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PERCEPTIONS OF EFFICACY OF MINORITY AND NON-MINORITY SCHOOL-
BASED DECISION-MAKING COUNCIL MEMBERS IN KENTUCKY'S REGION 1
AND REGION 2 SCHOOL SYSTEMS

By

Anthony Ray Sanders

A. A., University of Kentucky - Hopkinsville Community College, 1983

B. S., Western Kentucky University, 1985

M. A. Ed., Murray State University, 1989

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of the

Graduate School of the University of Louisville

and the

Graduate School of Western Kentucky University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Educational Leadership, Foundations, and Human Resource

Education

University of Louisville

Louisville, Kentucky

and

Department of Educational Administration, Leadership, and Research

Western Kentucky University

Bowling Green, Kentucky

May 2005

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A Dissertation Approved on

March 30, 2005

by the following Dissertation Committee

Dissertation Director

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to several persons who have in their respective ways allowed me to soar to heights unknown.

I dedicate this work to Leticia, DeAnte, and Anteneshia Sanders for their numerous sacrifices during this journey. I could not ask for a more loving and supportive family. MUCH LOVE!

I dedicate this work to my mother, Ruth Frances Lindsay Sanders-Brown who taught me about the Lord, absolutely made sure I went to church, and made many individual sacrifices so that I could emerge successful. I was unaware at that time, but education became important to me because of watching you go to school while I went to school.

I dedicate this work to my late father, George Stanley Sanders, Sr., a United States Navy veteran with limited formal education, but who was a Bible scholar and a learned man, for the countless days and nights we conversed about the many issues of life.

I dedicate this work to my paternal grandparents, the late Elias and Elizabeth (Hooks) Sanders-Hester. My grandmother, in particular, always told me that I was smart enough to be President of the United States. Although, it was many years before I determined that this was not true (smile), the impetus for continuing to learn had been set.

Finally, I dedicate this work to all those who want to and would pursue this journey!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To God be the Glory!

First to my wonderful family – Leticia, DeAnte`, and Anteneshia – for the sacrifices they made during the many years that I have taken course work, which often kept me from some important events or from spending time with them, I say thank you for loving, supporting, and praying in all of my endeavors – from the depths of the heart.

To my parents who ensured that the necessities of life were provided even during the most difficult of times. To my brothers and sisters, both living and deceased: Mary Frances, James Edward, George Jr., and Edwin Darnell for the love and support through the years. To my pastor and church family, Dr. H. Hayes Belle & the Durrett Avenue Baptist Church, Hopkinsville, Kentucky – thanks for many opportunities across many years! Thanks to the late Rev. C. K. Reeves and Cedar Grove Baptist Church and present pastor, Rev. G. Esters, and to Rev. Bruce Kendrick and Moores' Baptist Church and Mass Choir. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to serve!

Many thanks go to some very special educators – some living, some deceased – who have inspired me across the years. Space does not permit for me to enumerate each of the special significances they have to me: Mrs. Grace Bussell (dec.); Mrs. Marjorie Parker (dec.); Mrs. Fannie Bell McNary (dec); Mrs. Delma Terry (dec.); Mrs. Annie Mae Archer (dec.); Mrs. Wanda Butson; Mrs. Elnora McHenry; Mrs. Gladys Sivels; Mrs. Connie O'Donnell-Beard; Mrs. Velma Davis-Jacobs; Dr. Sharon Walker; Dr. Eula Ewing Monroe; & Mrs. Margaret Ford. These educators, among others, helped me to keep in mind that attaining higher heights was possible – I cannot and will not forget! Thanks to all the staffs of the Hopkinsville City Schools & Christian County Public Schools during my time there. From these roots . . .! To *bell hooks* and Dr. Kathy Oldham Peale, *the first* members of my patriarchal Hooks family to earn doctoral degrees. Thanks

for bearing the standard! To Chris Davie and the Davie family, and to all my friends, family, extended family, and so many others: Many thanks for all you've said or done to help nurture me to become what God would have me to become. It does not yet appear...!

Professionally, I like to acknowledge Mr. Paul Armstrong and Browning Springs Middle School Staff (Hopkins County, 1985-86) for my first teaching experience and for all of the support shown during an eventful, but very successful first year. To the memory of Mrs. Ruth White (deceased), former principal of Highland Elementary School, for encouraging me to enter administration as a career. To the Highland Elementary School family since 1986 for your support! To Dr. Kirby Hall, Dr. James Jury, & Dr. Robert Lovingood: Thanks for believing and understanding! Special thanks to Superintendent Stu Silberman and the Daviess County Public Schools – few people get to have the dynamic experience that I had there with you. Special thanks to Dr. Allene Gold, Dr. Louvenia Peavie, Mrs. Marcia Johnson, Dr. Youlanda Washington, & Mrs. Elaine Farris, & Mrs. Barbara Slatter for continuing to nudge and giving me the Word while on this journey. Thanks also to Mr. Austin Moss, Mr. Terry Minuth, Dr. Kathryn Wallace, Dr. Lucian Yates III, Mr. Robby Morton, and Dr. Roger Cleveland for their support and assistance. To my cousin, Mr. Anson Oldham, for helping a non-traditional student keep up with University of Louisville schedules. Special thanks to Kay Brown and Ann French with the Kentucky Department of Education for their assistance and support in delivering packets to school districts. Many, many thanks to the superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents who make up the school-based decision-making councils. Thanks for all you do for students in the Commonwealth!

Thanks to my traveling partners & doctoral cohorts, Mr. C. J. Woods, Mr. Jason Warren, and Mr. J. E. Barlow for the camaraderie and support during our travels to Louisville and Bowling Green for classes. Special recognition is extended to the members of the Scottish Rites (Louisville, Kentucky) Fellowship Program and the Elizabeth Stone Foundation, Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Thank all of you so much for your support of education in Kentucky!

Finally, to this great committee of professional and educational scholars who comprised my program & dissertation committees: Dr. Christopher Wagner, Dr. Joseph DeVitis, Dr. Cynthia Mason, Dr. John Keedy, Dr. Gayle Ecton, and Dr. Paige Tompkins. Also, thanks to Dr. Everett Egginton and Dr. Lois Jircitano for their initial service on the committees. Thanks to all of you for your guidance, wisdom, and support! – It is finished!

ABSTRACT

PERCEPTIONS OF EFFICACY OF SCHOOL-BASED DECISION-MAKING COUNCIL MEMBERS IN KENTUCKY'S REGION 1 AND REGION 2 SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Anthony Ray Sanders

May 2005

Shortly after the implementation of Kentucky's school-based decision-making councils, it became obvious that minorities were severely underrepresented on these councils. As a result, the Kentucky legislature enacted Section 160.352(3)(f) by which schools having 8% or more minority student population had to increase the school-based council membership to include a minority parent and/or teacher, elected by the parents or the teachers respectively, if no minority member was elected in the initial voting.

Though the law required minority representation on these councils, very little research has been conducted regarding minority participation. This study investigated the perceptions of school council members regarding their efficacy of experiences and impact of their contributions to school policies, operations, and student achievement. Furthermore, differences between minority and non-minority school council members were explored.

Data were collected by the researcher-designed *SBDM Perceptions Survey Instrument* (which also included the opportunity for respondents' comments) to address the following three overarching research questions:

(1) Do council members perceive that actions of the council impact the school and its students? These opinions were identified based on responses to a series of efficacy-related items on the survey instrument.

(2) Do council members perceive their participation on the council to be a positive experience as they interact with each other during deliberations and decision-making? These attitudes were obtained from responses provided on the series of experience-related items on the survey instrument.

(3) Do minority council members sense that they are empowered and efficacious and do their perceptions differ significantly from the perceptions of non-minority council members? Differences between these two groups of respondents were examined statistically for all items on the survey instrument.

Generally, council members agreed that school-based decision-making was advantageous for schools and students. Additionally, respondents generally indicated that their experiences as council members were positive. Statistically significant differences were found between minority and non-minority respondents in both the efficacy- and experience-related survey items.

Recommendations for further study and policy implications were offered.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the 1990s, Kentucky was the first state in the union to accept the national public plea for education reform and to implement a comprehensive reform model. Historically, Kentucky's education system was one of the nation's worst (Sexton, 1995; Kentucky Department of Education, 1998), where equal opportunities for learning were unavailable for students in different locations within the state (McDonald, 2001; Larkin, 2001; Day, 2003). From the 1950s through the mid-1970s, Kentucky ranked in the bottom 10% of the states on the majority of educational quality indicators, despite numerous and various attempts to correct the situation (Kentucky Department of Education, 1998).

As a result of a Kentucky Supreme Court case (*Rose v. Council for Better Education*, 1989) declaring the entire system of education unconstitutional, the Kentucky Education Reform Act was instituted in 1990. This landmark decision was the beginning of reform in education, including a complete and massive restructuring of public education in finance, curriculum, instruction, assessment, governance, and personnel (McDonald, 1989; Steffy, 1993; Piphon, 1994; Foster, 1999; Kentucky Department of Education, 1998; Gold, 2002; Day, 2003).

Although Kentucky educators and legislators considered the idea of school-based decision-making controversial, one basic belief of the resulting education

system established by the state supreme court and the one most pertinent to the present study is that “the school is the best place to make decisions about what happens in the school” (Kentucky Department of Education, 1998; Foster, 1999).

Statement of the Problem

Whereas the mandate for school-based decision-making was instituted in the reform act under the area of curriculum, school-based decision-making councils, by state statute, have far-reaching power, rights, and responsibilities for the success of individual schools. The intent of this legislation was to allow decisions affecting schools and student achievement to be implemented at the lowest level of interaction among principals, teachers, and parents. The Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) specifically declared that “each child, every child, in this Commonwealth must be provided with an equal opportunity to have an adequate education” (*Rose v. Council for Better Education*, 1989). All Kentucky schools have the expectation to attain proficiency or beyond on the *Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS)* by 2014. Additionally federal legislation, entitled *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)*, has been enacted which mandates that all students become proficient on state-mandated assessments. So the impetus for student achievement is accompanied by high stakes testing. All members of the school community – students, parents, teachers, administrators, and others – must share and own leadership to initiate and sustain meaningful school improvement (Kentucky Department of Education, 2002). According to the Kentucky Department of Education (1998), “Kentucky

has set high standards for all of its schools, then liberated and empowered teachers and parents to decide how best to meet those standards at the local school level.”

The KERA legislation still provided a place for the hierarchical levels of administration and governance from the school board through the superintendent and to the building administrators and teachers, however, many of the budgetary and instructional-related issues that affected schools were decided by school council policies. There were times when these two statutory ideals collided and resulted in at least one court case (*Boone County Board of Education v. Joan Bushee*, 1994) which delineated and outlined the decision-making aspects of each entity. The ruling noted that school boards were not responsible for setting school policy at individual schools within the district, but rather they were to handle matters such as managing funds, property, and district-wide personnel decisions. The results of the case significantly expanded the role and responsibility of school councils as autonomous educational decision-makers as indicated by statute KRS 160.345 (2)(1) (*Boone County Board of Education v. Joan Bushee*, 1994; Kentucky Department of Education, 2000; Kentucky School Boards Association, 2003). The importance of local decision-making and site autonomy was validated by KERA, holding each school accountable for continuous educational improvement of its students, however, despite the court case, legal responsibility for the local school remains with the local board of education. In other words, a school does not govern itself totally (McDonald, 2001; Foster 1999).

Shortly after the implementation of the school-based councils, it became obvious that minorities were severely underrepresented on these councils. Senator Gerald Neal, an African-American state legislator, introduced a bill in the Kentucky State Senate addressing minority underrepresentation. As a result, in 1994, the Kentucky legislature enacted Section 160.352(3)(f) by which schools having 8% or more minority student population had to increase the school-based council membership to include one minority parent and/or teacher, elected by the parents or the teachers respectively, provided a minority member was not elected in the initial voting. This section was later codified with the existing school-based decision-making law (Kentucky Department of Education, 2004).

Though the law required minority representation, very little research has been conducted regarding minority participation. This study attempts to determine the perceptions of council members' own sense of individual contributions to council efficacy and their perceptions of efficacy, minority representation and impact of this representation on the council, in general. Surveying all council members allowed this exploration to occur.

The expectation for equal educational opportunity in Kentucky is purportedly strengthened by the legislation requiring minority representation as an integral aspect of school-based decision-making, impacting school operations and policies affecting student achievement. There is a dearth of literature, however, concerning the topic of minority council membership. Some studies (Laureau & Horvat, 1999; Carr, 1995a; Carr, 1995b; Carr, 1996) have suggested that while non-minority school council members perceive their participation as

highly valued, some minority school council members perceive that their participation is not valued. The researcher was interested in exploring these perceptions further, while also examining whether minority council members perceived that they are perhaps recruited to serve only because there is a law requiring minority representation on the school council.

Essentially, the problem was that all council members, as school-based decision-makers, need to perceive themselves as being empowered to be advocates for students, but until this study, there had been little investigation into those perceptions. In order to maximize the effectiveness of councils, as well as to fully implement the Kentucky 8% law in the spirit in which it was intended, minority members – whether they are principals, teachers, or parents – must also perceive that they are enfranchised and that their service is efficacious as interactions, deliberations, and decisions occur. This study seeks to explore these perceptions.

Research Questions

The following overarching research questions for the study were:

(1) Do council members perceive that actions of the council impact the school and its students?

(2) Do council members perceive their participation on the council to be a positive experience as they interact with each other during deliberations and decision-making?

(3) Do minority council members sense that they are empowered and efficacious and do their perceptions differ significantly from the perceptions of non-minority council members?

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how school-based council members in Kentucky perceived the impact of the council's actions on the school and its students. The study also investigated whether differences existed between minority and non-minority members regarding their personal council experiences.

This study is significant in that the results of this research will add to the body of knowledge concerning the perceptions and processes of school-based decision-making, and will enhance the understanding of how members interact, cooperate, and collaborate. The study provides information on how members perceive the overall impact of school-based councils, as well as information on the existing differences between minority and non-minority perceptions. Additionally, the study illuminates council members' perceptions of how service on the council impacts overall student achievement. Given that a gap exists between non-minority and minority student achievement throughout the state of Kentucky, information was also gleaned pertaining to council members' perceived level of influence specifically regarding minority student achievement.

School leaders can use the information provided in the study to increase the efficacy of school-based decision-making. Additionally, political leaders now

have a source of information regarding the influence of its mandated minority council membership requirement. Study findings could be readily useful in the quest to continue to ensure that all school stakeholders are involved in the education of students.

Using quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry, this study surveyed perceptions in a manner that enhances and enlightens the body of existing research concerning school-based decision-making and minority influences in Kentucky's schools. Not only are minorities traditionally underrepresented in the make-up of school councils and council committees, but the lack of representation may be affected by negative perceptions that may surround current minority membership. This study explored the possibility, and sheds light on the level of empowerment perceived by minority council members.

Limitations of the Study

The following are limitations of this study:

1. The sample of participating schools was selected purposefully, instead of randomly. While the sample size was adequate for a study of this nature, strengthening generalizability, the fact was that all Kentucky schools were not required to have minority representation. Therefore, a study of this nature in those schools may not be generalizable to all of Kentucky's schools.

2. In addition, the urban centers of Kentucky having the most people of minority descent in their citizenry were not surveyed. The urban nature of these

areas would have perhaps yielded different results, indicating that care must be taken in generalizing the findings to these areas.

Borg and Gall (1983) posited that generalizability of educational research findings to other settings harbors potential threats to the study's external validity. The behavioral sciences are continuously confronted with the choices of attaining rigorous laboratory control and thus forsaking realism and realistic study events. As a result, the majority of educational studies seek to balance scientific acceptability while maintaining adequate realism to make the results transfer to other educational settings (Campbell & Stanley, 1963).

3. Regarding term length of members serving on a school-based council, it was possible that the target group members may have been new to the school council and had experienced the conditions represented in the survey questions superficially, rather than having enough time to make determinations based upon frequent and profound participation in the processes and procedures of school-based decision-making councils.

4. Regarding survey question 7 – my service on the council came about as a result of being recruited – the term “recruitment” did not apply to principals who were required to serve on the school council by virtue of being the building administrator. Principals may recruit for the other constituent council roles, such as teachers, parents, and minority representatives. Also, teachers and parents may recruit prospective candidates to consider running for a seat on the school council. It is important for the reader to note that recruitment as defined for this study meant to solicit or encourage persons to become a candidate for election

to the school council. Council memberships cannot be made by appointments but rather by constituent elections.

5. Regarding survey question 17 - my input specifically impacts minority student achievement. While the analysis indicated this as a salient finding, the word "impacts" was inadvertently left out of the survey. It was later corrected and contacts were made to have respondents insert the missing word in the survey question. However, this was not the case for all respondents, many of whom either left it blank, looked at the next question and implied the word "impacts" and marked their response, read the question without the word and responded, responded as undecided, or inserted the word "impact" within the question. Therefore, the saliency of this particular construct may be inflated and/or not truly representative of council members' perceptions.

6. Finally, although the ultimate goal for instituting school councils was to create policies for school change that would enhance and promote student achievement, no analyses of student assessment results were proposed for this study.

Definitions used in the Study

Clear and operational terminology is an essential element in research design. The definitions below are indicative of words and acronyms that are used throughout the study:

Efficacy

Efficacy, according to Bandura (1982, 1986, 1989), describes the perception of the capability or preparedness of a person to handle particular kinds of tasks. Efficacy is defined in the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* as the power to produce an effect.” For the purposes of this study, council members participants were surveyed on their perceptions of this phenomenon relative to school-based decision-making.

Western Kentucky Demographics

Kentucky is divided into six geographic regions. They are: Bluegrass Region, Eastern Coal Field Region, Jackson Purchase Region, Knobs Region, Pennyroyal Region, and the Western Coal Field Region (KyFlag.htm, 2003). This study focused on the counties that comprised the Pennyroyal Region and the Jackson Purchase Region.

In the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, the state’s geographical locations were mapped into eight educational regions in order to establish Regional Service Centers. These centers, actually implemented in 1992, were to be operated by the Kentucky Department of Education to provide technical assistance and professional development to schools and districts (Kentucky Department of Education, 2003). Since that time, the state legislature has abolished the service centers; however, references to the region numbers are still maintained and used for demographic purposes. A state regional map showing actual educational region locations is provided in the appendix section. These two regions, when taken together, represent a significant number of the

state's minority population centers, and comprise an appropriate sample for this study.

Region 1 –Region 1 consists of the following 25 counties and independent school districts in Western Kentucky: Ballard, Caldwell, Calloway, Carlisle, Christian, Crittenden, Dawson Springs Independent, Fulton, Fulton Independent, Graves, Henderson, Hickman, Hopkins, Livingston, Lyon, Marshall, Mayfield Independent, McCracken, Muhlenberg, Murray Independent, Owensboro Independent, Paducah Independent, Providence Independent, Trigg, Union, and Webster. Only those counties and independent school districts listed with schools having 8% or more minority populations were considered for the sample pool.

Region 2 – Region 2 consists of counties and school districts in the central portion of the state, excluding Louisville-Jefferson County – a separate region in itself. The counties and school districts by name are: Allen, Barren, Bowling Green Independent, Breckinridge, Butler, Caverna Independent, Cloverport Independent, Cumberland, Daviess, Edmonson, Elizabethtown Independent, Glasgow Independent, Grayson, Green, Hancock, Hardin, Hart, LaRue, Logan, McLean, Meade, Metcalfe, Monroe, Ohio, Russellville Independent, Simpson, Todd, Warren, and West Point Independent. Again, only those counties and independent school districts listed with schools having 8% or more minority populations were considered for the sample pool.

Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA)

The state educational law passed on April 11, 1990, resulted in massive and sweeping changes in the business of schooling in Kentucky. The initial lawsuit and subsequent court case that resulted in KERA was based upon inequitable funding for schools districts (*Rose v. Council for Better Education*, 1989). The Kentucky Supreme Court declared the entire public school system as unconstitutional. KERA instituted new laws in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, finance, governance, and personnel (Kentucky Department of Education, 1998).

Site-based management (SBM)

A governance design for schools where the decisions, involving individual schools, are governed on-site by principals, teachers, and/or parents. Behavior inherent in this phenomenon includes shared vision, common goals, open communication and a focus upon student achievement (McDonald, 2001; Foster, 1997). Other terms used synonymously are: participative/participatory management, shared decision-making, and shared leadership.

School-based decision-making (SBDM)

One model of site-based management required by Kentucky statute, where councils have decision-making authority in specific areas, all of which are focused upon improving student achievement. School councils make policy decisions that are binding upon the school administrator, but do not handle the day-to-day operation of the school.

School-based decision-making councils (site councils or local school councils – LSC's)

School councils in Kentucky are comprised of the principal, three teachers, and two parents. Other models exist by state waiver, but state statute requires the proportion of teachers and parents to be kept intact. This study focused only on the traditional council make-up, as indicated by Kentucky law (KRS 160.345 (2)(1)). Other terms used synonymously in the literature are site councils or local school councils.

Traditional school council

A traditional school council is defined as a council that is comprised up of principals, teachers, and parents. Such a council has a minimum of six members, but can have additional members as long as the state-mandated ratios are maintained (principal – 1:6; teachers – 3:6, and parents – 2:6).

Recruitment or volunteer council service

With the exception of the principal, who serves on the council by virtue of being the instructional leader and building administrator, all council members must be elected by members of the remaining role groups (teachers and parents) under Kentucky law. The terms recruitment or volunteer as related to council service refers to the practice of actively asking people to consider running for a council seat or persons nominating themselves to run for a seat.

Minority - Ethnicity

This term refers to people of color, known as Black (African-American), Native American, Asian-American, Hispanic (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban,

Central or South American origin), Pacific Islander, or other underrepresented ethnicity in the school population. Schools having a minority student population of 8% or more must have minority representation on the school-based decision-making council. For the purpose of Kentucky's school-based decision-making model, an underrepresented gender is not considered a minority. A special election may have to be held to elect a minority representative if not elected in the first election. This phenomenon can increase school council membership from the traditional six members.

Minority – Influence

This use of the term refers to the level of persuasion and impact a minority group has in decision-making activities of a political body, in this case a school council. The term here is related to power and authority, in addition to the perception that their opinions and ideas have merit and value from other members of the body.

Non-Minority or Majority

These terms are used synonymously within the study to denote persons or groups of Caucasian descent.

Summary

Kentucky implemented a comprehensive reform as a result of a court case regarding funding inequities. Ranking in the bottom 10% on most educational quality scales, the Kentucky Education Reform Act began implementation in

1990, establishing school-based decision making as one of the major reforms and tenets of the new law.

Once school councils were in place, it was noted that ethnic minorities were grossly underrepresented, prompting the legislature to enact a law requiring minority representation on school councils. The law targeted those schools having 8% or more minority student populations. Since the enactment of this law, very little research explored its influence. The researcher conducted this exploratory study to look at the perceptions held by both non-minority and minority council members after minority membership was mandated by law. Using quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry to explore those perceptions, this study added to the body of knowledge about school-based decision-making.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Site-based management emerged as an educational reform alternative to the traditional method of operating the public school. Countless numbers of states and school districts have begun some type of mechanism to include stakeholders in school decision-making. Leithwood and Menzies (1998) state that, in 1993 alone, districts in 44 states and some foreign countries implemented shared/site decision-making in their schools. The initiative is known by many titles: school-based decision-making, shared decision-making, participative/participatory management, shared leadership, and local school councils, among others. This review of studies encompasses site-based management both in the private/corporate sector and in the field of education. Further, research completed focuses upon school-based decision-making in the state of Kentucky, principal and leadership perceptions, teacher perceptions and involvement, parent involvement, and minority involvement in schools and school-based decision-making.

The process of moving from a traditional approach equating leadership with a position of authority to a paradigm of shared leadership involves significant change. Senge (1999) indicated that major change involved shifts in processes,

strategies, practices, systems, and structures known as “outer shifts.” He also postulated that major change involves attitudes, beliefs, values, philosophies, and behaviors known as “inner shifts.” Fullan (2001) added that improvement occurs through an organized social learning as a result of connecting people with new ideas to each other in an environment where ideas are subjected to scrutiny.

Historically, minorities have been reluctant to participate in school initiatives such as school-based decision-making. When they participate, perceptions emerge regarding whether their contributions are accepted and valued. Since there is a requirement for minority representation on qualifying school councils in Kentucky, the focus of the study is to ascertain the perceptions of efficacy of minority and non-minority school-based council members in Kentucky. A dearth of research exists on this topic, therefore making this exploratory research an addition to the body of literature on school-based decision-making and minority participation. The following studies referenced how site-based decision-making, as precursors of school-based decision-making, had been applied in the private/corporate sector before it was implemented in various models in the educational arena.

Shared Decision-making in the Private Sector

Shared decision-making boasted a rich historical legend in the private sector of society. In this section, the emergent concepts of shared-decision making, participatory management, worker participation, and empowerment were discussed. These terms were often used interchangeably in the literature.

Researchers disagreed as to when the phenomenon actually began and who first began exploring the concept. However, the concept of shared decision-making perhaps emerged in the 1930s and 1940s with such terms as “consultative supervision” (Carey, 1937), a phenomenon in which management of corporations is encouraged to consult with workers about changes in their jobs. Carey (1937) posited that:

In all human affairs nothing so stirs up instant and severe resentment as action taken by someone which vitally concerns us and which he failed to discuss with us. (p. 44)

Levine and Tyson (1990) differentiated between consultative and substantive forms of participation, describing substantive participation as a phenomenon where workers had more autonomy over methods, the work pace, and on decisions made that affected the production process.

Some disagreement existed in the literature. For example, Pojidaeff (1995) suggested that Dr. Alfred J. Marrow could be titled the father of participative management back in 1947. He indicated that Marrow, as CEO of Harwood apparel manufacturing, found that productivity increased by 14% when employees had the authority to make meaningful decisions concerning their own work. Unlike Pojidaeff, Coye and Belohav (1995) suggested that participative management originated with Coch and French’s (1948) research. Lowin (1968) defined participative decision-making as a mode of organizational operations in which decisions were determined by the very persons who were to execute those decisions.

Still other researchers added that support for worker participation, or industrial democracy, as it was frequently labeled, was a major industrial issue in the progressive era (1910-1916), sometimes even described as a “flood tide” movement (Hession and Sardy, 1969, p 595, as cited in Muhs, 1982). Muhs (1982) maintained that historically the phenomenon typically began with Douglas McGregor, Rensis Likert, or Kurt Lewin (Nehrbass, 1979). Muhs (1982) proffered this quote:

... the genuine democratization of industry, based upon a full recognition of the right of those who work, in whatever rank, to participate in some organic way in every decision which directly affects their welfare or the part they are to play in industry (Haber, 1964, p. 124, as cited in Muhs, 1982).

The quotation was actually stated by none other than President Woodrow Wilson in the year 1919, long before the famous Hawthorne or Harwood studies.

Two major forms of employee representation (industrial democracy, participative decision-making (PDM)) emerged during the era: (a) the Leitch (1919, as cited in Muhs, 1982) approach which attempted emulate the structure of the United States government with a cabinet, senate, and a house of representatives; and, (b) the worker’s participation board (also referred to as shop committees, works committees, cooperation boards, and joint industrial councils) (Wolf, 1919, as cited in Muhs, 1982).

Lauck (1926, as cited in Muhs, 1982) indicated in a 1923 report that at least 80 firms had formal employee representation plans in which management and employees participated in certain decisions.

Muhs (1982) reported on the views of scientific management pioneer, Harrison Emerson, who offered an intriguing concept of worker participation. In his response to a Society of Industrial Engineers' resolution that "the worker should participate in management, Emerson was unsure of the meaning or motive behind the concept:

The resolution put up for debate leaves me wholly in the dark as to who makes the assertion. Is it the worker, is it the manager, is it someone superior or inferior to either? . . . there is also no mention of why workers should participate. Yet there must be some definite reason. Let me change it. Resolve that to promote the welfare and progress of the human race, workers should participate in the management. I heartily agree with that aim . . . (Emerson, 1920, pp. 2-3, as cited in Muhs, 1982).

Emerson differentiated worker participation from delegation of responsibility with commensurate authority, noting that "I have always considered the workers as one of the most valuable sources of counsel; they are close to the facts." (Emerson, 1919a, p. 16, as cited in Muhs, 1982). However, Emerson tended to reject any scheme attempting to replace the formal authority structure of competent line and staff officers (Emerson, 1919c, p. 13, as cited in Muhs, 1982).

The empowerment issue is one of the common themes holding a place in a substantial body of literature in business and management publications. The impetus and rationale behind the empowerment of employees has centered around companies attempting to cut costs to compete in a global economy (Crosby, 1988; Juran, 1988; Taguchi, 1986; Isikawa, 1985; Feigenbaum, 1983; Peters & Waterman, 1982). This was realized by organizing their employees in

work teams that were empowered to solve problems and to make decisions once solely controlled by the management (Wall & Rinehart, 1997).

Also known by terms from the mid-1960s as “job enlargement” and “job enrichment,” in addition to industrial democracy (Parsons, 1984), worker participation in decision-making purported to enhance job satisfaction, to reduce alienation of the worker, and to make work more meaningful. Further, it was said to increase self-satisfaction, self-fulfillment, and self-respect of the worker by allowing the opportunity to contribute and share in decisions of the organization. Worker participation “promises” to impact an increase in productivity and “enhance” the “quality of work life,” and to increase worker morale (Alexander, 1984; Alexander, 1985; Maree, 2000). Alexander (1985) explained that a more democratic workplace could mitigate a basic contradiction existing in American society, where our political ideals extolled democracy and the dignity and worth of the individual. These ideals, however, were compromised in the workplace, submerging the citizenry in “starkly authoritarian” work organizations. Parsons (1984) concurred with Alexander (1985).

Movement from authoritarian to participatory work organizations promised increases in worker satisfaction and productivity. Unlike the rapid implementation of participatory decision-making in education, however, change of this nature in the United States was described as relatively slow (Alexander, 1984).

Worker Participation

Coch and French (1948), in one landmark, quantitative, causal-comparative, study, considered the effects of the methods of group decision on how employees resisted changes in their jobs. The researchers hypothesized that job change would be positively influenced by the level of group participation in planning. The study took place in a pajama plant in the state of Virginia. Three groups of workers were matched by skill levels and the extent of changes in the job. A field experiment and analysis involving production graphs with comparisons of data from the group were used to quantify the study's results.

The control group ($n = 18$) had no participation status or any part in planning the change in their jobs. The change for this group was solely controlled by plant management. The first group of the sample ($n = 13$) had representation of their group in the design of a job change. The second group ($n = 8$) and third group ($n = 7$) had full participation in the design of their job changes. The researchers collected the information from observations, interviews with supervisors, and daily reports of production. The data collection for this group included hourly productivity rates, notations of reports of aggression or resistance to the change, and return rates to the levels of production once the change was implemented.

The findings indicated that while the control group exhibited little production improvement, the sampled groups' rates were significantly higher, with the second and third groups outperforming the first group. Additionally, the sample groups exhibited neither aggression nor turnover in personnel. To

strengthen the study, the members of the control group were assigned and allowed complete participation in changing jobs. Remarkably, the control group's results indicated that there was no aggression or personnel turnover. The implication suggests that participatory management may be a viable means to reduce conflict among constituent groups in other settings.

In contrast to Coch and French (1948) study, Powell and Schlacter (1971) studied the influence of participative management on worker morale and productivity, hypothesizing that increased participation would result in increased productivity and morale. Unlike previous studies, the researchers selected a setting dissimilar to the normal industrial environment, one without economic incentives.

Questionnaire responses from a nonparametric binomial sign test of before and after attitude and a descriptive analysis of productivity reports were used. The participants were six field crews (number in crew were not identified) employed by the Ohio Department of Highways. Promotions there were granted on the basis of seniority. Performance was only recognized if it did not meet the standard expectations.

Powell and Schlacter (1971) manipulated the independent variable of participation in decision-making over a period of six months, using three differing degrees of allowing the crews to develop monthly schedules. The first two crews were allowed to design their schedules working indirectly through their supervisor. The second degree allowed crews to work directly with a

representative of operations in designing schedules. The last degree was participation through crews developing their own work schedules.

Productivity and morale measures were derived via a questionnaire applying Herzberg's constructs of maintenance and motivational needs before and after the experiment and supervisor reports. After the experiment, the crews took the Allport-Vernon Lindsey Personality Profile. No reliability co-efficients were reported for this instrument.

Referencing the findings from the study, no significant increase in productivity was noted at any level of participation. Morale, however, was significant in relation to the third way of participation, where crews made their own schedules ($p < .05$). An interesting note included that sick leave had increased in five of the crews, as indicated by supervisor reports. The researchers concluded that increased morale did not result in increased productivity, perhaps due to the lack of recognition, economic incentives, or aspects of governmental or public sector employees.

Implications for the present study suggest that productivity may not be increased for teachers participating in school-based decision-making, if they are not recognized or provided with incentives for their participation. Regarding minority participation, a mechanism may have to be in place to recognize and reward their membership on the council in order for them to remain active, providing the points of view these members can bring to the council, while working productively along with other council members to eventually enhance student achievement.

Rosenberg and Rosenstein (1980) conducted a mixed-design study to appraise the effects on productivity of worker participation in a unionized foundry. The program was entitled the Foundry Co-op Program, initiated by the management in 1969. The subjects of the study ($n = 182$) were production workers and first-line supervisors. The independent variable for the study was: (a) worker-involved group participation (meeting frequency, subject relevance, representation ratio, attendance rate, discussion quality, monetary reward). The dependent variable was (a) manufacturing productivity increase.

Sources of data for the study included reviewing scheduled meetings and discussions of improvement in productivity. The data were analyzed in several ways. Indices of group participative activity and productivity were submitted to statistical analysis: (a) analysis of productivity trends; (b) step-wise multiple regression analysis; and (c) diagrammatic causal mapping.

Salient findings suggested there was a significant difference between the level of production between the pre-participation period and after the worker participation program was implemented. In addition, the increase in the productivity index was sustained for more than five years, maintaining worker participation activity. An upward trend existed in productivity. From the stepwise regression, meeting frequency accounted for 41% of the explained variance.

Implications suggested that improvement of workers' attitudes accounted for improvement in productivity. Implications for this study indicate that, at least for teachers, participation in decision-making may promote better attitudes toward the school's goals for success.

