have little understanding of the TQM process and are involved on district committees in limited numbers. Those that were trained need refresher courses. A continuous three-tiered training for novices, TQM members and experts available to teachers, administrators and parents is recommended in order to guarantee the transfer of desirable culture to all stakeholders.

Access to Information about TQM. Little historical information is available regarding the TQM process in the district. Available information is scattered and the bulk of knowledge is anecdotal, passed as district folklore, rather than being systematically stored and centrally coordinated in a depository of information and official policy. In order to empower present and future stakeholders, the district needs to collect systematically historical evidence of the TQM process.

Effective Communication. Information regarding the TQM process and decisions made through the process are not effectively communicated to all stakeholders. For example, novice teachers have only basic knowledge of the TQM process. All stakeholders need to gain deep knowledge and understanding of the TQM process in the district at all six levels of the cognitive domain of the Bloom's taxonomy in order for them to engage effectively in the decision-making process. At this time, little importance is given to the recording of decisions and initiatives generated by the members of the SQCs and district IPG committees. Minutes of committee meetings, both SQC and IPG are not filed in a central location for future reference.

A clerical position might be created for the purpose of coordinating, recording, storing, and disseminating of the information flowing from various levels of the organization, especially committees of the SQCs and the IPG. In the spirit of TQM, such a clerk should be empowered to demand accurate information from all levels, including principals and the central office administrators. Creating another committee of the IPG in charge of effective TQM communication might be a way to address currently existing deficiencies in effective communication.

Coordinated Information Exchange. There is some coordination regarding exchange of information between the SQCs, but it is only rudimentary. A principal in one school has little knowledge of what transpires in other SQCs; teachers know even less. Most of the information is of anecdotal nature. There is no evidence of systematic collection and dissemination of information between the SQCs. If Effective TQM Communication Committee of the IPG were to be created, it could be in charge of organizing an annual TQM symposium for all committee members. Any interested

person should be invited to attend, including out of district guests. The month of August might be a good date for such a symposium. The symposium could become a forum for the presentation of papers on various topics of interest related to TQM as well as formal and informal debates. It could also bring attention and recognition to the district, which might translate into more support and assistance from government, academia and business communities.

Alternative Salary Schedule. Although it is possible for those involved in the TQM process to request payment for extra hours of involvement, there is little accommodation for the idea of alternative salary schedules. The salary schedule for the administrators was changed to reflect new realities of the district's operations, but the new schedule serves more as a convenient tool for the superintendent to reassign the administrators with little resistance, rather than as an incentive motivating them to be fully engaged in the TQM process. The introduction of bonus pay tied to increases in the students' academic achievement or to reflect the non-linear commitment of time and creative energy expected of committee members might be considered.

If the momentum of TQM is to continue, teachers working in critical decision-making capacities need to be recognized. Asking and hoping for volunteer activists is a short-sighted remedy and not a long-term strategy. The position of Teacher on Special Assignment (TSA) is an example of a successful district strategy to attract and train prospective quality administrators. Fiduciary incentive for activist teachers involved with the TQM committee work should be in place in order to attract quality members for district TQM committees. Such strategy might be helpful in recruiting candidates that would search diligently and effectively for new and improved ways to operate the district,

which is a daunting challenge.

Role of the Superintendent

Under the leadership of its current superintendent, the school district has engaged in TQM as the process that has framed district transformation from a centrally managed and controlled structure to a more distributive one. Although an increasing number of district employees, parents, and community activists are engaged in TQM, ultimately, the superintendent is the key decision-maker, officially charged by the school board to propose any new policies. All committees, even at the school level, serve at the discretion of the superintendent. Although there was a time when the school principals had some control over staffing and limited elements of the budget, which are important aspects of the PODSCORB (see Chapter Two), these functions have not been formally devolved to the principals or the SQCs.

No cause-effect relationship has been established between the TQM process and the improved student achievement on the State assessments, although both are occurring concurrently. It is a fact, however, that the district has decentralized some decision-making authority to schools and has empowered teachers, albeit in a limited capacity, to engage in the decision-making process. At the same time, students' performance on the State assessments has been improving in the elementary and middle schools. It is also a fact that the superintendent elevated curriculum and instruction as important issues in the district. When commenting on Bloomberg's study (1985) of 25 school superintendents, Fullan (1991) points out "the infrequency with which curriculum and instruction matters naturally arise in the interviews" (p. 193). For this superintendent curriculum and instruction are paramount issues which are permanently anchored by focus on the point

of delivery. This follows the findings from Cuban's study (1988) who noticed that some superintendents, "albeit a minority, have been able to elevate instructional leadership as the central focus, using politics and management in its service" (Fullan, 1991, p. 194).

It is not known what would happen if the school board were to officially devolve more budgeting and staffing powers to the principals or the SQCs and retain the superintendent in coordinating and service capacities. On the one hand, such a decision might improve the functioning of schools. Even with greater devolvement of budgeting and staffing functions, the central office functions remain critical, however. Without its monitoring, recording and coordinating, some schools might perform well while others might perform poorly. Powerful principals might not heed to the advice of a well informed and well meaning but weakened superintendent. Although, as the superintendent pointed out, it is an oxymoron, the strong centrally situated superintendent oversees the process of decentralization. This strategy seems to be working for the district, but it is difficult to predict whether it would be successful in a different district under a different set of circumstances in this district, as with a different superintendent (Carlson, 1962).

This district has its peculiarities. It is located in a closely knit community where the power of the superintendent is well established in the political system of the city. The current superintendent, much like his predecessor, feels at ease with the school board. He had invested almost three decades of his professional career to build his knowledge of the district and nurture his relationship with the community before he became the superintendent. Some of the elements of the superintendent's strategy that brought him success were: (1) work with the former superintendent to be promoted; (2) develop a

network of reliable informants to understand the workings of the district; (3) maintain close relationship with the members of the school board; (4) be engaged with the political process of the city; (5) continually search for best practices; (6) develop process, not personalities; (7) be direct and not let any opposition fester in the organization; (8) begin reform away from the classroom to learn from potential implementation mistakes; (9) be proactive rather than reactive. How many of these points would spell success for other districts and other superintendents? Is the recipe for success as an urban superintendent to be born in the community and pursue a career within the district? Would a superintendent from outside this district be able to achieve similar results? Is the obvious charisma of the current superintendent the key ingredient to his success? If his success is due to his unique personal abilities, his life history, and the nature of this city, how much of the findings herein can be transported to other districts and other superintendencies? How much of this example can be utilized for the purpose of a rational, objective, and universal organizational analysis?

Will the current reform transcend the tenure of the current superintendent? It would seem that if the current superintendent, as did his predecessor, nominates his successor carefully; the momentum of the TQM reform could be sustained. How much, however, does such a system have in common with a rational-legal bureaucratic organization as described by Weber and how much of it resembles a Weberian traditional organization, where precedent and custom are the source of authority?

Role of Principals

The role of principals has been transformed from the enforcers of the district's plans into the implementers of site-based SQC initiatives and the coordinators of district-

wide IPG committee work. Fullan (1982) points out that the “new dimension of leadership” calls for “the transition from principal’s role in influencing the implementation of specific innovations to the principal’s role in leading in the school as an organization” (p. 157). Ultimately, the principal is central “in working with teachers to shape the school as a work place in relation to shared goals, teacher collaboration, teacher learning opportunities, teacher certainty, teacher commitment, and student learning” (Fullan, 1984, p. 161).

The district seems to endorse Fullan’s contention that the central role of the principal in the new dimension of leadership is to lead and not merely to manage. The current superintendent selects principals who are able to activate their SQCs and to be instrumental in the work of district-wide committees of the IPG. Interviewed principals agreed that one of the more important aspects of their professional involvement was to make sure that their SQCs were active and could make a positive impact on their students’ academic achievement.

The central office administration understands that schools need to have removed organizational obstacles created by central strategizing that is often insensitive to the urgent needs of school sites. Rather than simply impose their vision, the principals are expected to generate initiatives that reveal what the real needs of their school community are.

The principals’ primary concern is not about how to control the unruly teacher and to shape the maladapted; instead, they attempt to activate those with constructive ideas through membership in their SQC. The concern of what to do with the poorly performing teachers has been replaced with the challenge of how to make the school

community professionally active. The negative problem of damage control has been replaced with the positive charge to improve each school.

Principals serve an important leadership function of aligning the bureaucracy of the central office with the bureaucracies of their schools in order to create a dynamic and cohesive organizational structure focused on the point of delivery: the quality of student / teacher interaction leading to improved academic achievement of students.

Role of Teachers

Regardless of other organizational considerations, one of the major reasons for the success of the current reform is the superintendent's belief that teachers are the key to educational reform. In order for the teachers to function well, they need to be treated as professionals and not as mere technocrats who follow directives from the central office under the supervision of principals. As the researchers, the superintendents, and the principals struggle to make sense of education in their respective fields, so do teachers. Teachers' decisions, experiments, successes, and failures happen as they face students. Traditionally, the power and control descend from the superintendent, through the principal, down to the teacher, who in turn influences the student. The first and the most critical line of contact with the student in this structure is the teacher, then the principal, followed by the superintendent. It is of critical importance that the teacher is able to exercise professional judgment when teaching rather than carrying out decisions made by higher echelons.

If it is agreed that teaching is a profession and not only a technical skill, the discussion can move a step further by treating the teaching profession as an art, as suggested by the superintendent. Looking at the teaching profession as an art form helps

us understand that teaching cannot be simplified as merely organizationally efficient instructors. Teaching is inexorably connected with emotions. The emotional bond between the teacher and the students is at the core of effective teaching and learning, and should extend in Bloom's cognitive domain to fully engage the affective domain consisting of awareness, responding, valuing, organizing, and internalizing emotions and ultimately assigning values (Bloom, Mesia, and Krathwohl, 1964). What is beautiful and uplifting for one student can be dull and boring for others. The teacher as a professional artist needs to understand this connection. Fullan (1991) cites Hollingworth (1989) who, while commenting on the importance of experience in teaching, points out that teachers need "an opportunity to try own ideas across different contexts" (Hollingsworth, 1989, p. 181-82).

Administrators at all levels need to understand both cognitive and affective aspects of teaching in order for improved learning to take place in a classroom. The current superintendent understands and appreciates the artistic aspect of the teaching profession. It is important for the superintendent to monitor the budget; to clearly articulate the vision and mission for the district; to have politically good relationship with the school board and the unions; to motivate everyone in the district to seek best practices without being afraid to speak up; but, ultimately, the superintendent wants and needs to facilitate classroom environments where the art and magic of teaching can happen effectively.

Fullan (1991, p. 210) suggests that, in the best possible scenario for a successful educational reform to be implemented, a district needs a minimum of ten years and two to three consecutive superintendencies. Reform in the researched district has been going on

for more than a decade under one superintendent. Initial positive results are evident but still more time is required to see whether the results will be sustainable. Although the reform has produced new TQM structures, a fundamental bureaucratic realignment is yet to come. The control over budget and staffing is still in the domain of the superintendent and little imagination is needed to see that a new superintendent could stop the current reform and reinstate the former top-down command and control structure with relative ease.