Worker Empowerment

Lee and Koh (2001) examined in a qualitative review of research various terms that have been equated with the word empowerment. Seeking to differentiate empowerment from other words traditionally used synonymously, they embarked on a discussion of the difference between participative management, or high-involvement management, and empowerment.

Empowerment for the purpose of the study was defined as integrated aspects of behavior and perception. Operationally defined, empowerment is the “psychological state of a subordinate perceiving four dimensions of meaningfulness, competence, self-determination, and impact, which is affected by empowering behaviours of the supervisor.”

Each dimension was defined to clarify empowerment according to the stated definition: (a) meaningfulness (value of a task goal or purpose relative to an individual’s own ideals or standards); (b) competence (an individual’s belief in his/her capacity to perform task activities skillfully); (c) self-determination (autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behavior and processes); and (d) impact (perception of the degree to which an individual can influence strategic, administrative or operating outcomes at work) (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Spreizer, 1995, Spreizer, 1996; Gist, 1987; Bell & Staw, 1989; Ashforth, 1989).

The discussion concluded that empowerment was not a fad, but rather a unique concept that represented a new approach to management. It was concluded that empowerment was different from terms such as authority

delegation, motivation, self-efficacy, job enrichment, employee ownership, autonomy, self-determination, self-management, self-control, self-influence, self-leadership, high-involvement and even participative management.

Implications of the researchers' definition, relating to the dimensions, suggested that the supervisor/supervisee relationship be close, further suggesting that the word "empowerment" could not be used between peers. In addition, the definition implied that a low mark in any of the dimensions would decrease empowerment. A further implication would be that empowerment should have been measured by perception of the subordinates on the dimension, but also that the supervisor's behavior could not be overlooked. The researchers explained that if the subordinates were high on each dimension, but the supervisor did nothing to empower them, they would still not be considered empowered. It was implied that empowerment was not a "global construct" across all situations, but was specific to the work context. Finally, it was noted that empowerment was a continuous variable, not a dichotomous construct, in that subordinates would be considered more or less empowered, instead of empowered or not empowered (Spreizer, 1995, p. 1444). Citing Evans and Fisher (1992), the researchers also noted that allowing participation in organizations was decidedly different from giving power.

Regarding implications for this study, high-involvement management was defined as an approach that involves employees in decision-making that affects their specific work area, while participative management was described as managers sharing goal-setting, information-processing, and problem-solving

activities with employees, as well as decision-making (Lawler & Mohrman, 1989; Wagner, 1994). Participative management, by the definition of these researchers, seems to be more in line with school-based decision-making in education. The terms as used for the education arena seem somewhat dichotomous, but are actually related since parents are not school workers, though they are expected and encouraged to have high involvement in the authority of the school.

Further implications for this study include that school-based decision-making may not be considered empowerment under the researchers' definition, although, perhaps in Kentucky statutes and subsequent policies and procedures, it is intended to be. Principals and teachers tend to retain power and do not necessarily empower parents. It is important to consider as well the history of racism and classism in our society, which may also hamper empowerment of school council members, whether intentional or not.

Manz and Sims (1987) examined the leadership role in self-managing work groups in a mixed design study. The sample group ($n = 276$) was hourly employees and their management in a nonunionized small-parts manufacturing plant which used self-managing work teams. Compensation was contingent upon employees' expertise on performance tests.

One phase of the study was qualitative, involving observation, interviews, and group elicitation centered on the question of what leaders of self-managing teams do. Relevant leader-behavior variables were developed from this phase of the study. The leaders of the self-managing teams were referred to as

coordinators, distinguishing them from elected team leaders within the various teams.

Factor analysis comprised the quantitative phase of the study, using Pearson zero-order correlations and partial correlations. The *Self-Management Leadership Questionnaire* (SMLQ) was used, centering on the relationship between coordinator behaviors and effectiveness. A Cronbach alpha of .92 was obtained for the SMLQ. The instrument provided perception measures of team members toward the coordinators' effectiveness on a seven-point Likert-type scale (1 = *definitely not true*, 7 = *definitely true*).

Ratings of management perceptions of coordinators' effectiveness were also derived from the SMLQ on an eight-point scale (1 = *marginal effectiveness*, 8 = *excellent*). Management rank-ordered the team coordinators from most effective to least effective as well. The Pearson zero-order correlations between ratings and rankings were .94 ($p < .001$). Interrater reliabilities were calculated resulting in .92 and .89, respectively. Average composite scores for the ratings and rankings were computed.

Six management supervisors of the coordinators also completed the scale.

The following coordinator behaviors toward the teams emerged from the factor analysis of the SMLQ: "(a) encourages self-reinforcement; (b) encourages self-criticism; (c) encourages self-goal-setting; (d) encourages self-observation and self-evaluation; (e) encourages self-expectation; (f) encourages rehearsal; (g) communicates to and from management and between groups; (h) encourages within-group communication; (i) facilitates

equipment, supplies, and production flow; (j) encourages group training of inexperienced employees and trains inexperienced employees; (k) encourages group problem solving; (l) encourages within-group job assignments; (m) encourages flexible task boundaries (pacing oneself); (n) positive verbal reward and punitive or corrective behavior; (o) goal setting; (p) expectation of group performance; (q) communicates production schedule; (r) works alongside employees; and (s) truthfulness.” There were two factors not supported by the factor analysis (encourages group planning and communication with other coordinators).

Pearson zero-order correlations between (a) the self-management leader variables and the effectiveness evaluations of coordinators and between (b) the elected team leader and team member rankings of the coordinators. All were significant ($p < .01$) with the exception of coordinator encourages rehearsal, as rated by management. The most significant correlations emerged between the team leader variables of “encourages self-reinforcement” and “encourages self-observation and self-evaluation” (.78 and .81), positively supporting the qualitative part of the study.

Partial correlation controlled for leader behaviors (g) through (s), resulting in significant correlations only for the team leaders’ rankings of the coordinators. The most relevant of these was “encourages self-observation and self-evaluation” (.68). The partial correlations indicated there was a significant additional variance when the coordinator leadership behaviors were ranked by the elected team leaders.

Manz and Sims (1987) concluded that the coordinator had a fundamental responsibility to promote the group in managing itself. Facilitation of group organization and group coordination was conducted by the elected leader within the group, viewed as a team member.

Implications for the present study indicate that principals are responsible for getting the team to function effectively. Differing from the leadership make-up in the Manz & Sims' (1987) study, the principal in a school must lead both from within the council and external to the council, promoting all stakeholders to empowerment. Further implications suggest that principals must be responsible for effectively recruiting and retaining minority teachers and parents in order to ensure that all stakeholders, representing the school's student population, are involved in the push for student achievement.

Blumberg (1969, as cited in Alexander, 1975) concluded that "there is hardly a study in the entire literature which fails to demonstrate that satisfaction in work is enhanced or that generally acknowledged beneficial consequences accrue from genuine increase in workers' decision-making power."

To summarize, worker participation improved productivity and reduced personnel turnover in the workplace (Coch & French, 1937; Rosenberg & Rosenstein, 1980). One study indicated that there was no productivity increase in workers, although morale was significantly improved when crews made their own schedules (Powell & Schlacter, 1971). Directly related to the concept of worker participation was worker empowerment, concluding that empowerment was not a fad, but a unique approach to management (Lee & Koh, 2001).

Finally, one study found that the group coordinator played an integral part in self-management of the group (Manz & Sims, 1987). From these roots emerged participatory management or site-based management as a part of education reform which will be discussed in the next section of studies.

Site-Based Management in Education, Reform, and Restructuring

In this section, the researcher reviewed the education literature concerning site or school-based decision-making. The reviewed strands included restructuring and reform in education; studies in Kentucky or about Kentucky's education reform and school-based decision-making mandate; school leaders' perceptions and involvement; teacher empowerment, involvement, and perceptions; parent involvement and empowerment; and minority perceptions and involvement in educational decision-making.

Where education is concerned, participation by stakeholders in addition to school administrators has been a concept beginning around the mid-1950s (Belasco & Alutto, 1972). As previously stated, the theme that runs through the nation's reform movements, including the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA, 1990), is that of all students learning at high and proficient levels.

A main impetus for such reform was the Coleman Report (Coleman, et al., 1966). The United States Congress commissioned this report as a congressional evaluation tool to gauge the effects of school integration. The report indicated that inequities existed in the education of all students, including students of color, however, the causes were not easily identified. The researchers posited that

standards should be raised, that accountability should be expected, and that the quality of education for American children should have increased quality, especially for minority and poor students.

Coleman et al. (1966) expounds:

Whatever may be the combination of nonschool factors – poverty, community attitudes, low education level of parents – which put minority students at a disadvantage in verbal and nonverbal skills when they enter the first grade, the fact is the schools have not overcome it. . . . Schools are remarkably similar in the effect they have on the achievement of their pupils when the socioeconomic background of the students is taken into account. It is known that socioeconomic factors bear a strong relation to academic achievement. (p. 21)

Since the 1990s, the school restructuring debate encompassed two dominant themes: (a) parent involvement and (b) teacher school-wide decision-making (Conley, 1991; Johnson, 1990). The underlying assumption of restructuring as a strategy of reform suggested that altering the roles of parents and teachers led to a partnership with the potential of enhancing schooling for all children (Elmore, 1990; Johnson, 1990; David, 1989). David (1989) suggested that school-based decision-making represented a new style of governance, highlighting the empowerment of teachers as a means of improving student outcomes. As in the private sector, the term empowerment arose again. For the purposes of this section, Short (1994) defined empowerment as:

a process whereby school participants develop the competence to take charge of their own growth and resolve their own problems [having] the skills and knowledge to act on a situation and improve it. (p. 493)

Among the restructuring avenues of the education reform movement during the 1980s and 1990s, school-based management (SBM) and participatory decision-making arrangements had been a definite commonality in each wave of reform efforts (Kaba, 2000). The impetus for the movement to restructure schools was the need to produce students who were better learners in schools and in their later lives (Murphy, 1991). State legislatures and local school boards advocated shared decision-making as a major component of site-based management (Malen, Ogawa, & Kranz, 1992). Under such initiatives, teachers and parents were afforded opportunities to participate directly in school decisions by serving as members of local school councils (Malen & Ogawa, 1988; Hollins & Spencer, 1990; Conley, 1991; Smylie, 1992; Leithwood & Menzies, 1998).

Hallinger, Murphy, and Hausman (1992), using a qualitative method, identified the aspects of classroom life that restructuring could conceivably influence, and then elicited the perceptions of principals regarding the potential impact of fundamental school reform efforts on those elements. A sample of principals ($n = 15$) comprised of two women and thirteen men participated in the study. Other demographics included six principals at the elementary level, four at the junior high/middle school level, and five high school principals, ranging in age from 34 to 58 years and having principal experience ranging from three to twenty-three years. The sample included principals from urban, rural, and suburban schools who were already into restructuring efforts as well as those who were still working through issues of previous reform efforts.

Using a semi-structured interview protocol, consisting of 22 open-ended questions, and adapted to assess perceptions of restructuring (Murphy, Evertson, & Radnofsky, 1991), in-depth interviews were conducted. Principals answered questions regarding restructuring, beliefs about whom they thought would be affected, and specific changes that would have to occur in their respective schools. More specific topics emerged around changes at the classroom and school levels (such curriculum, school climate, and student outcomes). In addition, a role-playing scenario was used to elicit responses from principals pretending to be members of a school-based decision-making group. The group was charged with producing strategies to effect a learning orientation in the school, to encourage student responsibility for learning, and to improve student learning outcomes. Three pilot interviews were conducted to allow researchers to become familiar with the semi-structured instrument.

The interviews lasted between one and two hours, were audio-recorded and then transcribed, and finally checked against the taped interviews. Using the qualitative procedures of coding and analytic induction, espoused by Miles and Huberman (1984), the data were analyzed to develop the reported themes: conceptions of restructuring, potential impact of restructuring, and changes at the classroom and school levels.

Interestingly, there were no observed differences in responses concerning demographics (level of schooling, geographic location, district contexts, or years of principals' experience).

Under the heading *Conceptions of Restructuring*, the salient results of the study indicated that eleven of fifteen principals responded that shared decision-making was a good idea, envisioning it as leading to increased ownership of teachers and school improvement. In turn, ownership was perceived as the impetus for increased motivation for teachers and parents. These principals viewed shared decision-making as a means to more effective problem solving. Despite these comments, however, severe reservations were cited regarding the roles of teachers and parents. Specifically, they stated that faculty would have to allot time to participate on decision-making committees, a concern that the added time would reduce classroom effectiveness. In addition, there were reservations about the “appropriateness” of significantly involving parents in schooling, that is, that it would be difficult for parents to be aware of the latest trends in education, along with parents’ lack of time to invest, working parents, parental apathy, power struggles, and dealing with parents who had an “axe to grind.”

As for the two principals clearly opposing restructuring, they cited the necessity for an individual having final authority to make decisions (accountability). The majority of principals in the study affirmed that if parents and teachers were afforded the authority to make decisions, then they must be held accountable for the results. One comment in particular sized up this perception: “the old theory of ‘if something goes wrong, hang the coach,’ should not apply.” Views such as this were consistent with other literature regarding administrators’ perceptions of accountability in the process of shared decision-making (Seeley, Niemeyer, & Greenspan, 1990).

Under the heading of *Potential Impact of Restructuring*, looking at the impact of shared decision-making on teachers, consensus among the principals in the study was that the greatest impact of restructuring would be exacted upon the teachers. They projected that increased ownership and responsibility for decision-making could lead to teacher self-esteem, motivation, and participation, and a faster response toward meeting students' needs. Comments such as:

. . . people who now feel that that's what they want [shared decision-making] don't have to deal with the political pressures, the broad [sic] pressures, the central office pressures, etc."

specified perceptions of the unanticipated impact of the pressures accompanying involvement in decision-making.

Regarding the impact on administrators, the principals perceived the restructuring effects on themselves, for the most part, in terms of power, in particular, loss of control, although most of the principals believed that increased building autonomy would be beneficial for schools.

Concerning the impact on parents, thirteen of the principals perceived that the role of parents would change as a result of restructuring by their gaining a greater voice in the process of decision-making. As a result, the perception was that parents would be more informed, perhaps even more tolerant, knowing the problems facing educators. The most significant perception was the possibility of parents establishing better partnerships with the schools in educating their children.

Finally, regarding the impact on students, the findings here were the most varied of all the results. Only two principals indicated an enhanced student performance as a result of restructuring. Only seven total even mentioned students as beneficiaries of restructured schools. This phenomenon was specifically illuminated in the results of the following subsection.

Under the heading of *Changes at the Classroom and School Levels*, principals were allowed to role-play their membership in a restructured school where shared decision-making had been implemented. Principals were asked to make speculations about changes among the following six subsections: “(a) curriculum; (b) supporting structures (budget, scheduling, staff development); (c) teacher roles; (d) school climate; (e) organization for learning and managing classroom behavior; and (f) student outcomes.”

Regarding curriculum, little consensus emerged among the principals concerning ways to alter the curriculum in a restructured school. Most commonly mentioned was the call for a more integrated curriculum delivered in a more cooperative fashion by teachers. Three of the principals were not capable of envisioning a curriculum change which diverted from the “deeply entrenched state-mandated curriculum.”

Under the heading of *Supporting Structures*, the researchers outlined findings under the subheadings of budget, scheduling and staff development.

- (a) Budget: Principals perceived a more decentralized flexible budget where staff members could decide to allocate money for need, rather than to have it uniformly allocated. In addition,

the principals foresaw a larger percentage of the budget going toward personnel and new programs. The principals favored teacher authority to order materials for delivering the instructional program and higher teacher salaries.

- (b) Scheduling: The perceptions here yielded a consensus that the traditional school year needed to be reconfigured by instituting shorter breaks instead of an extended summer vacation.
- (c) Staff development: Staff development was another pertinent component. The principals indicated two different roles for staff development in a restructured school. One of those was the importance of training those involved in restructuring to assume new roles and responsibilities. In addition, they perceived that training would be necessary to help staff, parents, students, and administrators understand what restructuring entails, and how to effectively participate in the process of shared decision-making. Finally, they envisioned in-service activities that focused on instructional strategies, subject matter content, and peer coaching.

Concerning teacher roles, the principals identified five different ways that restructuring could affect the teaching-learning process. They perceived that restructuring would result in more individualized programs, a collaboratively-designed interdisciplinary curriculum, more hands-on lessons, teachers who

would be more facilitative instead of a feeder of information, and more opening up of opportunities for expanding education beyond the walls of the classroom.

Under the heading of *School Climate*, principals perceived climate in a restructured situation as one of more caring evident among all stakeholders. One principal responded, “I think tolerance and respect for cultures and ethnic groups would increase.”

Concerning organizing for learning and managing classroom behavior, findings in this section revealed very little agreement on how to group students for maximum learning. One theme was a hope for increased parental involvement to assist with managing children’s behavior. The principals perceived a need for additional parenting skills courses and a requirement that parents come to school when a child is not functioning appropriately.

The findings for student outcomes yielded that affective gains for students were perceived when principals were questioned about the effect of restructuring on students. One principal responded, however: “I’m not sure restructuring school guarantees any outcomes. I think that it is a result of your commitment to whatever it is you are doing.”

Limitations of the study included a small sample size and that no data were provided regarding the ethnicity of the sample used for the study. In addition, it was difficult to generalize from the qualitative method used in the study.

Implications for the present study are that school-based decision-making may not, per se, improve student achievement as councils are expected to do in

Kentucky education reform. Accountability for proficient student performance is perceived as a contentious issue in Kentucky. Whereas educators feel the pressure of the accountability system and its resulting consequences, parent council members do not.

A number of studies showed that site-based management emerged as an educational reform alternative to the traditional method of operating the public school. The initiative was known by many titles: school-based decision-making, shared decision-making, participative/participatory management or decision-making, shared leadership, and local school councils, among others.

The assumptions of site-based management suggested that the school was the primary decision-making unit, and that the addition of participants broadened the base of ownership of changes, resulting in more collaborative planning and decision-making (David, 1989). Site-based management was a process allowing decisions to be made by people who were closest to the issues: principals, teachers, parents, and occasionally students. The importance of stakeholders was acknowledged by participation and involvement in problem solving. It empowered those at the local school level to take restructuring risks on important decisions that schools encountered (Fiske, 1991; Hallinger, Leithwood, & Murphy, 1993; Lovingood, 1997; Wall & Rinehart, 1997; Foster, 1999; Johnson & Logan, 2000). No definite agreement existed regarding site-based decision-making as an effective influence on student achievement, indicative in several studies (Brown & Hunter, 1998; Everett, 1998; Geraghty, 1997; Hopkins, 1999; Peters, 1999). Several studies reviewed below discussed

various illustrations of the site-based management initiative in the field of education. Although similar, and sometimes used interchangeably, some studies made a distinction between site-based management and school-based decision-making. Etheridge (1992) narrowly defined the latter as a participatory process that shifted decision-making to the local school level, giving all affected parties a voice.

It is notable, also, that the existing literature on school reform did not relegate school-based decision-making (SBDM) to the standard of a cure-all for more efficient school management (Lovingood, 1997). Site-based management had been historically described as a formal alteration of governance for schools, denoting the school as the primary unit of improvement. The concept of SBDM relied upon the redistribution of decision-making as the primary means to stimulate and to sustain school improvement (Malen & Ogawa, 1988). Superintendents and principals could not assume all leadership responsibilities; therefore, a major challenge for leadership was to inspire and to enlist all stakeholders to become leaders, as suggested in Figure 1 (Kentucky Department of Education, 2002).

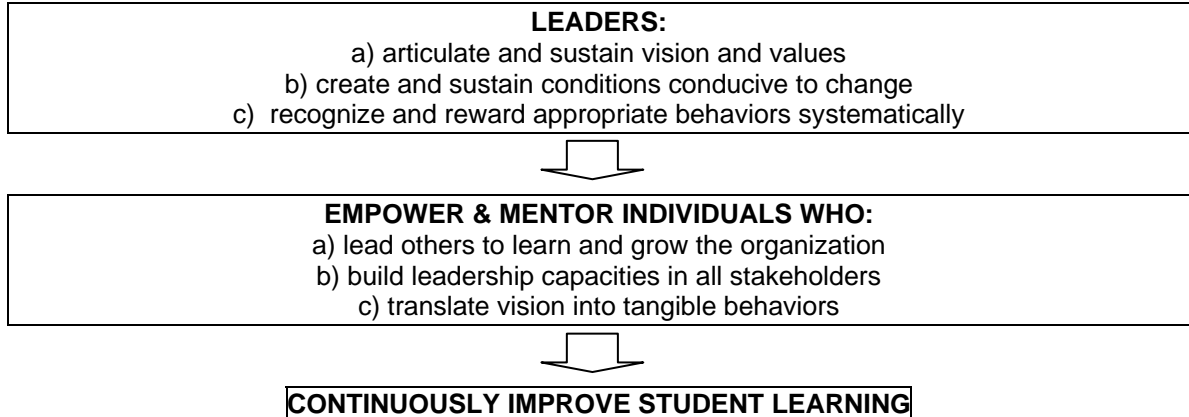


Figure 1. Shared Leadership Model

The achievement of broad-based participation by community and society was limited when the powerful concept of leadership is equated with the behavior of one person (Lambert, 2000).

Walsh and Sattes (2000) reported four benefits of shared leadership:

- (1) When individuals worked together to find solutions to complex problems through the sharing of leadership, they had ownership in and commitment to the solution. Ownership and commitment increased the likelihood of sustainability.
- (2) Shared leadership resulted in increased productivity and effectiveness for participating individuals.
- (3) Shared leadership energized and motivated individuals to work together toward attainment of shared goals.

- (4) Shared leadership was consistent with and reinforced democratic ideals that our public schools were intended to mirror.

Baldrige and Burnham (1975) examined, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the phenomenon regarding the adoption of innovations in school systems. Data were analyzed from the researchers' previous studies in California during 1967-1968 and in Illinois during 1969-70. The researchers outlined three hypotheses for the study: (a) Organizations having a high percentage of individuals with certain personal and societal attributes would be likely to adopt more innovations; (b) High complexity of the organization and large size promoted adoptions of innovations because of permitted specialized expertise in subunits; and (c) Heterogenous or changing environments were likely to cause problems for organizations promoting the adoption of innovations.

The California sample was described as randomly selected schools ($n = 20$) in seven school districts in the San Francisco Bay Area, while the Illinois sample was randomly selected, large elementary school districts ($n = 264$), having enrollments over 1,000 students, exclusive of Chicago. In California, interviews were conducted with district superintendents and school principals. In addition, district enrollment and other types of records were analyzed. Other interviews were with 53 teacher opinion leaders who were nominated by principals and department heads, 309 teachers described as change participants, and a randomly selected group of 50% of all school faculty members ($n = 775$). In Illinois, data were obtained from surveys of superintendents, district

records analysis, and the school districts' most recent census data. The survey return rate was 70%, with a usable sample of 184 school districts reporting.

The independent variables were: (a) individual characteristics (sex, age, career satisfaction, social origins, education, years of work, cosmopolitanism [described as previous work in other districts, conference or summer institute attendance, and journal reading]); and (b) organizational factors (size, complexity, environmental heterogeneity, environmental change). Descriptions of variables included that high heterogeneity in the environment consisted of high values for density of the population, urbanization, percentage of nonwhite residents, and the number of agencies that competed for tax funds.

Environmental change was described as alterations in the operating expenses for schools, population migration, property valuation assessment, racial population density, and the total valuation assessment. The dependent variable was adoption of innovations, described as extensiveness, importance, and longevity potential of the particular innovation.

Data were analyzed by several methods including correlations, factor analyses, and multiple regressions. Findings indicated that three factors accounted for 67% of the total variance: (a) environmental heterogeneity; (b) size and complexity; and (c) environmental change. The results of the multiple regression using these factors explained 32% of the variance in innovation.

The researchers concluded that large-sized, complex organizations having heterogeneous or changing environments were more apt to adopt innovations than small organizations with homogeneous surroundings.

Implications for the present study indicate that school-based decision-making, as an innovation, may work in larger settings, but have difficulty in smaller settings. Obviously, conflicts emerged from the Kentucky law regarding organizational turf (superior-subordinate relationships). While the law is clear on what authority councils have, resistance to change remains evident in school districts. It is important to consider Lowin's (1968) statements:

No complex organization can ever operate on a purely participative decision-making principle. (p. 69)

Lowin (1968) continues by quoting Richmond (1954):

Effective participative decision-making presumably operates through a subtle blend of conflict, cooperation, and restraint; not through the absence of conflict, but by its constructive resolution. (p. 84)

Carpenter (1971) studied the relationship between formal structural types of schools and perceived job satisfaction of classroom teachers, hypothesizing that in tall (two or more subordinate levels before reaching the top), medium (one subordinate level before reaching top), and flat (no subordinate level before reaching the top) organizational structures, no significant differences would emerge. Using quantitative data collection analysis methods, the sample comprised randomly selected school systems ($n = 6$) among 10 systems in and around (within a 60-mile radius) Houston, Texas, having at least 5,000 students.

Categorization of the systems' hierarchical organization (tall, medium, flat) emerged from a formula previously developed to rate business organizations. Expressed as a ratio, the formula ascertained the total number of possible peer

relationships within the organization. From these were selected a random sample of classroom teachers in each type of system ($n = 120$).

The independent variable for the study was organizational type (tall, medium, flat), while the dependent variable was the discrepancy score between existing and optimal teaching conditions. Thirteen job-satisfaction statements which reflected sociopsychological needs (Maslow, 1959) were used to rate existing and optimum teaching conditions on an eight-point Likert-type scale. No reliability data was given for the scale other than it had been previously used by Porter and Siegel (1965).

Analysis of variance (ANOVA), along with the critical difference test of the mean comparisons for teacher group satisfaction discrepancy scores among three structural types (tall, medium, flat) was used to analyze the data.

Findings indicated significant differences ($\alpha = .05$) between discrepancy scores of teachers in the three organizational structural types. The significance rating for the critical difference test (Lindquist, 1953) was .81. No additional information was given for the type of test and no F value was reported. Findings expressed that teacher satisfaction decreased as the structural type became taller. The largest discrepancy scores emerged from teachers in the tall organizations. Less job satisfaction was always significant with the tallness of the organizational structure. The researcher concluded that teacher job perceptions were influenced by organizational factors. Carpenter (1971) noted that the conclusions derived from the data analysis were subject to limitations indicative of a small sample size and the number of participating systems.

An implication for the current study suggests that involvement in school-based decision-making may affect teachers' efficacy and work conditions, which in turn may positively affect and promote proficient student achievement. The results showed no findings regarding respondents' ethnicity as a factor in the study or relating to job satisfaction. This implication assumes that teachers of all ethnicities would have increased job satisfaction in flatter organizations.

Pertinent to this body of literature was a study Easton and Storey (1994) conducted that centered upon the Chicago School Reform Act of 1989. This act created local school councils (or LSCs), dominated by parents, for each school. In the project concerning the implementation and outcomes of school reform, a representative sample of schools ($n = 14$) was randomly selected for study. The schools were previously stratified by student race and geographic location. Ten elementary schools and four high schools comprised the sample.

Although the authors did not explicitly state a study design, observation, a qualitative method, was employed for data collection. Data were collected through carefully scrutinized observation of over 570 council meetings in the sampled schools over the four years of the study. The researchers noted there was no intent to generalize to the entire school system, but rather to understand how councils differed, which differences were important, and whether trends could be discerned in the differences. They also iterated that the results described a "typical" council instead of a single, real council.

The researchers found that the typical council met about twelve times annually for about one and three quarter hours per meeting. Community

members and parents tended to be absent more frequently, while the principal was “nearly always” present. The LSC considered nine or ten items of business with the most prevalent topics being “LSC business” (council functions) and “school program issues” (administration, curriculum, school improvement plan). Budget/Finance and safety/security accounted for the next two most prevalent discussion topics. Three to four members participated in each topic of discussion, but this was dependent upon the topic. Parent and community members participated less often, one-fourth and one-fifth of all topics, respectively.

Finally, the researchers conceptualized a framework within which to discuss various council governance types: (a) balanced (active, involved and democratic); (b) limited (rubber stamps for the principals); (c) excessive (overwhelmed by conflict); and (d) moderate (waver between balanced and limited governance style).

Implications germane to this study included concerns about the lack of parent participation. In many cases, the minority member(s) of the council tends to be a parent. If the parents’ voices were not heard during council meetings, their effectiveness on the school council, and subsequently on student achievement, would be limited. One of the authors’ implications was that the mere creation of site-based management and shared decision-making would not automatically produce school-level restructuring.

Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999) conducted a mixed-design study using quantitative and qualitative data collection methods for the purposes of

ascertaining an estimate of the nature and extent of influence councils had on schools after several years of implementation. They identified the conditions under which positive contributions of school councils were made toward classroom and schoolwide practices, and described the forms and sources of leadership that significantly contributed to effectively functioning school councils.

There were three study populations, selected from identified school sites which varied to the extent teachers associated changes in teaching and learning in the classroom with the efforts of the respective school council: (a) schools in three Ontario, Canada, school districts ($N = 109$) that had implemented school councils over the previous two years; (b) noncouncil teachers ($n = 48$) in five of the schools that reported positive influences of the school council on their classroom practices and from schools that reported a low council influence; and (c) council members from eight elementary schools and two secondary schools ($n = 97$).

The research was conducted in two stages with several instruments identified. The researchers noted that different data collection and analysis techniques were employed to utilize the strengths of multimethod research as advocated by Brewer and Hunter (1989). Stage One identified school sites which differed in the extent to which teachers associated the efforts of their school councils with changes in teaching and learning in their classrooms. The *School Council Classroom Impact Survey* was developed and administered to teachers in the sampled schools, but no information about field-testing or piloting was mentioned. Responses to two of the questions from the survey (council

influence on teachers' work inside and outside the classroom, council characteristics for decision-making, and identification of council issues) were used to select the sample of schools for Stage Two of the research project.

Leithwood et al. (1999) conducted Stage Two to identify the conditions which accounted for perceptions of differences by teachers in the impact of school councils on schoolwide and classroom practices. A grounded, constant comparative analysis was performed to compare relevant concepts in previous literature and for providing supplementary validation to enhance explanatory validity (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Brinberg & McGrath, 1982). For Stage Two, the *Conditions for Success Interview Schedule* instrument, which consisted of seventeen open-ended questions, was developed and field-tested. The questions were designed to extract information about teachers' knowledge of their respective school councils, council influences or lack of influences on their classroom work, the roles of the principal, roles of the school system, and role of parents regarding the school council. Additionally, demographic information was collected. Further, 48 non-council teachers were interviewed with the instrument. Twenty-four were from five schools (four from each school) where a high proportion of staff reported moderately positive influences of the school councils on their school and classroom practices. The remaining 24 were from schools where a lower influence was reported.

A second purpose proffered for Stage Two of the study was to reconstruct the processes used for council decision-making and to identify council initiatives. Up to six council members (principal; chair; one or two parents; one or two

teachers; and one or two students, where applicable) were interviewed. A semistructured interview questionnaire, *The School Council Initiatives Interview*, was constructed and field-tested. Again, the results were analyzed using the grounded techniques discussed previously. Total interviewees consisted of 97 persons from eight elementary schools and two secondary schools.

There were 1362 usable questionnaires returned from teachers at 92 elementary and 14 secondary schools. The response rates were relatively low: 49% (elementary) and 35% (secondary). Analyses of survey data included frequency distributions, calculation of means, standard deviations, *t* tests, and correlation coefficients. Data were aggregated at the school level, before analysis of the entire data set occurred, to determine the school means on measures of the extent of parent council influence on classrooms, which provided the selection of schools for Stage Two.

Salient findings from the Stage One of the study, regarding the extent of influence of parent/school councils and associations on their work within the classroom, on a scale from -2 (significantly negative) to +2 (significantly positive), ranged from slightly above “no influence” but less than “moderately positive” ($M = .35$). Ratings for elementary teachers ($M = .44$; $p < .000$) were significantly higher than secondary teachers ($M = .11$; $p < .000$). Outside the classroom, council influence was rated somewhat higher than within-classroom influence ($M = .44$), with similar differences between elementary and secondary ratings ($M = .52$ vs. $M = .22$; $p < .000$).

As for the nature of council influence, the survey, for one, requested write-in descriptions from teachers about the nature of school council influence on teaching and learning in their classrooms. Only a third of the respondents complied in answering this question. The comments fell into four broad categories: (a) fund-raising for a variety of classroom resources; (b) parent volunteering; (c) improved communication between parents and teachers; and (d) increased parental input into school decision-making. Parental influence on curriculum was viewed as indirect and was limited to only a few schools. A small minority of teachers gave examples of negative influences regarding councils, such as council members advocating for their own children or for initiatives with limited or no educational merit. Second, the survey asked teachers to select council descriptors from eleven pairs of antonyms with one positive and one negative descriptor in each pair. Of the 78% of the teachers responding, 13% selected all eleven positive descriptors. On the average, elementary teachers selected more positive descriptors than did secondary teachers ($M = 6.1$ vs. $M = 4.6$; $p < .000$). A large [not designated] percentage of teachers elected not to respond to that item, implying an ambiguity about the nature of school councils that seemed to be perceived more strongly in secondary than in elementary schools.

Findings regarding parent-school relationships indicated that from a potential of seven choices, the overall mean was 4.21. Again, elementary teachers indicated more positive choices than secondary teachers did ($M = 4.51$ vs. $M = 3.4$). Almost 60% of the teachers thought parents were supportive,

satisfied, and trusting. As expected, a higher percentage of elementary teachers than secondary teachers saw parents as involved (46 vs. 27), close (43 vs. 17), and active (37 vs. 17). The final findings in Stage One of the study dealt with conditions associated with council influence. Findings included that the more teachers reported awareness of their councils, the more likely they were to report a positive influence of their school council on their work inside ($r = .25$; $p < .01$, two-tailed) and outside ($r = .31$; $p < .01$, two-tailed) of the classroom.

Additionally, the more teachers attributed positive characteristics to the council, the more likely they were to indicate positive influences of councils on their work in class ($r = .37$; $p < .01$, two-tailed) and in the school overall ($r = .43$; $p < .01$, two-tailed). Also, the more positive teachers were about parent/school relationships, the more likely they were to report a positive council influence on their work in class ($r = .19$; $p < .01$, two-tailed) and across the school ($r = .19$; $p < .01$, two-tailed). Further, the smaller the staff the more likely teachers were to report council influence on school ($r = -.21$; $p < .01$, two-tailed) and classroom ($r = -.18$; $p < .01$, two-tailed). Finally, teachers with more years in their current school and/or greater teaching experience reported more council influence ($r = .10$; $p < .01$, two-tailed), although these particular relationships were quite weak or inconsistent within the sample.

Leithwood et al. (1999) analyzed the interview results from Stage Two, using data from ten schools (5 rating moderate council influence, 5 rating low council influence), looking at council influence on school and classroom practices, the characteristics of council functioning, and principal leadership. The

researchers noted that interview data corroborated the results of the survey with the exception of one council, reported to be less influential than survey results described, possibly due to respondents reporting on a different school entity than the current school council.

Important findings from this stage indicated that, across the ten schools, there were 23 identified conditions that affected the influence and work of councils. The numbers of interviewees who mentioned each of these conditions ranged from a high of 57 to a low of two, out of a possible 97 persons. Five top ranked items (only the most important to this study are mentioned herein) were mentioned by at least 42 people, with three of the five being conditions that expressed marked differences between moderate and low influence councils. For example, one of the conditions was the degree of parent involvement in a wide range of activities in the school. While 30 interviewees who were associated with moderate influence councils said that parents were very active, one said that parents were not. By contrast, only 12 interviewees with low influence councils reported high parental activity, with 14 explicitly noting the lack of such activity, even guardedness or hostility between staff and parents. (Frequently identified, but not in the top five, was the extent to which parents in general and council parents, particularly, were simply visible and present in the school. Twenty-two moderate council respondents affirmed a strong parental presence in the school, while only one respondent associated with a low influence council made such an indication).

The second most frequently expressed condition was the relationship between the staff and the council. Good communication, a high degree of trust, and lack of conflict were expressed by 30 interviewees from moderate influence councils. Only four responded with these indicators from the low influence council group, with seven identifying a poor relationship between the two entities. The third condition dealt with noncouncil teachers being well informed about the activities of the council, again distinguishing between moderate and low influence councils. This condition was mentioned positively by twice the number (18 vs. 9) of moderate influence councils.

Regarding conditions external to the school, interviewees discussed negative effects in over half of the cases (60%). Noting that many of the expressed conditions were classified by three of the four tools required for authentic participation, as cited by Wohlstetter et al. (1994): (a) information; (b) knowledge and skill; and (c) power. A fourth related category was the nature and extent of parent and community participation.

The evidence indicated important differences between moderate and low influence councils. Low influence councils reported

- (1) lack of information from the board or ministry sources as a serious problem (22 vs. 10),
- (2) lack of clear guidelines as an obstacle, and
- (3) described their community as economically disadvantaged.

Moderate influence councils reported

- (1) more likely to set goals and guidelines in absence

- of formal mandates,
- (2) better relationships and more communication with their boards,
 - (3) boards were more responsive to their needs,
 - (4) less difficulty recruiting parents,
 - (5) more involvement with the community, and
 - (6) the community was not economically disadvantaged.

With regard to council processes (routines, membership characteristics, communication procedures), moderate influence councils reported positive characteristics and better developed processes than did the low influence councils. Members of moderate influence councils tended to believe that parent and staff members were complements to one another because of difference in perspectives. Moderate influence respondents tended to experience satisfaction that they were doing important work, but several members of low influence councils discussed negative perceptions about whether they were being taken seriously. Frustrations concerning membership attrition each fall were expressed. Finally, members of moderate influence councils tended to report that the group worked well together, were compatible and respectful of others, and got along well. Members of four of the low influence councils expressed friction among their members. One council stated that there was difficulty putting a prior parent organization alongside the newer school council, resulting in unresolved hard feelings.

As for problem-solving processes, several constructs emerged from the responses: (a) structuring the council for problem solving; (b) problem-solving leadership; (c) preplanning processes; (d) goal setting and issues identification; (e) ways of ensuring that all members' opinions were considered; (f) conflict resolution strategies; and (g) final decision-making strategies.

Moderate influence councils most often reported addressing issues which contained all of their schools' concerns, making decisions through consensus instead of voting. Most reported a smooth transition being made between the existing parent organization and the current council. Twenty-two moderate influence council respondents indicated the use of committees to complete their work, while only nine of the low influence members expressed this response. One important difference noted between the moderate and low influence councils was how clear they were about the tasks and goals to accomplish as a council. Most moderates expressed "very clear," while low influence members tended to respond "not sure." Council chairs received praise by mostly all of the members in the moderate influence councils. This leads into the next dimension of principal leadership.

Regarding principal leadership, the researchers found that principals played a dominant role in most school councils. Twenty-four to fifty-three times the principals' roles were mentioned as sources of information, provision of leadership with regard to internal council processes, helping to set the agenda, being active and strong council supporters, and communicating with all stakeholders regarding council activities. Concerning the principal role, no overt

differentiations were reported between councils with more and less influence. Principals who were interviewed spoke of issues which concerned the distribution of power. All principals expressed that councils should only have advisory powers. Principals described themselves as “keepers of the process.” Although some principals reported clearly not wanting council influence to “seep too far” into their schools, they also reported that they shared information, assisted with council decision-making, and communicated council activity to parents and staff.

Limitations of the study included the fact that there were no tables or figures to assist with reporting the various statistical results. It seemed many times to juggle among means, percentages, or only more than or less than methods of reporting. It was, however, a complex study that seemed to be well designed. No specific mention was made concerning the importance of having ethnic minority groups serving on the school councils. Realizing that minority representation is a Kentucky mandate, it should still be important that all representative groups have a voice in the education of their children.

Among the implications inherent in the study was that effectiveness should be defined as improved student outcomes. Limited research exists on whether school councils are effective under this definition, although the study looked at change in classroom practice as a result of council implementation. The researchers concluded that school councils did not add value to the empowerment of parents, the technical work of schools, or the development of students. However, they noted that there was a difference between advisory role

councils (from the study) and councils with decision-making roles (as mandated in Kentucky).

Additional implications for this study indicate that economic advantage, or the lack thereof may be a factor to consider regarding effective councils, instead of or in addition to race and/or ethnicity. Perceptions of the principal leadership in Kentucky were certainly curtailed under the state's concept of school-based decision-making. The study seemed to bear out this phenomenon. The implications for leadership in general almost insist that administrators make a change from transactional, authoritarian leadership to one of more transformational, shared leadership for schools and councils to thrive.

Robertson and Buffett (1991) examined the school-level factors related to the success of early efforts to restructure schools through school-based management. The study participants were schools ($N = 130$) from the Los Angeles Unified School District. Proposal requests to decentralize were submitted by sixty-five of these schools to initiate school-based management. The remaining sixty-five schools not submitting proposals were randomly selected as the control group, stratified according to school level (elementary, junior high, and high schools). High schools disproportionately represented a large number of the schools to implement site-based decision-making. Schools were coded as belonging to one of three categories:

- (1) schools which had not submitted a preliminary or final school-based management plan (control);
- (2) schools which submitted a preliminary plan but had not had a final

plan approved (submitted); and

(3) schools which had a final plan approved (approved).

Six independent variables were operationalized: (a) socioeconomic status (using a poverty score from a weighted average of percent of pupils receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in 1988-89; percent of pupils eligible for free lunch in 1988-89; and the previous years' figure for each of these variables); (b) school size (number of standard deviations a school's enrollment is from the average for its kind, i. e., elementary or secondary); (c) student ethnic diversity (variance of percentage of different ethnic groups in each school); (d) student linguistic diversity (variance of percent of limited-English speaking students at the school); (e) teacher ethnic diversity (variance of percent of different ethnic groups in each school); and (f) fiscal discretion (total discretionary dollars that each local council has control over divided by school enrollment).

The researchers employed an experimental design with a sample and control group. The dependent variable was whether these factors predicted the likelihood of a school moving forward toward more extensive decentralization. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to assess the differences in the combination set of variables, while an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine differences for each separate variable.

Findings indicated that a significant multivariate difference existed between the sample and control group schools ($F = 2.74$; $p = .0114$), but no

significant difference resulted between the submitted and the approved schools ($F = 1.26$; $p = .2870$).

Findings further indicated that schools which were more apt to move toward extensive decentralization tended to be smaller ($p = .0294$), to have more ethnic and linguistic diversity among students ($p = .0005$; $p = .0002$), and to have less ethnically diverse full-time faculty ($p = .0759$).

Implications salient to this study indicate that ethnically diverse faculties may not rush to implement decentralization or not take full advantage of the autonomy and decision-making authority afforded by decentralization. There is also an implication of the need for more ethnically diverse faculty members.

In a similar vein of discussion, Robertson and Briggs (1998) conducted case studies of schools ($n = 22$) in four school districts in North America to assess the processes and outcomes of school reform through school-based management (SBM). In each district, two elementary, two middle/junior high, and two high schools were selected by district recommendations. The researchers iterated the opinion that no theoretical model of research existed for school-based decision-making prior to this study.

Interviews were the primary method of data collection. A team of three researchers visited the districts with each member being responsible for conducting interviews at two schools and at the district level. The researchers wrote the case studies for the schools where they conducted the interviews.

The case studies were coded to analyze, using inductive analysis, the amount of change occurring in five research-focused variables: (a) decision-

making processes (formal mechanisms for participation for [all] constituents, informal opportunities for involvement in decision-making, level of parent involvement, power distribution, group process techniques for meeting facilitation, school decisions made by consensus); (b) strategic and operational changes (development of school vision; innovations in curriculum and instruction; curriculum is student-focused; changes in assessment, reporting, and placement of students; changes in class organization, allocation of resources, physical plant, and mix of personnel oriented toward school improvement; use of outside resources); (c) school culture (philosophy and values focused on student-centered teaching and learning; school norms support accountability, innovation, collegiality, collaboration; teacher professionalism; dominant school culture; staff internalize school goals; principal actions cultivate school culture); (d) individual behavior (teachers work together to solve problems; staff willing to take additional responsibilities and/or adopt innovative practices; staff involved in school improvement; time/energy directed toward achieving school goals; peer interactions generate changes in staff practices); and (e) school quality (improvement in student achievement, engagement, retention, graduation rates; reduction in turnover, absenteeism, grievance rates; improvement in resource utilization; improvement in job satisfaction and staff morale; enhanced leadership opportunities for staff; increased responsiveness to community and student needs).

Six 2 x 2 matrices (vertical/horizontal axes: high/low) were constructed to indicate the frequency with which each of the four patterns of change could occur among any pair of variables. Finally, patterns of frequencies were examined.

Findings noted that fifteen of twenty-two schools utilized effective decision-making processes, with little improvement in the seven remaining schools, although some parents perceived their involvement was not authentic, nor that their input was considered in decisions. Eight schools successfully implemented meaningful strategic and operational changes, noting, however, that time in SBM could be a factor in this number being low. Effective cultures emerged in thirteen schools, implying that it may be easier to improve culture than to implement meaningful change in strategies and operations. School-based decision-making did not seem to impact individual behavior, with only six schools having high levels of this indicator. Likewise, only eight schools exhibited notable increase in outcomes connected with school quality.

The researchers implied that the ultimate purpose of school-based management, which is enhanced participation and decision-making outcomes for a school's stakeholders, was not freely taking place. Again, the length of time in school-based management was a consideration. For this study, one implication is that school-based management does have the potential for impacting school improvement, at least culturally.

Observing that many standard practices of schools did not serve today's urban students, Reitzug and Cross (1994) undertook a study of schools ($n = 6$) in two large, urban districts that implemented site-based management as a means

to improve their schools. The study's purpose was to add to the knowledge base concerning site-based management by studying its implementation in several urban schools. Data were collected through a qualitative, naturalistic design using observations, formal and informal interviews, and document mining. Site council meetings were observed throughout the school year, while interviews were conducted with teachers, classified staff, and principals. An independent analysis by each researcher was conducted before merging the analysis to construct shared meanings. One researcher compiled brief stories for each school, while the other collated an overview analysis of the data with regard to scope of authority, influence, and involvement level at each school. Four general codes emanated from the data: (a) constraints, (b) opportunities, (c) roles, and (d) relationships, which were the framework to explicate the findings.

To establish trustworthiness, several techniques, advocated by Lincoln and Guba (1985), were employed: a) triangulation of researchers, data collection techniques, and data sources; b) persistent observation (entire meetings were observed and observations were done during the entire academic year); and c) negative case analysis was utilized when data were incongruent.

The salient findings were: a) education professionals cared much about children and about the quality of education they provide; b) parents and community members were committed to contributing to the work of the school (particularly noting that schools truly desiring such involvement had no problems with acquisition or maintenance);

c) all relationships needed to be challenged; that maintaining old relationships was problematic, possibly undermining the development of new relationships; d) an opportunity to have a voice was not commensurate to structures that solicit participation, views, and ideas; and e) the legitimacy of decision-making had to be established over time.

Implications from the study indicated that site-based management varies from school to school, and that effective planning was necessary to assume responsibilities for governing themselves. Implications for this study suggest that perhaps parent and minority council populations may have a difficult time interacting with existing structures of governance, especially when these populations are required by law or statute to be involved in school-based decision-making.

Using qualitative naturalistic inquiry, Weiss (1993) investigated the value of shared decision-making in the improvement of high school performance over seventeen months. The researcher conducted a longitudinal study of high schools ($n = 12$) in eleven states across the nation, using structured, open-ended interviews with school staff (administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, and librarians). A total of 193 interviews was conducted over a time period of two and one-half years. Half of the purposive sample had implemented site-based management while the other half were run in the traditional principal-led style of management.

The investigation focused upon two claims of improved student performance under shared decision-making: (a) that shared decision-making

focused attention on issues of student performance, and (b) that the decisions [site councils] made were innovative and progressive. The findings, according to Weiss (1993), did not support either claim. Weiss noted, however, that they were more complicated and interesting than that one sentence could suggest.

SDM schools involved themselves in decisions about the process of decision or governance. Both SDM schools and non-SDM schools focused on curriculum issues in equal percentages. Student issues and pedagogy were rarely mentioned as a focus of council decisions. The findings did suggest, though, that if curriculum issues were addressed with any changes, SDM schools did a better job of gaining teacher support. SDM schools were found to be more innovative and conducive to trying new approaches, but formal participation of teachers was not the main catalyst for change. For this sample, the impetus for change was a reform-minded administrator.

Implications were that the energy and time spent during the process of collegial decision-making may delay the introduction and implementation of curricular reform efforts. An interesting note germane to both Weiss's study and this study was that three schools in the sample were "schools of color" (i. e., they had an African-American or Latino principal). None of these schools implemented shared decision-making. This may have implications for the present study in considering why the principals of those schools opted not to enter into shared decision-making, and whether those considerations were related to negative minority perceptions toward this vehicle of school governance.

In another qualitative study of school-based decision-making, Parker and Leithwood (2000) explored the influence of school councils on school and classroom practices. In a mixed design study, using the interview method with council members ($N = 50$) from five schools that were selected for the range of council's influence, questions were posed dealing with the extent of council effects and characteristics of councils that were relatively influential.

The researchers collected the data in a large school district one year after implementation of school councils. Nine to eleven people in each school were participants in open-ended interviews. The interview sample involved parents, students, teachers, principals, and non-council teachers. After the information was transcribed and coded, the modified grounded theory approach espoused by Strauss & Corbin (1990) was used for the method of analysis. The data were applied to the school level and cross-comparisons among schools were also completed.

Findings indicated that, in all schools except one, teachers reported influence at the school level to be greater or equal to the influence in the classroom. Two schools were reported as having high levels and diverse types of parental involvement in classrooms and schools by fostering school partnerships. Schools with more influential councils had considerably more parent involvement than they did prior to school council implementation.

In sum, the above-referenced studies indicated the importance of organizational capacity and resources needed to effectively implement change. Shared decision-making emerged as a good idea which would lead to increased

ownership for teachers and school improvement. The theme of accountability in individual school results emerged due to an increase in parent and teacher decision-making. Principals' loss of control in such a process emerged as a concern although the perception was that an increase in individual school autonomy would be beneficial. Increased tolerance and respect for cultures and ethnic groups was a perceived finding (Hallinger, Murphy, & Hausman, 1992). Another conclusion revealed that large-sized complex organizations were more apt to adopt innovations such as site-based decision-making (Baldrige & Burnham, 1975). In looking at organizational hierarchies, organizations are tall, medium, or flat in their chain of command structures. It was concluded that teachers tended to be less satisfied as the structural type of the organization became taller (Carpenter, 1971).

School-based decision-making is a dynamic departure from previous governance mechanisms for operating the public schools. Researchers looked at meeting schedules and time, types of business considered, member participation – both professional and non-professional – and categorized types of councils as balanced, limited, excessive, or moderate. The councils focused on council functions more so than school programmatic issues, with parent/community members participating on a very limited basis (Easton & Storey, 1994). Regarding councils, influence at the school level developed more than influence at the classroom level. Parents' influence on curriculum was indirect and limited to a few schools. Elementary teachers perceived councils' decision-making as more positive than did secondary teachers. Teachers having

more years of experience in teaching reported more influence on the council. Principals played a dominant role on most school councils (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999; Weiss, 1993).

Further, smaller schools and schools where the student body was both ethnically and linguistically diverse tended to be more decentralized, while less decentralization was indicative of schools with ethnically diverse faculty (Robertson & Buffett, 1991).

Effective decision-making processes emerged, although parents perceived their involvement as unappreciated or unwanted. Culture seemed to be easier to improve than operations and management. The findings also showed that parents are committed to assisting in the work of the school, and considerable parent involvement is possible if really desired. Educators exhibited much care about children and the quality of education provided, while parents were committed to contributing to the work of the school. However, the opportunity to have a voice in school decisions was not the same as soliciting participation, views, and ideas; the legitimacy of decision-making had to be established across time (Robertson & Briggs, 1998; Weiss, 1993; Reitzug & Cross, 1994). Interestingly, no significant effect on student achievement emanated from these studies as a direct result of school-based decision-making, but SBDM schools tended to be more open to trying new ideas and approaches (Weiss, 1993; Hoskins, 1995).

The next subsection of studies reviewed research within or concerning the state of Kentucky regarding school-based decision-making.

Kentucky Studies of Education Reform and School-based Decision-Making

These studies reviewed school-based decision-making as it existed in Kentucky during the periods of the studies from its inception to its implementation.

While some states allowed school-based decision-making to flourish or perhaps flounder by the will of school stakeholders, other states granted incentives to promote or to encourage adoption and use of site-based management (Reitzug & Cross, 1994). Kentucky, among a handful of states, mandated that schools would implement the process. The primary rationales for creating school councils was to insure that the process for instructional decisions was meaningful and to promote a “collective sense of responsibility for results” (Foster, 1999).

The judiciary impact the state courts had on education resulted in landmark decisions for schools in those states. Nowhere was that more apparent than in the state of Kentucky, where, in 1989, the Kentucky Supreme Court rendered the decision that not only statewide funding, but the entire system of schooling within the state, was unconstitutional (Parkay & Stanford, 2000). A twenty-two member task force appointed by the governor and the legislature studied the matter, subsequently generating the 906-page report structuring the framework for the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990 (Foster, 1999).

Kentucky’s school-based decision-making initiative gave the people nearest to students direct responsibility concerning how best to teach those

students. School councils were implemented to bring together parents, teachers, and principals from an individual school to enact decisions about the school. By placing teachers and parents in the decision-making arena, it ensured that interests and viewpoints of both were considered, while making for better, more responsible, and more responsive policymaking (Kentucky Department of Education, 1998; Foster, 1999).

One dynamic requirement of the bill mandated that each school elect a school-based management council by July 1, 1996. Councils were authorized to make policy in eight areas of schooling which directly affected student achievement. Councils had governance over: (a) curriculum; (b) staff time; (c) student assignment; (d) scheduling; (e) school space; (f) instructional issues; (g) discipline; and (h) extracurricular activities (KRS 160.345). Three teachers, two parents, each respectively elected by their constituent group, and the principal comprised the council membership (Parkay & Stanford, 2000; Kentucky Department of Education, 1998). The mandate gave teachers, principals, and parents the authority to determine the direction for their schools by allowing the people closest to the children to make educational decisions (Prichard Committee, 2000; Kentucky Department of Education, 1998; Foster, 1999). As of 1998, approximately 1200 of Kentucky's 1400 schools were headed by councils with an estimated membership of 3,600 teachers. In addition, more than 14,000 parents were involved in SBDM, either as council members or by serving on council committees (Kentucky Department of Education, 1998).

Logan (1992) conducted a research study on the first-year perceptions of Kentucky teachers, principals, and counselors. Although the purpose of the study was to examine the effects of school-based decision-making upon vocational programs in secondary schools, it also reviewed the schoolwide curricular context and school personnel's perceptions of the quality of the processes of school-based decision-making.

The researcher initiated a survey, with both Likert-scale and open-ended questions, of school personnel in secondary schools throughout the state of Kentucky. The sample consisted of the high schools ($N = 69$) operating under school-based decision-making (SBDM) in the 1991-92 school year. The research employed the method of having a three-member panel of educational experts to review the questions to obtain content validity. The survey items were also correlated and received a Cronbach coefficient alpha of .94.

The independent variables for the study were: (a) quality of decision-making; (b) curriculum, class, or program changes; (c) academic and vocational interaction or integration; (d) allocation of time and resources; and (e) vocational representation on school councils and schoolwide committees. The dependent variable was the percentage score obtained on each question of the survey results.

Analysis methods for the data were frequency distribution, chi-square analysis, measures of central tendency, measures of variability, and general linear model analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Key findings suggested that school-based decision-making had a positive influence that year on the quality of decision-making (67% of respondents; $p = .039$). In addition, respondents (82%; $p = .007$) expected the SBDM process to improve the quality of future school decision. Principals (81%; 91%, respectively) and academic teachers (71%; 84%, respectively) tended to perceive the SBDM process more positively than did counselors (59%; 68%, respectively) or vocational teachers (60%; 80%, respectively). Expressed in all roles was the optimism about the future benefits of school-based decision-making on decision-making quality.

Findings germane to this study included respondent comments about a lack of cooperation within the council, too much administrative control of school council membership, and a lack of information. No changes were found in curricular programs as a result of implementing school based decision-making.

Implications suggest that administrative control must be limited if all council members are to be accountable for participating in discussions and making decisions that will affect school operations, which ultimately affect student achievement.

Kannapel et al. (1994) commenced a qualitative, ongoing five-year study of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 (KERA), focusing on the implementation of school-based decision-making (SBDM) in schools ($n = 7$) situated in four rural Kentucky school districts. The study centered on the school councils that formally began SBDM during the 1991-92 school year. The purpose of the study was to examine how decision-making was shared among

the role groups (principal, teachers, parents), the extent to which shared decision-making affected educational reform, and factors that facilitated or impeded effective school-based decision-making.

Using interviews, observations, and mining of documents as methods of data collection, the researchers documented and analyzed the data. The researchers did not elaborate the specific methods of data analysis, an obvious limitation of the study. One of the most critical findings of the study proposed that SBDM did give councils significant authority over school functioning if that authority was exercised.

Other findings relevant to this study included that over half of the councils were major decision-makers at their schools, although parents played a minor role. In addition, only one of the councils practiced balanced decision-making (where the principal, teachers, and parents all deliberated as equals during council discussions and decisions). The need for more parent involvement was found to be a need of which councils were aware.

Implications are that school-based decision-making can work and effectively involve parents as equal partners in decision-making, but most likely support and leadership from other stakeholders in the process is needed. This necessitates inviting and welcoming attitudes from school personnel, expressing a willingness to acclimate parents and minority members to the school environment and milieu.

The Kentucky Institute for Education Research (KIER, 1995) sponsored a study of the implementation of school-based decision-making (SBDM) in Kentucky. The purpose of the project was to determine:

- (a) the status of SBDM implementation in a random selection of schools, middle/junior high schools, and elementary schools geographically distributed throughout Kentucky;
- (b) implementation patterns of various SBDM components including policy development, meeting focus, decision-making process, and similar issues; and
- (c) perceived levels of support council members received in SBDM implementation.

Random sampling occurred by selecting one high school, one middle/junior high school, and two elementary schools from each of the eight Regional Service Centers within the Kentucky Department of Education from a list of all SBDM schools dated December 14, 1994. Of the schools participating in the study ($n = 31$), seven were high schools, eight were middle/junior high schools, and sixteen were elementary schools. A minimum of three SBDM council members were interviewed in each school which comprised at least one teacher, one parent, and one administrator. Although all eight Regional Service Centers were represented, no high school in Region 6 was included in the study.

A limitation of the study noted that the sample was small (31 SBDM schools of 816 SBDM schools) and not necessarily representative of SBDM schools within the state.

Data for the study were collected using trained observers and an instrument called the Innovation Component Configuration Map for School-Based Decision-Making (ICCM/SBDM). Although validity and reliability data were not reported for the instrument, a prominent limitation of the study, it was field tested in 1994. The instrument was developed from a conceptual framework of understanding the process of change called the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM), which considers three diagnostic change process dimensions: (a) user concerns; (b) levels of use of the innovation; and (c) innovation configurations. Hall and Hord (1987) defined innovation configurations as a focus on the “extent which a new program or practice resembles the intent or ideal of its developer(s).”

The ICCM/SBDM instrument contained descriptors of different implementation levels for thirteen sub-components of six major SBDM components: (a) policy; (b) school planning; (c) communication; (d) decision-making; (e) SBDM training; and (f) support. The instrument was designed and refined by representatives of higher education, the state education department, and public school personnel employed in SBDM schools. Review of SBDM-related documents at each school and interviews comprised the additional methods of data collection.

Research teams, comprised of university professors and doctoral students, were recruited and trained to conduct site visits at sampled schools. Subsequently, the teams were organized into three working groups and charged with the responsibility to visit schools in the western, central, or eastern areas of

Kentucky. Composites of the ICCM/SBDM instrument were compiled from total information received at the school site. Visitations continued from February 1995 through March 1995.

The several analyses performed on the data were completed via a computer analysis program developed for ICCM research. The analyses included: (a) descriptive profiles of characteristic samples; (b) ICCM element and sub-component response summaries; (c) rank-ordered correlations of ICCM sub-component scores; and (d) cluster and discriminant analysis for sub-component[s].

Of the many findings of the study, two-thirds of the schools exhibited a relatively high degree of SBDM implementation referring to how close a school's rating compared to the predetermined optimal rating in the SBDM component area, as measured by the ICCM/SBDM instrument. Communication about SBDM issues was targeted to all stakeholders in 85% of the schools.

Stakeholder support seemed to be somewhat limited in 65% of the sampled schools, especially by parents. All schools used consensus as the method of making decisions, although eight schools reported the use of voting when necessary.

A positive report emerged for meeting times and locations being acceptable and not presenting a major problem in attendance. Teachers and parent members expressed their enjoyment of council service, but noted that a large amount of time was required. A lack of parent participation and community

member attendance at school council meetings evoked frustrations from the respondents.

Implications suggest that consensus building can be a positive way of reaching effective and efficient decisions, considering that all schools in the study employed this method of decision-making. An additional limitation of the study was that the respondent data were not disaggregated by ethnicity, which would assist the focus of the present study.

Klecker, Austin, and Burns (2000) determined the status of Kentucky's implementation of school-based decision-making councils and reviewed the types of decisions the councils were making. Using demographic survey data and council minutes from a stratified random sample ($n = 137$) of 1032 Kentucky councils, in-depth analyses were performed to categorize decisions made. Noting that Kentucky councils were, by state statute, responsible for nine areas of decision-making, they looked at the types of decisions councils made during the period from July 1, 1996 through November 30, 1997.

Working from a list provided by the Kentucky Department of Education, the researchers adopted a stratified random sampling technique to procure a small representative sample ($n = 344$) by both region and school level, to make the research study generalizable to the population, and to meet time constraints. Study data included: (a) demographics from an administered Council Profile sheet; (b) agendas of all meetings for the specified period of study; and (c) minutes of all meetings for the specified study period. A postage-paid priority-mail return envelope was included, with a usable return rate (40%) from 137

councils. A chi-square test was performed to compare the 137 councils as to their representiveness by region and school level. A confidence level of 95% revealed goodness of fit.

Data were coded for analysis with agendas reviewed but discarded as a source of data because of their incompleteness. One researcher, however, reviewed council minutes, and the decisions were categorized using thirteen categories. Additionally, a second researcher was employed to establish interrater reliability at .93 and coded a random sample of 10% of the council minutes. The Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used as a mechanism to produce descriptive statistics, results of independent t-tests, and ANOVAs to explore mean differences by categorical variables (i.e., region, school level, length of time principal was at the school, locale of SBDM training, etc.)

Among the salient findings for this study was that 91% of the parents had served for one or two years, noting that most members of the sampled school councils were new to the process of school-based decision-making. Curriculum decisions were made three or fewer times by 50% of the councils, while the remaining 50% made more than three decisions in this category. Further, elementary SBDM councils made fewer decisions about curriculum than did middle or high school councils ($p < .01$).

Implications suggest that since student achievement and outcomes are expected as a result of all school reform areas, including school-based decision-making, councils should be making increasingly more decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Another implication is that parents

might need additional training in the tenets of school-based decision-making and that perhaps term limitations should be relaxed in favor of having more experienced council members. (Subsequently, the law was changed to delete term limits for school council members).

In a study directly related to the above study, Lindle (1992) researched communication relationships and satisfaction among the members ($N = 385$) of school-based decision-making councils in Kentucky ($n = 211$) in the pilot year (1991-92). This study was a mini-study performed as part of a larger research project.

Parents, teachers, and principals were polled in a mailed survey on general demographic data and categorical questions (council training, meeting procedures, perceptions of satisfaction with school council communications). The *Communication Satisfaction Scale*, a twelve-item Likert-type instrument, was used to elicit responses after a Delphi panel technique was employed to select the twelve items from a larger item-bank of twenty-five. No reliability data was identified for the instrument used in this study, one of the limitations of the research.

Scores were disaggregated based on demographic information. Mean and categorical responses were statistically compared with non-parametric and parametric tests, while comments were reviewed for content and themes. Interestingly, the demographics showed an almost equal number of principals, parents, and teachers who responded. It was noted, however, that the vast majority of respondents (99%) were white. This could be a limitation of the study

in that during this time 7% of Kentucky's population was of minority descent, but only 1% of the sample was people of color.

Other findings were that councils tried to consider parents' schedules or made accommodations for as many school/community events as possible; therefore, meetings were scheduled for evenings. Generally, councils had not discussed the responsibilities for effective communication with parents or had typically relied upon the principal. Few councils relied on the parent representatives to perform that duty.

Almost all of the councils extended some type of invitation to parents to attend meetings, noting several comments made concerning the difficulty of involving parents in the meetings. Even where parent attendance was high, actual parent involvement was low. Parents who attended meetings were allowed to speak at some juncture during council meetings, but few were specifically invited to be speakers at meetings. Five or fewer methods of communication were used to communicate with school parents.

People with children in school tended to have lower communication satisfaction scores ($p < .01$). Likewise people over the age of forty-five were significantly more satisfied ($p < .014$). As expected, principals exuded higher communication satisfaction scores ($p < .05$) than teachers or parents. This implies that principals believe they are doing a great job getting the word out, but that other constituent groups may not have the same belief.

Johnson and Logan (2000) investigated the relationship between efficacy and productivity and stakeholders' attitudes about the school-based decision-

making council's usefulness as a decision-making entity. The construct of efficacy was defined as "the power to produce an intended effect," while productivity was defined as "yielding perceived results or benefits." Schools with school-based councils ($n = 206$) were randomly selected from an alphabetized list using a computer spreadsheet sampling procedure. Participants were 1,349 teachers, 144 principals, and 727 parents who served and did not serve on the school councils, during the year of 1996-97. Random selection did not occur for teachers and parents who were not council members.

The independent variables were: (a) efficacy and (b) productivity. The dependent variable for the study was the scores on the School Council Efficacy Scale (SCES) instrument (Tschannon-Moran et al., 1998) and the researcher-designed School Council Productivity Scale (SCPS), each having a 5-point Likert-type scale. Reliability coefficients were reported only on the SCES. The construct validity for the SCES was ascertained through factor analysis on 12 items using varimax rotation, single factored with loadings ranging of .68 to .88 accounting for 67% of the variance. The SCPS represented legislated school council responsibilities listed in the state statute. The SCPS had content due to the fact it was directly taken from the list of council responsibilities.

The data was collected by distributing the survey packets to each council member in the sample. The School Council Efficacy Scale was delivered only to the teachers and parents who were not on the council. The researcher obtained a response rate of 87%.

Analysis of the quantitative data occurred by testing for variability in the measures of school level (elementary, middle, and high), school setting (urban, suburban, rural/small town), school size, and number of years the school council had been in place. A series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were used with an alpha level of .05, revealing no differences on any of these measures. The researcher reported that no demographic values were considered further in the analyses of the data. Pearson r coefficients were calculated for the efficacy scores and the productivity scores. The researcher noted that all coefficients were not significant or very low.

Findings revealed that the strongest correlation regarding efficacy was between council teachers and non-council teachers ($r = .54$). Also significant, but low, was the correlation for the productivity between scores for parents and principals ($r = .24$; $p > .05$) and parents and teachers ($r = .33$; $p < .01$). These correlations indicated that the study constituencies were strongly independent of each other in regard to their perceptions of efficacy and productivity of the school council. The calculation of mean scores from all groups (principal, council teachers, council parents, non-council teachers, non-council parents) revealed a moderately positive perception of council efficacy (3.94). Mean scores emerged for the groups on the council (principal; 3.97; teachers, 3.86; parents, 3.75), suggesting a moderately positive perception of the productivity of the council. Further analysis of means occurred using a one-way ANOVA with the Scheffe` test, revealing that the three council groups rating of council efficacy were significantly higher than the non-council groups' ratings ($F(4,676) = 20.32$; $p <$

.001). In addition, council parent ratings were significantly higher than council teacher ratings, though principal ratings were not significantly different from neither teacher nor parent ratings.

Implications for the present study, including the fact that the design used in the study above is similar to the proposed design for the present study, suggested that self-efficacy of council members should be explored. The present study seeks to focus on the self-efficacy of minority school council members as well as other council members' perceptions about their service on Kentucky school councils.