Limitations

There is a concern that response bias might have skewed the results of both quantitative and qualitative data. Although 62% of the teachers in the district responded to the ESS survey, the range of responses among schools was from 100% to 13%. It is possible that some of the four schools where the teachers' response rate was less than 50% might have a mean of responses of less than three indicating a hindering bureaucracy. The highest and lowest schools in student achievement are among the non-responders. Compounding the problem, five of nine elementary school principals did not participate.

In conversations with the leadership of the teachers' union, this researcher asked for an opportunity to interview those teachers who felt dissatisfied with the district in general or their school in particular. No such teacher contacted this researcher. The involvement of the teachers' union in the collection of data was pronounced. The union leadership facilitated a number of personal interviews with the teachers. Because of the support of the teachers' union, the number of schools providing over 50% of teacher responses increased from four to nine, with the percentage of responses increasing from

about 30% to 62%. This researcher appreciates the efforts of the union to keep the sample of respondents balanced and robust.

The research was also limited in both time and scope. Although the preparation phase was quite extensive, the collection of data took seven months. It began October 10, 2003, when this researcher was granted approval from the University at Buffalo Social and Behavioral Board to conduct the research and when Wayne K. Hoy consented, in November 03, 2003, that his and Sweetland's ESS research instrument might be used for this study. The logistics of contacting teachers and administrators while the district's schools were in sessions was a daunting task. The invaluable assistance of a Teacher on Special Assignment who was charged by the superintendent to be the contact person for this researcher is greatly appreciated. The scope of data collection was limited to the researcher conducting all interviews. Another limitation of scope is that the research focused on one district. With a research sample of one, it is not possible to draw any inferences as to the universal nature of what has been observed in this district.

Policy Implications

The analysis of the district under study from the perspective of policy implications is based on the themes identified by the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) as critical for a successful reform of an urban public school district. The themes are: (1) student achievement, (2) professional development, (3) decentralization, (4) accountability, (5) parental choice, and (6) leadership (CGCS, 2000). The CGCS is a not-for-profit coalition of 55 of the nation's largest urban school systems. Its mission is "to advocate for and assist in the improvement of public education in the nation's major cities" (CGCS, 2000, p. 115).

The first theme is student achievement. The results of the NYS Report Card for the schools in the district suggest that the curriculum policy as developed by the district through the School Quality Councils and the committees of the Instructional Planning Group is headed in the right direction. This direction was set when the district formed its vision, mission, and strategic goals in 1996 and decided that strategic goal number one would be "to exceed and continuously improve learner outcomes against academic standards" (Doc. 6, p. 6). The district underscored the importance of the cycle of "monitoring, analyzing, assessing, and evaluating" which provides longitudinal scaffolding for systematic improvement of student achievement. The district identified its point of delivery as what happens in the classroom between a student and a teacher and decided that any proposed change would be considered only if it promises positive impact on that point. Marked improvement has been made at the middle school level and some improvement has been made at the elementary level. These gains need to be consolidated and continued growth should be sought. It should be a major district priority to achieve similar improvement at the high school level.

One focused area of improvement is the work of curriculum committees comprised of teachers and principals, which consolidate curriculum reform at the point of delivery. Next step towards improving student achievement is to coordinate the work of all curriculum committees by developing a set of common rubrics and templates to be shared by the committees, which would insure exchange of valid and reliable information between committees. It would be a sound investment for the district to employ a clerk and charge that person to centrally store all curricular information in the district in a uniform format and continuously disseminate that information to all stakeholders in both

paper and electronic forms.

The second theme of the CGCS is professional development. Often, it is expected that educators as professionals should have the expertise to perform their duties (Fullan, 1991). However, specific procedures, expectations, and culture are unique to each district. The district should communicate its expectations better and ensure that the district's professional development plan "includes access to information and best practices in curriculum, standards, performance expectations, assessment and technology" (CGCS, 2000, p. 79). The Superintendent's College, which provides sustained instruction for selected Teachers on Special Assignment, is a laudable effort to proactively shape the future administrative core of the district. A similar program should be considered for all teachers in the district to inform what has already been accomplished and facilitate the transfer of desired culture. The CGCS recommends that 3% of a district's budget should be devoted to professional development. It is recommended that the district actively seek collaboration and support from area colleges and universities in this endeavor. The CGCS considers phasing out residency requirements (except for school board members and the superintendent) as an important element leading to improvements in staff development and recruitment (CGCS, 2000, p. 79). These recommendations should be considered by the district.

In the case of the researched district, there are some who contributed to the key elements of organizational transformation by being instrumental in, for example, negotiating the administrators' contract, constructing the Survey of Empowerment, Trust, and Cooperation, and being initial trainers in the Total Quality Process. Some of them are trained researchers with Ed. D. and Ph. D. degrees who either retired or do not work

with the district any longer. Those who continue in their footsteps of organizational improvement in the district and beyond would gain great insight if the record of the early contributions, thought process, growth, and development were kept by the district and made easily accessible. Since empowerment invites initiative from various, often unpredictable segments of the bureaucracy, and at different and varied time intervals with unpredictable and changing results, it is important that those entering the change process in the later stages have a clear understanding of the process, the change, and the reasons behind different decisions and outcomes. A record of the contributions and involvement in the TQM process is of historical value to the district and to those studying educational organizations and should be considered as an element of professional development critical in the era of empowerment.

The third CGCS theme is decentralization. The district has accomplished a lot in this area by changing its structure from command and control over schools into service for schools using TQM to reform its operations. The energy and enthusiasm emanating from School Quality Councils (SQCs) begins to make a positive impact on district policies. The most challenging task still ahead of the district is to make a decision about formally devolving staffing and budgeting responsibilities to school principals and the SQCs. In order to begin this process, the district should consider providing “training on school-based budgeting and finances to principals” (CGCS, 2000, p. 80). It also should consider developing “a weighted student formula to provide regular and definable budget allocations to each school” (CGCS, 2000, p. 80). As mentioned in the discussion of the TQM items in need of improvement, the role of the SQCs at this phase of the reform is tangential. Formally devolving more of the staffing and budgeting powers to principals

and the SQCs will strengthen the decision-making power of schools.

The fourth theme of the CGCS is accountability. The district has developed systematic measures for all four of its strategic goals. It uses the Ten Week Review as an opportunity to provide school principals with information on these measures and treats it as a basis for constructive dialogue focused on school improvement. School principals shared how difficult it was in their schools to openly discuss differences between teaching styles and abilities among the faculty. The district should consider developing professional teacher benchmarks that could serve as a way to provide SQCs with information on the quality of teaching staff, provided that individual personal information would be protected. In the present structure, it would be worthwhile for the school board and the superintendent to create a committee of professional standards and open a dialogue on this important facet of accountability.

The TQM process involves a lot of organizational energy. There should be an objective system in place to account for the energy expended on TQM throughout the district and to store information necessary for the continuous improvement of TQM. Table 7.1, or a similar template, is a convenient way for those involved in the TQM process to systematically analyze their progress against desired outcomes. Once collected and stored, it would be useful to disseminate information about the progress of TQM to all involved stakeholders.

The fifth theme of the CGCS is parental choice. This researcher collected too little data on this theme to be able to offer any reliable analysis. Generally speaking, the district allows for parental choice but offers little support for the parents in such decision. Parental involvement in the TQM process is a first step on a way to increased parental

interest and awareness. Permitting parents a choice of school for their children is not enough to make such decisions benefit students.

The sixth theme of the CGCS is leadership. The leadership of the current superintendent and the structural transformation which he initiated bear characteristics of a charismatic organization, where change is initiated and maintained by a strong leader and a group of followers who believe in the vision created by the leader. Only time will tell whether the structures and reforms he helped institute will continue beyond his departure. The school board should consider how to select a successor and, if the selection were to be based on a traditional organizational model where history and tradition matter, they should consider how to move the selection process towards a more bureaucratic rational-legal model. Regardless of success, if the current reforms are valued by the district, they should be formalized by policy adopted by the school board.

Recommendations for Further Research

Educational research is an important element of school reform. The National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Sciences “reviewed the nation’s entire educational research enterprise” (National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences, 1992, p. 1) and the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) in particular. The NRC stated that sustained education reform required contributions of research in (1) the curriculum and instruction for all subject areas and grade levels, (2) the structure and administration of schools, (3) the opportunities for teachers to learn throughout their careers, (4) parental understanding and community support, (5) federal and state policies, and (6) resources available to support these changes. This research focused on the second item of the NRC agenda.

An important element in the study of the structure and administration of schools is the perception of how effective this structure is in the eyes of the practitioners at the organizational point of delivery – the teachers in the classrooms. Hoy & Sweetland's concept of enabling bureaucracy measures this perception. When analyzed from the perspective of Systems Theory and bureaucratic pull, the research on enabling bureaucracy should be expanded.

Systems Theory (Hanson, 1991), see Chapter 2, points out that organizations influence one another. Discussing the “pull” of organizational parts in a bureaucracy, Mintzberg (1979) and Bolman and Deal (1991) observed that there was a need to study the influence of the bureaucratic component parts. This research expanded Hoy and Sweetland's concept of enabling bureaucracy from the measure of a school as one bureaucratic unit into the measure of two of its component parts: teachers and administrators. It also looked beyond the school to gauge the influence of the district on a school bureaucracy.

Eventually, the study of enabling bureaucracy needs to expand to encompass all elements of educational bureaucracies and all bureaucracies that influence education. Such expanded study should include the measure of the perception of parents and students as well as the perception of the influence of the State and federal regulatory agencies on the bureaucracies of schools. Enabling bureaucracy should also be related to the measure of students' academic success.

The immediate benefit of this study is that it expanded available quantitative data on the perception of enabling bureaucracy of the administrators in the central office as well as the administrators and teachers in all schools of the district. It further expanded

the concept by providing qualitative data, describing the decisions and discussing the reasoning of those who attempted to formalize the district's structure at the level of the central office and the level of schools. Enabling bureaucracy as measured by the Enabling School Structure (ESS) and the Enabling District Structure (EDS) surveys is a promising concept that should be of interest to students of educational administration, practitioners in school districts, and state and federal government agencies interested in researching employee perceptions of the level of enabling bureaucracy. In order to further develop the concept of enabling bureaucracy, it would be useful to:

1. Replicate this study in the researched district in order to look at trends over time.
2. Use this or a similar methodology to:
 - a. Enable comparisons with other districts;
 - b. compare public and private schools;
 - c. compare schools or districts with high and low academic performance and compare these results to the perceptions of the level of enabling bureaucracy in these schools or districts;
 - d. measure the relation of the levels of enabling bureaucracy between a State Education Department and the districts or schools in the state;
 - e. compare the perception of enabling bureaucracy to negotiated rulemaking (Coglianese, 1997) in order to determine whether negotiated rulemaking has had any impact on the perception of the level of enabling bureaucracy in a State Department, especially the Department of Education.
3. Enhance quantitative aspects of the research with a qualitative segment which would provide thick and rich description of the researched bureaucracies in order

to give more meaning and contextual validity to the numerical information obtained from the ESS and the EDS surveys.

Bureaucratic entanglements increase with the growth in size and complexity of a bureaucratic organization. Typically, as an organization grows, its decision-makers are progressively removed from the organization's point of delivery. Eventually, the point of delivery becomes obscured and obfuscated. As the organization adds boxes to its organogram, each box begins to take on a life of its own with little connection to the point of delivery. This process has been characteristic of public urban education systems in particular. Focusing the analysis of urban core district bureaucracies away from the political and towards the rational definition of bureaucracy allows a researcher to see more clearly which elements contribute and which elements obfuscate the achievement of the vision and mission of the organization. Reduction in the size and complexity of urban public education bureaucratic machinery focused on improvement of function at the point of delivery should improve the conditions for teachers and students in the classroom and hopefully lead to improved academic achievement. Hoy and Sweetland's concept of enabling bureaucracy provides a parsimonious yet powerful measure of the perception of working conditions in schools.

The researched district has transformed its culture into a more distributive form. If the transfer of culture is to continue, collective memory flow within organization should be developed, stored and communicated effectively. At the same time, leadership transfer should be a concern to the board of education if it desires to maintain the current culture that fosters enabling bureaucracy.

As predicted by Weber, bureaucracy has been an evolving construct with increasing levels of complexity. If treated objectively with due amount of attention to its detail and gross elements, there is hope that urban public educational organizations can be structured with students in mind in such a way that facilitates success for all.

Appendix A

Enabling School Structure (ESS) Form

The following statements are descriptions of the way your school is structured. Please indicate the extent to which each statement characterizes behavior in your school.

Strongly Disagree (SD)	Disagree (D)	Undecided (U)	Agree (A)	Strongly Agree (SA)
1	2	3	4	5

Record your response by circling the appropriate number beside the statement.

	SD	D	U	A	SA
1. Administrative rules in this school enable authentic communication between teachers and administrators.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. In this school red tape is problem.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. The administrative hierarchy of this school enables teachers to do their job.....	1	2	3	4	5
4. The administrative hierarchy obstructs student achievement.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. Administrative rules help rather than hinder.....	1	2	3	4	5
6. The administrative hierarchy of this school facilitates the mission of this school.....	1	2	3	4	5
7. Administrative rules in this school are used to punish teachers.....	1	2	3	4	5
8. The administrative hierarchy of this school obstructs innovation.....	1	2	3	4	5
9. Administrative rules in this school are substitutes for professional judgment.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Administrative rules in this school are guides to solutions rather than rigid procedures.....	1	2	3	4	5
11. In this school the authority of the principal is used to undermine teachers.....	1	2	3	4	5
12. The administrators in this school use their authority to enable teachers to do their job.....	1	2	3	4	5
13. Write the year you began working for this district	_____				

Notes.

- (1) In the scoring process, the scores on items 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, and 11 will be reversed in order to reduce acquiescence response bias.
- (2) Original Hoy & Sweetland (2001) scale descriptors of 1. Never, 2. Once in a while, 3. Sometimes, 4. Fairly Often, 5. Always, have been changed in order to avoid absolute descriptors of "never" and "always."

Appendix B

Enabling District Structure (EDS) Form

The following statements are descriptions of the way your district is structured. Please indicate the extent to which each statement characterizes behavior in your district.

Strongly Disagree (SD)	Disagree (D)	Undecided (U)	Agree (A)	Strongly Agree (SA)
1	2	3	4	5

Record your response by circling the appropriate number beside the statement.

	SD	D	U	A	SA
1. Administrative rules in this district enable authentic communication between teachers and administrators.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. In this district red tape is problem.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. The administrative hierarchy of this district enables teachers to do their job.....	1	2	3	4	5
4. The administrative hierarchy obstructs student achievement.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. Administrative rules help rather than hinder.....	1	2	3	4	5
6. The administrative hierarchy of this district facilitates the mission of each school.....	1	2	3	4	5
7. Administrative rules in this district are used to punish teachers.....	1	2	3	4	5
8. The administrative hierarchy of this district obstructs innovation.....	1	2	3	4	5
9. Administrative rules in this district are substitutes for professional judgment.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Administrative rules in this district are guides to solutions rather than rigid procedures.....	1	2	3	4	5
11. In this district the authority of the superintendent is used to undermine teachers.....	1	2	3	4	5
12. The administrators in this district use their authority to enable teachers to do their job.....	1	2	3	4	5
13. Write the year you began working for this district	_____				

Notes.

- (1) In the scoring process, the scores on items 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, and 11 will be reversed in order to reduce acquiescence response bias.
- (2) Original Hoy & Sweetland (2001) scale descriptors of 1. Never, 2. Once in a while, 3. Sometimes, 4. Fairly Often, 5. Always, have been changed in order to avoid absolute descriptors of "never" and "always."

Appendix C

Formalization Interview Guide

Thank you for participating in this interview. It is my understanding that you have voluntarily consented to be interviewed without any coercion or pressure. You may refuse answering any question or stop the interview at any time.

The **purpose** of this interview is to gather information about the district. It will be used to produce an account of how district administrators understand the role of bureaucracy in the district and how they apply this knowledge in the shaping of the district's organization. The intention is to understand the dynamic and complex process that has shaped the present organizational form of the district. Individual names and functions of the respondents are not the focus of this research and will be kept confidential.

The questions will mainly ask about your perception of how, and why the district is organized the way it is. Since individuals and organizations constantly undergo change, it is important that we talk about the district as it is now. Some of the questions will ask your perception of whether and when you noticed change in the district's philosophy, direction, or structure. After you have answered the questions, you will be asked to fill out a one page survey to complete this interview.

Please read the questions that I will ask and let me know when you are ready to begin. For every question, please identify supporting documents.

1. Does the district have a vision and/or mission statement? If the answer is "yes," describe the statements and explain how the district has shaped its organization in order to realize the vision and mission. If "no," what do you see as the district's vision?
2. Describe your perception of how the policies and procedures are being made in the district and who the key decision makers are.
3. Explain how much control the central office has over schools and how it is manifested.
4. In your opinion, how does the district address change and at what point are schools involved in the change process?
5. What are the organizational consequences of not following directions at different levels?
6. How does the district address mistakes at different levels of the organization?
7. Have you noticed any changes in the philosophy of the district during your tenure? If yes, when, and what changes?
8. Have you noticed any changes in the organization of the district during your tenure? If yes, when, and what changes?
9. Are there any mechanisms that address unforeseen problems or surprises in the functioning of the district?
10. Are there any policies that address unforeseen problems or surprises in the functioning of the district?
11. Do you always agree with decisions made at the district level? Are you allowed to voice dissent? If yes, what is the district policy regarding criticism?
12. Describe the structure and function of the central office administration in the district as you see it.

Appendix D

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH PROTOCOL

October, 2003

Case Study of an Urban Public School District's Central Office Formalization Strategies and Their Impact on the Level of Enabling Bureaucracy in Schools

Principal Investigator: Mr. Bogdan Kotnis, a Ph.D. candidate, University at Buffalo SUNY Graduate School of Education in the Department of Educational Leadership & Policy; 468 Christopher Baldy Hall; Buffalo, NY 14260-1000; tel. (716) 645-2471.

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Austin D. Swanson, address and telephone same as above.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to measure and describe the relationship of central office policies and the perceptions of school personnel on how empowering these policies are in the functioning of their schools as reflected by the level of enabling bureaucracy in schools.

Procedures:

This research will consist of three stages. (1) Central office personnel will be interviewed with Formalization Interview Guide (FIG) and asked to fill out the Enabling District Structure (EDS) Form. (2) Teachers in every school in the district will be asked to fill out the Enabling School Structure (ESS) Form and deposit it in a drop box. Principals in each school will be asked to fill out both the EDS and the ESS forms. (3) Representatives of two most and two least enabling schools will be interviewed with the FIG. The results of this research will be published as a Ph.D. dissertation.

Consent:

In case of the first and the third steps of the research, the principal investigator will obtain the Voluntary Consent Form, which lists the name and the signature of the subject to be interviewed. In case of the second step (school ESS survey), the subjects will determine whether they take part in the research based on the district leaflet and the Brief Description of Research Protocol. Since the subjects will deposit their responses in a drop box, there will be no way for anyone, including the principal investigator, to determine the identity of any individual subject in this part of the research.

Subjects:

The subjects are central office administrators, school administrators and teachers in a public school district in Western New York who are currently employed or were employed in the district. This research consists of three steps. Each step has its source of subjects. In the first step, the organizational chart of the district will be used to identify key decision makers. Based on their responses, snowballing will be used to identify other decision makers. Each will be asked to respond to the Formalization Interview Guide (FIG) and the Enabling District Structure (EDS) survey. In the second step, all teachers and administrators in all schools of the district will be asked to respond to the Enabling School Structure (ESS) survey. Principals will be asked to respond to EDS as well. In the third step, based on the responses to the ESS survey, principals and other school decision-makers identified by the principals from two most and two least enabling schools will be asked to respond to the FIG.

Right to Refuse:

Participation in the project is voluntary and can be stopped at any time, which will be made clear in writing in the questionnaires and cover letters to the participants. It will also be stated verbally at the beginning of the interviews.

Confidentiality:

No names will be recorded with the data. Names of persons interviewed will be kept on a separate sheet and related to the interviews by means of a code key. The raw data will be handled and analyzed exclusively by the principal investigator (Bogdan Kotnis). Data presented in the final report will not include any information as to the specific identity of the participants.

The Principal Investigator does not know any of the potential subjects. In the first step of the research, the superintendent of schools, or his designee, will be asked to provide the district's organizational chart and arrange that the subjects are informed about the research and ask for their support. Then, the principal investigator will contact prospective interviewees and ask whether they will agree to be interviewed. At the beginning of the interview, the subjects will be informed in detail about the research and their right to withdraw without any penalty. They would be asked to sign the consent form and proceed with the interview if so inclined. Only principal investigator will know whether a person took part in the interview and what their responses were.

In the second step of the research, administrators and teachers in each school of the district will be informed about the research by a leaflet from the central office and during faculty meetings. They will be provided Enabling School Structure surveys and asked to answer them and deposit them in a drop box in each school. The principal investigator will open the drop boxes and will know only a number of surveys but nothing about which individual teacher or administrator answered them. In the third step of the research, the technique used in the first step will be used to protect the privacy of individual subjects.

Deception:

No deception will be used in this project.

Coercion:

The principal investigator does not work in the district to be researched nor does he live in the town where the district is located. The principal investigator does not know any subjects personally nor do they know him. Therefore there is no possibility of intended or unintended coercion or undue influence of the research subjects.

Risks:

There are no known physical, legal, or social risks for participants. If at any time, the participants might not feel comfortable in responding to a question, they will be clearly informed that they might refuse to answer any of them or stop the interview or the survey instrument.

Benefits:

This research is the continuation of a previous qualitative study of enabling bureaucracy. The research will yield generalizable knowledge by replicating the original study. It will add to the original research by providing rich and thick qualitative description of the district to be surveyed.

It is also the hope of the researcher that the outcome of this research will benefit all employed in the district by providing them with data on how the bureaucracy created by the decision makers is perceived by both teachers and administrators.