In summing up this section, there were no major problems in council meeting attendance. Although it was recognized as time-consuming, teachers and parents enjoyed council service. In particular, a lack of parent participation caused frustrations for school staff, as most parents played minor roles in making council decisions. Consensus emerged as the major means of making decisions, but decisions about curriculum were made less often in general and in elementary schools. Parents' schedules were accommodated to the extent possible, but parent involvement remained low. Methods of communicating about council meetings were discussed. School councils perceived their efficacy and productivity positively, although moderately. Parent ratings of school councils tended to be higher than teacher ratings of school councils (Logan, 1992; Kannapel et al., 1994; Kentucky Institute for Education Research, 1995; Klecker, Austin, & Burns, 2000; Lindle, 1992; Johnson & Logan, 2000)

The next subsection reviewed studies of school leaders' perceptions of the school-based decision-making concept and implementation.

School Leaders' Perceptions of School-Based Decision-Making

In this section, studies were reviewed to ascertain the perceptions of school leaders toward school-based decision-making. Under the traditional model of education, superintendents and principals were accustomed to being in a lone decision-making role at least to the point of being accountable for decisions they individually made. However, in some models of SBDM, school leaders were held accountable for decisions made by school councils, as was the case in Kentucky, where educators were held responsible for improving student achievement, with school-based councils being one mechanism toward that end.

School-based decision-making, among its many synonyms, was a dynamic new type of school leadership. Where it had been mandated, it had brought traditional leadership ideals into question and surprised or angered many school principals. Principals had long considered their respective schools as their domain. School administrators contended that there existed an internal conflict regarding the principal's role as instructional leader by assigning authority to school councils to make instructional decisions. Laws in Kentucky clearly indicated that the principal was the instructional leader of the school, but that the principal must administer policies established by the school council. Moreover, the principal was required to be a member of the school council (Foster, 1999).

Although the ideal of transformational leadership emerged around 1978, transactional leadership had been the norm for a considerable number of years.

As school principals accommodated changes, staff members, parents, and the community tended to become partners in the definition of school needs, missions, processes, and outcomes (David, 1989). The purpose of transformational leadership as discussed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) was to “foster capacity development and higher levels of personal commitment to organizational goals on the part of leaders’ colleagues.” Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) noted that increased commitment and capacities assumedly result in extra effort and greater productivity (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978).

Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) described a model of transformational leadership among six “leadership” dimensions. These leadership dimensions included: (a) building school vision and goals; (b) providing intellectual stimulation; (c) offering individualized support; (d) symbolizing professional practices and values; (e) demonstrating high performance expectations; and (f) developing structures to foster participation in school decisions.

McDonald (2001) posited that “principals must relinquish part of their former decision-making role because school-level accountability underscores the need for principals and teachers to work together.” Barnard (1968) observed that the “authority of leadership” was not restricted to executives, rather implying that leadership could be exerted by an organizational member. Thompson (1967) concurred that administration flows throughout organizations, encompassing different levels and flowing both up and down the hierarchies of the organization. Finally, Katz and Kahn (1966) posited that all members of an organization lead

when compliance was gained from other members by using personal resources, such as personality strengths and task-relevant knowledge.

Under the name of restructuring, among other titles, the recent reform initiatives had focused upon reshaping the whole educational enterprise. Restructuring suggested endeavors to: (a) decentralize organization, management, and school governance; (b) empower those closest to the students in the classroom (teachers, parents, principals); (c) create new roles and responsibilities for all system players; and (d) transform the teaching-learning process in classrooms (Hallinger, Murphy, & Hausman, 1992; Foster, 1999).

Pounder, Ogawa, and Adams (1995) conducted a study to examine the relationship between organizational leadership, Parsons' (1960) four functions of effective organizations, and several measures of school effectiveness (i. e., perceived organizational effectiveness, student achievement, student absenteeism, and faculty/staff turnover rate). Unidentified schools ($n = 57$) were used as the unit of analysis for the study. Random-stratified sampling occurred to obtain a sample of 25 different employee roles at 60 school sites, inclusive of 25 junior and senior high schools and 35 randomly selected elementary schools. Too few usable surveys were returned from three schools, and could not be used for analysis purposes. The stratified role sample included one administrator, one guidance counselor, twenty teachers, two secretaries, and one custodian from each school site. A 95% school return rate represented 1,061 usable responses, a 71% participant return rate.

A measure of organizational leadership, assessed by Tannebaum and Cooke's (1979) Organizational Control Questionnaire Graph, constituted the antecedent variables. The instrument possessed a moderate Cronbach alpha of .48. This measure asked participants to assess the amount of influence exhibited by various individuals or groups within the school (principal, secretary, staff member acting alone, collective group of faculty members, and patrons from the school community). Parsons' four functions (adaptation, goal achievement, integration, and latency) were the intermediate variables, while the school-effectiveness measures served as outcome variables.

Miskel, Fevurly, and Stewart's (1979) adaptation of Mott's (1972) Index of Perceived Organizational Effectiveness instrument assessed adaptation, goal achievement, and perceived organizational effectiveness, having a combined alpha coefficient of .76.

Integration was measured by Hoy and Williams's (1971) Overall Job Satisfaction Questionnaire. The reliability of this instrument yielded a Cronbach alpha of .84. The researchers noted a construct validity limitation, as satisfaction was but one aspect of integration.

Latency was assessed by Hoy and Miskel's (1982) Loyalty Questionnaire, which measured behavioral, cognitive, and affective dimensions of subordinate loyalty. After one item was eliminated from the scale, a Cronbach alpha of .92 emerged for the instrument.

Student achievement was measured by school level student scores on the Stanford Achievement test averaged over the three academic years prior to the

study, while student absenteeism was calculated by averaging reported rates over the three academic years before study initiation.

Path analysis, bivariate correlations, and multiple regression were used to analyze the data, noting that path analysis made an assumption of causality, instead of testing causality.

Salient findings of the study suggested that the overall amount of leadership varied across schools. In addition, total school leadership was associated with school performance. Further, the results indicated that there were two separate leadership domains. In the first domain, leadership of principals and groups of teachers produced perceptions of school effectiveness and reduced teacher turnover. However, the leadership of principals and teacher groups were not connected to the second domain affecting student absenteeism and achievement; instead parents were the primary leaders and the only positive ones.

Additional findings indicated that the principals' leadership was indirectly, but negatively, associated with student achievement scores, while a negative relationship also emerged between the influence of secretaries and student achievement. A puzzling finding was that individual teacher leadership was not related to any of the measures of school performance.

Implications noted that the study was exploratory and the findings were speculative, but made a suggestion that people in different roles could lead and affect school performance. Current efforts in public schools to implement shared decision- making was discussed as having the potential to improve school

performance. It was indicated, however, that an absence of clear evidence existed that site-based and shared decision-making processes improved school effectiveness (Malen, Ogawa, & Kranz, 1990).

Implications for the current study suggest that principals will have to employ many strategies to share leadership functions with other stakeholders of the school. Obviously, this is a difficult concept for some school administrators who are used to being in control or in power. It would seem that in light of what schools are expected to do, which is to educate all children, that it will take more than one person to implement reform efforts. Inclusion as used here suggests that people of color are very important in the process to support positive student influence of students of color in the Kentucky's schools.

In recent years, Carr (1997) noted that community participation had become an important aspect of reform efforts in the public schools. For the most part, this initiative was focused upon attaining "buy-in" from parents and community members. In times of systemic change, the process of globally examining and re-creating human learning systems based upon interconnections and interdependences, the inclusion of stakeholder groups had become a foundation to systems change. Noting that educators, parents, social service agents, government leaders, business constituents, religious leaders, minority-rights groups, and students should share decision-making power, Carr concurred with Daresh (1992) that power relationships had typically created difficulties in community participation. Kentucky law mandated that principals, with few exceptions, be the chairpersons of school councils, in addition to administering

policies and the day-to-day operation of their schools. However, when it came to council membership and voting, principals only had one vote, although ideally an effective school-based council should seriously consider the principal's perspective concerning council issues.

Where school district central offices were concerned, centralization was usually discussed rather than decentralization, and usually not from empirical studies (Bogotch et al., 1995). However, in Kentucky, even the important decision of principal selection was statutorily placed under the responsibilities of school councils (Jaeger, 2001). New language in the law, as a result of the 2000 legislative session, indicated that councils needed training for this significant responsibility:

when a vacancy in the school principalship occurs, the school council shall receive training in recruitment and interviewing techniques prior to carrying out the process of selecting a principal. The council shall select the trainer to deliver the training (KRS 160.345).

Jaeger (2001) maintained, though, that superintendents must identify quality and substantial candidates who fit the needs and expectations of the school council. The law provided that superintendents determine candidate qualifications and submit a slate of names to the school council, though two Kentucky court cases had challenged that authority of the school superintendent (*Young v. Hamilton*, 2003; *Back v. Robinson*, 2003). The issue of how much the superintendent should be involved in the principal selection process was decided in favor of school councils having access to all principal applications and making the final selection of the principal. The superintendent is obligated to hire the

person selected by the council. Results from the Office of Education Accountability's 1998 Principal Selection Survey indicated that 31% of councils who hired principals that year requested the superintendent to submit additional applicants (Jaeger, 2001).

Bogotch, Brooks, MacPhee, and Riedlinger (1995) studied the interactions of an urban school district's central office, attempting to understand systemic structural change, and the support for school-based innovations. In this qualitative inquiry, central office personnel described their perceptions of innovative educational thinking and behaviors.

The study occurred in a large urban school district in the Southeast with approximately 84,000 students in 120 schools. The district had an 85% African-American student body. The sample for the study was central office administrators ($n = 30$) from the highest administrative levels (superintendent to directors). A structured interview guide was used to elicit the information. Interviews were verbatim-transcribed or audio-taped. The research team then summarized the transcriptions and notes and inductively categorized the responses into short descriptive narratives.

The salient findings from the study indicated the most frequent interactions occurred with individuals who were at the same organizational level of the respondent. One respondent stated:

I am not going to criticize what schools do; we allow them to determine their own destinies. . . . We have only financial constraints; otherwise there is school-site decision-making.

Regarding innovations, the most often heard phrases were “new and untried; has promise of success; unique and different; basically a risk-taking venture; focused on a particular need that is not being satisfied; a modern technique.” Only one central office administrator discussed educational innovation as the connection between restructuring and curriculum instruction:

I’d get rid of structure. I’d introduce flexible scheduling and cross-disciplinary teaching – lots of interaction among faculty.

Central office leadership tended to be based on allowing others to exercise leadership. Area superintendents were allowed to direct their area schools to promote school-based management and programs supporting community issues of equity. However, the district lacked the top leadership necessary for schools to take a risk toward effective site-based management.

A limitation of the study included that the findings were based upon one single entity. Additional studies would be necessary in order to make the results generalizable to other populations.

Implications are that central office staff must become supporters of school-based change. There is no longer a question of whether reform will change the way central offices operate, but rather when they will be forced to change. Obviously, in Kentucky, the school-based decision-making councils are entrusted with the important functions of school operations.

Stroud (1992) validated urban school principal’s views toward site-based decision-making and its probable success in public education in a quantitative study. Principals ($n = 156$) from a Southeast Texas school district were randomly selected to survey their perceptions in four dimensions of site-based

management: (a) curriculum; (b) budget; (c) shared decision-making; and (d) leadership roles.

The researcher ascertained whether the principals' views regarding the dimensions were related to the probable success of site-based management. In addition, the researcher investigated the effects of the principals' gender, ethnicity, age, years of administrative experience, and the level of administrative experience on their perceptions.

Stroud (1992) employed the Principals Management Survey instrument to collect data. The instrument attained an alpha reliability coefficient of .95.

The Pearson-Product Moment correlation, multiple regression, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to analyze the data using an alpha level of .05.

The salient conclusions of the study were:

- (a) the probable success of site-based management was correlated with the more favorable principals' views toward leadership roles, shared decision-making, curriculum, and budget control.
- (b) the probable success of site-based management was influenced by the more administrative experience principals had obtained.
- (c) the probable success of site-based management was influenced by the level of principalship. Middle school

principals favored the design, whereas elementary and high school principals did not.

Implications for the study were that attempts to predict the probable success of site-based management should also consider the leadership roles of others as perceived by the principals. Implications for the present study concur with research findings in that, in the age of school restructuring, school site-based management seems to be a mainstay. It is necessary for principals to share leadership duties with all stakeholders and sub-cultures of those stakeholders, including ethnic minorities.

Brown, Carr, Perry, and McIntire (1996) examined the extent to which school principals in Maine perceived the involvement of school staff and community members in decision-making. The study further surveyed principals as to their perceptions of an ideal level of involvement, and whether there were gender or grade level differences in the perceived level of current and ideal involvement.

The researchers surveyed 712 school principals in Maine. Of the responding principals ($n = 217$), 72 were senior high principals (15 females, 57 males); 31 were middle school principals (11 females, 20 males); and 114 were elementary principals (52 females and 62 males). No ethnicity demographics were reported for the sample.

Decision-making was assessed in four basic areas or variables: (a) mission, goals, and objectives (system level goals, building level goals); (b) curriculum (content, assessment); (c) communication (internal, external); and

(d) students (program of study, assessment of progress). The dependent variable was the response obtained on the survey.

No reliability information was provided for the researcher-designed survey. Both current and ideal involvement of staff and community members were surveyed using a 5-point, Likert-type scale (1 = *not involved at all in decisions*; 5 = *fully involved in decisions*).

The data was analyzed using a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA). Gender and school level differences in ideal involvement were assessed, with significant grade level effects evaluated utilizing the Bonferroni post hoc test to assess pairwise differences.

The findings indicated no differences in male and female principals in their desired level of staff involvement in any of the eight areas, although differences existed in three areas regarding community involvement. School level differences existed on four items for ideal involvement of staff. In each of the cases, the elementary principals rated ideal staff involvement higher than high school level principals. Interestingly, no differences existed for middle school principals as compared with their elementary or high school counterparts. Elementary principals wanted greater community involvement. All of the principals perceived their staff as moderately to highly involved in current decision-making, but perceived the community as informed, though not involved. All of the principals supported staff involvement to a greater degree than did the community.

The implication for the study was that principals desired participatory change in the bureaucratic structure of schools. This study also suggested that as principals work toward promoting participatory management and decision-making that they make a direct effort to include all sections of the school society, especially the participation and opinions of ethnic minority staff and parents.

Carr (1997) initiated a follow-up study to explore how leadership styles related to engaging stakeholder participation in school change teams, used synonymously with school-based councils, although most teams in the study were not imbued with decision-making authority. The original study was focused upon selection of members for school change teams, studying six middle schools for six months, from a population of twelve schools. The background of the study indicated that, as a result of court-ordered busing, all schools had equivalent populations of minority students. However, minority (African-American) parents and community members rarely became involved in the schools. The superintendent began an advisory council movement and mandated a “top-down mandate for bottom-up involvement in the MidWest Public Schools,” emphasizing responsibility and accountability.

The schools were purposefully selected based upon demographics, diversity and the perceived leadership style of the principals. The schools were located in an unidentified major Midwestern city. The subsequent study focused upon four schools whose participants were available for interview and where redundancy (regarding leadership styles) was not evident.

A naturalistic inquiry orientation and case study methodology was used to collect data for the research. Personal telephone interviews were conducted. A principal's primary leadership style was established by analyzing observation notes, parent and staff interviews, and from impressions formed when interviewing principals. The researcher noted that her biases and values were obviously carried into these data collections, which most likely affected the findings. This would be a limitation of the study findings as well.

The data were analyzed by paragraph-level content analysis (Weber, 1990). Four school cases were studied and discussed: McGregor Middle School, Yo Wick Middle School, Jefferson Davis Middle School, and Merrimack Middle School. Each principal exhibited a different dominant style of leadership.

Located in a middle-class neighborhood, McGregor Middle School had just been assigned a new principal. At the beginning of the school year during the first meeting, Mr. Fowler expressed strong impressions of the advisory team concept and their goals for the school, stating to the group: "You are gonna help run and drive the direction this school is going. This group will have power and voice in what happens at McGregor." The researcher indicated that Fowler, however, erected roadblocks to parent participation, requiring parents to sign in and obtain a pass from the office, and to give at least a day's notice expressing their desire to observe. Later, during the fall open house, he expressed to the group that he had planned to apportion the advisory council candidates and create subcommittees according to grade levels. When later hosting an October luncheon, he indicated that the advisory council was a group "which will advise

me.” Carr (1997) noted that statement contrasted significantly from the initial comments made regarding the power endowed to the council.

Subsequently, at the first meeting of the advisory council, noticeably called by him, he consumed the majority of the time to explain the council’s purposes and to assign the focus for the school year. During the exit interview for the study, he indicated an inclusive philosophy relative to parental participation, stating that “I’m not interested in blowing anyone away who wants to be involved in this school, especially parents.”

In spite of this philosophy, he explained that the efforts of selecting members would have been more participative had the council been imbued with decision-making powers. Also, in the interview he stated that he believed minority parents were comfortable with the process “because he had not noticed anything unusual about the nature of their participation.”

Carr (1997) concluded that, despite Mr. Fowler’s earlier statements that indicated the concept of shared power, he exhibited a strong top-down style of leadership, exemplified by one-way communication. The researcher suggested that this position was indicative of a reactive attitude toward the process of change. Additionally, the researcher indicated that the parents passively accepted his agenda and that no alternative focus emerged for the group’s work.

This case study portrayed the leadership style of Ms. Otten, at Yo Wick Middle School, who dominated the first Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meeting. Although the meeting was announced as an opportunity for members of the community to select representatives for the advisory council, in reality, it was an

opportunity for the principal to offer names of potential PAC representatives that had been submitted to her. Without a discussion or a formal vote, the group accepted the proposed slate of representatives.

Carr (1997) indicated that although three minority parents were in attendance at the September meeting, they were uninvolved in comparison to the assistant principal, the council chair (a parent/professor at the local university), the principal, and a teacher representative. Likewise, at the October meeting, the minority representatives were not as active as non-minority representatives. Parent interviews indicated that the council was not a “powerful council,” scoring an average of three on a scale of one to nine. Regarding Ms. Otten’s leadership patterns, one parent’s comment was:

. . . the principal wouldn’t change. I wouldn’t say the council was powerful. That implies we had . . . the ability to change existing practices and procedures in school rather than be simply advisory.

Later, the Yo Wick PAC took an active input role into a student reassignment plan that the school district had suggested, indicating that the group comprised critical, actively engaged thinkers. The principal’s response to this initiative, however, reflected a strong resistance to change and an autocratic style of leadership. The PAC assembled in an unscheduled meeting to develop a statement to the district committee for student reassignment. Carr (1997) indicated that Otten did not attend and explained that she did not want to “encourage divergence from the group’s original purpose,” since the meeting was not formally scheduled.

Although she maintained a top-down style of leadership, the researcher noted her demonstration of a more participative style in Otten's strongly expressed desire for increased minority participation. Ideas were solicited, and many were implemented, on how to increase minority attendance. The researcher concluded that Otten's attitude toward change yielded conflicting signals.

Ms. Burns, principal of Jefferson Davis Middle School, stated that advisory councils in alternative schools present particular issues due to the fact that the school is a magnet school, and not neighborhood-based. Although the parents were required to sign a statement of their commitment to school involvement, the school was not conveniently located for parents to exercise that commitment. New members were not easily acclimated into the cliques and groups that were already formed on the Parent Advisory Council (PAC). The principal had decided who should serve on a delegation to select members. Chaired by the principal, an initial meeting took place which was open and included the ideas of others in the decisions. When the meeting convened in September, the principal explained the purpose of the school's PAC, which was "to involve as broad a segment of the community as possible . . . so as to get a variety of ideas." In the interviews, parents alluded to their "feelings" of power and importance, with these comments:

I'd like to help implement, lead, and facilitate the changes.

Volunteering to work for change in our school gives me as a parent an opportunity to make contributions to the quality of my child's education.

Because MidWest Public Schools have to succeed. . .
[I'm] more interested in action than endless dialogue.

Carr (1997) indicated that such comments were a testimony to a leadership style that allowed for “feelings” of power in the change process. The researcher further iterated that the only time the principal dictated to the council was during the period of member selection. Minority participation was reported as being “far greater” at Jefferson Davis Middle School. Ms. Burns only redirected the council if they strayed from the purpose. Her style of involvement as the administrator consisted of answering questions and presenting important issues. Instead of arriving, taking control, and discussing non-agenda items, a pattern noted in other schools, Ms. Burns asked the chair to include her on the agenda. This style of leadership indicated a shared vision and two-way communication between the principal and the council without regard to power and control.

The final case study described Ms. Jude, a first-year principal at Merrimack Middle School, who exhibited a quiet and calming demeanor. Merrimack was the only school, among the four, with an African-American majority on the school’s advisory council. A quote from the only African-American father who participated in the study described the global concern that dominated Merrimack’s school council:

I’m concerned about the lack of parental involvement in inner-city school systems. . . I’m concerned about . . . academic failure in our schools. . . [and] the increasing polarization of various socioeconomic groups in this society. I’m concerned about the relationship between the business world and the educational system. I’m referring to how they choose to

support certain educational institutions, ignore others, and control others. . . . we as a society should send a clear message to the business world and to the political leaders that they have a responsibility to support the schools that are in trouble and to be supportive of children in those socioeconomic groups that are in trouble.

Carr (1997) expressed that the council members did not promote individual agendas, but rather expressed concern for all children. In that way, they created a future-oriented environment of thinking and a shared vision. At the council's first meeting, Jude emphasized process, asking several people to speak on particular issues and to share their reasons for joining the council. Ms. Jude closed the meeting with the charge:

For whatever reason – segregation, desegregation, reassignment, whatever – parents have been taken out of the process, and they need to come back in. We need the parents who are uncomfortable, our Chapter I parents, as many parents from as many different backgrounds as possible. We need to bring them here, or else we won't be addressing all the issues of parents.

Carr (1997) described Ms. Jude as open to two-way communication and interested in encouraging members to be actively involved, and that she demonstrated global, unselfish goals that were intrinsic. The researcher noted that the principal's attention to diversity of parent issues indicated her desire for a shared vision. The council, in turn, respected the formality of school structures, for instance, by written communication to the principal through formal channels.

The study findings, a cross-case compendium, indicated there was a range of styles, behaviors, and characteristics that impacted followers, which further indicated that a relationship existed between leadership behavior and parental participation. While the relationship was acknowledged, the author

iterated the impossibility of identifying a particular type of leader who would inspire more or less participation . . . or more or less numbers of minority participants than other leadership types.

One limitation was the fact that the researcher stated in the findings that “leadership style alone appears not to cause higher minority participation.” Since this was not a causal comparative study, such a generalization perhaps should not have been expressed. Another limitation, as previously stated, was that the study looked at previously collected data and inferred that researcher bias probably entered into the observations and analysis.

For this study, implications suggest that there are certain types of behavior by leaders that promote minority participants to become involved and feel a part of the school community. Another implication is that a transformational leadership should be utilized, emphasizing shared decision-making power, if healthy and empowered involvement in schools is to be realized. It is further implied that leaders should embrace and display the types of behaviors, values, and ideologies they desire their groups to emulate.

In sum, prior research indicated that the amount of leadership varied across schools, but that total school leadership was associated with school performance. It was further noted that principals’ leadership was indirectly, although negatively, associated with student achievement. Central office administrators viewed school/site-based decision making, for the most part, as risk-taking. Regarding principals, the findings of the studies indicated that school-based management success correlated with principals’ views of the

process. Community involvement was lacking although principals reported wanting more community involvement, especially at the elementary level. Principals' perceptions of the community viewed them as informed, though not involved. One study referred to a few minority parents as being present, but not involved in council proceedings. Finally, it was determined that a relationship existed between leadership behavior and parental participation, suggesting that certain types of leadership behaviors fostered more parental and minority involvement (Pounder, Ogawa, & Adams, 1995; Bogotch et al., 1995; Stroud, 1992; Brown et al., 1996; Carr, 1997).

The following studies referenced teacher empowerment and teacher involvement in school-based decision-making initiatives.

Teacher Empowerment and Involvement in School-Based Decision-Making

This section discussed how teachers perceived and were involved in school-based decision-making. Of the several essential components of school-based decision-making, one component was to empower teachers to take responsibility and accountability for policies that affect student achievement and outcomes. "Teachers are empowered through shared decision-making and they are also enabled because the decisions are more likely to support what they are trying to accomplish in the classroom" (Miller, Sava, & Thomson, 1988). "The key to full empowerment is that teachers feel that the important aspects of their work are in their own professional hands" (Keith & Girling, 1991). Others examined empowerment in the school setting as well (Short, Greer, & Michael, 1991; Maeroff, 1988; Lightfoot, 1986). Empowerment is spoken of as the banner

word (buzzword) of the current restructuring movement in the public schools (Glickman, 1990). Although empowerment of teachers was one aspect of school-based decision-making, research suggested that as teachers began to participate [more] in school-wide decisions, they tended to see parents as clients of education rather than as partners (Malen, Ogawa, & Kranz, 1990). However, in an attempt to protect their professional autonomy, resistance to parent participation should be expected to occur (Bauch & Goldring, 1996).

Systems of education existed where legislative action mandated the participation of teachers in decision-making through policy-making bodies such as school councils (Wall & Rinehart, 1997). In Kentucky, the law provided for teachers to have a greater majority of representation on the council than the other two groups, namely parents and principal or building administrator. This was significant in that even when the state education department granted waivers for varied council membership, the law mandated that only proportional increases were legal (KRS 160.345).

Smylie (1992) collected quantitative, survey data from 115 K-8 classroom teachers in a midwestern metropolitan district where new councils had been established. The findings revealed that the respondents proffered their least willingness to participate in general administrative and personnel decisions as part of school council activities. In addition, the findings indicated that

merely establishing policies and procedures for teacher participation in decision-making will not necessarily result in participation, particularly willing . . . participation. . . (p. 64)

The study also concluded that legislation or regulation alone could not effectively solve the problem of individual and organizational change in promoting teacher participation in decision-making (Jaeger, 2001).

The thrust of school-based management was to establish an alternative structure for schools to assume the responsibility of providing quality education for all children. Such a context could influence perceptions of uncertainty, particularly regarding teachers in schools adopting the SBM approach in general and, moreover, in situations where the minority populations had become the majority of student body (Antelo & Ovando, 1993).

Antelo and Ovando (1993) investigated the perceived environmental uncertainty (PEU) of teachers ($n = 62$) in two selected elementary schools from a minority/majority context. Environmental uncertainty referred to the non-clarity of information needed for the individual's job. Citing Singh (1991), environmental uncertainty was defined as "the degree to which school personnel feel that their environment is composed of elements that are both unclear and significant to them." Attempting to establish the sources of uncertainty perceived by teachers in a site-based managed school (SBM) and a non-site-based managed school, the researchers hypothesized that teachers in SBM elementary schools, using participative management as the general administrative strategy, displayed lower degrees of uncertainty than teachers in non-SBM elementary schools.

Two independent variables comprised the basis for the study: (a) site-based management and (b) non-site-based management. The dependent variable was the perceived environmental uncertainty level as measured by the

scores on the Perceived Environmental Uncertainty Index (PEUI), which was designed and pilot tested by Singh (1991). An additional reliability test was conducted which produced a Cronbach alpha of .9270 for the total scale, .8961 for the in-district scale, and .8729 for the out-of-district scale. The instrument measured the degree of clarity the subjects perceived regarding eleven in-district and nine out-of-district work-related statements on a five-point [Likert-type] scale (1 = *being almost never*, 5 = *almost always clear*). The researcher reversed the scale so that the analysis of items would be expressed in terms of degree instead of clarity.

In-district survey items consisted of: (a) district expectations for teachers' performance; (b) how to do the job; (c) limitations of the job; (d) evaluation process; (e) co-workers' status; (f) acquisition of district resources; (g) types of district support available; (h) district expectations for the campus; (i) use of district special services; (j) training/professional growth; and (k) confidentiality of topics and documents. The out-of-district items included: (a) parents' expectations for campus; (b) parents' responsibilities to campus; (c) dealing with the public; (d) laws regarding the performance of the job; (e) expectations and the roles of Texas Education Agency; (f) impact of state legislature on the job; (g) federal government actions and expectations; (h) community expectations for campus; and (i) community responsibilities to campus. In addition, the significance attributed to each item was rated on a three-point scale, and the researchers calculated a schoolwide measure of the uncertainty degree.

Using a quantitative, causal-comparative design, descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to describe the characteristics of each school, as well as to examine the relationships between the schools' perceived environmental uncertainty. Analysis occurred at two levels: (1) within each school and (2) between the two schools. Further, one tailed *t*-tests ($p = .05$) for independent samples were used to establish the magnitude of mean differences (Popham & Sirotnik, 1992).

According to the study's findings, the site-based management school reflected a lower total degree of uncertainty ($M = .359$) than the non-site-based management school ($M = .428$). The same results held true for site-based management school regarding in- district and out-of-district degree of uncertainty ($M = .393$, $M = .359$), compared to the in-district and out-of-district degree of uncertainty for the non-site-based management school ($M = .337$, $M = .488$). The researchers calculated the magnitude of the differences between the two schools using *t*-tests. The in-district environmental uncertainty of the SBM school and the non-SBM school had a significant difference ($t = 1.99$; $p < 0.05$). Significant differences were also found for the out-of-district environmental uncertainty ($t = 3.57$; $p < 0.005$) and for the total perceived environmental uncertainty ($t = 2.99$; $p < 0.005$), indicating that a statistically significant difference existed between the two schools in regard to the degree of perceived environmental uncertainty.

A limitation of the study was that the size of the sample limited the generalizability of the results, indicating the need for additional research involving a larger sample of schools and perhaps at other school levels. Implications

suggest that site-based management is a viable strategy for reducing and coping with environmental uncertainty. In addition, germane to the present research project, a study of this nature should be conducted using parents, in particular minority parents, to determine their perceived environmental uncertainty during their interactions with the school environment or school councils.

Taylor and Bogotch (1994), in a quasi-experimental project, studied the effects of shared decision-making (i.e., teacher participation in decision-making). Teacher participation in decision-making was defined as participation by teachers in making decisions about issues that affect their activities or job assignments. The study took place in a large, diverse, restructuring district, of national prominence, that emphasized the involvement of teachers in making decisions. The district was an urban, inner-city district having 80% minority population (African-American, Hispanic). The sample ($n = 33$) was obtained from two pools of elementary and senior high schools that consisted of schools that piloted the district restructuring program and schools that matched the pilot schools regarding organizational and demographic characteristics (level, size, percentage of free lunch participants). The sample comprised 14 elementary and 2 senior high schools from the first pool, and 14 elementary and three senior high schools from the non-pilot pool. All schools were not fully matched due to inherent problems in the district (e. g., involvement in other projects, decline in district support as a result of reforms, and a new superintendent who had reclaimed much of the decision-making previously afforded to the schools). Because of these problems the characteristics of the unmatched schools were unknown

because a double-blind selection process had been used to protect against researcher bias in the data collection (Taylor & Teddlie, 1992).

Undergirding the study was the premise that, after several years of restructuring, evidence of the participation effects, if any, should have been measurable. Four questions framed the study:

- (1) What dimensions of participation in decision-making emerged from data collected in a restructuring district?
- (2) What correlations could be found between those dimensions and (a) facets of teacher job satisfaction and (b) school-level outcomes, including teacher and student attendance and student achievement and behavior?
- (3) Did teachers' participation in decision-making result in significantly different outcomes for teachers and students?
- (4) Did teachers in a restructuring district perceive saturation, equilibrium, or deprivation with regard to their participation in decision-making?

The independent variables were: (a) teacher attendance; (b) student attendance; (c) student achievement; and (d) student behavior. The dependent variable was the scores (outcomes) on the teacher participation survey.

Using survey research to collect the quantitative data, an unidentified questionnaire, developed by Bacharach, Bauer, and Shedd (1986), was employed to gauge teachers' involvement on 19 decision items. The Cronbach alpha was reported in the study as having a range from .83 to .66. A total of 637 usable surveys were returned from the sample population of respondents, with a

response rate of 39%. In addition, the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) (Smith, Kendall, and Hulin, 1969) was used to measure job satisfaction in six areas (work on present job, present pay, opportunities for promotion, supervision, coworkers, job in general). The JDI had internal consistency reliabilities above .80 as corroborated by Yeager (1981). From three hundred teachers who had returned the participation survey, usable JDI surveys were received from 213 teachers with a return rate of 71%. Prior power analysis indicated that a sample of 120 teachers was required for power = .70 with an effect size of .30 ($\alpha = .05$).

Taylor and Bogotch (1994) performed several data analyses. Initially, school mean scores, emerging from teachers' responses on the participation survey, were used to assign schools to a high participation or a low participation group. Data on teacher and student attendance and also on student achievement and behavior were obtained from school profiles published by the district office. Those school-level variables were then calculated as gain/loss scores emerging from subtracting data for the school year prior to the initiation of the restructuring from the data collected in the third year of implementation of the restructuring. Using gain/loss scores allowed schools to be assessed against themselves, therefore diminishing the impact of differences between schools when examining the effects of teachers' participation in decision-making. Pearson correlations ($r > .80$) were conducted for all school-level variables, except teacher attendance (a restricted range of values prevented obtaining a strong correlation) (Gravetter & Wallnau, 1985). Gain/loss scores for the student achievement school-level variable reflected each school's mathematics score as

was reported in the district profiles for the Stanford Achievement Test. Other notations about school-level variables included that teacher and student attendance was reported as the percentage of attendance for a school year, while student behavior was reported as the percentage of students with out-of-school suspensions.

Further, a principal components analysis rotated to the varimax criterion was performed to identify the dimensions of teacher participation in decision-making. Those dimensions were entered into a correlation matrix to calculate relationships between dimensions of participation and both the school-level variables and the subscales of the Job Descriptive Index (JDI). Multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) were conducted to calculate differences between schools on the school-level variables and the JDI responses. Groups for the MANOVA consisted of the prior divisions of high participation and low participation groups. An invariance procedure, called the “jackknife” statistic, was computed to provide a confidence measure for the external validity of the study results (Thomas, 1989).

The summarized, salient findings from the study indicated that:

- (a) several dimensions of decision participation existed;
- (b) the dimensions correlated differentially with the criterion variables;
- (c) teachers’ participation did not produce a statistically significant effect on outcomes for teachers or students in the district;
- (d) teachers in both participation groups reported “feeling” decisionally deprived on all decision items.