This protocol should be regarded as exempt because all questions from the page four checklist have been answered "no" and two of the page six Certification for Exemption items have been checked.

Appendix E

VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM

Institution: University at Buffalo, Graduate School of Education
Title: Case Study of an Urban Public School District's Central Office
Formalization Strategies and Their Impact on the Level of Enabling
Bureaucracy in Schools
Principal Investigator: Mr. Bogdan Kotnis, Ph.D. Candidate, University at Buffalo SUNY
Graduate School of Education in the Department of Educational
Leadership & Policy; 468 Christopher Baldy Hall; Buffalo, NY
14260-1000; tel. (716) 645-2471.
Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Austin D. Swanson, University at Buffalo SUNY Graduate
School of Education in the Department of Educational Leadership
& Policy; 468 Christopher Baldy Hall; Buffalo, NY 14260-1000;
tel. (716) 645-2471.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to measure and describe the relationship of central office policies and the perceptions of school personnel on how empowering these policies are in the functioning of their schools as reflected by the level of enabling bureaucracy in schools.

Benefits:

The intention of those studying enabling bureaucracy is to empower teachers and school administrators by giving them tools to evaluate the effectiveness of those in position of administrative power over them. The research provides district level administrators with an evaluation of their effectiveness as perceived by those in "the trenches." It compares the plans and hopes of district administrators with the perceptions of their effectiveness as voiced by teachers and administrators in schools.

Procedures:

This research will consist of three stages. (1) Central office personnel will be interviewed with Formalization Interview Guide (FIG) and asked to fill out the Enabling District Structure (EDS) Form. (2) Teachers in every school in the district will be asked to fill out the Enabling School Structure (ESS) Form. Principals in each school will be asked to fill out both the EDS and the ESS forms. (3) Representatives of two most and two least enabling schools will be interviewed with the FIG. The results of this research will be published as a Ph.D. dissertation.

Duration:

The duration of an interview is approximately an hour. Responding to EDS or ESS forms should take about 15 minutes.

Risks:

There are no known physical, legal, or social risks for participants.

Confidentiality:

No names will be recorded with the data. Names of the persons interviewed will be kept on a separate sheet and related to the interviews by means of a code key. The raw data

will be handled and analyzed by the principal investigator (Bogdan Kotnis). Data presented in the final report will not include any information as to specific identity of the participants.

Questions:

Direct questions about this study first to the investigator (Bogdan Kotnis) and then to the faculty sponsor (Dr. Austin D. Swanson). Further questions can be directed to the Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board, College of Arts and Sciences Administrator, Christian Marks, Ph. D. at 515 Capen Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260; tel. (716) 645-3321; e-mail: marks@research.buffalo.edu.

Right to Refuse:

You do not have to join this or any research study. If you do join, and later change your mind, you may quit at any time, or skip any question. You also have the right to withdraw own data at the end of the session or later. If you refuse to join the study, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

You may request a copy of the consent form and keep it for your records.

I have read and understood the above information. My questions have been answered. I agree to participate in this research.

I give consent to be audiotaped during this study (check one of the two options below):

_____Yes _____No

Date: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix F

LIST OF DISTRICT DOCUMENTS

Doc. 1

Board Policy Manual, approved 9/4/75, last updated 8/19/02, 542 page three ring binder.

Doc. 2

Budget Proposal for 2002-2003, 23 bound pages.

Doc. 3

General Fund Budget 2003-2004, 54 bound pages.

Doc. 4

Certified Staffing, approved 5/19/03, 2 page summary.

Doc. 5

Staffing Projections for 03-04, updated 9/25/03 for a Board Meeting, 17 page report.

Doc. 6

Strategic Goals of the District, brochure published in 1996, 13 bound pages.

Doc. 7

Chart of Organizational Functions and Levels of Responsibilities, 1990, one page.

Doc. 8

Administrative Organization Chart, 1994/95, one page.

Doc. 9

Total Quality Management Process, prepared by the Office of Human Resources after 1/26/94, 7 page memorandum.

Doc. 10

Instructional Planning Group Committee Status Reports, to the Board of Education, 1/15/04, 13 page report.

Doc. 11

List of Committees Comprising Instructional Planning Group, 10/23/03, two page memorandum.

Doc. 12

Instructional Planning Group Initiatives, 10/31/03, 5 page memorandum.

Doc. 13

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Committee Report to the Superintendent, 3/26/03, 27 pages.

Doc. 14

District Curriculum Cycle, 2003, 13 page memorandum,

Doc. 15

Technology Plan May 2002—May 2007, prepared by the District Technology Committee, 61 page brochure.

Doc. 16

Agreement with the Western New York Broadcasting Association (WNED) regarding Lifelong Digital Learning Services including Video Streaming, the Administrators' Meeting of 2/9/04, 8 page memorandum.

Doc. 17

Safe School Helpline: confidential means of reporting unsafe conditions, the Administrators' Meeting of 2/9/04, 4 page memorandum.

Doc. 18

School Quality Council Charter, established May 1997, revised October 2003, 3 pages memorandum.

Doc. 19

Preliminary Proposal to the School Quality Council Form, revised 10/28/03, 3 pages.

Doc. 20

Survey of Empowerment Trust, and Cooperation, 12/3/03, 9 pages.

Doc. 21

The Good School Tool, a survey rating schools, last revised 3/01/01, 13 pages.

Doc. 22

Presentation regarding Good School Tool prepared for March 24-27, 2001 National School Board Association 6th Annual Conference in San Diego, CA, 17 pages.

Doc. 23

Parent—Student High School Handbook 2003—2004, 34 page brochure.

Doc. 24

District Code of Conduct, August 2001, 50 page brochure.

Doc. 25

The List of central office and School Administrators and TSAs for 2003/04, one page memorandum

Doc. 26

The Good School Tool, a survey rating schools, last revised 12/09/99, 13 pages

Doc. 27

The Performance Improvement Team (PIT), a brochure explaining the mission of PIT, Aug. 2000, one page.

Doc. 28

Power Point presentation explaining the role and function of the Performance Improvement Team, August 2000, 6 pages.

Doc. 29

Summary of the School District Survey of Empowerment, Trust, and Cooperation, a memorandum explaining the process of creating the survey and the preliminary data, July 21, 1998, 25 pages.

Doc. 30

Proposed Activities to Attain Strategic Goal IV, information sheet, September 14, 1998, one page.

Doc. 31

Our Schools, district newsletter, November 2003, 4 pages.

Doc. 32

Continuous Improvement Planning Template, steps from identification of a problem, approach taken and results, year 2000, one page

Doc. 33

New York State District Report Card Comprehensive Information Report, 2002—2003, 15 pages.

Doc. 34

Basic Educational Data System (BEDS) Personnel Master File, 2001-2002

Doc. 35

The Administrative and Supervisory Council Contract: Effective July 1, 2003, Expiring June 30, 2006, a brochure, 30 pages.

Doc. 36

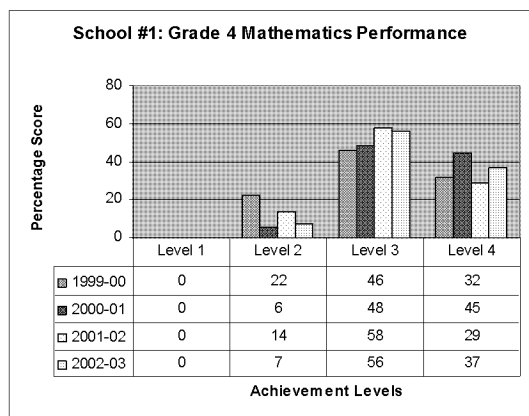
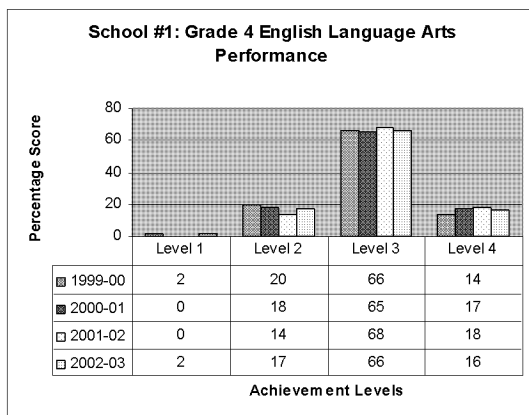
Agreement between the Board of Education and the Classified Administrators and Supervisors, 2003-2006, a brochure, 33 pages.

Appendix G

Overview of Schools' Performance on State Assessments with the Performance of Corresponding Similar Schools Group (SSG)

School #1

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

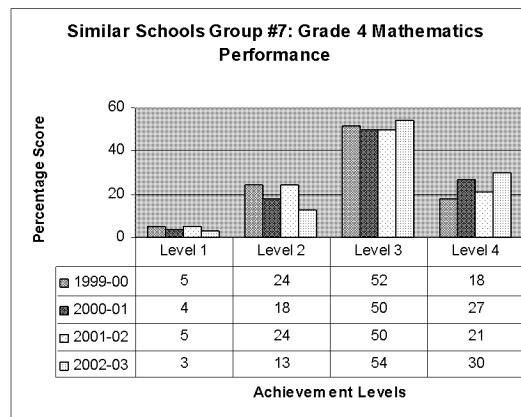
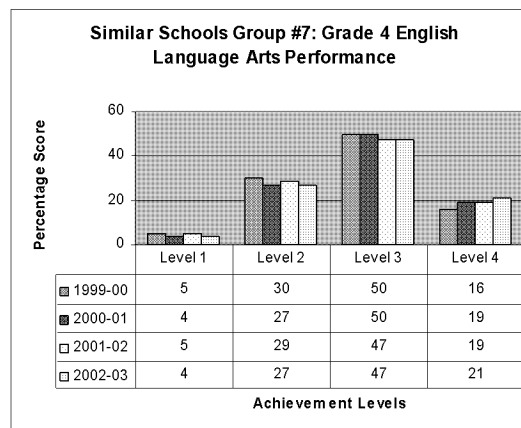
Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Similar Schools Group #7

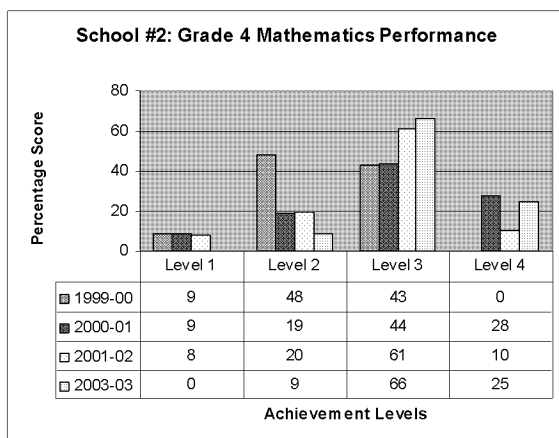
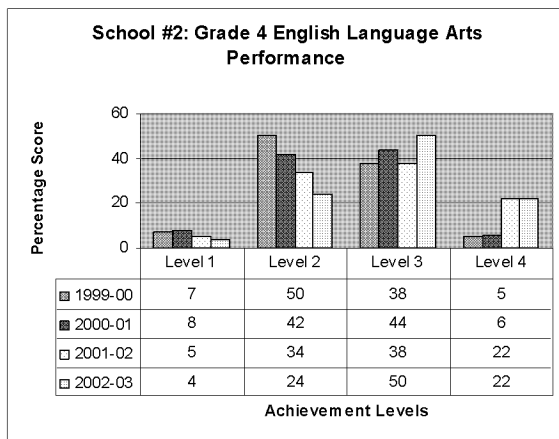
Overview of Academic Performance



Note. District schools included in SSG #7 are schools #1, 7, and 9.

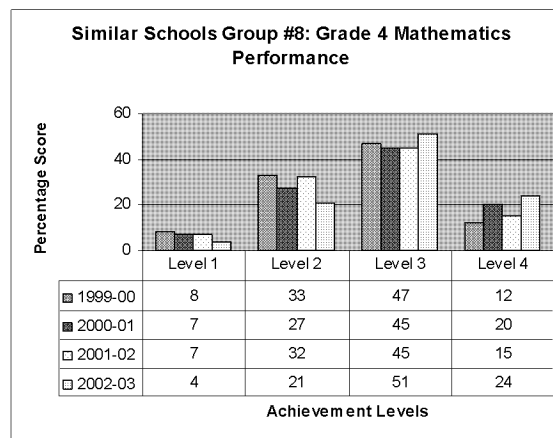
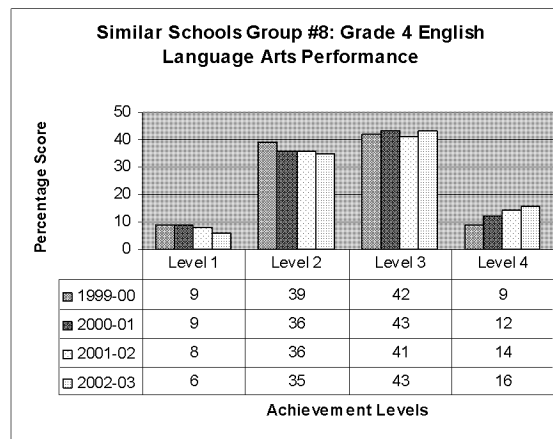
Schools #2

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #8

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

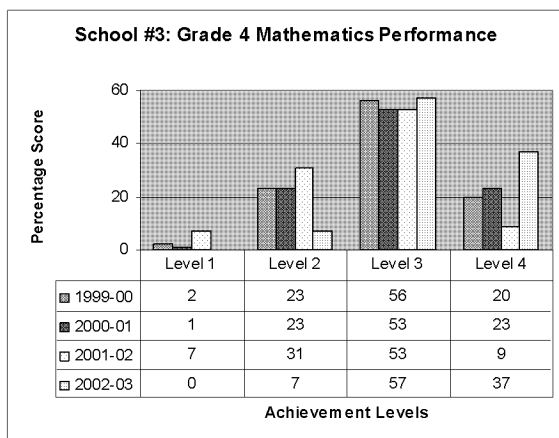
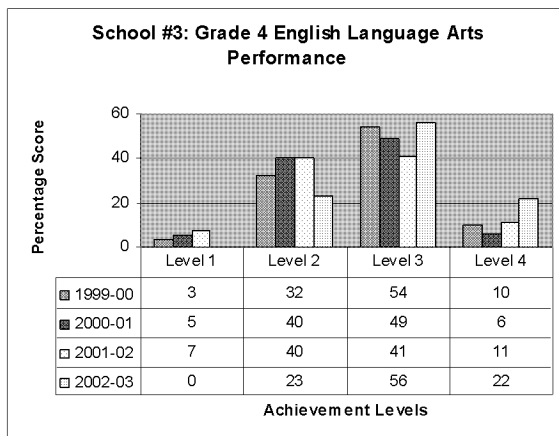
Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Note. District schools included in SSG #8 are school #2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9.

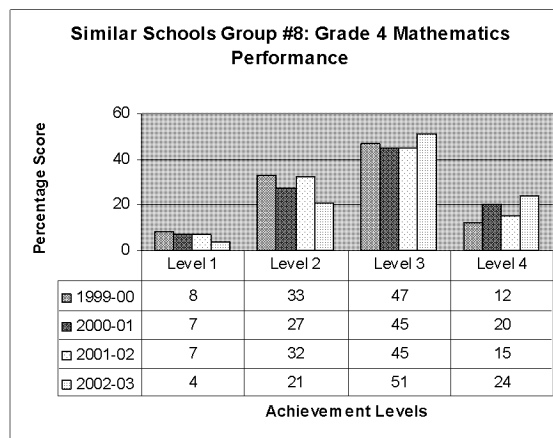
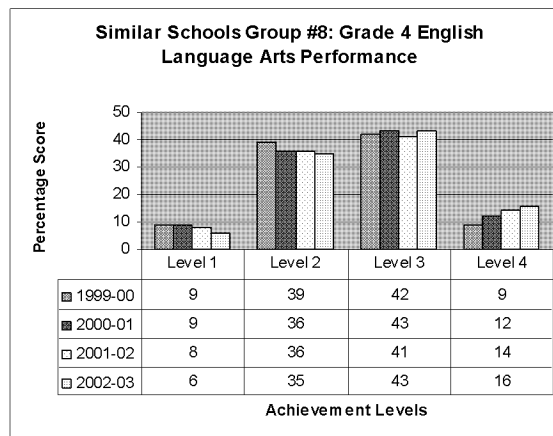
Schools #3

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #8

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

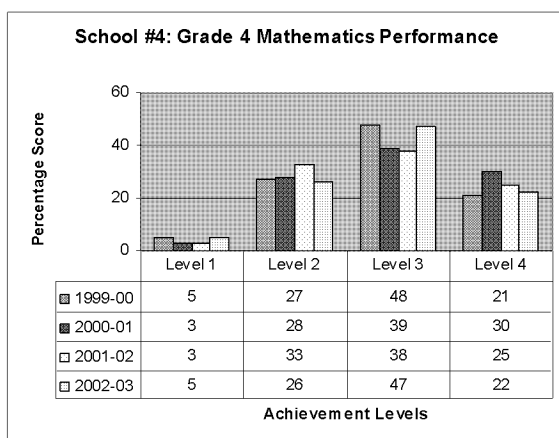
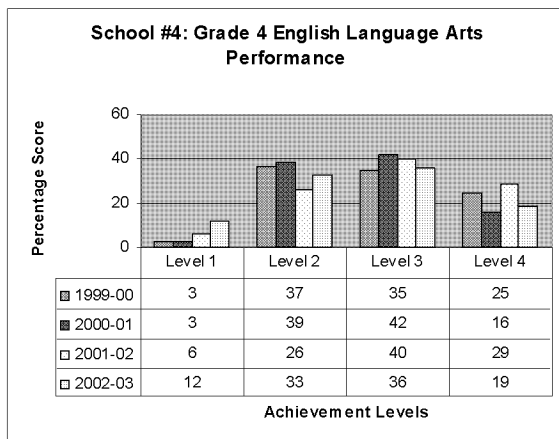
Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Note. District schools included in SSG #8 are school #2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9.

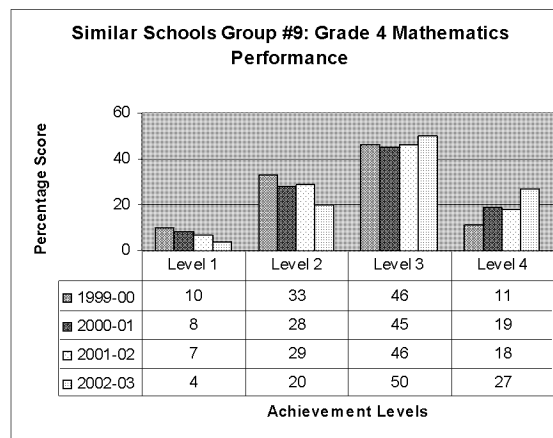
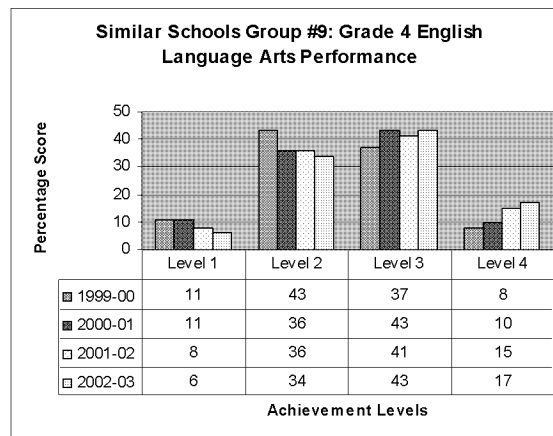
Schools #4

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #9

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

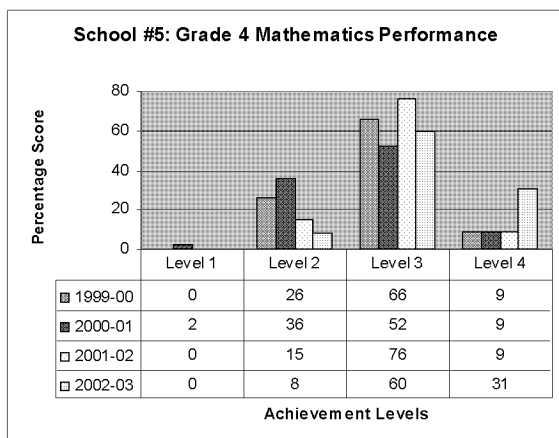
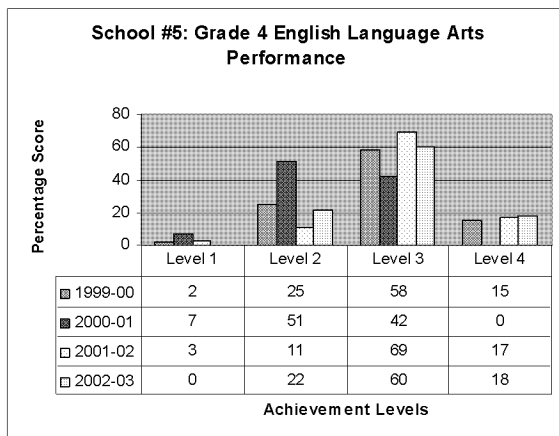
Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Note. School #4 is the only school in the district included in SSG #9.