Limitations of the study included the issues involved with proper school matching. In addition, a volunteer sample was used and the rate of response was low. However, Wunsch (1986) indicated that the responding number is sufficient for 95% confidence that the sample mirrors the population within $\pm 3\%$. Finally, the researchers offered no description or definition for the jackknife statistic, only that it was an invariance procedure.

Implications are that no significant statistical effect emerged between school-based decision-making and student achievement, an ultimate goal of reform and restructuring, particularly in Kentucky education reform efforts. However, this result is consistent with other studies throughout this study and also cited in the present study (Bacharach et al, 1990; Mohrman et al, 1978; Alutto & Belasco, 1972; Brown & Hunter, 1998, Everett, 1998; Geraghty, 1997; Hopkins, 1999, Peters, 1999). Further, there are studies Taylor and Bogotch (1994) cited in which student learning outcomes are not the focus of restructuring efforts (Elmore, 1993; Wohlstetter & Odden, 1992).

Hiter (1997) examined teacher participation in decision making in a mixed design study to compare the levels of actual participation, desired participation, and decision deprivation of teachers in schools with councils and those without councils. Twenty-nine rural and suburban schools in one southeastern state were used to survey teachers for this study ($n = 395$). Those teachers having three or more years of experience with school-based decision-making (SBDM) numbered 189, while 206 teachers from schools with similar demographics had no SBDM experience.

The variables used in the study consisted of: (a) decision participation, (b) SBDM status, (c) demographic variables (age, gender, teaching experience, school size, school district population density). The dependent variable for the study was decision participation as measured by an unnamed instrument previously used by Conley (1990), but adapted from Bacharach et al. (1990), having a Cronbach alpha of .81.

The data was analyzed using a series of dependent and independent t-tests and two-way analyses of variance (ANOVA). In addition, interviews were conducted with seven teachers who were asked to expand upon the answers given in the written questions. The data was summarized and reported, but no method of analysis was reported for this stage of the study.

The salient findings indicated significant differences between actual and desired levels of participation for all of the teachers ($t = 19.92$; $p = .001$). Regarding schools with and without school-based decision-making, the findings suggested there was a statistical significant difference between levels of actual participation reported by teachers in SBDM schools ($t = 12.34$; $p = .001$) and teachers not in SBDM schools ($t = 13.68$; $p = .001$). Finally, statistical significance was determined on two demographic variables. Analysis of school size data indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the actual and desired participation of teachers ($F = 3.09$; $p < .05$), indicating a desire for greater involvement in the decision-making process. Population density and SBDM status also obtained a statistical significant difference ($F = 7.69$; $p < .01$),

suggesting that schools serving a more dense population held a greater desire to participate in school decision making than those in less populated areas.

Implications for the study outlined the lack of a thorough survey of minority teachers at all school levels, noting this as a limitation of the study. Additionally, it was suggested that urban schools should have been included in the study.

Implications for the present study are that more data should be available for African-Americans and other minority status individuals serving on school councils. The Hiter (1997) study looked at SBDM before the 8% statute was enacted. Other research had already indicated the paucity of minorities serving on councils. The population of minority teachers in his study was lower than the state percentage of minority teachers (around 10%), perhaps due to not surveying the urban centers in the state.

Marks and Louis (1999) initiated a combined correlational, case study project to investigate the link between teacher empowerment through participatory decision-making and theories about organizational learning. For the purposes of the study, the authors defined organizational learning as the “social processing of knowledge or the sharing of individually held knowledge or information that construct a clear, commonly held set of ideas.”

The researchers conducted a national search looking for public schools that demonstrated extensive restructuring of students’ school experiences, teachers’ work lives, school governance, and coordination of school. From a population of 300 schools, a sample ($n = 24$) was drawn consisting of eight

elementary, eight middle, and eight high schools. This sample represented 16 urban states and 22 school districts.

The nine independent variables operationalized for the study were: (a) school structure (school size, extent of decentralized governance, amount of time teachers spend meeting with colleagues); (b) shared commitment and collaborative activity (index of professional community constructed from teachers' self-reports, composite score on professional community from coding data, measure of goal consensus from teachers' survey data, factor of responsibility for student learning from teachers' survey data, extent to which the staff is regarded as competent to analyze problems and to solve them); (c) index of knowledge and skills (index of school-oriented staff development taken from the coding, factors constructed from teachers' survey data tapping the school's and staff's openness to innovation, pedagogical content knowledge and ongoing opportunities for curricular and instructional improvement); (d) leadership construct (intellectual leadership taps the extent to which new information reaches the school from external or internal sources; supportive leadership reflects how much the principal or administrator supports and encourages teachers; welcomes their ideas; and has positively influenced restructuring; facilitative leadership measures administrative style enabling shared power relationships among faculty and administration); (e) feedback and accountability (information on performance provided to outside groups; rewards or sanctions from constituent groups based on students' performance; influence of students' parents on school restructuring; extent to which teachers feel respected by

internal and external stakeholders); and (f) teacher empowerment, operationalized as influence or control of four separate domains (school policy, teacher work life, student experiences, classroom control).

The dependent variable was an index of the capacity for organizational learning based upon the dimensions listed above, using a six-point [Likert-type] scale. The index emerged from ratings on the survey. Although a named instrument was not reported, the researchers' noted the internal consistency of the component items yielded a Cronbach alpha of .76. The survey consisted of questions about teachers' instructional practices, professional activities, school culture, and their personal and professional backgrounds. The survey response rate was 82%, considered a high rate of return.

The research methods consisted of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to observe differences among the grade levels -- a multilevel, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) for partitioning the variance in the dependent variable into within- and among-school components. Additionally, the researchers conducted interviews of 25 to 30 staff members, observed governance and professional meetings, and analyzed written documentation pertaining to the school's efforts toward restructuring. Finally, a case study for each school was developed and comparatively coded with a list of one hundred items.

Findings resulted in elementary schools ranking highest in most of the dimensions of organizational learning capacity and empowerment domains ($p < .001$). For the school policy domain, middle school teachers tended to

experience slightly greater empowerment than either elementary or high school counterparts ($p < .01$). The major finding of the study related that a consistent relationship existed between the capacity for organizational learning and teacher empowerment ($r = .74$).

Implications for this study were that if teachers in general are empowered to affect the organization, then teachers of minority status should logically be empowered to affect the capacity for organizational learning and impact student achievement through decision-making activities on school councils.

Wall and Rinehart (1997) investigated Kentucky high school teacher perceptions of empowerment with and without school-based decision-making councils. The study occurred at various stages of council implementation through a survey of teachers in 93 of 120 schools. By the fall of 1994, councils existed in high schools for varying numbers of years (zero, one, two, or three). The sample for the study was high schools in the state stratified by the time their policy-making body existed. Thirty sites were randomly selected from each strata for a total sample size of 120 schools. From this sample, the schools that responded affirmatively to participate comprised the actual sample for the study ($n = 93$).

The survey for this quasi-experimental study elicited a 79.5% response rate. The independent variable for the study was teachers' years of experience. The dependent variables were the scores on six subscales of School Participation Empowerment Scale (SPES) instrument (Short & Rinehart, 1992): (a) decision-making, (b) status, (c) professional growth, (d) self-efficacy, (e)

autonomy, and (e) impact. The instrument, consisting of 38-items [Likert-type scale responses] among six subscales, produced a Cronbach alpha of .94 across the scales. Individual dimensions produced Cronbach alpha coefficients as follows: decision-making (.89); status (.83); professional growth (.86); self-efficacy (.84); autonomy (.81); and impact (.82).

The data were analyzed using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and also analysis of variance (ANOVA), after descriptive statistics were performed to obtain means and standard deviations.

Noteworthy results indicated a significant ANOVA statistic for teacher empowerment and decision-making ($F(3,89) = 3.57; p = .02$), but no significant differences among the other subscales. From the MANOVA analysis, the findings suggested that teachers in schools where councils had been in place for three years perceived more involvement in decision-making than those in schools not having councils ($F(18,283) = 2.02; p = .01$).

Implications are that teachers may perceive being empowered, but perhaps not necessarily due to being employed in a school with a school-based council. To extrapolate further, minority teacher members of the school may perhaps have different perceptions of empowerment, but the data were not disaggregated on that demographic information.

Jones (1997) researched the relationship of teacher-perceived participation in decision-making to staff morale and student achievement. The purpose of the study was to test the hypothesis that the effectiveness of an organization and employee participation in decision-making was positively

correlated. In this correlational study, the participants were teachers ($N = 405$) from thirty-six urban elementary schools having a student population of at least a 66% minority and 66% low socio-economic status. The selected schools were working under a state and district mandate to implement site-based management/shared decision-making (SBM/SDM). Socioeconomic status was determined by the percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. Employee participation in decision-making was operationalized as the degree to which employees reported participation in SBM/SDM activities.

The independent variables for the study were: (a) participation in decision-making; (b) organizational effectiveness; and (c) employee morale. The dependent variables were: (a) the scores on the Teacher Decision-Making Instrument (TDI) (Ferrara, 1992); (b) the students' scores on the state mandated achievement test, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills; and (c) the teacher morale score on the Bentley and Rempel Purdue Opinionnaire (1980). Although the researchers reported no measures of reliability or validity for the instruments used, obviously they had been previously rated and used to measure what they were intended to measure.

After distributing questionnaire packets to each school site containing the three instruments and a small participation incentive, the Pearson r correlation coefficient was employed to ascertain the nature and type of relationships between participation in decision-making and the variables of teacher morale and student achievement.

Study findings contended that teachers expressed a desire to be most involved in curriculum and instruction, but most reported the perception they were deprived of participation in decision-making. In addition, teachers of smaller schools indicated lower levels of actual participation in SBM activities. Finally, while a positive correlation ($r = .371$) existed between overall morale and mean participation scores ($p < .001$), no significant relationship emerged between participation in decision-making and student achievement. This study implied that teachers' efficacy toward participation in school-based decision-making may not impact student achievement.

To summarize, these research studies emphasized a significant relationship between teacher empowerment and capacity for organizational learning. Further, teachers were desirous to be involved in curriculum and instruction, but perceived they were deprived of the opportunity. Indicative in the findings, too, was the fact that legislation, policies, and procedures alone will not necessarily result in organizational change to promote teacher participation. No significant relationships emerged between student achievement and school-based decision-making. There was a deficit of research regarding minority teacher empowerment as members of school-based decision-making councils, which would strengthen this section for the purpose of the present study (Smylie, 1992; Antelo & Ovando, 1993; Taylor & Bogotch, 1994; Hiter, 1997; Marks & Louis, 1999; Jones, 1997).

The next subsection reviewed studies looking at general parent involvement in school initiatives and in processes of school-based decision-making.

Parent Involvement in Schools and School-Based Decision-Making

This section considered how parents were involved in their children's schools and in the decision-making processes of the school. The types and level of parent involvement had changed over time. Historically, the expectation of parents was to enroll children, to leave educational decisions to educational officials, and to comply with those decisions. In the 1960s and 1970s, it was realized that economically disadvantaged families had fewer opportunities for proper child-rearing compared to middle/upper class homes (Turnball & Turnball, 1990). Head Start, a federal early childhood program, promoted parent training skills for those families focused upon teaching parents to be better teachers of their children. During that time, more parents became increasingly involved in their children's school achievement. Officially, the role of parents in educational decision-making was accomplished with the passage of the Education of the Handicapped Act in 1975 (Brown, Carr, Perry, & McIntire, 1996).

Coulombe (1995) indicated that schools appeared to harbor one of three points of view regarding parental involvement: (1) Parents want parental involvement; (2) Parents do not want parental involvement; and (3) Parents want parental involvement only when it is necessary. In addition, he established two paramount reasons for encouraging parental involvement in schools: (1)

supportive parent involvement increased the likelihood that students would succeed academically; and (2) in the area of volunteerism, parental involvement contributes directly to the support of goals and programs.

Appropriate roles for parents continued to receive attention from school reformers since the advent of models of site-based management (David, 1989). Research had indicated that when parents became involved in education, their children learned more effectively and became more successful (Wolfendale, 1989; Pugh, 1989, as cited in Blackledge, 1995). Involvement should be considered as a means to progressively empower parents (Shepard & Rose, 1995). Bloom (1992) viewed true empowerment as achieved once parents were actively involved in agencies or groups that can influence and monitor changes at local, district or statewide levels. Shepard and Rose (1995) added that the highest level of involvement was achieved when parents were able to set policy and influence decision-making in their schools. Only after parents acquired knowledge, confidence, and a sense of community belonging needed for effective involvement would they become more active at that level (Shepard & Rose, 1995). Access to policy making was described as crucial if parents were to take a full and active part in children's schooling (Blackledge, 1995).

Parent involvement in education was a national goal with a purpose that was not always clear, sometimes leading to adversarial relationships or poor parent participation regardless of the solicitation of cooperation. Parents needed to take ownership of the task as full partners with the school staff in participatory school management. A governance mechanism inclusive of all players in a

school could promote good interaction among parents, students, and staff (Comer, 1994).

The Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) required parent representation as a part of school-based decision-making councils. In addition, parent representation was expected for participation in school activities as part of council committees. The law defined parent as “stepparents, foster parents, and a person who has legal custody of a student by court order and with whom the student resides.” Further, parents of students preregistered to attend the school were eligible to vote for parent members on the school councils (KRS 160.345). It was deemed important in Kentucky for parents to have a formal position at the table in a meaningful way to participate in school decisions, although the intent never was to give them control of those decisions. This was evident in the council structure of three teachers and two parents (Foster, 1999).

While all of these studies did not originate in Kentucky, increased parental involvement seemed to have always been a nationwide desire. Parental involvement in children’s learning had long been recognized by nationally known scholars, noting that children had an added advantage when their parents encouraged and supported their schooling (Epstein, 1984). In fact, despite differences in experiences and concerns, both white and African-American parents elicited “strikingly similar visions” of what it took to educate kids. At the top of the list were involved parents and higher academic standards overall (Farkas & Johnson, 1999).

Parent Involvement Studies in Schools Outside of Kentucky

Epstein (1984) surveyed teachers, principals, parents and students to elicit information about teachers' and principals' attitudes toward parent involvement and how they involved parents in the children's home learning activities. The survey was given to 3,698 first-, third-, and fifth-grade public school teachers and principals in 600 elementary schools in 16 Maryland school districts. From this population, case and control teachers were selected ($n = 82$) who varied in their emphasis in parent involvement. The parents of students in these teachers' classrooms were surveyed with a return rate of 59%.

Salient study findings were that teachers who had more active parents in their classrooms as well as those who invited parents to workshops at the school were also more likely to ask parents to become involved in home-learning activities. From the parent data, it was determined that most parents could not or did not become involved in school, as over 40% of the mothers in the sample worked full-time and another 18% worked part time.

Limitations of the study were that no survey instrument reliability coefficients were indicated, no demographic information was provided, and no specific method of data analysis was given. Although the study provided graphs showing significant differences between teacher leadership and parent involvement practices, no recognizable statistics were reported.

Implications are that time constraints may be a barrier to participation in school activities and on school councils or their committees. It is entirely

possible that some parents would be more involved if afforded the opportunity and if other necessary obligations were not pressing issues.

Pryor (1995) conducted a quantitative, survey research study of ninth-grade students, their parents, and their teachers ($n = 516$) about family-school relations. The researcher sought to examine the belief that adolescents did not want their parents actively involved in their education because of their greater need for independence, a reason frequently heard for less involvement at the high school level.

The study data were collected in five Midwestern school districts where teams of school personnel had experienced training to increase parent involvement on behalf of high-risk students. In addition to the survey, focus groups, telephone interviews, and school case studies were also conducted. Separate questionnaires were developed for teachers, students, and parents using an unidentified format developed by Epstein, Connors, and Salinas (1992), and other items used by Chrispeels, Boruta, and Dougherty (1988); Families and Schools Together (FAST); and Hoy, Tarter, and Kottkamp (1991). The questionnaire was mailed to the parents of the ninth-grade students in the five schools. All of the parents of ninth graders were surveyed in three districts, while a random sample of 100 ninth graders was selected in the remaining two schools. Additionally, in each school, 30 ninth-grade students were randomly selected for possible participation in focus groups and given parent permission forms to be signed. From this sample, 12 students were selected from the returned forms on the next day.

The parent questionnaire consisted of 20 items on a five-point scale, asking for a response to a variety of statements about the school and their involvement with their child's education. The initial rate of return was 39%. However, in the focus groups, parents who had not filled out a survey previously were asked to do so. In addition, some parents answered the survey questions by phone, which raised the final rate of response to 47%.

An unidentified method of analyses occurred, but a correlation statistic was used to report a positive correlation between participation in school events over the last four months and parents' education ($r = .26$; $p < .01$). For one open-ended question (What is one thing that your family could do to help this school that you are not doing now?), findings were indicative that parents wanted to be more involved in decision-making regarding the curriculum and school policies and procedures ("...voice in the operation of schools"). Reasons for non-involvement were also listed, which included work obligations, lack of time or transportation, and other pressing problems in the parents' lives. "School rules" as a limitation was indicated by several parents.

On the student questionnaire, there were four items about parent involvement. The items were combined to form a scale of parent-involvement attitude. From this, a standardized item alpha of .56 was obtained. Findings from the student questionnaire analysis found no relationship between parent involvement and parents' participation in school events. A significant positive relationship emerged between student-school bonding and a positive attitude about parent involvement ($r = .52$; $p < .01$).

Findings from the teacher portions of the study indicated positive perceptions of parent involvement. Some teachers iterated comments such as “parents and students should be taught to be accountable for their actions, grades, and attitudes.”

Implications for the present study imply that parents want to be involved and that there are perhaps certain rules or policies that parents perceive as detrimental to their involvement. The finding of wanting more involvement in policy and decision-making is certainly in line with what reformers believe and desire for school-based councils, especially in Kentucky. However, accountability in education seems to have been placed in the confines of the council, though in reality only certified educators are held responsible and accountable. It is not surprising that teachers indicated more of the accountability was expected from parents and students.

Beck and Murphy (1999) examined parental involvement in school-based decision-making in a case study of a low-income, urban school in Los Angeles. The researchers sought to understand what was going on at the site in the area of parental engagement. They looked not only to understand forces that contributed to notable increases in parent activity, but also to ascertain those that inhibited complete and equal involvement of parents in substantive decision-making.

The majority of the student population was from poverty-laden, first-generation immigrant families, mainly from Mexico. In many cases, the parents spoke only Spanish. The school became part of a major school reform effort in

the city titled the Los Angeles Educational Alliance for Restructuring Now (LEARN). Specifically, guidelines were formed under which schools could be site-based managed and autonomous, with all stakeholder groups serving on the council (administrators, teachers, classified staff, and parents). Consensus was the decision-making tool by which all decisions had to be made.

As a result of this initiative, there was a dynamic increase in parent involvement at the site, noting that prior to this there was no parent involvement, according to one informant for the study.

Recorded interviews, field notes, and mining of documents were employed as the methods for collecting and triangulating the data. The school's Site Action Plan was reviewed, along with newspaper reports of the LEARN reform efforts, and specifically the activities conducted at Jackson Elementary School. The constant comparative method of analysis comprised the framework for data analysis, citing Glaser (1969). Reviews of the data indicated inhibiting factors (pressures to produce and teacher expertise; culturally- based role expectations – expert teachers, parents as supporters and followers, differences in language and experiences) and contributing factors (embracing a family metaphor; reaching out and saying yes; recentralizing to build a strong community power base; and pursuing academic excellence and parental empowerment in the context of site-based management) that shaped parental involvement at Jackson Elementary School.

Findings suggested that although parents attended meetings and were highly involved in school functions, effective instructional practices used by

teachers had not been communicated with clarity to the parents. Parents, in many cases, were silent in the meetings. Other findings concluded that parents perceived that they were extremely welcomed at the school, and perceived that teachers had their children's best interests at heart. Parents expressed the utmost respect for teachers, which was indicative of the deference to the staff in site-based meetings. Subsequent findings indicated that parents became increasingly involved to the point where they felt comfortable placing any issue on the discussion table, while staff did everything they could to honor the parents' viable desires.

Implied here is that school-based decision-making may be a viable vehicle for increased parent involvement, despite the debate in various research studies that do not support that statement. The commitment to involve parents in decision-making must be an important goal for the school administration and staff. Further, parents, and moreover, minority parents, can play a significant role in the decision-making processes of the school, thereby fostering and promoting a positive effect on student achievement.

In summation, although efforts were made to improve parent participation with school councils, more focus centered on parent membership on committees. Parent input sometimes remained elusive. Additionally, when parents became involved in school activities, they perceived that communications concerning teachers' instructional practices were lacking. In general, schools welcomed parents to become more and more involved. Malen et al. (1999), in a meta-analysis of studies of site-based management research, indicated that "parent

influence is more a goal to be pursued than it is a condition that has been realized, especially for low income and minority populations.”

Drago and Caplan (1990) undertook a qualitative study to examine whether participatory decision-making (PDM) was family-friendly. Three urban, public, primary schools were used as the sample, with two teachers and an administrator interviewed at each site. Two of the schools were located in a midwestern city, while the other was in a eastern seaboard city. The midwestern schools had ongoing EI programs, while the other had a recently failed EI program. Should pondering occur as to why the study was used here, parent council members have intimated the lack of time, child care, and family obligations as reasons for non-participation. While the study discussed employee involvement (EI) in the private sector and its effects on the family, particularly single-parent families, the study used teachers' perceptions of PDM and EI for the collection of data. The researcher explained that practitioners of employee involvement and academicians had seemed to ignore the interaction of the two phenomena: employee involvement and family unity.

The researchers provided background using the example of the extensive worker participation/decision-making model at the Saturn automobile factory in Spring Hill, Tennessee. Single parents at Saturn reported such phenomena as: (a) not being able to assist their children in preparing for school in the mornings; (b) not being home with children when they arrive from school in the afternoons; and (c) exhaustion.

A Saturn worker was quoted from Parker and Slaughter (1994) as stating:

Since I'm a single person, it's all right – I can come home and go to sleep. But people with families – if I had a child I just couldn't go along with the rotating shifts. . . Some people say it's taking seven years off your life.

The Saturn example highlighted a serious flaw in how managers, employees, and unions implement worker participation, causing workers' families to be often ignored and likely to suffer.

The actual study looked at schools for three reasons:

- (a) Schools were inherently connected to family concerns in that children are involved.
- (b) Research on employee involvement (EI) and high performance schools was consistent in claiming that parental involvement was critical for the child's education. These factors should make schools aware of and sensitive to family needs.
- (c) Teachers were typically women and often mothers as well.
(39% according to the U. S. Census, 1990)
- (d) Employee involvement was very popular in schools, where it was often labeled site-based management.

While the study was limited in that no analysis was reported, other than just certain categories of respondent comments, there was pertinence in the responses related to parent involvement and family friendliness in the educational sector.

Salient findings, with accompanying responses, intimated that employee involvement programs (EI) were frequently individually fulfilling, created a sense of teamwork, and were successful:

I don't like being told what to do, so this [EI program] works for me.

EI allows for that camaraderie between the staff so that we're all in this together.

I found it refreshing to teach in a different way and to do things that you read about teachers doing in magazines. We felt like we were really making a difference with these students.

Another finding suggested that leadership, employee buy-in, and resources were critical to success:

If the staff isn't very supportive of it, it doesn't matter if it's principal-mandated, district-mandated, whatever. If people don't buy into it, you can forget it. . . it's not going to happen.

Further, the results concluded that EI programs frequently had adverse effects on teacher family life, noting that start-up costs for such programs were often shouldered by teachers' families. One teacher intimated how her blood pressure increased during EI implementation, and how she was not alone:

There were many who worked very hard on implementation . . . and were just overworked. And it was very stressful, especially for the ones with young children.

[During the initial stages of EI,] sometimes I'd come to work and I would feel as though I were, even though I get here an hour and a half early, I would feel two hours behind by the time the day started. And I think I was a whole lot less easy to live with.

Yet another finding indicated that EI programs often harm teachers' families by increasing time demands:

We had a workshop on Saturday, all day, and one of the teachers there had three of her children involved in activities. . . She felt really torn about being at that workshop all day for school, and [leaving] her family without her support.

One teacher could not enroll her child in pre-school due to increased commitments to the school under EI. "My son came

up to me. . . He said, "Well you have to quit your job so that you can take me to school..." That makes you feel guilty. With the switch to EI, something has to go, [and] what is it going to be? And being a female . . . I feel guilt. I feel guilt because I'm a teacher, I'm helping someone else's child, and then where does my child come into it? See that's the whole thing: when do I take the time for my own?"

Finally, the study concluded that employee involvement programs could, and sometimes did, have positive effects on teacher family life in that EI processes could be transferred to home situations:

One teacher noticed a difference in his approach towards his sons in their roles as students. He said he thought about them more as people, and cared more about how they were getting along with other people in school. He became less concerned about the grades, and more concerned with their happiness and whether they were doing well and having their needs met. Empowerment at work can lead to empowerment at home. [For one teacher, EI] changed her family life – she and her husband were having a real serious problem. I think he disregarded her, he didn't think that she was important. . . It was a change in her that caused her to insist that he pay attention to that change.

Employee involvement processes can help to integrate work and family life. I think [EI at work] will improve relationships in the household. I think the worst thing that could happen is having [work and family life] be segmented and competitive, whereas if people become involved together, they work together, and there is a group decision for success.

Implications for this study suggested that if EI programs had been harmful to teachers' families, results could have been arguably different.

Implications for the present study indicate the perceptions and comments of present principals, teachers, and parents had concerns about sufficient time to successfully implement the SBDM mandates, while also meeting family obligations and other personal and professional responsibilities. This is

especially a concern with parents of minority descent, many of whom may lack the social and economic resources to participate in their child's education as fully as they would like.

Parent Involvement Studies in Kentucky Schools

Coogler (1992) initiated a quantitative, survey research study designed to determine the degree of parent participation in the election of parent representatives on school councils in Kentucky. Noting that school-based decision-making (SBDM) promoted parents as major stakeholders in schools and that their involvement had been said to be critical to the success of Kentucky's education reform efforts, the influence of the independent variable, school size, was explored with the dependent variable of parents' voting in school council elections. The results were reported in percentages.

After reviewing a listing from the Department of Education of Kentucky schools ($N = 378$) that adopted SBDM by May 1, 1992, questionnaires were mailed to the principals. A second and third questionnaire was mailed to schools that did not respond initially. A return rate of 90.7% of schools responded, though not to all questions, with an actual return of 340 surveys. Information to determine the number of parents in a school was gleaned from the 1990 Census of Population and Housing, which revealed characteristics of the population of Kentucky, listing the number of persons under the age of eighteen. The researcher only calculated the percentage of households with two parents, and obtained 72.8%.

Findings germane to this study revealed that overall participation by parents in the parent elections was extremely low at 3.9%. When analyzed by school type (elementary, middle, high), 5.1% of elementary parents participated, while 2.5% and 2.4% of middle school and high school parents participated, respectively. The researcher noted that K-8 graded schools were considered elementary and any school having a twelfth grade was considered a high school.

Further, findings indicated that school size did not appear to produce a significant difference in number of parents participating in the elections. Schools with enrollments under 300 had twenty or fewer parents participating (53.1%), while schools with enrollments between 300-499 had twenty or fewer parents participating (40.7%), and schools with enrollments of 700-999 had twenty or fewer parents participating (55.3%). One-third of the schools had less than 2% of parents voting for school council members. Finally, over 64% of the schools with enrollments of 700 or greater had 2% of voting parents participating.

Limitations included that single-parent families and families where guardian(s) head the households were not included in the parent demographic information. Also, no data were collected on how many parents of minority descent participated in the elections. This would have been especially helpful in light of the fact that the law requiring minority representation on SBDM councils was not in effect at the time of the study.

Implications are that parents may not be aware or are uninterested in what school councils do, indicating the need for increased communication between the home and school. Additional implications are that parents may have work

obligations, lack of transportation, and other factors prohibiting active participation in school council activities.

Lindle (1994) conducted a survey of pilot year (1991-92) school councils ($n = 66$) in Kentucky to determine parental inclusion in school decision-making employing a mixed design. Using an unnamed, nonrandom, open-ended questionnaire, school councils representing one-third of Kentucky school districts responded to this question: "Do school councils include only the required two parents in the decision-making process or do they make efforts to broaden parent participation?" Follow-up phone interviews were conducted after the survey.

Findings from the study indicated that attempts to broaden parent participation in school council issues had worked, but that councils most likely had not executed enough methods to insure success. Parent participation focused on membership on committees as a means of reviewing parent concerns. Aside from that phenomenon, school councils were not seeking input from parents to a great degree. The researcher offered recommendations for various ways to increase parent participation in school council initiatives, which included additional training beyond what is required, an orientation to school councils of all parents, and differentiated ways of notification to parents about school council meetings and issues. Study limitations included the lack of discourse on the method of analysis and the lack of reliability and validity measures of the survey instrument.

An additional limitation germane to this study was that both of the studies above were conducted in 1992, still early since the passing of the reform act and several years before 1996, when all schools had adopted school-based decision-making. Obviously, more current research should be conducted to determine whether parental inclusion in school-based decision-making has increased.

To conclude this section, the data indicated that parents who were invited to participate in schools were most likely to do so, although deferent to staff members when serving on school councils. In one study, parents perceived themselves to be welcomed at school. Though in all cases parent involvement tended to be low, it was evident that elementary parents participated more often than middle and high school parents. As for school council elections, school size was not a factor in the low turnout. When parents declined to participate or become involved, it was usually because of work or other time conflicts. Teachers indicated positive perceptions of parent involvement. School councils in one study had attempted to increase parent participation; however, they had not used enough methods to do so, focusing upon committee membership as a way to monitor parent concerns. For the most part, parent input was not sought to any great degree (Epstein, 1984; Pryor, 1995; Beck & Murphy, 1999; Drago & Caplan, 1990; Coogle, 1992; Lindle, 1994).

The final subsection considered the perceptions of persons of minority descent and their participation in school initiatives and school-based decision-making.

Minority Involvement in Groups, Schools, and School-Based Decision-Making

This final subsection looked at how people in minority groups contributed to the education of children in school and how they had been involved in the decision-making processes in the field of education. Where school-based decision-making was concerned in Kentucky, there was a noticeable underrepresentation of minorities on school councils. This became an issue and adjustments were made in the 1994 legislature to address the concerns, urged by the filing of a bill by State Senator Gerald Neal, an African-American legislator (Foster, 1999).

Nationally, trends of increased pressure from minority groups, in addition to pressure from education reformers, had their part in forcing school systems to decentralize and increase community involvement in the schools (Ornstein, 1983). Delgado-Gaitan cited various research studies that revealed the need for parent involvement to promote children's school success (Bloom, 1985; Bronfenbrenner, 1978; Cochran & Woolener, 1983; Comer, 1984; Griffore & Boger, 1986; Lareau, 1989; Tizard, Schofield, & Hewison, 1982).

In fact, contemporary school reform initiatives would lack substance if parent involvement were not a component. Parent involvement appeared to be the one constant in the myriad of school reform projects (Ayers, 1991). Reformers on both sides posited that parents could make good choices about schools and could make important contributions to school-based decision-making committees (Norwood & Atkinson, 1997).

Epstein (1987) iterated that families had changed, noting the importance of understanding and working with all types of families. She noted the statistic that more children came from one-parent homes than ever before (24%). That statistic doubled for black students in urban school districts. Involvement and empowerment of minority parents in managing schools was deemed crucial to the success of reform (Blackledge, 1995). Yet, studies tended to indicate that minority parents and parents of low socioeconomic status seemed least involved in their children's education and in school restructuring (Jones, 1995; Bauch & Goldring, 1996).

Epstein (1987) described five levels of parent involvement: (a) basic family obligations (health, safety, positive home environment); (b) basic school obligations (communication and participation at school level); (c) parent involvement at school (volunteering, attending performances); (d) parent involvement at home (supervision and helping with homework); and (e) parent involvement in school governance (decision-making, advocacy, and participation in parent-teacher groups). Although the first four levels indicated the traditional roles expected by the school of the parent, the fifth role was newer and less traditional.

Oftentimes, however, the role of parents in school reform presented a major challenge, especially in urban and multicultural neighborhoods. While understanding that parents must be players in the reform process, many urban parents needed assistance if they were to be more active in supporting the efforts of the school. The need for assistance may have stemmed from events

such as denial of appropriate schooling and social supports for the parents, although such efforts were now aimed at their children (Norwood & Atkinson, 1997).

Parents of children who were ethnically and linguistically diverse oftentimes failed to participate in the schools in comparable numbers to non-minority group parents (Clark, 1983; Comer, 1984; Delgado-Gaitan, 1990; Laosa, 1983). Other studies concluded that the “culture of the school differs from that of the home for many underclass children (Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Goldman & McDermott, 1987; Macias, 1987; Wilcox, 1982). Ogbu (1981) pointed out that parents prepare their children for the society as experienced by themselves, noting that African-American parents, in particular, did not experience the society in the same ways as white middle-class parents. He added that children of either group were not any more or less academically capable.

Chavkin (1989) suggested that the myth regarding indifferent minority parents gained acceptance when those parents did not participate in traditional school activities. She further explained that it became easy for educators to give up on involving minority parents when actually the attitudes of those parents were misunderstood by educators.

The researcher referenced a study conducted by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory from 1980 through 1986. The purpose of the study was to explore attitudes of minority parents toward involvement in their children’s education. A sample of 1,188 Black and Hispanic parents comprised a

subsample from a larger study conducted in six states (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas).

While not reporting on the data analyses methods, she did report the results as clearly demonstrating that parents, without regard to ethnicity or minority status, were concerned about the education of their children. The report also concluded that minority parents were interested in being involved in school decisions.

Reporting from the Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, from a survey of more than 1000 teachers and 2000 parents, the salient findings indicated that minority parents tended to be intimidated by the staff and institutional structure of the schools, often feeling awkward about approaching school personnel. This was particularly so if negative contacts had been previously experienced. Over 80% of the teachers reported that parents should assume a larger role in school decision-making (Chavkin, 1989).

She opined that teachers needed help communicating with minority parents and understanding their cultural backgrounds, noting that minority parent involvement was essential, but that a concerted effort was required to debunk the myth of minority parents not caring about their children's education.

As of 1995, research on educational reform had not addressed how minority communities influence decisions about how to change their children's schools, instead focusing on how reform affected minority students and communities. However, the potential involvement of parents in educational

decision making and the focus on school sites suggested that minorities could have an opportunity to influence reform decisions (Jones, 1995).

Jones (1995) conducted a case study in Chicago to investigate minority involvement in urban educational reform. Chicago was selected because of its state reform movement toward governance at the local school level. In addition, the city was selected because many schools in Chicago had student enrollments that were ethnic minorities in the city and state, but actually comprised the majority, numerically, in certain schools. Finally, the selection made sense in that a major highlight of Chicago's reform initiative was to transfer certain powers from the central administration to local school councils (LSCs) (i.e., authority to select principals, approve the school budget, and adopt a mandated school improvement plan).

The study questions were framed from the broad question of what voice minority groups had in new schooling visions: (a) Who plans and decides what the school does regarding restructuring? (b) Was the minority community whose children made up the school's majority involved in decision making regarding restructuring? (c) What did the minority community have the potential to influence? and (d) What kinds of issues and decisions emerged in initiating and implementing restructuring that the minority community had the potential to influence?

No information was reported regarding qualitative methods of analysis; instead the author gave a description of data collection under the heading of findings, an obvious limitation of the study. Data collection began at the school

site with school personnel interviews. The researcher noted that it was clear that those personnel had not been involved in the initiation of the reform they were to implement.

The findings of the study actually showed that decision making for the school site took place at a variety of levels: (a) school personnel; (b) Chicago public school administrators at the central office and subdistrict level; and (c) community coalition groups (government, business, universities, and civic organizations). However, noteworthy in the findings was that Hispanic involvement occurred across layers, in that nine of the ten elected LSC members were of Hispanic descent. The author concluded that Hispanics, by presence alone, possessed the potential to influence decisions at the school. But when decision-making was viewed at all restructuring levels in Chicago, it served as a reminder that the power balance was still tipped in favor of white power brokers.

Implications for this study indicated that in spite of the shift of power to local school sites, a minority community is still a minority in the larger picture of policy making. An implication for the present study is that, since minorities have the chance to affect reform and decision-making, will they rise to the challenge or do minorities consider it business as usual and feel apprehensive of accepting the responsibility for and participating in effective change and decision-making?

Farkas and Johnson (1999) posited that most Americans tend to believe in the concept of equal education for all children without regard to race or ethnicity, citing their survey responses which also indicated that only a handful of people question the goals of the civil rights movement. Delgado-Gaitan (1991) offered

that ethnically diverse families in low socioeconomic conditions faced sustained isolation from the school culture, leading to miscommunication between school and the parents. Schools tended to facilitate student and parent exclusion, either consciously or unconsciously, by establishing events requiring majority culturally-based knowledge and behaviors about the school as an institution. Similarly, Berhard and Freire (1999) corroborated that teachers used educational terms that [minority] parents did not understand. They concluded

the institutional system of education tends to perpetuate itself, along with the existing power relations on which it is based. In the process of change, misleading, inadequate or even stereotypical perceptions of the beliefs and attitudes of minority groups remain in place.

Norwood and Atkinson (1997) described a collaborative university-school sponsored parent education program that united urban parents of minority descent, educators, and social workers. The purpose of the study was to understand the potential impact of a culturally-responsive program on those parents' perceptions of competency in the roles of parent involvement. The study commenced at a low-income, inner-city elementary school during the 1993-94 school year.

Notably, while the school was 25% Hispanic population, the school had a negative image among that segment of the population. Consequently, they had indicated that because of lack of trust and sincerity of the administration and teaching staff, they would not participate in programs offered by the school. To that end, the team concentrated on developing a program for African-American parents.

The study sample consisted of parents and grand parents ($n = 20$). One Anglo parent whose partner was African-American participated in the study. The remainder of the participants was of African-American descent. The program was designed to be sensitive and inclusive of the unique history, life circumstances, and values of African-Americans, avoiding the possibility of creating unnecessary or artificial barriers (i.e., dress code of the project team members differing from parents' dress code and care in using familiar language rather than educational/social work jargon). In doing so, the comfort levels of the parents would be enhanced. Input toward the program from the parents was elicited through a survey of possible topics. Sessions were held for two hours one morning on a weekly basis for eight weeks.

Following the completion of the program, interviews were held with parents and teachers. Parents indicated positive responses in being enabled to work with their children and to interact with teachers and school staff. Teachers noted an increased level of communication that occurred between parents and the school and an increase in regular parental participation in school programs.

Norwood and Atkinson (1997) suggested that the findings of this research indicated that minority parents respond to programs when they are designed to relate to them culturally, linguistically, and contextually. Low-income, minority parents with little education could not be expected to understand the school's operationally defined expectation of parent involvement.

Implications suggest the importance of offering urban parents the opportunity to learn more about how their home environment can support

learning. Additionally, provisions for urban minority parents to receive the tools and strategies needed for them to become advocates and decision-makers must be offered by the school. In that increased student achievement is the ultimate goal of reform and of the implementation of school-based decision-making councils, it is important to educate parents about exactly what is expected of them in helping to achieve the goal.

Kentucky was one of the first states, if not the first, to implement minority representation in school-based management reform as a legislative mandate. Once all appropriate Kentucky schools (excluding vocational-technical, special education, preschool, or alternative schools) had elected councils, it quickly became apparent that ethnic minority membership was severely underrepresented, causing many to believe minority influence would be effectively restricted from local council deliberations and decisions (Wagner & Gold, 1997).

This concern, regarding the lack of minority representation on school-based decision-making councils, reached the legislature through constituent communication to initiate efforts to ameliorate their exclusion. Kentucky Senator Gerald Neal introduced a bill in the 1992 legislative session addressing the underrepresentation of minorities. Schools having 8% or more minority student population, based upon enrollment from the previous October 1st, were required to have at least one minority council member elected by a majority of the parents and/or teachers. Equity in the School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) process highlighted the reason for the change (KRS 160.345).

For the purpose of this provision, minority was defined as “a person of American Indian, Alaskan native, African-American, Hispanic (including persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Central or South American origin), Pacific Islander, or other ethnic group underrepresented in the school.” Should an election not include a minority member, a special election must be held to include individuals from the underrepresented groups. No term limits were applied for minority teacher members, providing he or she was the only individual of color on the faculty (KRS 160.345). Approximately 700 minority teachers and parents participated in Kentucky school-based decision-making councils according to information from the Kentucky Department of Education SBDM Office (2001).

Reitzug and Cross (1994) observed that standardized schooling practices designed to educate the typical American student – defined as white, middle class, and living with both parents – were ill-equipped to serve many of today’s urban students – defined as racial/ethnic minority, living in poverty, estranged from mainstream culture, and from a home headed by a single parent.

Very little published data in the form of dissertations or research studies regarding minority involvement in school-based decision-making emerged in the literature to date. However, studies of minority participation in groups and in school initiatives certainly count when considering their perceptions of their efficacy and efficiency in such settings.

Brown and Miller (1998) commenced a quantitative study in the higher education arena with minority faculty groups for these purposes: (a) examining how minority faculty view their roles in student affairs governance; and (b)

examining what minority faculty members believe an ideal shared involvement in student affairs should be. The subjects for the study were self-identified racial (African-American, Hispanic, Asian, or non-US citizen) minority faculty ($n = 212$).

Survey research was used to collect data as a part of the National Data Base on Faculty Involvement in Governance (NDBFIG) Project at the University of Alabama between 1994 and 1997. The sample represented 23% of the actual number of faculty members who completed the survey ($n = 925$). Minority faculty were full-time tenured/tenured-track employees who voluntarily participated in the survey. More than half of them were employed at a Carnegie Classified Research University, with the remainder employed at Comprehensive Universities focused upon teaching. In all cases, the minority faculty members worked on predominately white campuses. The NDBFIG Standard Survey, with a Cronbach alpha of .77 or higher, was developed in 1993 and subsequently revised in 1994 and 1996. Respondents rated their agreement with survey items using a modified Likert-type scale (1 = strong disagreement; 5 = strong agreement).

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze and report the data (means and standard deviations). The findings germane to this study showed that minority faculty members agreed that their role in shared governance included the insistence on rights and responsibilities to be involved in appropriate student affairs governance ($M = 4.36$, $SD = .778$). Likewise, agreement was strong that they (minority faculty) must work to have their collective voices recognized as valuable in the decision-making process ($M = 4.07$, $SD = .860$). Interestingly, a

neutral perception emerged concerning involvement in developing outcomes for budgetary expenditures ($M = 3.24$, $SD = .981$).

Implications for this study are that although the project was conceptualized at the higher education level in student affairs, the ideal of professional people of minority status desiring to be involved in the decision-making activities of their organizations is relevant and timely.

Etheridge and Hall (1994) conducted a case study research project of a low-income parent who became a school-level decision-maker and an accepted member of a school's political structure during the first three years of service. It was assumed that the individual who was the subject of this study was a minority member, according to various descriptions throughout the study, but this status was not mentioned (obviously to protect anonymity). The purpose of the study was to examine issues and processes relevant to restructuring top-down administration to a more democratic approach including parents as decision-makers.

Urban Elementary in Memphis, Tennessee, was the site of a case study, which served four public housing projects, and described as a heavy poverty area with 97.2% Black population. Interestingly, the school's student population became all Black in 1947, and was excluded in court-ordered integration mandates in 1973, remaining a neighborhood school where all children walked to school. Low achievement scores, in addition to attendance and disciplinary concerns, plagued the school.

The subject, “Ms. Apple,” attended parent training seminars that were the impetus to her becoming involved in school volunteering and, subsequently, in school-based decision-making. After being elected chairperson at the first meeting, Apple was uncertain about the roles of council member and chair. She knew, however, the needs of parents in the school community, and of the educational expanse between parents and teachers. She was instrumental in explaining to school officials how parents felt during conferences, and how they would shelter themselves if they did not understand what the school officials were saying.

She attended trainings, always approaching the trainers with questions about roles, responsibilities, and how to conduct meetings. Consequently, she began to query the principal about why things were done the way they were. Although he would give her “a look,” he always responded by inviting her into the office to talk about it. Teachers began to perceive that Apple was controlling the council, although researchers’ observations and interviews did not verify this accusation. Apple confronted the accusations in open council meetings, and morphed from being a passive volunteer to a leader who prodded, pushed, and organized others to action, in spite of criticism.

Urban Elementary was faced with a loss of teaching positions in the next school year due to expected low enrollment. Apple became very active in demanding that parents enroll their children at Urban, effectively avoiding the teacher loss. Later, Apple became concerned that the principal was back to “doing his old things.” She was not being consulted on issues other than big

issues that might have drawn the attention of the SBDM director. She and other SBDM parents attended a conference in St. Louis, Missouri, which helped them to gain clarification of the roles and responsibilities of school council members. Armed with this information, the parents went before the school board with a letter of concerns. Apple drew a reprimand from the school district and union officials for signing the letter as chair of Urban's school council. Her final statement expressed her belief in parents as school decision-makers, which resulted in improving her school stating that "SBDM is the best thing to come along for inner-city schools...It is our only chance to have schools as good as those in the suburbs."

The study findings indicated that personal and school changes can emerge when parents had an opportunity and the support to become school level-decision makers, and that a feeling of ownership of problems led to action and commitment.

Implications for this study included that minority, low income, and urban parents can positively impact schools with proper training and support through the mechanism of school-based decision-making.

Similarly, Kirchmeyer (1993) initiated a correlational study for the purpose of explaining the imbalance of contribution between minority and non-minority members of multicultural task groups, based on personal characteristics outside of minority status.

The participants were business students ($n = 164$) in a Western Canadian university, ranging in age from eighteen to fifty-two years with a mean of twenty-

five years. The students were surveyed as a convenience sample by virtue of enrollment in organizational behavior classes at the university. Forty-five were ethnically or racially different, forming the minority subsample. Of the minority subsample, twenty-two were women and twenty-three were men. The subsample consisted of thirty-nine individuals of Oriental descent, five of East Indian origin, and one of Canadian-born Black descent. Participants were placed in a total of forty-one, four-member, multicultural groups to complete individually assigned questionnaires on the experience and their personal characteristics.

Kirchmeyer (1993) used inter-rater and Cronbach alpha tests to determine acceptable reliability of instruments used for five independent variables: (a) contribution to decision; (b) group attachment; (c) communication competence; (d) sex-role orientations (masculinity, femininity); and (e) motives (need for achievement, autonomy, power or dominance). The dependent variables for the study were the participant ratings using researcher-designed and other commercial instruments using 5-point and 7-point Likert-type scales. The items were: (a) the degree to which group members contributed to the decision relative to one another; (b) strength of attachment to the group; (c) ability of participants to communicate effectively; (d) the degree of masculinity or femininity in participation; and (e) the need for achievement, autonomy, or power in the group interactions.

Several items were lifted from different instruments. No identified instrument was used for the contribution to decision category, but the questions used had an interrater reliability of .70 and were deemed acceptable for use. For

group attachment, the union used a commitment measure (Gordon, Philpot, Burt, Thompson, & Spiller, 1980). For these measures, the word “group” replaced the word “union.” The Cronbach alpha was .68. Rubin’s (1985) Communication Competence Self-Report measure was used to measure communication competence among the respondents, with a Cronbach alpha of .75. To measure sex-role orientation, the Bem (1974) Sex-Role Inventory achieved Cronbach alphas of .89 and .86 for masculinity and femininity, respectively. Finally, to measure motives, Steers & Braunstein’s (1976) Manifest Needs Questionnaire was applied, attaining receiving Cronbach alphas of .68 for relationship needs and .64 for competition needs.

The researcher employed the Pearson product-moment correlation to examine relationships among the variables. T-values were used in the case of minority status. Additionally, multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the variables’ effects on contributions to decision-making, and to assess interactions with minority status.

The study findings germane to this topic denoted that having minority status meant a reduced level of group contribution ($r = -.40$; $t = 28.94$; $p < .001$). Additional findings indicated that personality variables influenced minority performance in groups, perhaps a stronger predictor than minority status in isolation ($r = .26$; $p < .10$). Minorities reported significantly less ability to communicate with others ($r = -.28$).

In a later quantitative, correlational study, Robertson and Kwong (1994) researched the nature of the relationship between membership diversity and

council functioning. A number of schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) served as the sample for this study ($n = 57$). After sending a survey to all members of leadership councils at 156 LAUSD schools, only the schools that returned surveys comprising at least 75% of their council members were included in the sample.

The researcher-designed survey consisted of 126 items, using a 4-point, Likert-type scale for five scales focusing on operations of the leadership council. Reliability coefficients were calculated for each scale: (a) decision-making effectiveness obtained a .74; (b) problem-solving effectiveness obtained a .72; (c) noneducator involvement obtained a .75; (d) council effectiveness received a .86; and (e) council ineffectiveness received a .55. (Noticeably, the council ineffectiveness scale received a low interrater reliability.)

The independent predictor variables for this study were: (a) gender (male, female - .5 was subtracted from percentage of men or women on the council whichever was highest); (b) ethnicity (white, Hispanic, African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander); (c) time on council (less than one year, one to two years, over two years); (d) district tenure (less than five years, five to nine years, nine to fifteen years, more than fifteen years); and (e) role (principal, teacher, classified personnel, parent or community member, student).

The dependent variables for the study were the various measures of characteristics of the functioning of leadership councils at the schools: (a) decision-making effectiveness (decisions by consensus, members have equal opportunity to participate, sufficient time at meetings for proper function,

decisions made in timely fashion, new issues were presented clearly, council informed parents of school goals and activities); (b) problem-solving effectiveness (items discussed with constituent groups before decisions made, background information researched on school operations, work toward problem solutions, work cooperatively, seek out resources needed); (c) noneducator involvement (parents' ideas influence decisions, parents self-assigned to council tasks, community members involved in school activities, parent/community involvement increased since council formation, community influences decisions, school staff recognizes parent contributions); (d) council effectiveness (meetings are valuable in regard to time and energy, consensus was most effective as a decision-making form, quality of decisions increased since council formation, council provided most effective form of leadership, happy with decisions in staff development, goals achieved without SDM/SBM, positive impact of SDM/SBM, staff members appreciated council's contribution, happy with council decisions in scheduling of school activities, council instrumental in resolving school problems, SDM/SBM had potential to make positive impact on school); and (e) council ineffectiveness (important decisions made before council meets, decisions dominated by a few members, principal had most influence at council meetings, council had created new problems at school).

The researchers employed multiple regression to analyze the relationships between the five predictor variables and the five dependent variables, noting that higher scores indicate less diversity. Germane findings from the study indicate that council diversity accounted for 43% of the variance in noneducator

involvement ($p < .01$). Significance was also obtained with the measures of role and district tenure ($p < .05$), but in the opposite direction. This phenomenon expressed that greater diversity in council member roles was associated with increased involvement by noneducator members, but involvement decreased when experience in the district became more diverse. Council decision-making tended to be better when there was more heterogeneity of roles held ($p < .01$) with 28% of the variance explained.

Implications for this study were that greater heterogeneity with regard to experience had a negative effect on the group dynamics, but not on the quality of outcomes for the council. This implied that although council diversity impacts communication within the group, the council could still function and effectively achieve its goals for the school.

Carr (1995a; 1995b) conducted a qualitative, six-month longitudinal study for the purpose of examining attendance data and interview data as they relate to race, gender, and class differences among the parent participants on school change teams. This study was a follow-up research project that emanated from a previous study (Carr, 1994) where the purpose was to apply a model for stakeholder member selection for such teams (Carr & Reigeluth, 1993). The study sample were middle schools ($n = 6$) in a major, urban midwestern city school district, she named "MidWest" district. The sample was purposive, being chosen from among twelve schools to compare community participation and membership trends over several sites. In the sampling procedure, enrollment

size, relative advantage of the population, minority percentage, and staff size were all considered.

Interview and observation methods were employed to collect data from principals, teachers, PTA leaders, and advisory committee meetings. Follow-up phone and personal interviews were conducted with 40% of the parents, particularly focused on minority parents, due to high attrition rates among those members of the advisory councils. Although no list of actual research questions emerged from the article, the questions centered around why members attended meetings or not, why members participated in meetings or not, perceptions of team power, positive and negative team member characteristics, and aspects of the experience that would draw parents to more meetings.

The researcher proposed no specific methods of data analyses, an obvious limitation. The pertinent findings of the study expressed that the attrition rates, participation rates, and attendance rates among minority participants were lower than non-minority participants. While in all six schools the African-American student population approximated 48%, minority parent participation on advisory councils reached a high of only 31%. Additionally, a lack of male participation was discovered from the data review (fathers tended to participate only when substantial power was authorized for the team). The researcher cited specific findings from the respondents looking at obstacles schools and parents faced that prohibited effective council implementation. These included work and family obligations, lack of information from schools, child care, and illness, with the primary obstacle listed as work priorities and obligations.

The researcher also posited obstacles erected by schools, such as selection criteria, administrators' attitudes (lack of sensitive to minority "feelings"), and meeting scheduling.

Implications for the study suggested were that a focus on "available parents" increased the inadequate feelings among lower-class populations who in many cases worked two jobs to survive. This tended to promote the status quo and current system operations. Implications for this study seemed to suggest a deeper focus on the perceptions of minority school council members and how efficacious they perceived their service and interactions on the council tended to be.

Limitations included the fact that data were not analyzed by a specific method. Additionally the author had a tendency to go back and forth between the original study and the current study, although they did complement one another and the conclusions were corroborated.

Carr (1996) also examined the participation, as well as the perceptions about participation, of minority representatives on three school councils in Kentucky. Using qualitative, naturalistic inquiry via case study and interview methodology, schools with unusually high minority participation were identified, school principals were interviewed, and parents ($n = 8$) were interviewed for the project (four elementary level parents, three middle school level parents, one high school level parent). Citing the likelihood of having minority council representatives available, the schools were located in urban settings of Louisville and Lexington.

After general demographic information was collected, a series of open-ended questions were asked, with responses causing additional follow-up questions to be asked. Inter-rater reliability data were not reported. The interviews were transcribed and content analyzed twice [inductive analysis] with nine codes emerging from the data.

Findings included that minority parents perceived a lack of educational knowledge, expertise, or personal confidence in assisting with decision-making which kept most parents from participating in school councils. Additionally, time was cited as a reason for non-participation. Perceptual racism and classism were significant findings, while personal invitation was often cited as an important mechanism for gaining more participation. Finally, a lack of knowledge about the school council was listed, but a relatively lower number of respondents expressed that as a reason for non-participation on school councils.

The author listed limitations of generalizing from a qualitative study and of not being an African-American or even a parent of school-aged children. Implications for this study outline a concern of elitism for school council membership, but moreover that a personal invitation to serve on school councils may enhance or increase minority participation on school-based decision-making councils.

Carr and Wilson (1997) undertook a secondary study of data from the National Commission on Children (1991) survey. The original survey purpose was to “gather direct, up-to-date, and nationally representative data on the current state of family life, the quality of relationships between parents and their

children and their interactions with the major institutions affecting the family.”

The survey's focus was on evidentiary shifts in family life and their relationship to education. The researchers' purposes in re-analyzing the data were to place it in context for educators who were interested in what moves people to action in school participation. Several of the survey items would help others to understand the interactions of race, class, and gender in terms of impact on school participation.

The researchers discussed background information on the initial survey instrument. Conducted nationally by phone with 1738 respondents, an estimated response rate of 71% was stated, based upon contact rate, cooperation rate, and completion rate. Random sampling by telephone numbers for the general population produced the sample for the study. Special considerations ensured that African-American and Hispanic populations were randomly drawn. This was done through supplemental samples of telephone numbers screened for eligibility by race.

Only a few of the original questions were used in the secondary analysis, though no additional piloting or reliability checks seemed to have been conducted, since only parts of the initial instrument were utilized in the study. The questions used were clustered around several independent and dependent variables. The independent variables for the study were: (a) race, (b) income, (c) relative advantage/disadvantage, (d) parental education level, (e) public versus private school enrollment, and (f) respondents' perceptions of their own neighborhood. The hypotheses emerged that these independent variables

impacted these dependent variables: (a) school participation, (b) feelings of empowerment, (c) expectations of schools, and (d) satisfaction with schools.

A re-coding of the original data occurred for like directionality of the variables of interest. Four scales emerged around the dependent variables: (a) school participation, (b) parent efficacy or perceptions of personal control, (c) school satisfaction, and (d) parent expectations. For analyses of these scales, a series of correlations, scale correlations, and stepwise regressions were conducted.

Salient findings included that there existed a clear correlation between race and indicators of relative advantage/disadvantage. A positive relationship between African-American respondents and food stamp ($r = .17; p = .000$), or Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) support ($r = .18; p = .000$), emerged from the analysis. Conversely, a negative relationship occurred between European American respondents and the use of food stamps ($r = -.22; p = .000$) or AFDC support ($r = -.20; p = .000$).

Interestingly, African-American parents indicated some contact with a teacher in the past year ($r = .12; p = .000$). Educational level exhibited the strongest relationship to the measures of school participation, such as PTA meetings or extra-curricular activities. Educational level was correlated with helping the child with homework ($r = .14; p = .000$), as was the educational level of the spouse ($r = .12; p = .000$). Further, educational level was correlated with the likelihood of having had contact with a teacher in the past year ($r = .18; p =$

.000), the likelihood of having attended a PTA meeting ($r = .14$; $p = .000$), and the likelihood of having attended an extracurricular school activity ($r = .25$; $p = .000$).

Additional findings, from the scale correlations, included a positive relationship between the respondents' feelings of efficacy and school participation ($r = .24$; $p = .000$) and between academic expectations and school participation ($r = .20$; $p = .000$). A small positive relationship emerged between school satisfaction and school participation ($r = .09$; $p = .001$). The stepwise regression results revealed two significant predictors of school participation: academic expectations of the parent and the parent sense of efficacy ($F = 61.56$, $r^2 = .08$; $p < .0001$). When combined educational level of the spouse was considered, the regression results revealed a stronger prediction level ($F = 45.65$; $r^2 = .12$; $p < .0001$).

Limitations of the study included a lack of strength for the regressions, and vague questions in the survey, which limited some analysis. For instance, just having contact with a teacher did not give enough information, as the contact may have been positive or negative. In addition, some questions were simply yes-no type questions on the original survey, indicating that some parents may have attended several meetings, while others attended only a few.

Implications included the unacceptability of suggesting that it was because of being poor or African American that these populations did not participate in schools. For example, instead of race, differences in culture and upbringing often caused eligible recipients not to accept food stamps or AFDC assistance. Implications for this study include the necessity for determining reasons for the

participation, or lack thereof, for minority members who serve on school councils, and the perceptions they have toward their service.

Delgado-Gaitan (1991) examined parent-involvement activities in a southern California school district as they encouraged isolated Spanish-speaking parents to become more involved in their children's schooling. The study took place over a four-year period of time. The researcher suggested that power was the undergirding force required from parents to deal with schools, departing from the deficit model which had portrayed the involvement of parents in the past. Describing power as the capacity to produce intended, foreseen, and unforeseen effects on others to accomplish results on behalf of oneself (Barr, 1989; Dahl, 1961; Delgado-Gaitan, 1990), Delgado-Gaitan (1991) outlined the Carpinteria case study describing how the parent-involvement process became one of shared power between families and schools, which led to the empowerment of the Latino community.

Carpinteria, California, was described as a community about 25 miles south of Santa Barbara, and one which was ethnically segregated before the late 1950s and early 1960s. One school there was designated as the Mexican school. Using ethnographic methodology, interviews were conducted with parents, teachers, and administrators who worked with Mexican-American, Spanish-speaking children and their parents. Observations of parent-involvement activities were conducted. In all, a total of 157 activities were observed that involved parents and teachers over a four-year period. Each school in the district had a school-site council comprised of elected parent

representatives. These bodies were charged with making decisions about the school budget, fundraising, and curriculum decisions.

Pertinent findings showed that the preschool teacher worked toward making parents co-teachers, using the family's native language to educate parents about the school's curriculum. Parents who had been invited to meetings, but did not attend, claimed the meetings were deemed unimportant or unnecessary, noting their long hours at work precluded their participation. Three basic dimensions of power emerged from parent involvement in Carpinteria which the researcher defines as: (a) conventional, (b) nonconventional, and (c) Committee for Latin Parents (COPLA). The conventional parent-involvement activities were a domination of power on the district's part to make the family conform to the school, while the non-conventional activities in parent involvement represented power sharing on the district's part, although the agendas were set by school officials. Finally, the third model of parent participation was the autonomous groups of parents (COPLA) who set their own agendas and contexts, inviting school personnel to share decision-making with them.

Lareau and Horvat (1999) initiated a case study of parent involvement with their third-grade children in "Lawrence" school district where 48% of the students were of minority descent, while 40% were classified as low income (eligibility for the free lunch program or receiving public assistance). The study site was described as a school district in a small Midwestern town with a populace of about 25,000. The study took place at Quigley Elementary, where participant-observation was employed in each of two third-grade classrooms twice a week

from September to December 1989. Other observations were conducted less frequently from January to June 1990.

A student sample ($n = 24$) was chosen for in-depth, two-hour parent interviews. In the sample were 12 white children and 12 black children. The students themselves were not formally interviewed. Forty parents and nine educators were interviewed, along with twenty-six other community members and city officials who spoke of the broader racial context in Lawrence. The researchers spent a week in the library reading the newspaper articles on racial issues and tensions in the schools from 1950 to 1990. Information was also gleaned from parent interviews when they, as children, watched and experienced legalized racial discrimination and the resistance offered by institutional officials to end it.

The researchers reviewed the research about the concept of how schools replicated existing social inequalities, and how they are perpetuated in schools, especially in regard to class differences. The authors discussed cultural and social resources, or capital, that facilitated parents' compliance with dominant standards in school interactions. Cultural capital was inclusive of parents' large vocabularies, sense of entitlement to interact with teachers as equals, time, transportation, and child-care arrangements to attend school events during the school day. Social capital included social networks with other parents of the school community who offered informal information concerning the teachers. In addition, the authors proposed that being white was a cultural resource that white parents drew upon, though (sometimes) unwittingly, in school negotiations.

Conversely, blacks did not have that cultural resource, noting that black parents could not presume or trust that their children would be fairly treated in school, making it more difficult for the parents' compliance with desirable family-school relationships as defined by educators.

Although the authors did not report an actual method for analyzing the findings, "thick descriptions" of the respondents' discourse were reported in the article, suggesting a qualitative method was employed. Results indicated that the educators perceived that they welcomed parental involvement enthusiastically, believing their requests were neutral, efficient, and designed to promote higher levels of achievement. Specifically, educators wanted parents to be positive, supportive, and trusting of their judgments and assessments. Findings indicated that as long as parents were deferential to educators, they were considered supportive. If the interactions involved parents who expressed concern through anger or criticism, acting upon their understanding of the broader context of racial relations in the school, it was deemed unacceptable and destructive to educators. For instance, black parents perceived, as indicated by the field notes, that many holidays were celebrated in the school, but Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was downplayed. Some white parents agreed that there were racial problems, but did not express comfort in discussing such issues with other white parents because of known feelings of prejudice.

The authors concluded that race was independent of the power of class, noting that although middle-class black families benefited from that position, they

were still faced with an institutional setting that provided privileges, implicitly and invisibly, white families.

Describing reform in Chicago, Epstein (1989) expressed that teachers tended to possess negative attitudes to parents, perpetuating the cycle of disadvantage for minority and working-class children. That phenomenon added to the problem of this research in that school personnel tended to consider many families as “hard to reach,” when in fact they needed to know more about their role, rights, and responsibilities in the education of their children (Bermudez, 1993). Referring to involvement of minorities in school councils in Britain and Chicago, Blackledge (1995) posited that schools controlled by majority culture bureaucracies and staffed by teachers, whose culture was not that of the local community, prevented the progress of parents and community initiating school reforms.

Comer (1984) emphasized the need, but also the difficulty, of establishing good home-school relationships, especially in schools serving low-income, new immigrant, and minority groups with a stress history (i.e., Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians). He described the larger society as expecting the attitudes and performances from those groups to be beneficial to it (the larger society). In various ways (economic/political opportunities, media, public officials, and individual attitudes and performances), the larger society sent messages to minority groups about their rights to belong, their value, and their worth in the larger society. According to Comer, the messages positively or adversely affected the ability of the groups to identify with the attitudes, values, and ways of

the larger society. Comer concluded that often negative and harmful messages were sent to the most vulnerable members of society, identifying Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians.

Comer (1984) posited that very little attention was paid to the type of governance and management at the school building level needed to produce a school climate to facilitate teaching and learning. Compared with the societal-school relationships (e.g., parent respect of education and for educators) that naturally existed in society before World War II, it had become obligatory and necessary to systematically create such a climate.

Indicative of that creation, Comer (1984) described a 1968 school improvement plan with the New Haven School system [now renowned as the Comer model]. The model was implemented to address and to reduce the negative impact of change, social stratification, and conflict and distrust between home and school. The children in the two elementary project schools had low achievement in reading and math, low student and staff attendance records, and many serious behavior problems.

Four critical elements comprised the model: (a) representative governance and management body (principal, parents, teachers, aides, support staff); (b) parent program; (c) support staff or mental health team program; and (d) staff and curriculum development program.

Comer (1984) noted that the representative governance and management body coordinated the program at the building level. Each representative group selected its own representatives, resulting in the phenomenon that all adults in

the school felt represented in the decision-making process. The parental involvement component transmitted a good feeling about the school to other parents and community members.

Salient results of the project indicated that behavior problems were reduced and relationships were improved between parents and staff, focusing energy for planning and program implementation, instead of resolving conflicts between them. Comer (1984) concluded that the program systematically restored the pre-World War II climate of home-school relationships. In addition, he noted that parent participation was important for improving opportunities for members of low-income communities as well as for improving school operations and test scores.

Implications for this study indicate that there is a need to gauge, even if through self-report, whether school council members perceive their role on the school council as one of promoting and advancing the achievement of all students, including students of color.

To summarize, these studies revealed that minorities tend to display a lower level of communication in council deliberations. Conversely, one study expressed that greater diversity affected greater parent involvement, while greater heterogeneity in council experience negatively affected dynamics of the group. Minority parents expressed a lack of educational savvy or confidence with decision-making. Racism and classism emerged as constructs that precluded and affected minority involvement in schools. Previous discriminatory actions from past years also affected participation. Finally, racial culture, as compared to

race inherently, emanated as a driving force between blacks and whites in school settings. Two significant predictors of school participation emerged in the findings: parents' academic expectations and parents' sense of efficacy (Epstein, 1987; Chavkin, 1989; Jones, 1995; Norwood & Atkinson, 1997; Reitzug & Cross, 1994; Brown & Miller, 1998; Etheridge & Hall, 1994; Kirchmeyer, 1993; Carr, 1995a, 1995b; Carr, 1996; Carr & Wilson, 1997; Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; Lareau & Horvat, 1999).

In consonance with the ultimate goal of the Kentucky Education Reform Act, Farkas and Johnson (1999) proposed that, for African-American parents, the most important goal they seek is academic achievement for their children.

Research Problem

School-based decision-making has been a mainstay in the educational reform movement. It has remained thus to forward the premise that those closest to the results of decisions should be responsible for making the decisions at the school level. Although research indicated the underlying basis for most models of school-based decision-making is to improve student achievement, no studies shared this phenomenon as positively correlated between the two ideas. Bauch and Goldring (1996) concluded that it seemed that neither teacher decision-making nor parent control of schooling policies and functions alone would provide the desired improvement in student achievement.

Principals and administrators indicated concerns about loss of power as a result of the implementation of school-based decision-making. However, they

were able to determine many aspects of the process to be beneficial, if time-consuming. In addition, concerns about accountability emerged during the studies involving principals. Principals held the belief that all stakeholders involved in the process should be made accountable for student results.

Further, the research iterated that parents have not always been invited to participate in the SBDM process, nor always comfortable participating in educational deliberations, while students, the ultimate focus of school-based decision-making councils, expressed ambivalent perceptions about their inclusion in the decision-making process. Because of this, non-participation from these groups has grown, even to the point that in some ways the push for more involvement and participation is all but non-existent.