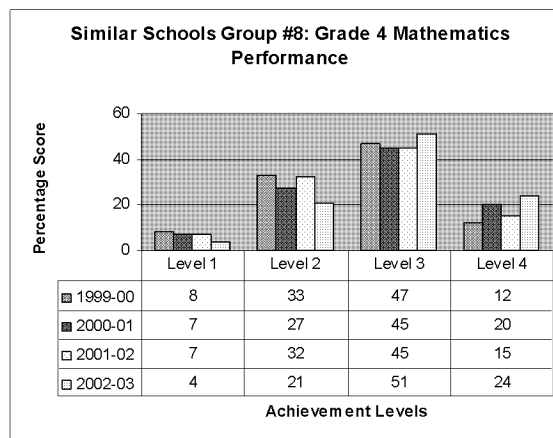
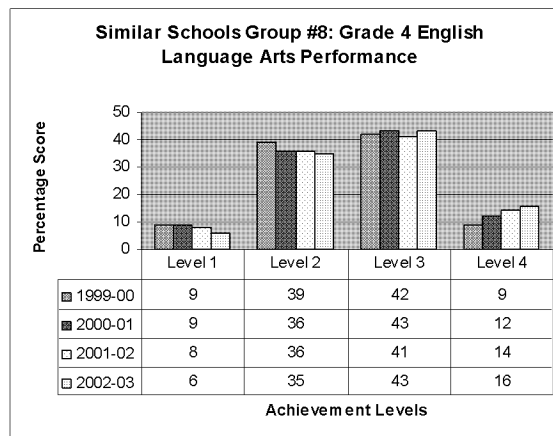
Schools #5

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #8

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

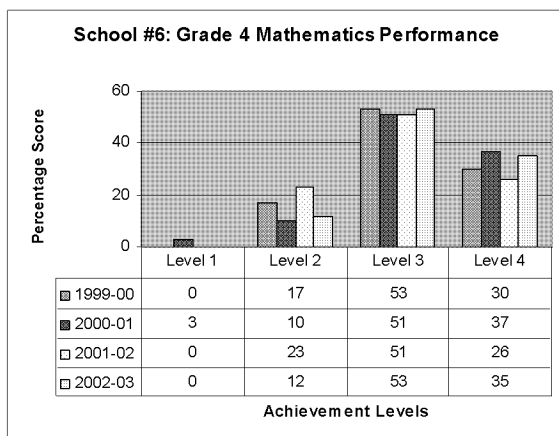
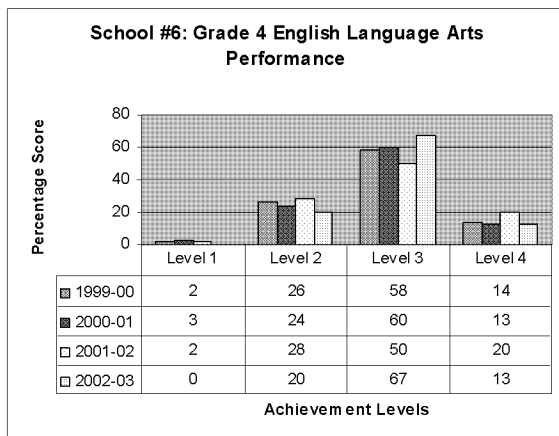
Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Note. District schools included in SSG #8 are school #2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9.

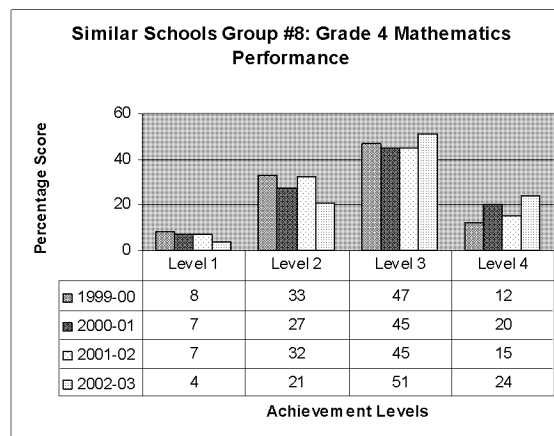
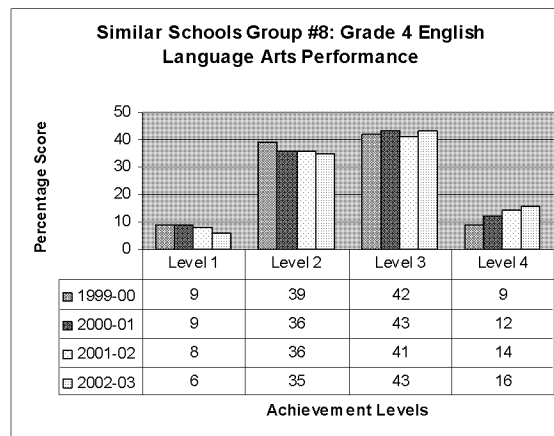
Schools #6

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #8

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

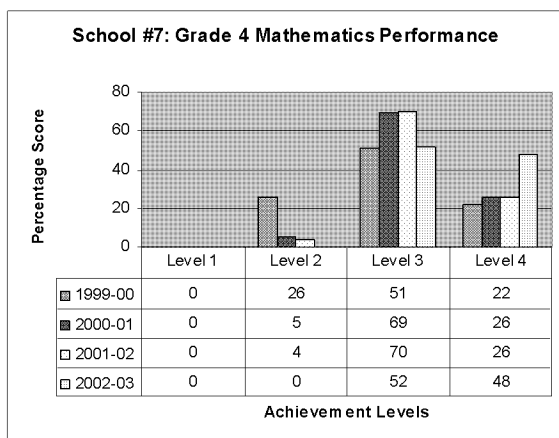
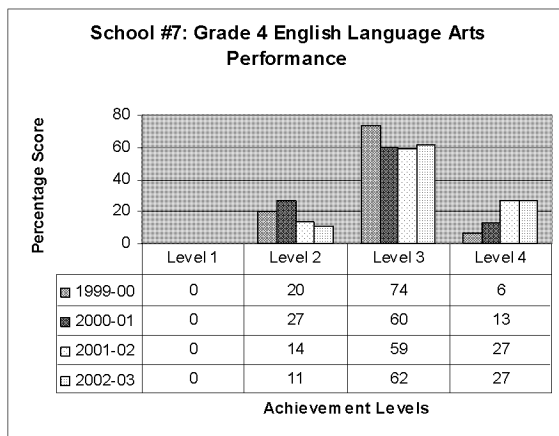
Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Note. District schools included in SSG #8 are school #2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9.

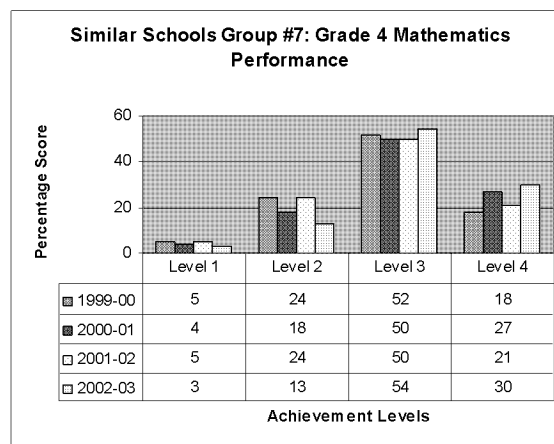
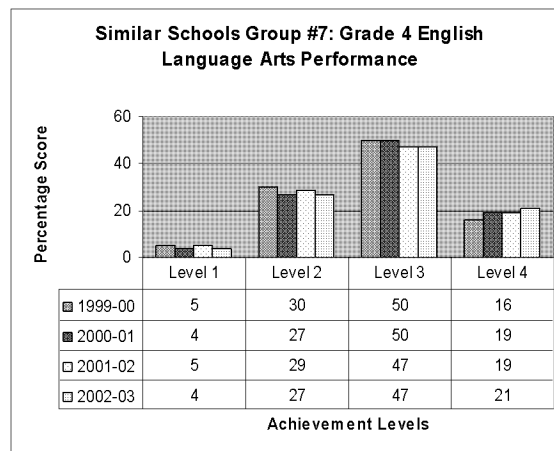
Schools #7

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #7

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

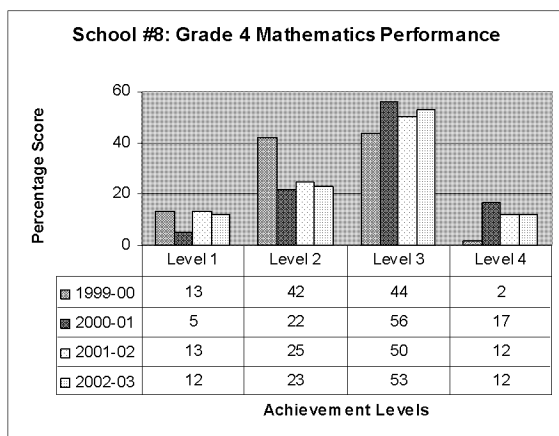
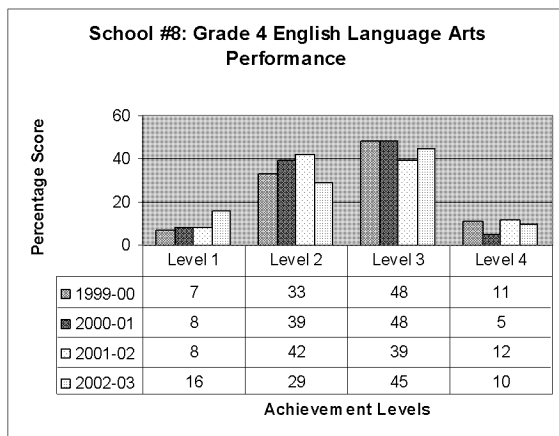
Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Note. District schools included in SSG #7 are schools #1, 7, and 9.

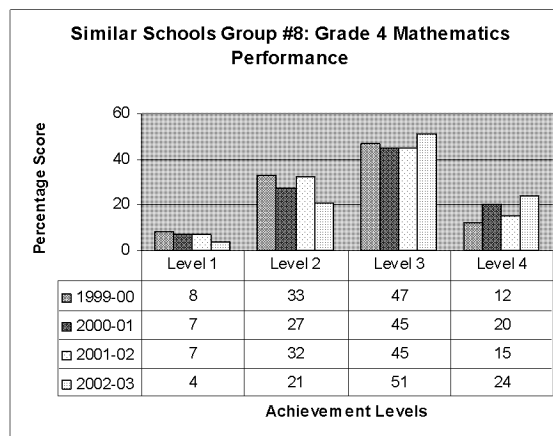
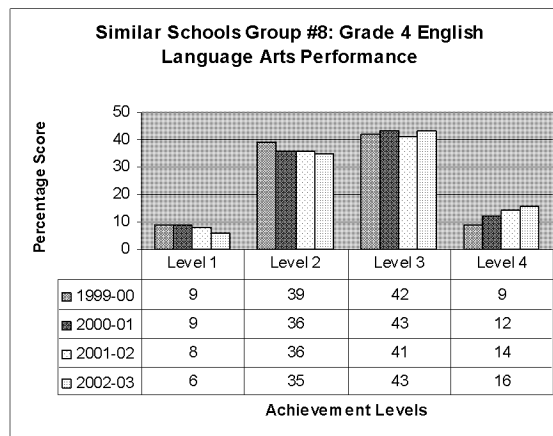
Schools #8

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #8

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

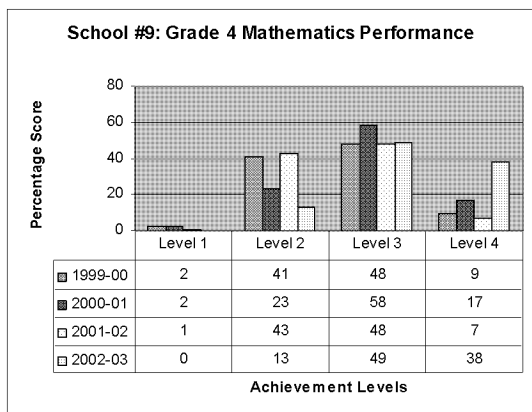
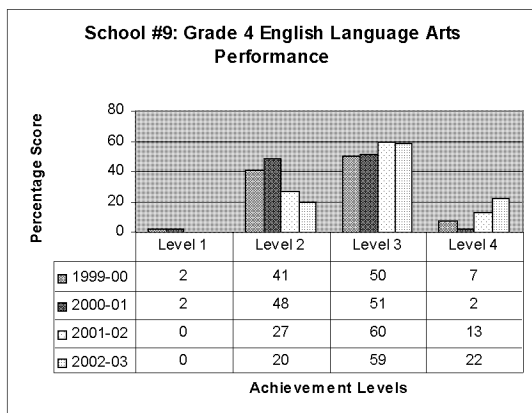
Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Note. District schools included in SSG #8 are school #2, 3, 5, 6, and 8.