The research suggested that ethnic minority cultures have perceived that their opinions and input are not accepted by the majority culture, leading to a void in minority influence on school council decision-making. To this end, this research study focused on determining the perceptions of, and toward, the minority members of school based decision-making councils in schools in Western Kentucky's Region 1 and Region 2 school districts.

The expectation for equal educational opportunity in Kentucky is strengthened by the legal requirement for the school-based decision-making initiative to employ minority representation in its focus upon student achievement. This, in effect, offers all stakeholders a place at the table to impact school governance. The problem poses the question: Are minority school council members empowered, via their service in school decision making, to advocate

for their school's children as the quest for achievement increases in urgency? It is necessary to explore and seek to understand the perceptions held by minority and non-minority school council members concerning school policies and operations during their tenure of service. Considering that minority school council members tend to perceive that their efforts on the council are not valued, while the opposite is true for non-minority members, (Laureau & Horvat, 1999), and that minority members perhaps perceive they are recruited to serve only due to the fact there is a law regulating minority representation on school-based decision-making councils, while the opposite is true for non-minority members, the researcher sought answers to whether a significant perceptual difference existed between minority and non-minority council members regarding: (a) their perceptions of the impact of school-based councils, and (b) their personal council experiences.

Essentially, the problem was that all council members, as school-based decision-makers, need to perceive themselves as being empowered to be advocates for students, but until this study, there had been little investigation into those perceptions. In order to maximize the effectiveness of councils, as well as to fully implement the Kentucky 8% law in the spirit in which it was intended, minority members – whether they are principals, teachers, or parents – must also perceive that they are enfranchised and that their service is efficacious as interactions, deliberations, and decisions occur. This study seeks to explore these perceptions.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

School-based decision-making was implemented for all but a few schools in Kentucky in July 1996. Due to minority underrepresentation, minority membership was mandated by the Kentucky legislature. This exploratory research examined the perceptions held by minority and non-minority school-based decision-making council members regarding council impact and personal experience. The study received Human Studies approval from the University of Louisville as #344.04 and Western Kentucky University as #HS04-097R.

The purpose of this study was to investigate how school-based council members serving under the Kentucky model of school-based decision-making perceived the impact of the council's actions on the school and its students, as well as whether differences existed between minority and non-minority members regarding their personal council experiences.

Essentially, the problem was that all council members, as school-based decision-makers, needed to perceive themselves as being empowered to be advocates for students, but until this study, there had been little investigation into those perceptions. In order to maximize the effectiveness of councils, as well as to fully implement the Kentucky 8% law in the spirit in which it was intended, minority members – whether they are principals, teachers, or parents – must also

perceive that they are enfranchised and that their service is efficacious as interactions, deliberations, and decisions occur. This study sought to explore these perceptions.

The comprehensive research questions for the study were:

(1) Do council members perceive that actions of the council impact the school and its students?

(2) Do council members perceive their participation on the council to be a positive experience as they interact with each other during deliberations and decision-making?

(3) Do minority council members sense that they are empowered and efficacious and do their perceptions differ significantly from the perceptions of non-minority council members?

Study Design

The study design was quantitative and descriptive, with some qualitative aspects. The purpose of the qualitative data collection was to provide depth and context that may not be possible with the collection of only quantitative data.

Participants

The population for the study were 116 school-based decision-making councils in the former Region 1 and Region 2 areas of Kentucky. The requirements for having minority representation and a traditional council membership constituted eligibility for inclusion in the study. Kentucky law

mandates that schools that have an 8% or more minority student population must have minority representation on the school council. Traditional council membership refers to the normal, state-mandated members: principal, teachers, and parents. While state law allowed waivers for an alternate council make-up, these role groups were not included in the population.

The sample ($n = 720$) for the study was principals, teachers, and parents in western Kentucky's Region 1 and Region 2 schools serving on school-based decision-making (SBDM) councils during the 2004-05 school year. See Appendix H for a map identifying the population regions. The sample was purposefully selected to obtain responses from participants in areas where a significant number of minority persons resided, excluding the main urban centers of Kentucky (Jefferson County and Fayette County). The selected areas comprised such a sample.

The participants were selected for being council members from schools having at least an 8% minority student enrollment. In some cases, a special election had to be held to acquire minority representation if not occurring in the original election process. As a result, some school councils had more than six members, but were still considered traditional councils made up of the principal, teachers, and parents. All members of the school councils were provided the *SBDM Perceptions Survey Instrument* to ascertain their perceptions for the study.

Procedures

Surveys were distributed by mail, courier, and/or internal district/school delivery to all school-based council members in each sampled school. Surveys were assigned an identification code for the researcher's purposes only. Upon receipt of the returned surveys, responses were coded and checked to minimize errors. Respondents who denoted minority status were isolated for additional follow-up review, as applicable, a procedure expected to increase the validity and reliability of the collected data. Using the survey as the primary tool for data collection as proposed by Babbie (1990), the generalizability was enhanced to make inferences about characteristics, behaviors, and attitudes of the study population. Other advantages of the survey approach concerned the economy of the design, possibility for rapid-turn around in the data collection time, and the ability to identify attributes of a population from a small cadre of individuals (Fowler, 1988).

Each school council member in the study population received the questionnaire with an attached cover letter. The cover letter had completion instructions to fill out and return the survey. Expectations were that respondents comprised sufficient numbers of male and female, non-minority and minority, and new and experienced council members. Filling out and returning the survey constituted informed consent and willingness to participate in the research study. Confidentiality was guaranteed to the extent permitted by law to encourage more candid responses from the participated. Respondents were also asked to protect their own confidentiality until the survey was returned to the researcher.

The process of data collection was initiated via an introductory written communication to superintendents in the sample by the researcher. This correspondence urged the superintendents to permit and to encourage their eligible district schools to participate. A request for a response designating participation in the study was sent or forwarded to the researcher. The researcher provided packets to the superintendents at the regional cooperative meetings either in person or through a representative of the Kentucky Department of Education, assigned to the sampled regions. Packets included approval letters for superintendents' and principals' signatures, along with individual school packets of the cover letter, survey instructions and return procedures, and survey instruments. See Appendixes A-G.

The proposed method of collection allowed empirical data relevant to the variables considered to be properly collected, described, and analyzed. The method was consistent with Marshall and Rossman's (1995) definition of descriptive surveys. Creswell (1994) posited that descriptive survey research was appropriate for analysis of attribute and attitude variables. Fowler (1988) defined descriptive research as studies designed to glean data concerning the current state or nature of a situation as it existed at the time juncture of the study.

A survey response rate of 60% or more was expected, as suggested by Babbie (1990), to be able to make generalizations from the analysis. The researcher used direct contact, e-mail, telephone calls, and regular mail to superintendents and principals to increase the likelihood of receiving this rate of return.

Instrumentation

Data used to address the research questions were collected using a researcher-designed, self-report survey instrument. The *SBDM Perceptions Survey Instrument* (see Appendix B) was designed to provide primarily quantitative (although a qualitative component was included) information on: (a) council member perceptions regarding the impact of the council's actions on the school and its students, and (b) council member perceptions regarding their own personal experience on the council. Demographic variables were included to allow for hypothesis-testing for differences between groups on select survey items. A thorough review of the literature did not provide an established instrument to measure the variables necessary for this study.

The instrument employed a five-point, Likert-type scale designed for participants to denote their responses (5 = *strongly agree*; 1 = *strongly disagree*). The closed-ended design gave the respondents fixed choices in answering and allowed the respondents to easily indicate their choice. In addition, an open-ended comments/follow-up section was provided, so that respondents could elaborate on any survey item (Vierra, Pollock, & Golez, 1998).

In addition to a section requesting demographic information, there were two main sections in the survey. The first designed to measure general perceptions about the efficacy of the council's impact on the school and its students, offered the following statements to which subjects were asked to respond (5 = *strongly agree*; 1 = *strongly disagree*):

1. I understand the purpose for having SBDM councils in Kentucky schools.
2. I have a favorable opinion of the SBDM process overall.
3. School-based decision-making affects student achievement.
4. Council decisions are made by consensus.
5. As a member of the council, my input has an impact on the operations and policies of the school.
6. There is difficulty obtaining minority members to serve on the school council.
7. My service on the council came about as a result of being recruited to serve.
8. Minority representation on the council would be actively pursued without the 8% law.

The second major section of the survey, designed to measure the perceptions of council members' interaction with the rest of the council, offered the following statements to which subjects were asked to respond (5 = *strongly agree*; 1 = *strongly disagree*):

9. My experiences as a school council member have generally been positive.
10. My presence on the school council is desired.
11. I have a positive level of interaction with other council members.
12. There have been instances where my contributions were not welcomed or valued.

13. My relationship with the school council chairperson has been positive.

14. Issues have arisen where I openly expressed disagreement with the council's direction.

15. My opinions are actively solicited on all school council related issues.

16. On controversial issues, my interactions with other council members were positive.

17. My input specifically affects minority student achievement.

18. My input impacts minority issues in the school that probably would not be addressed if there was no minority membership on the council.

19. My contributions to the discussion of issues have been received favorably by the group.

20. My ideas are valued in the decision-making process.

A matrix delineating specific survey items used to investigate each of the overarching research questions is presented in Table 1. Survey questions in the general category pertained to typical school-based decision-making issues. Based upon Kentucky law, the questions considered the perceptions of the impact school councils have on school operations and students. The interaction category consisted of questions relating to council members' perceptions of their interactions during deliberations and decision-making.

Table 1

Research Question Matrix

<p><i>G = General</i> <i>I = Interaction</i></p>	<p>(1) Do council members perceive that actions of the council impact the school and its students?</p>	<p>(2) Do council members perceive their participation on the council to be a positive experience as they interact with each other during deliberations and decision-making?</p>	<p>(3) Do minority council members sense that they are empowered and efficacious and do their perceptions differ significantly from the perceptions of non-minority council members?</p>
<p>G1. I understand the purpose for having SBDM councils in Kentucky schools.</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>X</p>
<p>G2. I have a favorable opinion of the SBDM process overall.</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>G3. School-based decision-making affects student achievement.</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>X</p>
<p>G4. Council decisions are made by consensus.</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>G5. As a member of the council, my input has an impact on the operations and policies of the school.</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>X</p>
<p>G6. There is difficulty obtaining minority members to serve on the council.</p>			<p>X</p>
<p>I7. My service on the council came about as a result of being recruited to serve.</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>X</p>
<p>I8. Minority representation on the council would be actively pursued without the 8% law.</p>			<p>X</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Research Question Matrix

<p><i>G = General</i> <i>I = Interaction</i></p>	<p>(1) Do council members perceive that actions of the council impact the school and its students?</p>	<p>(2) Do council members perceive their participation on the council to be a positive experience as they interact with each other during deliberations and decision-making?</p>	<p>(3) Do minority council members sense that they are empowered and efficacious and do their perceptions differ significantly from the perceptions of non-minority council members?</p>
<p>I9. My experiences as a school council member have generally been positive.</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>I10. My presence on the school council is desired.</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>I11. I have a positive level of interaction with other council members.</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>I12. There have been instances where my contributions were not welcomed or valued.</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>I13. My relationship with the school council chairperson has been positive.</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>I14. Issues have arisen where I openly expressed disagreement with the council's direction.</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>I15. My opinions are actively solicited on all school council related issues.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Research Question Matrix

<i>G = General</i> <i>I = Interaction</i>	(1) Do council members perceive that actions of the council impact the school and its students?	(2) Do council members perceive their participation on the council to be a positive experience as they interact with each other during deliberations and decision-making?	(3) Do minority council members sense that they are empowered and efficacious and do their perceptions differ significantly from the perceptions of non-minority council members?
I16. On controversial issues, my interactions with other council members were positive.		X	X
I17. My input specifically impacts minority student achievement.	X		X
M18. My input impacts other minority issues in the school that probably would not be addressed if there was no minority membership on the council.	X		X
M19. My contributions to the discussion of issues have been favorably received by the group.		X	X
M20. My ideas are valued in the decision-making process.		X	X

Validity

To enhance instrument validity and provide insight, a panel of experts reviewed the survey. The panel included experts in the Sociology Department of Western Kentucky University and present and former school council members of different ethnicities. Only some minor clarifications in terminology were considered for instrument revision.

A field test was performed to further enhance the validity of the instrument, to offer insight on the improvement of questions, formats, and scales, and to test for reliability.

Since the responses from minority council members were limited, additional responses from council members of minority descent were surveyed for the pilot. All council members in the target sample were surveyed and demographics of the study population were recorded and summarized.

The pilot study commenced at an elementary school and a middle school in adjacent western Kentucky counties. The additional minority responses were also obtained from the school districts in the target population. The districts were purposefully selected for the pilot study due to their proximity and accessibility, and because those councils met the criteria, (i.e., governance by traditional council membership and the requirement to have minority representation). The purposeful approach was taken for the researcher to attain the goal of gaining an understanding of the phenomenon as explained by a group of people who are carefully selected (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

Reliability

Using the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a Cronbach coefficient ($\alpha = .90$) was obtained to ascertain the reliability of the survey instrument. Nunnally & Bernstein (1984) recommended a minimum reliability Cronbach alpha value of .60.

Demographic Variables

In addition to the twenty survey items measuring the perceptions of SBDM council members (as identified in the Instrumentation section), demographic variables assessing council member and school characteristics were also measured.

The purpose of this study was to investigate how school-based council members serving under the Kentucky model of school-based decision-making perceived the impact of the council's actions on the school and its students, as well as whether differences exist between minority and non-minority members regarding their personal council experiences.

Table 1 presents the research questions and how they were addressed by the questions on the survey instrument.

Variables Assessing Respondent Characteristics

Variables measuring demographic characteristics of council members were as follows:

1. Gender
2. Age
3. Race
4. Role on the school council
5. Marital status
6. Council experience (new or previous service)
7. Council membership (length of service)
8. Occupation

9. Number of dependent children
10. Income level

Variables Assessing School Characteristics

Variables measuring demographic characteristics of the schools were as follows:

1. Grade level (elementary, middle, high school)
2. Student population
3. Percentage of minority students
4. Percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch
5. CATS accountability status (rewards, progressing, assistance)
6. Number of certified staff
7. Number of classified staff
8. Number of minority certified staff
9. Number of minority classified staff

Data Analysis

The collected data were screened before analysis. The first inspection involved checking for input accuracy, evaluating any missing data that may render the survey unusable. Surveys having significant missing data were disqualified. Demographic information was then compiled and reported.

In order to address the three research questions, the data were analyzed as follows:

Research Question 1. Do council members feel that the actions of the council impact the school and its students? These opinions were identified

based on responses to a series of efficacy-related items on the survey instrument. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze and summarize the results of the seven survey items designed to address this research question pertaining to perceived council efficacy.

Research Question 2. Do council members perceive their participation on the council to be a positive experience as they interact with each other during deliberations and decision-making? These attitudes were obtained from responses provided on the series of experience-related items on the survey instrument. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze and summarize the results of the twelve survey items designed to address this research question pertaining to council members' perceptions of their personal council experiences.

Research Question 3. Do minority council members sense that they are empowered and efficacious and do their perceptions differ significantly from the perceptions of non-minority council members? Differences between these two groups of respondents were examined statistically for all items on the survey instrument. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the following research hypothesis for each of the 20 survey items: There will be a statistically significant difference between the responses for minority council members as compared to non-minority council members.

The alpha level was set at .05, denoting a 5% chance of a Type I error by rejecting the null hypothesis, and the SPSS *p*-value was used to determine statistical significance between the two categories of the independent variable. The null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis for results

at $p < .05$ (Vierra, Pollock, & Golez, 1998). For the qualitative aspect of the study, data were acquired through self-reported comments offered by the respondents. Inductive analysis was used for those open-ended responses to obtain themes emerging from the data (Vierra, Pollock, & Golez, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results, including discussion, of the planned analyses of the data collected from the *SBDM Perceptions Survey Instrument*.

This chapter is divided into five sections: a demographic profile of the respondents; the results and comprehensive discussion of each of the three research questions; and finally, selected qualitative data from the open-ended survey items are presented and discussed to provide further insight into the perceived efficacy and personal experiences of school-based decision-making council members.

Demographic Profile

A summary of the demographic characteristics is reported in Tables 2 and 3. Data were collected from 50% of the respondents ($n = 360$). Of the respondents who reported gender, 77% were female, while 22% were male. The ethnic status of the sample population included 81% of the respondents reporting non-minority status and 17% reporting minority status.

Teachers comprised the largest number of respondents (57%), which was expected, in general, since this role group makes up one-half of a council's

membership, followed by parents (29%) whose role group makes up one-third of a council's membership. Finally, principals (12%) comprised one-sixth of a council's membership. Vacancies in council positions at the time of the survey or non-returns may account for different ratios between council make-up by statute and the actual respondent numbers. Due to rounding and in some cases non-response to particular survey questions, percentages may not equal 100% in a given variable.

Respondents' age was reported in ranges with the majority of the respondents reporting the range of 36-45 (36%). The next highest range reported was 46-55 (31%), followed by the reporting age range of 26-35 (28%). The two outlying ranges, 18-25 and 55 or above comprised 1% and 3% respectively. Overall, these outliers totaled less than 4% of the sample population.

Table 2

Demographic Profile

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Council Role		
Principals	42	12
Teachers	206	57
Parents	106	29
Total	354	98
Age (in range)		
18-25	3	1
26-35	101	28
36-45	131	36
46-55	113	31
55 or above	11	3
Total	359	99
Gender		
Male	80	22
Female	278	77
Total	358	99
Minority Status		
Minority	62	17
Non-Minority	290	81
Total	352	98

Across the sampled regions, 57% of the respondents were from Region 1 and 43% of the respondents were from Region 2. Elementary schools represented 66% of the sample, followed by high schools at 18% and middle schools at 15%, respectively.

Council experience was defined as having served as a member of a school-based decision making (SBDM) council prior to the present term of service as compared to this term of service being the first. The experience level

of council members was reported as 69% experienced members and 31% new members. Council membership was defined as how many years the person had served on the school council. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents reported 2 years or more, while 32% of them reported 0-1 year of school council service.

Table 3
School Variable Profile

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Region		
Region 1	206	57
Region 2	154	43
Total	360	100
School Level		
Elementary	237	66
Middle	54	15
High	66	18
Total	357	99
Council Experience		
New Member	112	31
Experienced member	247	69
Total	359	99
Council Membership		
0-1 year	115	32
2 years or more	241	67
Total	356	99

Research Question 1

Do council members perceive that actions of the council impact the school and its students? As indicated in Chapter III, seven survey items (numbers 1, 3, 5, 7, 15, 17, & 18) were designed to address this research question regarding the perceived efficacy of an SBDM council by its members. Using SPSS, the results

were summarized and are presented in Table 4. The survey items were designed such that higher scores indicated stronger agreement with each statement.

Table 4

Dependent Variables for Research Question 1 (N = 360)

Item #	Variable	Mean	SD
1	I understand the purpose for having SBDM councils in Kentucky Schools	4.81	.44
3	School-based decision-making affects student achievement	4.45	.78
5	As a member of the council, my input has an impact on the operations and policies of the school	4.61	.68
7	My service on the council came about as a result of being recruited.	3.20	1.60
15	My opinions are actively solicited on all school council related issues	4.44	1.02
17	My input specifically impacts minority student achievement	4.72	2.37
18	My input impacts other minority issues in the school that probably would not be addressed if there were no minority membership on the council	3.22	1.55

Overall, for Research Question 1, the respondents perceived that their input favorably impacted the school and its students. By council role, principals reported the greatest efficacy on this question. From the open-ended questions on the survey, several participants responded similarly with remarks such as principals had the “majority ruling during decision-making.” In addition, one respondent expressed that “many times things are decided for you and you are

expected to agree.” Another comment noted the intent of school-based decision making but perceived that the council just goes “through the motions” with decisions being “dictated” rather than based upon “the true needs of students and teachers to improve the educational process.” One teacher council member indicated:

It can sometimes be intimidating to express views contrary to the school administration, especially since they evaluate your job performance.

Teachers were the next highest reporting a favorable level of perceived efficacy for the first research question, while parents reported the least amount of efficacy of the role groups, though still high.

Across school levels, participants from elementary schools reported the most positive perceived efficacy, with high schools reporting in second and middle schools last. Interestingly, experienced members reported a slightly lower perception of efficacy as compared to new members. The perceptions of efficacy for Question 1 by gender indicated similar perceptions for males and females.

Research Question 2

Do council members perceive their participation on the council to be a positive experience as they interact with each other during deliberations and decision-making? As indicated in Chapter III, twelve survey items (numbers 2, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, & 20) were designed to address this research question regarding perceived efficacy of the members’ interactions within the school council. Using SPSS, the results were summarized and are presented in

Table 5. The survey items were designed such that higher scores indicated stronger agreement with each statement.

Table 5

Dependent Variables for Research Question 2 (N = 360)

Item #	Variable	Mean	SD
2	I have a favorable opinion of the SBDM process overall	4.57	.68
4	Council decisions are made by consensus	4.76	.68
9	My experiences as a school council member have generally been positive	4.66	.64
10	My presence on the school council is desired	4.57	.66
11	I have a positive level of interaction with other council members	4.79	.55
12	There have been instances where my contributions were not welcomed or valued (reversed)	2.10	1.37
13	My relationship with the school council chairperson has been positive	4.73	.63
14	Issues have arisen where I openly expressed disagreement with the council's direction	3.08	1.58
15	My opinions are actively solicited on all school council related issues	4.44	1.02
16	On controversial issues, my interactions with other council members were positive	4.48	.94
19	My contributions to the discussion of issues have been favorably received by the group	4.63	.80
20	My ideas are valued in the decision-making process	4.66	.77

Overall, for Research Question 2, the responses indicated that participation on the school council was a positive experience. By council role, principals reported the greatest efficacy for this question, while teachers reported

the next highest efficacy for the question. Parents reported the least amount of efficacy of the role groups. The means for parents and teachers were very close, which supported qualitative data that a perception existed that principals had more authority on the council. Comments also included that communication was lacking between the central office leadership and the school council, that school-based decision-making was mostly “hoop jumping” or “going through the motions.” Other comments referenced a perception of intimidation to express views that went against school administration, especially since principals evaluated the teacher members of the school council.

Across school levels, high schools reported the most positive perception for Research Question 2, while elementary and middle schools both indicated the same level of positive perception.

It was expected that experienced members reported a higher perception for Research Question 2 than new members. Perceptions for Question 2 by gender indicated similar perceptions for males and females.

Across the two regions, similar perception levels emerged from the data.

Research Question 3

Do minority council members sense that they are empowered and efficacious and do their perceptions differ significantly from the perceptions of non-minority council members? Using SPSS, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to test whether statistically significant differences existed between minority and non-minority responses on the *SBDM Perceptions*

Survey Instrument. This analysis was based on the 352 respondents who denoted their ethnicity on the survey. The one-way ANOVA yielded statistically significant differences between minority versus non-minority respondents on the survey items presented in Table 6. The survey items were designed such that higher scores indicated stronger agreement with each statement. Survey questions 5, 7, 10, 11, and 17 were found to show a significantly significant difference between the responses of minority and non-minority respondents. A distribution of the study variables is presented in Table 7 which elucidate the percentages of responses given in the agree/strongly agree and the disagree/strongly disagree categories.

Table 6

ANOVA Table for Research Question 3 (N = 352)

Item #	Variable	Means		Sum of Squares	df	F
		Minority	Non-Minority			
5	As a member of the council, my input has an impact on the operations and policies of the school	4.45	4.64	1.839	1	3.973*
				162.058	350	
				163.898	351	
7	My service on the council came about as a result of being recruited	3.61	3.13	11.691	1	4.627*
				884.465	350	
				896.156	351	
10	My presence on the council is desired	4.37	4.61	2.843	1	6.562*
				151.654	350	
				154.497	351	
11	I have a positive level of interaction with other council members	4.66	4.82	1.298	1	4.344*
				104.563	350	
				105.861	351	
17	My input specifically impacts minority student achievement	3.95	4.83	39.504	1	7.395**
				1869.576	350	
				1909.080	351	

* $p < .05$.; ** $p < .01$

Table 7

Study Variable Distribution

Item	Variable	Category	Minority Distribution	Non-Minority Distribution	Total Distribution
1	I understand the purpose for having SBDM councils in Kentucky schools	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	98.40% 0.00%	99.40% .30%	99.20% .30%
2	I have a favorable opinion of the SBDM process overall	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	93.50% 1.60%	95.50% 1.70%	95.00% 2.00%
3	School-based decision-making affects student achievement	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	91.90% 4.80%	92.00% 2.80%	92.20% 3.10%
4	Council decisions are made by consensus	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	96.80% 1.60%	96.20% .70%	96.40% .90%
5	As a member of the council, my input has an impact on the operations and policies of the school	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	90.40% 3.20%	95.50% 1.40%	94.80% .70%
6	There is difficulty obtaining minority members to serve on the council	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	62.90% 17.80%	58.30% 25.80%	58.60% 24.80%
7	My service on the council came about as a result of being recruited	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	67.80% 27.50%	43.50% 34.70%	47.30% 34.20%
8	Minority representation would be actively pursued without the 8% law	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	45.60% 33.80%	47.20% 21.40%	46.40% 23.30%
9	My experiences as a school council member have been generally positive	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	95.10% 3.20%	95.90% 2.00%	95.80% 2.20%
10	My presence on the council is desired	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	85.50% 1.60%	94.20% 1.00%	92.80% 7.20%

Table 7 (continued)

Study Variable Distribution

Item	Variable	Category	Minority Distribution	Non-Minority Distribution	Total Distribution
11	I have a positive level of interaction with other council members	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	93.50% 0.00%	98.60% .60%	97.70% .60%
12	There have been instances where my contributions were not welcomed or valued	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	14.50% 64.50%	20.70% 67.30%	20.00% 67.70%
13	My relationship with the school council chairperson has been positive	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	93.60% 0.00%	74.90% 1.00%	94.80% .90%
14	Issues have arisen where I openly expressed disagreement with the council's direction	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	35.50% 37.10%	41.80% 36.20%	41.40% 35.50%
15	My opinions are actively solicited on all school council related issues	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	85.80% 4.80%	87.60% 3.80%	85.30% 3.90%
16	On controversial issues, my interactions with other council members were positive	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	81.20% 0.00%	85.80% 2.40%	85.00% 13.60%
17	My input specifically impacts minority student achievement	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	48.40% 11.30%	35.50% 3.50%	37.00% 4.70%
18	My input impacts other minority issues in the school that would not be addressed if there was no minority participation on the council	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	54.90% 17.80%	27.90% 27.60%	32.20% 35.90%
19	My contributions to the discussion of issues have been favorably received by the group	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	88.80% 0.00%	95.50% .60%	94.20% .60%
20	My ideas are valued in the decision making process	1 Agree to Strongly Agree 2 Disagree to Strongly Disagree	87.10% 0.00%	96.60% .30%	94.70% 3.90%

Qualitative Data Results

Inductive analysis of the qualitative data commenced using emic constructs and gleaned from self-reported comments respondents made on the survey instrument. The data was analyzed to determine themes relative to school-based decision-making (SBDM). Emic constructs reflect the meaning that respondents offer to the survey prompts as they are immersed in SBDM council service (Vierra, Pollock, & Golez, 1998). Eight thematic constructs or clusters emerged from the data: (a) minority representation/8% statute/special election; (b) recruitment and volunteerism; (c) student achievement/student concern (parental involvement, etc.); (d) culture/communication/cooperation; (e) political nature of councils (constituency, principal-controlled, decisions pre-made, term limitations); (f) lack of experience or limited experience; (g) impact of SBDM service; and (h) self-serving/personal benefits of serving on council. The respondents' comments are presented in a concise format in Table 8 and Table 9.

Minority representation/8% Statute/Special Election

From the analysis of the qualitative data, differences in perceptions emanated from minorities and non-minorities indicating some dissonance about minority representation and minority issues that arise on the school council. Of those who submitted comments, minorities stated concerns that minorities would not be sought for council service without the 8% statute. Also, there was some concern (not further explained) about the special election provision for acquiring a minority member for council service:

Even with the law I had to be appointed in a special election.

I don't believe that there would be a minority on the council if the law did not state there had to be.

Don't really know if minority representation would be sought out without the 8% rule.

Further, one minority respondent indicated that the council hesitated to discuss issues concerning minorities and special education students, perceiving that their input meant little regarding these issues:

There are 0 minority teachers in this school and my input does not mean anything when it comes to this issue. This is of major concern to me.

I represent the minority and the special education population and sometimes the council does not want to discuss issues concerning both populations of students.

Other comments from minority respondents noted that their input on the school council impacted all students and not just minority students, working to ensure that all students were able to succeed:

My input is not just for minority students! However, I feel that it is for all students.

Our council work[s] to ensure that all students are able to succeed.

Responses from non-minorities included not being aware of the minority requirements and the concept that all schools would not actively pursue minority representation on school councils:

I just started, so really have no idea about meeting the minority qualifications.

In my school we would pursue minorities, but overall I don't think all schools would. Our school values

diversity even though we have little luck in recruiting minority staff.

Some comments emerged from non-minority respondents about the value of diversity and ensuring that the best people were elected to the council regardless of minority or non-minority status. Disagreement with the 8% statute emerged as a construct also:

We have had 100% minority representation on our council as parents, it is not necessary to have a law. It is best to get the best parents and staff possible.

I was elected by majority vote to serve. I think minorities would be welcomed by the committee regardless of 8% law. However, I disagree with the law – why “pursue” someone based on race – let’s encourage the best candidates regardless of race.

Non-minority respondents also indicated that their input was for all students relative to student concerns and student achievement:

Yes – needs of all students would be met even if we didn’t have a minority.

I look at the overall picture of children (not color) in regard to helping them.

My decisions are made with all students’ needs in mind.

All minority issues are always addressed with or without my input or other minority participation.

Recruitment and Volunteerism

Recruitment and volunteerism for council service emerged as a construct, but only for non-minority respondents:

I volunteered to serve on the SBDM and was elected by the parents.
I volunteered to serve on the site-based council.

We have about 13% minority population and it is difficult to find parents to serve. We actively recruit members to get a minority on the board/council.

I was “elected” to SBDM council, however, it is more of a “recruited” feeling. Due to very small school, teachers willingly take turns with serving on the council.

I asked to serve.

I really don't feel like I was recruited, I was elected and went to training.

Student Achievement/Student Concern

Comments from minority respondents regarding student achievement or student achievement concerns expressed the ideal concept of school-based decision-making in that it is about the students:

I represent the minority and special education population and sometimes the council does not want to discuss issues concerning both populations of students.

My input is not just for minority students! However, I feel that it is for all students.

Our council work[s] to ensure that all students are able to succeed.

Non-minority respondents indicated this concept as well with comments like:

I look at the overall picture of children (not color) in regard to helping them.

My decisions are made with all students in mind.

I am serving mainly because I am actively involved in my children's education. I want to be involved in making the school better. I chose to be on the council because I feel being

involved in the school's council is important to the education[al] process.

Culture/Communication/Cooperation

Issues around the culture, communication, and cooperation aspects of effective school-based decision-making emerged from both minority and non-minority respondents. Minority respondents expressed concern with statements such as:

Improvements of communication between the council and superintendent is needed. Our council members are not being informed about certain decisions until everyone else is informed. ... I thought the council should have prior knowledge to most situations before others are informed.

I represent the minority and special education population and sometimes the council does not want to discuss issues concerning both populations of students.

Comments from non-minority members were mixed with expressions like:

Our council has always had a good relationship. We have always agreed on all decisions.

We have a strong, cooperative council – no major disagreements have arisen.

Controversial issues haven't come up.

I appreciate the intent of the SBDM and the opportunity to serve on it. But we usually just go through the motions. Decisions are dictated on budget and final say by the superintendent, not the true needs of students (and teachers) to improve the educational process.

I have been to only one meeting. It was decided in July (on vacation) to meet every two months.

There has been a significant improvement...since the installation of a new administration.

Political Nature of Councils

Many comments were generated from both minority and non-minority respondents concerning the political nature of councils. These comments take into account the constituent nature of school councils, the concept that councils are principal-controlled, the perception that decisions are pre-made before councils convene, and the concept of term limitations on school councils:

The principal has majority ruling during decision-making.

Sometimes school policies and politics collide.

Councils have become and are too political with constituent influence.

[I] Do not feel that teachers should be the majority on the council. I feel it should be 3 parents and 3 teachers.

I believe many times things are decided for you and you are expected to agree.

I feel there should be a limit to the number of "consecutive" terms teachers can serve on the council.

As a teacher council member, it can sometimes be intimidating to express views contrary to those of the school administration, especially since they evaluate your job performance.

Lack of Experience or Limited Experience

A few comments were offered regarding council experience:

I just started so [I] really have no idea about meeting the minority qualifications .

I have not been on the council long enough to have an impact on the school yet.

I've attended the one-day SBDM council training, and have had two meetings and a teacher interview session. My experience is thus limited.

Impact of SBDM Service

Two comments regarding impact of SBDM council service were reported:

I feel I have a good knowledge of SBDM & impact on students, I know others have very little knowledge of the council's purpose and the impact councils have.

It has a positive impact at our school.

Self-serving/Personal Benefits of Serving on Council

Only one comment was reported under this construct, though no further explanation was forthcoming:

I wanted to be on the council for my own benefits.