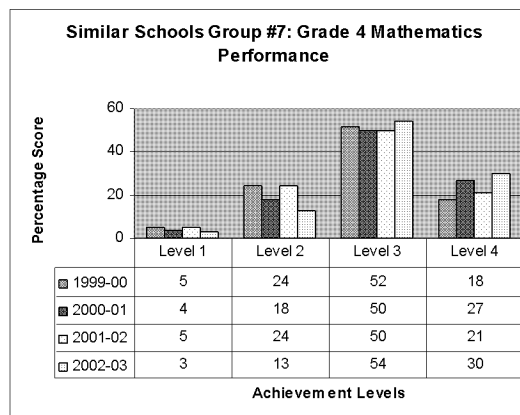
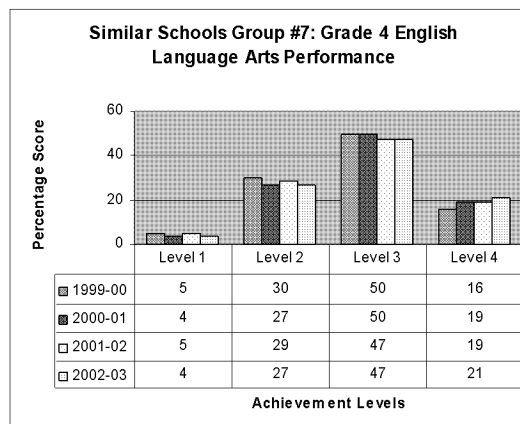
Schools #9

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #7

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

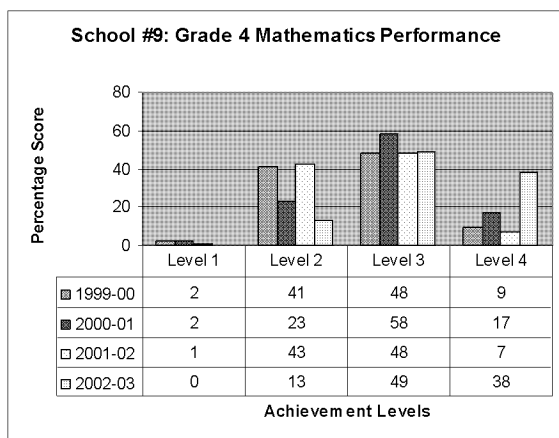
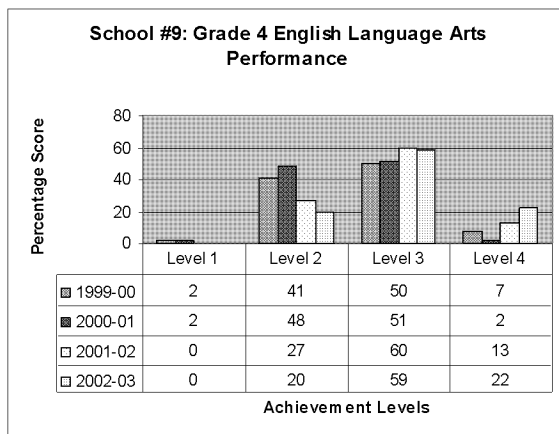
These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

School #9 is repeated on the next page to enable comparison with SSG #8.

Note. District schools included in SSG #7 are schools #1, 7, and 9.

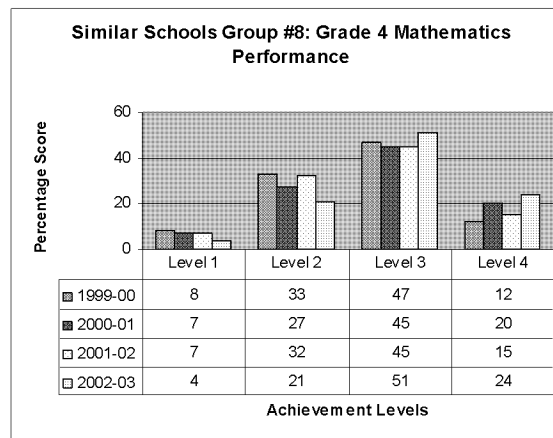
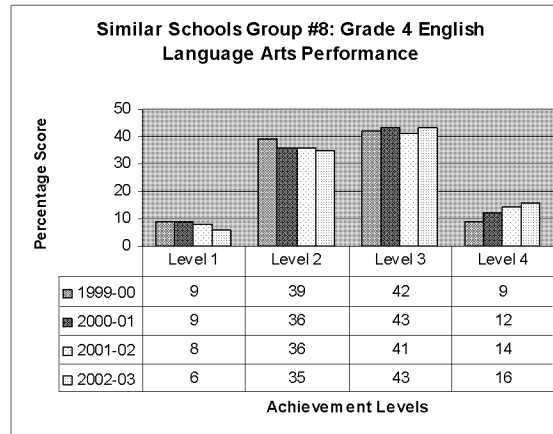
Schools #9

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #8

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

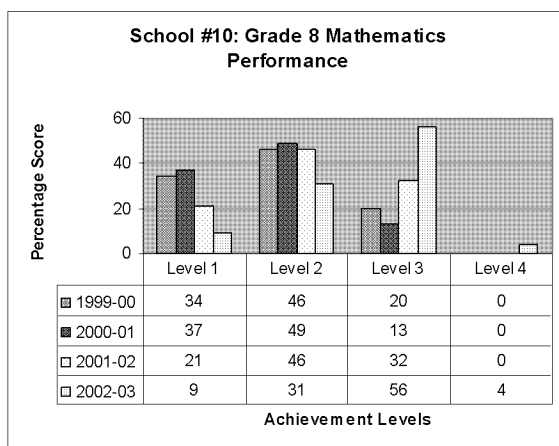
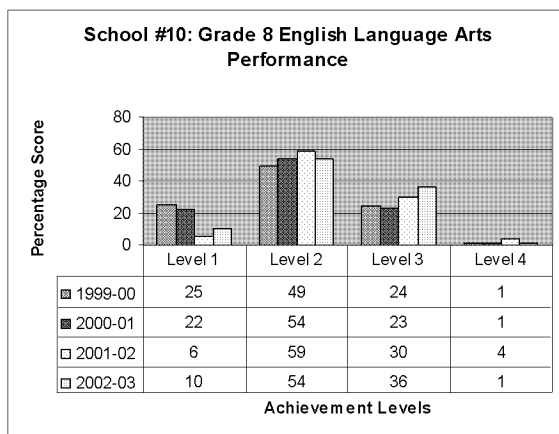
These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

School #9 is repeated on the previous page to enable comparison with SSG #7.

Note. District schools included in SSG #8 are school #2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9.

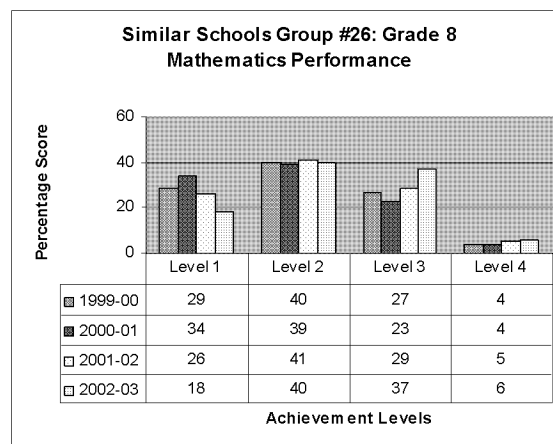
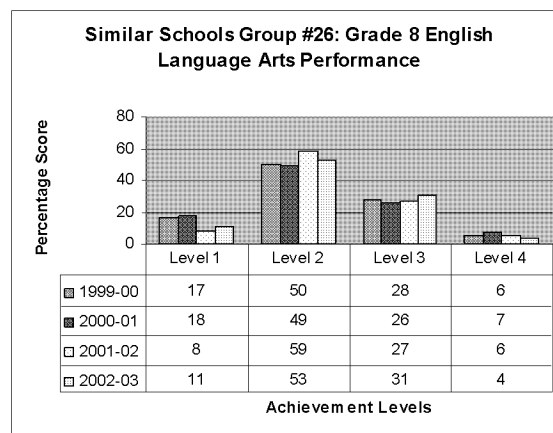
Schools #10

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #26

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

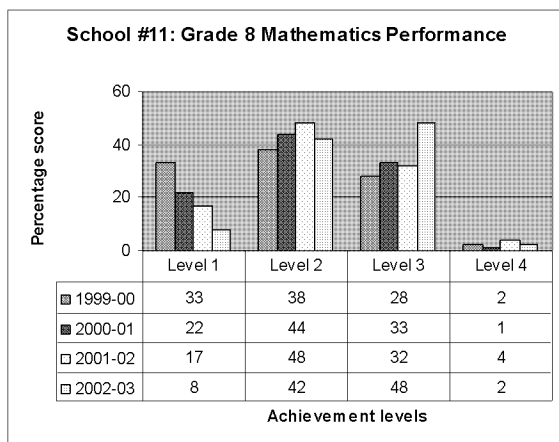
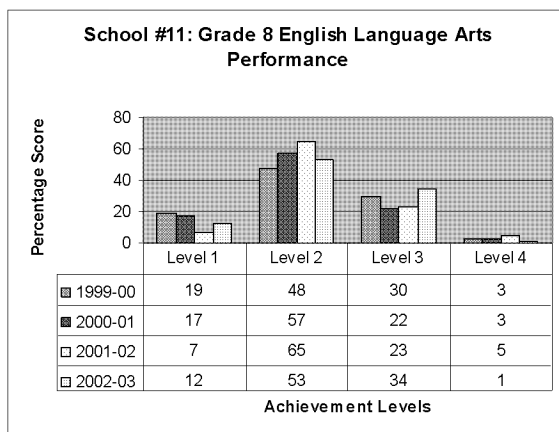
Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Note. Schools included in SSG #26 are school #10, 11, and 12.

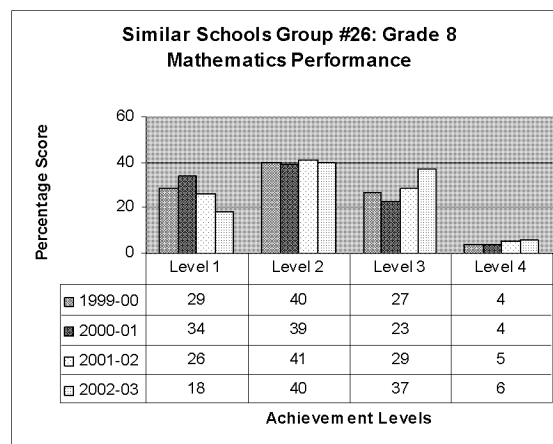
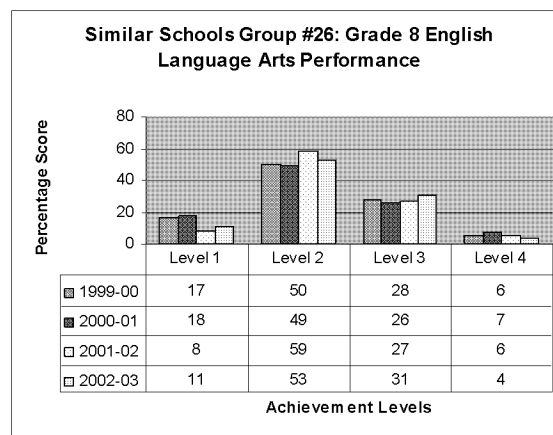
Schools #11

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #26

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

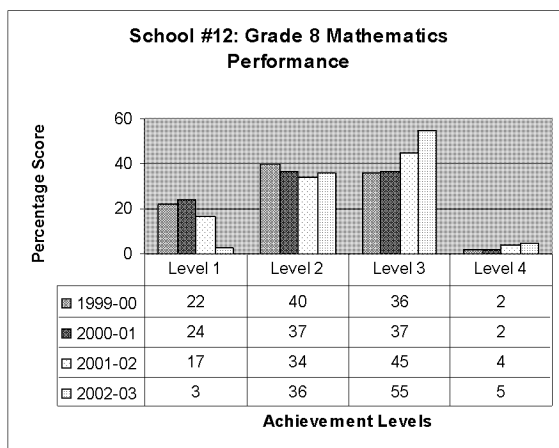
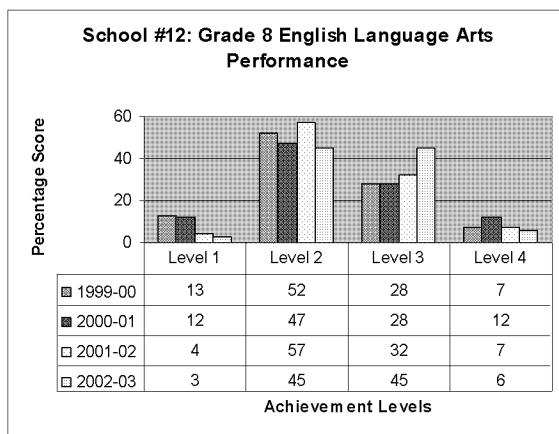
Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Note. Schools included in SSG #26 are school #10, 11, and 12.

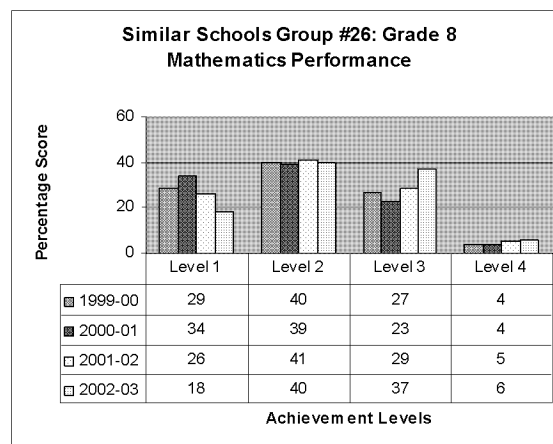
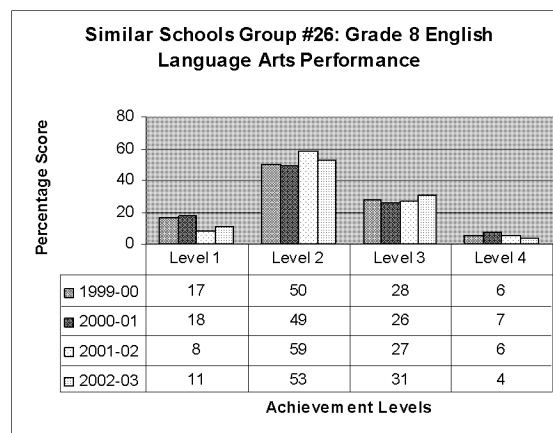
Schools #12

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #26

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

Level 4: These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high performance on the Regents examination.

Level 3: These students meet the standards and, with continued steady growth, should pass the Regents examinations.

Level 2: These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents examination.

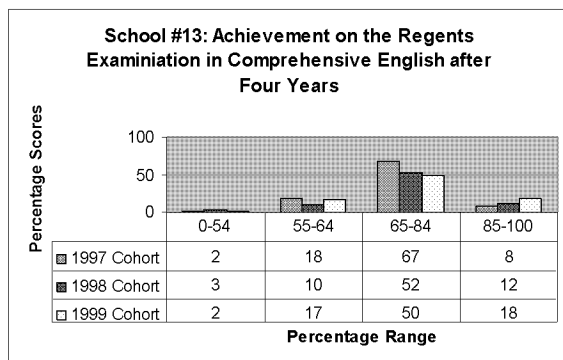
Level 1: These students have serious academic deficiencies.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Note. Schools included in SSG #26 are school #10, 11, and 12.

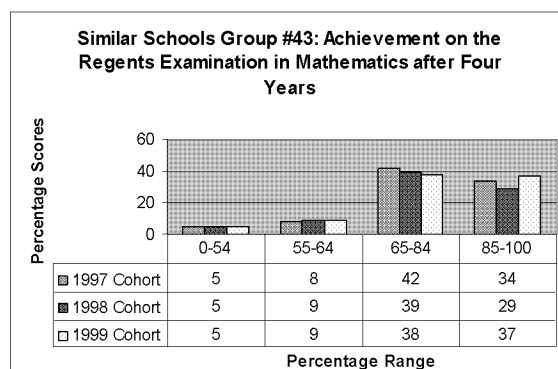
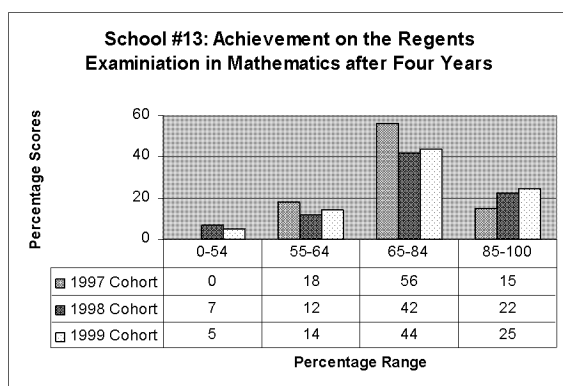
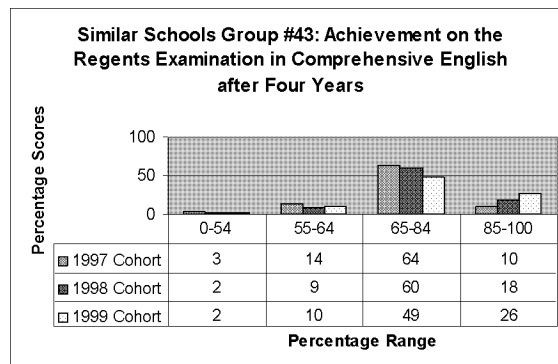
Schools #13

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #43

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

The figure presents performance of the 1997, 1998, and 1999 cohort members, four years after entering grade nine (Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004).

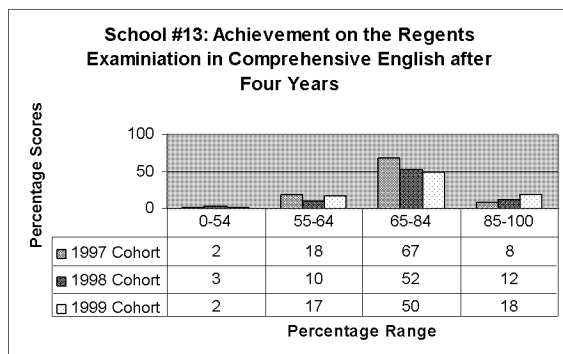
Note. School #13 is the only school in the district in SSG #43.

School #13 is repeated on the next page to enable comparison with SSG #44.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

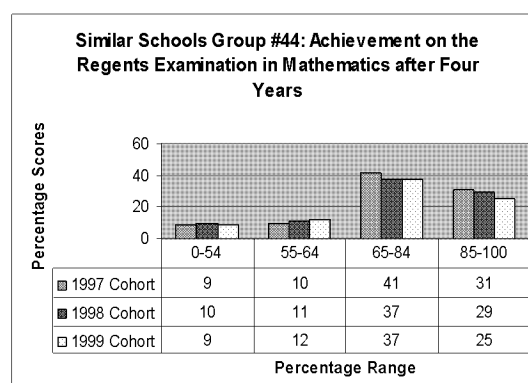
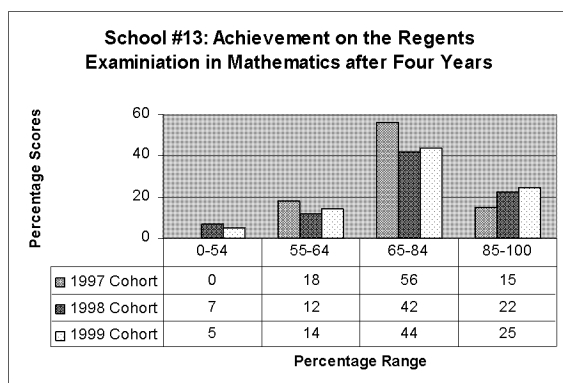
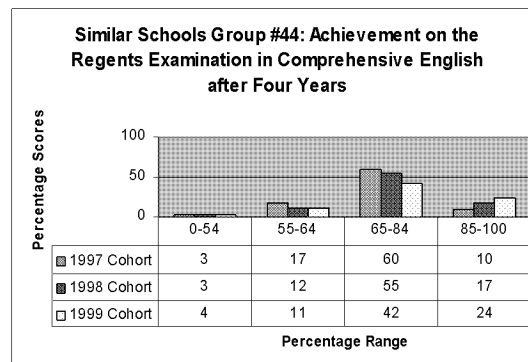
Schools #13

Overview of School Performance on the State Assessments



Similar Schools Group #44

Overview of Academic Performance



Note.

The figure presents performance of the 1997, 1998, and 1999 cohort members, four years after entering grade nine (Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004).

School #13 is repeated on the previous page to enable comparison with SSG #43.

These data are compiled from the Overview of School Performance, April, 2003 and March, 2004.

Note. School #13 is the only school in the district in SSG #44.

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