Table 8

Qualitative Profile of Respondents' Comments (General)

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Minority</u>	<u>Non-Minority</u>
<p>Minority Representation/8% statute/Special Election</p>	<p>Even with the law I had to be appointed in a special election</p> <p>I don't believe that there would be a minority on the council if the law did not state that there had to be.</p> <p>Don't really know if minority representation would be sought out without the 8% rule</p>	<p>We have had 100% minority representation on our council as parents, it is not necessary to have a law. It is best to get the best parents and staff possible.</p> <p>I was elected by majority vote to serve. I think minorities would be welcomed by the committee regardless of 8% law. However, I disagree with the law – why “pursue” someone based on race – let's encourage the best candidates regardless of race.</p> <p>In my school we would pursue minorities, but overall I don't think all schools would. Our school values diversity even though we have little luck in recruiting minority staff.</p>
<p>Recruitment (includes persons volunteering for service)</p>		<p>I volunteered to serve on the SBDM and was elected by the parents/I volunteered to serve on the site-based council.</p> <p>We have about 13% minority population and it is difficult to find parents to serve. We actively recruit members to get a minority on the board/council.</p> <p>I was “elected” to SBDM council, however, it is more of a “recruited” feeling. Due to very small school, teachers willingly take turns with serving on the council.</p> <p>We have had 100% minority representation on our council as parents, it is not necessary to have a law. It is best to get the best parents and staff possible.</p> <p>I asked to serve/I really don't feel like I was recruited, I was elected and went to training.</p> <p>In my school we would pursue minorities, but overall I don't think all schools would. Our school values diversity even though we have little luck in recruiting minority staff.</p>
<p>Culture/Communication</p>		

<p>Political Nature of Councils (constituency, principal-controlled, decisions pre-made, term limitations)</p>	<p>The principal has majority ruling during decision making</p>	<p>Sometimes school policies and politics collide</p> <p>Councils have become and are too political with constituent influence</p> <p>Do not feel that teachers should be the majority on the council. I feel it should be 3 parents & 3 teachers.</p> <p>I believe many times things are decided for you and you are expected to agree.</p>
<p>Lack of or Limited Experience</p>	<p>...I feel I have a good knowledge of SBDM & impact on students, I know others have very little knowledge of the councils purpose and the impact the councils have.*</p>	<p>I just started, so really have no idea about meeting the minority qualifications.</p> <p>I have not been on the council long enough to have an impact on the school yet.</p> <p>I've attended the one-day SBDM council training, and have had two meetings and a teacher interview session. My experience is thus limited.</p>
<p>Impact of SBDM Service</p>	<p>... I feel I have a good knowledge of SBDM & impact on students, I know others have very little knowledge of the councils purpose and the impact the councils have.*</p> <p>It has positive impact at our school.</p>	
<p>Self-Serving/Personal Benefits of Serving on Council</p>		<p>I wanted to be on the council for my own benefits.</p>

* - intra cross-themed (within category)

Table 9

Qualitative Profile of Respondents' Comments (Interaction)

Themes	Minority	Non-Minority
Minority Representation/8% statute/Special Election	There are 0 minority teachers in this school and my input does not mean anything when it comes to this issue. This is of major concern to me.	Yes – needs of all students would be met even if we didn't have a minority.*
Recruitment (includes persons volunteering for service)	N/A	N/A
Student Achievement/Student Concern (parental involvement, other)	<p>I represent the minority and the special education population and sometimes the council does not want to discuss issues concerning both populations of students.*</p> <p>My input is not just for minority students! However, I feel that it is for all students.</p> <p>Our council work to ensure that all students are able to succeed.</p>	<p>I look at the overall picture of children (not color) in regard to helping them.</p> <p>My decisions are made with all students needs in mind.</p> <p>All minority issues are always addressed with or without my input or other minority participation.</p> <p>I have not yet had a reason to disagree on some issues, as this is my first term. I have yet to understand and still trying to learn how some issues effects both black and white students.*</p> <p>There are 0 minority teachers in this school and my input does not mean anything when it comes to this issue. This is of major concern to me.*</p>

<p>Culture/Communication/ Cooperation</p>	<p>I represent the minority and the special education population and sometimes the council does not want to discuss issues concerning both populations of students.*</p> <p>Improvements of communication between the council and superintendent is needed. Our council members are not being informed about certain decisions made until everyone else is informed. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I thought the council should have prior knowledge to most situations before others are informed.</p>	<p>Our council has always had a good relationship. We have always agreed on all decisions.</p> <p>We have a strong, cooperative council – no major issues of disagreement have arisen.</p> <p>Controversial issues haven't come up.</p> <p>I appreciate the intent of the SBDM <u>and</u> the opportunity to serve on it. But we usually just “go through the motions.” Decisions are dictated on budget and final say by the supt.(superintendent), not the <u>true needs</u> of students (and teachers) to improve the educational process.*</p> <p>I have been to only one meeting. It was decided in July (on vacation) to meet every two months.*</p> <p>There has been a significant improvement in these areas since the installation of a new administration.</p>
<p>Political Nature of Councils (constituency, principal-controlled, decisions pre-made, term limitations)</p>		<p>It is mostly “hoop jumping”.</p> <p>I feel there should be a limit to the number of “consecutive” terms teachers can serve on the council.</p> <p>I appreciate the intent of the SBDM <u>and</u> the opportunity to serve on it. But we usually just “go through the motions.” Decisions are dictated on budget and final say by the supt.(superintendent), not the <u>true needs</u> of students (and teachers) to improve the educational process.*</p> <p>As a teacher council member, it can sometimes be intimidating to express views contrary to those of the school administration, especially since they evaluate your job performance.</p> <p>There has been a significant improvement in these areas since the installation of a new administration.</p>
<p>Impact of SBDM</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Self-Serving/Personal Benefits of Serving on Council	N/A	N/A
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* - intra cross-themed (within category)

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Considering that SBDM was established in the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 and was mandated for all schools by 1996, it was determined early in its implementation that ethnic minorities were underrepresented on the school councils. The Kentucky General Assembly enacted legislation requiring minority representation on school councils in schools having 8% or more minority student population.

This study focused on 360 school-based decision-making (SBDM) council members' perceptions of efficacy while serving within the school-based decision-making (SBDM) process in Kentucky Regions 1 and 2, and whether minority members perceived the same level of efficacy and influence as other council members.

This chapter outlines: (a) summary of the findings; (b) discussion of the findings (c) study limitations (d) implications for researchers, policy makers, and practitioners; and (e) conclusion.

Summary of the Findings

This study employed descriptive statistics and a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to examine the survey data obtained in reference to the overarching research questions. In addition, the respondents were allowed to self-report any comments they wished to offer regarding school-based decision-making relative to the groups of survey questions.

Research Question 1

Do council members perceive that actions of the council impact the school and its students? For Research Question 1, the respondents perceived that their input impacted the school and its students. Principals reported greater efficacy on this question than did teachers or parents. The open-ended responses yielded that several participants responded similarly with remarks such as principals had the “majority ruling during decision-making.” One respondent expressed that “many times things are decided for you and you are expected to agree,” while yet another comment explained the understanding of the intent of school-based decision making, but perceived that the council just goes “through the motions” with decisions being “dictated” rather than based upon “the true needs of students and teachers to improve the educational process.” One teacher council member indicated that it was sometimes intimidating to offer contrary views other than those of the administration. Teachers did report a favorable level of perceived efficacy, as did parents, for the first research question.

Elementary school participants reported the most positive perceived efficacy, with high schools reporting in second and middle schools last. Experienced council members reported a slightly lower perception of efficacy as compared to new members. Finally male and female respondents reported similar efficacy perceptions for Research Question 1.

Research Question 2

Do council members perceive their participation on the council to be a positive experience as they interact with each other during deliberations and decision-making? The responses indicated that participation on the school council was a positive experience, with principals again reporting the greatest efficacy for this question, while teachers reported the next highest efficacy for the question. Parents reported the least amount of efficacy. Noticeably, the means for parents and teachers were very close, which supported qualitative data that perceptions existed that principals possessed more authority on the council. Communication was noted as lacking between the central office leadership and the school council, that school-based decision-making was mostly “hoop jumping” or “going through the motions” as indicated by some of the respondents’ comments. Other comments offered perceptions of intimidation to express views that went against school administration, especially since principals evaluated the teacher members of the school council.

Across school levels, high schools reported the most positive perception for Research Question 2, while elementary and middle schools both indicated the same level of positive perception. Experienced members reported a higher

perception for Research Question 2 than new members, which was to be expected with experienced members having more time to interact with council operations and procedures. By gender, the perceptions for Question 2 by gender indicated that males and females had similar perceptions. Similar perception levels emerged from the data in both Region 1 and Region 2.

Research Question 3

Do minority council members sense that they are empowered and efficacious and do their perceptions differ significantly from the perceptions of non-minority council members? Using SPSS, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run to test whether statistically significant differences existed between minority and non-minority responses on the *SBDM Perceptions Survey Instrument*. Based upon the number of respondents who denoted their ethnicity on the survey, the one-way ANOVA yielded statistically significant differences between minority versus non-minority respondents in five areas. Survey questions 5, 7, 10, 11, and 17 were found to show a statistically significant difference between the responses of minority and non-minority respondents, while the remaining survey questions yielded no statistically significant differences.

The statistical information for Research Questions 1 and 2, along with the ANOVA results from the analysis of Research Question 3 is summarized in Table 10.

Table 10

Summary of Findings from the Current Study

Research Question	Key Findings	Results
Do council members perceive that the actions of the council impact the school and its students?	Based upon the analysis, school council members perceived that their input impacted the school and its students.	A mean score of 4.21 was obtained on the questions connected to this research question (1, 3, 5, 7, 15, 17, 18)
Do council members perceive their participation on the council to be a positive experience?	Based upon the analysis, school council members perceived their participation on the council to be a positive experience.	A mean score of 4.29 was obtained on the questions connected to this research question (2, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20)
Do minority council member perceptions differ significantly from those of majority (non-minority) council members?	A statistically significant difference emerged from a one-way ANOVA applied to survey questions 5, 7, 10, 11, & 17 indicating that minority perceptions differed from those of non-minority council members.	The following scores were obtained to determine a significant difference on five survey questions: $F(3.973)^*$, $F(4.627)^*$, $F(6.562)^*$, $F(4.344)^*$, $F(7.395)^{**}$

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Discussion of the Findings

While reviewing the findings, it is important to note that school-based decision-making is a mainstay phenomenon in the course of educational restructuring. In order for it to work as envisioned, a sense of urgency exists for individual members to be efficacious in their service to schools to in turn be able to coalesce as a group to make effective and appropriate school policies. The

findings indicated that overall a positive perception did exist, however, there were some differences between minority and non-minority perceptions that emerged from the data.

Minorities perceived less efficacy in the following areas: (a) that their input impacted the operations and policies of the school; (b) that their council service came about as a result of being recruited; (c) that their presence on the council was desired; (d) that they had a positive level of interaction with other council members; and (e) that their input specifically impacted minority student achievement.

In addition, there was some disconnect in the comments offered by both minority and non-minority council members relative to not perceiving efficacy in some of the qualitative constructs. Eight constructs emerged from the qualitative data in the areas of: (a) minority representation/8% statute/special election; (b) recruitment and volunteerism; (c) student achievement/student concern (parental involvement, etc.); (d) culture/communication/cooperation; (e) political nature of councils (constituency, principal-controlled, decisions pre-made, term limitations); (f) lack of experience or limited experience; (g) impact of SBDM service; and (h) self-serving/personal benefits of serving on council.

Minority council members reported concerns that although a law mandating minority representation on the council existed that their appointment had to be made in a special election. Since no further explanation was offered for this comment, the researcher considered that perhaps there was a minority candidate on the original slate of candidates, but was not elected in the first

voting session. Kentucky law indicated that if a school met the 8% minority student population requirement and a person of minority descent was not elected in the first voting, then a special election had to occur to ensure minority representation (KRS 160.345). Similarly, they reported if the law did not exist, that it was unlikely such representation would be sought. Interestingly, some non-minority members also reported that minority representation would not be sought without the 8% statutory requirement.

Minorities also indicated concerns about the lack of minority teachers and expressed concern about their impact on student achievement indicating they felt that their input was for all students, not just for minority students.

Both minorities and non-minority respondents offered comments about the political issues which tend to be inherent on school councils, noting that the principal exudes more power and authority during decision-making. Some expressed the perception that equality does not exist due to parents having one member less than the teachers. A concern was indicated about limiting consecutive terms. One teacher council member indicated apprehension of expressing views that were contrary to the school administration for fear of evaluative reprisal.

The findings of the present study were consistent with findings of previous studies in the literature (Laureau & Horvat, 1999; Carr, 1995a; Carr, 1995b; Carr, 1996) that suggested that while non-minority school council members perceive their participation on decision-making bodies as highly valued, minority school council members tend not to have the same level of perception.

Implications for Researchers, Policy Makers, and Practitioners

From this study on efficacy perceptions of school-based decision-making, the focus was on the state mandated role groups comprised of principals, teachers, and parents. A general implication was that minority members may experience difficulty participating on school councils due to reasons caused by their cultural immersion (e.g., value systems and traditions), in addition to external factors (e.g. society perceptions and expectations) proffered by the contexts in the society. Johnson (1991) indicated that “social institutions, even those in democratic societies, often resist input from those on the lower levels of the organizational hierarchy.” This had implications for persons of minority descent as well, especially regarding that race and social class still remain a significant phenomenon in society and its organizations (Akbar, 1996; Carr, 1995a, b; Compton-Lilly, 2004; Hooks, 1998; Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Larkin, 2001; Kochman, 1981; Shipler, 1997; Williams, 2000).

The present study highlighted the perceptions of school-based decision-making council members. The results and the limitations of the study consequently cause implications for further work to emerge. The recommendations are concentrated in two areas: (a) further research and (b) policy.

Further Research

This study commenced in the schools ($N = 116$) of 28 school districts in Regions 1 and 2 of western Kentucky with a school-based decision-making (SBDM) council population of 720. A limitation emerged here in that the urban

centers of the state were not surveyed and perceptions in these areas may be significantly different than the western region. Therefore, true generalization across the state is limited. The researcher suggests that this study be replicated in other state regions, including Kentucky's urban centers – Jefferson and/or Fayette counties – be conducted to affirm the results of this study.

In addition, a qualitative study using interviews, meeting attendance, and document mining to study in-depth perceptions and interactions among council members – addressing council efficacy as a group – may be warranted to further gather intricate details about SBDM practices in Kentucky, looking at whether minority members truly interact and participate on councils in an efficacious manner.

Further, an exploration of reasons for low response rate across Kentucky regions may be a topic to pursue. Perhaps the difference may lie in council members of some regions being more efficacious about their SBDM council service, in effect not feeling a need to express their perceptions about SBDM.

Also, this study focused only on principals, teachers, and parents serving on school councils. While some school councils allow participation in school decisions by educational support personnel (custodians, instructional assistants, cafeteria workers, bus drivers), this is not required by Kentucky law. Perhaps a study should be conducted among these groups of staff to ascertain their perceptions of inclusion or non-inclusion in the SBDM process.

Another recommended area of study would be to investigate councils where minority members comprise the numerical majority on the council or

perhaps an examination in other states concerning council efficacy and interactions with a numerical majority of parents.

Finally, the data showed a disproportionate number of men in comparison to women – regardless of ethnic (minority or non-minority) descent – served on school councils. In fact the data showed that females significantly outnumbered males on schools councils. This may be an important aspect for further study.

Policy Recommendations

The recommendations for educational policy is discussed in three areas: (a) educator and parent recruitment; (b) student participatory leadership; and (d) student achievement.

Educator and Parent Recruitment

Recruiting and retaining minority and male educators. There is no question that a shortage of minority educators exists in our nation's educational system. Likewise, minority men are virtually non-existent in the ranks of K-12 educators. Some have opined that this is directly related to the national achievement gap between minority and non-minority students. Moreover, there exists a dearth of meaningful research on the number and impact of teachers of color. An NEA survey indicated that the number of male public school teachers was at a 40-year low, particularly at the elementary level. The research suggested that gender stereotypes, along with low pay and concerns with status were a major reason for the scarcity of male teachers (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Ave, 2004). If school council membership

is to be reflective and representative of the student population they serve, it is important for the minority ranks of teachers to be significantly increased.

Recruiting and retaining minority and male parents. School operations and policies and ultimately student achievement can benefit from parents of all ethnicities being recruited and made to feel that their participation is valued by the school community. Epstein, Coates, Salinas, Sanders, & Simon (2002) offered six types of parent involvement practices for comprehensive programs of partnership: (a) Type 1 – Parenting (helping all families establish home environments to support children as students); (b) Type 2 – Communicating (designing effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communication about school programs and children’s progress); (c) Type 3 – Volunteering (recruiting and organizing parent help and support); (d) Type 4 – Learning at Home (providing information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning); (e) Type 5 – Decision Making (including parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives); and (f) Type 6 – Collaborating with Community (identifying and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development).

Though all are important from the vantage point of supporting student achievement, the ones most pertinent to this discussion is Type 3 and Type 5 involving parents as volunteers and in decision-making. For minority parents, recruitment tends to be an especially important practice to garner participation in

schools and school initiatives. Carr (1996) found that minority parents were more likely to participate more often if asked, in particular, by the principal of the school.

This study indicated that men – regardless of ethnicity – were scarcely represented as parent representatives on school councils. This was also consistent with previous findings in the literature (Carr, 1996). Though this severe shortage of males exists in parental involvement settings – as evidenced by response of this study – the reasons for non-participation may be similar to those discussed in the previous subsection (work obligations as head of household, gender stereotypes, etc.).

Student Participatory Leadership

While the focus of this study was not centered on student involvement in school-based decision making, it was important that a consideration be made in this section, as the reason schools exist is for the students. Student involvement in school affairs has been debated across the years, usually restricted to coordination of student smoking areas, operation of student lounges, and participation on activities committees, among a few other areas. Although these are important functions, they do not provide for direct involvement by students in formal instructional affairs (North & Brock, 1986).

North and Brock (1986) explained that:

Through involvement students learn the processes; they become committed learners; their frustration levels decrease; and negative activism may reverse polarity and become positive. (p. 442)

Often the level at which restructuring initiatives are focused is left out of the process. The Kentucky version of school-based decision-making allows student representatives to serve on school councils via a waiver from the Kentucky Department of Education, provided that the statute-based proportion of administrators (principals), teachers, and parents is kept intact on the council. While there are many studies regarding the need for teacher, parent, and community involvement in decision-making aspects of schools, very little data have been explored regarding the role of the student (Kaba, 2000).

Student involvement in school decision-making means that students must exercise a significant degree of control over major portions of the formal activities and events of the school. In addition, student participation in school decision-making means that the qualifications for teachers, professional staff, and even principal selection must be included. Further, students should be afforded a role in the administration of school finance. If student decision-making is to be real, students must have real authority and responsibility for educational and governance decisions of the school (Chesler, 1970; Hollins & Spencer, 1990). Significant to the present study, Hollins and Spencer (1990) concluded that if restructuring was to be meaningful for African-American youngsters, their voices must be used to raise questions about the purpose, function, content, and process of schooling.

The implication for this study is that schools where students could serve on school-based councils tend not to employ that model of governance. This

phenomenon continues to negate the importance of student involvement at the proper school level.

Student Achievement

Ultimately, the goal of school-based decision-making is to develop policies and procedures that will foster attainment of Kentucky's goal of student achievement proficiency by 2014 for all students. Since this study commenced, the federal government has also promoted higher student achievement through the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002. The goals of the federal act are very similar to, and in fact modeled after, what Kentucky expected by enacting the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, although there are many procedural conflicts and discrepancies between the two laws. It is important to note that in both cases "all" means just that: all. Laws, regulations, policies, and procedures are in place to reward and to sanction schools and districts to be accountable for higher learning outcomes for the state's and the nation's children.

This is a most critical and urgent task, if we are to continue to be competitive in an ever-increasing multicultural society that is bringing the world closer and closer together. The ethnic and cultural demographics are rapidly changing and our educational systems must make significantly progressive strides to have all students ready to meet the challenges they will face. To this end, school-based decision-making councils, both collectively and individually, must continue to be leaders and advocates for all students to succeed. Bucher (2000) discussed high-performance work teams, which in essence is what school councils must be. High performance work teams tend to evolve over time

and require people who possess certain talents, a range of diversity skills, and a common vision. In the case of Kentucky's school councils, the common vision must be that of student achievement. According to Bucher (2000), diversity of the team allows them to empower each other. In order to work together, he offered nine proven strategies for building high-performance teams: (a) get to know each other first; (b) make sure that the team's goal and the individual's role are understood; (c) respect ideas and feelings of other team members; (d) keep your word; (e) continue to build relations with other members of the team; (f) think and act like a team; (g) decenter and recenter; (h) avoid groupthink; (i) be flexible. While the bulk of these strategies are self-explanatory, perhaps item (g) and item (h) need additional clarification. The author explained that the terms decenter and recenter represented two techniques to acquire synergy in a diverse team. Decentering involved individual members shifting perspectives and adopting multiple viewpoints, while recentering allowed each member to identify and construct a common vision. Avoiding groupthink concerned the tendency to acquiesce to the group on decisions therefore discouraging differences of opinion. Where school councils are concerned, it is very important that all voices be heard and that individual concerns are not stifled. Respondents cited groupthink-like practices in the findings of this study regarding councils' political nature.

No doubt the Kentucky General Assembly, through Senator Gerald Neal's proposed legislation promoting minority representation in schools having 8%

minority student population, felt as did Sara Lightfoot (1978) in *Worlds Apart: Relationships Between Families and Schools*, as cited in Bell (1997):

Schools will only become comfortable and productive environments for learning when the cultural and historical presence of black families and communities are infused in the daily interactions and educational processes of children. When children see a piece of themselves and their experience in the adults that teach them and feel a sense of constancy between home and school, then they are likely to make a much smoother and productive transition from one to the other. Black familial and cultural participation will require profound changes in the structure and organizational character of schools, in the dynamic relationship between school and community, in the daily, ritualistic interactions between teachers and children, and finally in the consciousness and articulation of values, attitudes, and behaviors of the people involved in the educational process. (p. 264)

While this study was focused only on school-based decision-making in Kentucky schools, the findings of this study were consistent with findings from studies of school-based management in the local school councils (LSC's) of Chicago, Illinois. Chicago's massive school-based management initiative served as a precursor and model for school reform efforts nationwide.

Chicago's differed from Kentucky's model in that parents were placed as a numerical majority on the council and also comprised the leadership of the various school councils. In this urban center minorities were represented in comparable numbers. The findings of Hess & Easton (1992); Easton & Storey (1994); and Katz, Fine, & Simon (1997) were similar to this study in that both parents and minorities expressed perceptions that the model implementation and

their service on the local school councils were less than efficacious in certain areas.

Such consistencies in the research provide strong evidence and corroborate the idea that parents and minorities must perceive their service on school-based decision-making teams as efficacious and influential if school improvement and student achievement are expected to increase and be inclusive of all students.

Conclusion

School-based decision-making (SBDM) was implemented in Kentucky's schools under the Kentucky Education Reform Act (1990). The ultimate goal for the implementation of SBDM was student achievement with the concept that decisions made at the lowest level, by the people most affected, would be more beneficial for children. This paradigm shifted most of the decisions that occur at any school to be made at the school level, transferring that decision-making authority to principals and elected teachers and parents.

Obviously, the importance of perceptions of efficacy, communication, and collegiality is inherent in order for the individual members of the council to be able to interact, deliberate, and decide on policy and operational issues that are best for student achievement.

The present study elaborated on existing knowledge about Kentucky's school-based decision-making councils. While overall perceptions of efficacy from council members were favorable, this study provided both quantitative and

qualitative evidence that there was some dissonance between non-minority and minority members regarding perceptions of efficacy and interactions while serving on the school councils.

Recommendations for further study and policy implications were postulated for the purpose of suggesting improvements in the implementation of school-based decision-making in Kentucky for the benefit of all stakeholders.

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Appendix A
Informed Consent Document (UL)

(letterhead)

PERCEPTIONS OF EFFICACY OF SCHOOL-BASED DECISION-MAKING COUNCIL
MEMBERS IN KENTUCKY'S REGION 1 AND REGION 2 SCHOOL SYSTEMS

August 15, 2004

Dear Colleague,

You are being invited to participate in a research study by answering the attached questionnaire. The study is being conducted by Anthony R. Sanders and Dr. Joseph DeVitis and is sponsored by the University of Louisville Department of Leadership, Foundations, and Human Resource Education and the Western Kentucky University Department of Educational Administration, Leadership, and Research. The purpose of the study is to investigate perceptions about the efficacy of school council membership of all council members and that of minority council members. There are no foreseeable risks or penalties for your participation in this research study. The information collected may not benefit you directly. The information learned in this study may be helpful to others. The information you provide will add to the body of knowledge about school-based decision making. Your completed questionnaire will be stored at the researcher's locked home file. The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Individuals from the University of Louisville Department of Leadership, Foundations, and Human Resource Education, the Human Studies Protection Program Office and Institutional Review Board, and the Western Kentucky University Department of Educational Administration, Leadership and Research at Western Kentucky University may inspect these records. In all other respects, however, the data will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Should the data be published, your identity will not be disclosed. Because identifying information is asked on the questionnaire, it is important that you protect the privacy and confidentiality of your responses until they are returned to the researcher.

Please remember that your participation in this study is voluntary. By completing and returning the attached questionnaire, you are voluntarily agreeing to participate. You are free to decline to answer any particular question that may make you uncomfortable or which may render you prosecutable under law. There may be unforeseeable risks. You may refuse to participate or discontinue participation at any time without incurring penalty or losing any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

You acknowledge that all your present questions have been answered in language you can understand and all future questions will be treated in the same manner. If you have questions about the study, please contact Anthony R. Sanders at (270) 885-1042.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Human Studies Committees office at (502) 852-5188. You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject, in confidence, with a member of the committees. These are independent committees composed of members of the University community, staff of the institutions, as well as lay members of the community not connected with these institutions. The Committee has reviewed this study.

Sincerely,

Anthony R. Sanders
Doctoral Student

Appendix B Survey Questionnaire

I. SBDM Perceptions Survey. *Efficacy of School-Based Council Members: The feeling of efficacy and influence is important for every council member. Please place a check in the appropriate column box for your response.*

General Perceptions	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I understand the purpose for having SBDM councils in Kentucky schools.					
2. I have a favorable opinion of the SBDM process overall.					
3. School-based decision-making affects student achievement					
4. Council decisions are made by consensus					
5. As a member of the council, my input has an impact on the operations and policies of the school					
6. There is difficulty obtaining minority members to serve on the council.					
7. My service on the council came about as a result of being recruited to serve.					
8. Minority representation on the council would be actively pursued without the 8% law.					

Please use this place to expand upon any of the responses given in the general category above:

Part II. *Efficacy of School-Based Council Members: The feeling of efficacy and influence is important for every council member. Please place a check in the appropriate column box for your response.*

Interaction Perceptions	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9. My experiences as a school council member have generally been positive.					
10. My presence on the school council is desired.					
11. I have a positive level of interaction with other council members.					

12. There have been instances where my contributions were not welcomed or valued.					
13. My relationship with the school council chairperson has been positive.					

Part II (continued). *Efficacy of School-Based Council Members: The feeling of efficacy and influence is important for every council member. Please place a check in the appropriate column box for your response.*

Interaction Perceptions		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14.	Issues have arisen where I openly expressed disagreement with the council's direction.					
15.	My opinions are actively solicited on all school council related issues.					
16.	On controversial issues, my interactions with other council members were positive.					
17.	My input specifically impacts minority student achievement.					
18.	My input impacts other minority issues in the school that probably would not be addressed if there was no minority participation on the council.					
19.	My contributions to the discussion of issues have been received favorably by the group.					
20.	My ideas are valued in the decision-making process.					

Please use this place to expand upon any of the responses given in the **interaction** category above:

Part III. TO THE RESPONDENT: *The demographic information requested below is necessary for the research process. Please be assured that this information and all of your responses on this instrument will be kept **strictly confidential**. Data will be reported in such a way that individuals will not be identified.*

INDIVIDUAL DATA:

1. Gender: ___ M ___ F
2. Age: ___ 18-25 ___ 26-35 ___ 36-45 ___ 46-55 ___ 55+
3. Race: ___ African-American ___ Asian
 ___ Caucasian ___ Hispanic
 ___ Native American ___ Other (list) _____
4. Role on the school council: ___ Parent ___ Teacher

- Principal Other (explain) _____
5. Marital status: Single Married
6. Council experience New member (no prior service)
 Experienced member (have served before)
7. Council membership 0-1 year 2 years or more
8. What is your occupation? Homemaker Professional
 Clerical Teacher
 Administrator Other (list) _____
9. Number of dependent children? 0-1 2-5 6+
10. What is your income level? Below \$10,000 \$10,001-\$25,000
 \$25,001-\$40,000 \$40,001-\$55,000
 \$55,001-\$60,000 Above \$60,000

SCHOOL DATA:

1. What is the grade level of your school? Elementary Middle High
2. What is the student population of your school? 100-300 301-500 501-700
 701-900 901-1,100 1,101+
3. What is the percentage of minority students at your school? 8-10% 11-20% 21-30%
 31-40% 41-50% 51-100%
4. What percentage of students in your school qualify for free and reduced lunch? 0-10% 11-20% 21-30%
 31-40% 41-50% 51-100%
5. What is the CATS accountability status of your school? Rewards Progressing Assistance
6. What is the number of certified staff at your school? 0-20 21-50
 51-75 75+
7. What is the number of classified staff at your school? 0-20 21-50
 51-75 75+
8. What is the number of minority certified staff at your school? 0-20 21-50
 51-75 75+
9. What is the number of minority classified staff at your school? 0-20 21-50
 51-75 75+

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT!

Appendix C
Coding Sheet (sample)
Demographics

1. Gender										
	Male	-	1	Female	-	2	Non-Response	-	9	
2. Age										
	18-25	-	1	36-45	-	3				
	26-35	-	2	46-55	-	4				
	55 +	-	5	NR	-	9				
3. Race										
	African American	-	1	Asian	-	4				
	Caucasian	-	2	Hispanic	-	5				
	Native American	-	3	Other	-	6				
				NR	-	9				
4. Council Role										
	Parent	-	1	Teacher	-	3				
	Principal	-	2	Other	-	4				
				NR	-	9				
5. Marital Status										
	Single	-	1	Married	-	2	NR	-	9	
6. Council Experience										
	New member	-	1	Experienced Member	-	2	NR	-	9	
7. Council Membership										
	0-2	-	1	2 +	-	2	NR	-	9	
8. Occupation										
	Homemaker	-	1	Professional	-	3				
	Clerical	-	2	Teacher	-	4				
				Other	-	5	NR	-	9	
9. Number of Dependent Children										
	0-1	-	1	2-5	-	2	6+	-	3	NR - 9
10. Income Level										
	Under 10,000	-	1	40,001-55,000	-	4				
	10,001-25,000	-	2	55,001-60,000	-	5				
	25,001-40,000	-	3	60,000 +	-	6	NR	-	9	

Appendix D
Coding Sheet (sample)
School Data

1. Grade level: Elementary - **1** Middle - **2** High - **3**
NR - 9

2. Student Population: 100-300 - **1** 301-500 - **2** 501-700 - **3**
701-900 - **4** 901-1100 - **5** 1101 + - **6 NR - 9**

3. Percentage of Minority Students: 8-10% - **1** 11-20% - **2** 21-30% - **3**
31-40% - **4** 41-50% - **5**
51-100% - **6 NR - 9**

4. Percentage of Free/Reduced Lunch Qualification:
0-10% - **1** 11-20% - **2** 21-30% - **3**
31-40% - **4** 41-50% - **5** 51-100% - **6 NR - 9**

5. Accountability Status: Assistance - **1** Progressing - **2** Rewards - **3 NR - 9**

6. Location: Urban - **1** Suburban - **2** Rural - **3 NR - 9**

7. Number of Certified Staff: 0-20 - **1** 21-50 - **2** 51-75 - **3** 75 + - **4 NR - 9**

8. Number of Classified Staff: 0-20 - **1** 21-50 - **2** 51-75 - **3** 75 + - **4 NR - 9**

9. Number of minority certified staff: 0-20 - **1** 21-50 - **2** 51-75 - **3** 75 + - **4**
NR - 9

10. Number of minority classified staff: 0-20 - **1** 21-50 - **2** 51-75 - **3** 75 + - **4**
NR - 9

Appendix E
Coding Sheet (sample)
Efficacy

(**G**eneral, **I**nteraction)

Strongly Agree - **5** Agree - **4** Undecided - **3** Disagree - **2** Strongly Disagree – **1**
NR - **9**

- G1. Purpose for having councils
- G2. Favorable opinion of SBDM process
- G3. SBDM affects student achievement
- G4. Council decisions are made by consensus
- G5. Input has impact on school operations and policies
- G6. Difficulty obtaining minority members
- G7. Service as a result of recruitment
- G8. Minority representation without 8% law
- I9. Experiences generally positive
- I10. Presence on council is desired
- I11. Positive level of interaction with other council members
- I12. Instances where contributions not welcomed or valued
- I13. Positive relationship with school council chairperson
- I14. Openly expressed disagreement with council's direction
- I15. Opinions actively solicited
- I16. On controversial issues, interactions were positive
- I17. Input impacts minority achievement
- I18. Input impacts other minority issues that may not have been addressed
- I19. Contributions favorably received
- I20. Ideas valued in the decision-making process

Appendix F
Permission Letter to Conduct Research (Superintendent)

August 15, 2004

Dear Superintendent,

I am working on a research study which involves surveying school-based decision-making council members in your school district. A description of the project is attached.

Permission from the superintendent and principals must be obtained in order to conduct this research. All council members in sampled schools will be surveyed for the purpose of this study. The principal of the school will be notified and asked to consent to participate in the study.

The collection of this data will be reported in such a way that the identity of the school, the council, and its individual members will be anonymous.

Your cooperation is asked in this endeavor. You are invited to contact Dr. Joseph DeVitis at the University of Louisville (478.454-5958), Dr. Christopher Wagner at Western Kentucky University (270.745.4890) or the Human Subjects Committee at University of Louisville (502.852.5188) if you have any questions or concerns regarding this study.

Sincerely,

Anthony R. Sanders
410 Evangeline Court
Hopkinsville, Kentucky 42240
(270) 885-1042
A1Tonio@aol.com

If you consent to allow the system's schools to participate in this study, please fill out the information and sign below. You may have a copy of this form for your records.

District Name: _____

Superintendent's Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix G
Permission Letter to Conduct Research (Principal)

August 15, 2004

Dear Principal,

I am working on a research study which involves surveying school council members at your school. A description of the project is attached.

Permission from the superintendent and principal must be obtained in order to conduct this research. The superintendent has already granted permission for the study to be conducted in the school district. All school council members will be surveyed. Your signature on this form is giving consent for your council to participate in this study.

The collection of this data will be reported in such a way to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of all participants.

Your cooperation is asked in this endeavor. You are invited to contact Dr. Joseph DeVitis at the University of Louisville (478.454-5958), Dr. Christopher Wagner at Western Kentucky University (270.745.4890) or the Human Subjects Committee at University of Louisville (502.852.5188) if you have any questions or concerns regarding this study.

Sincerely,

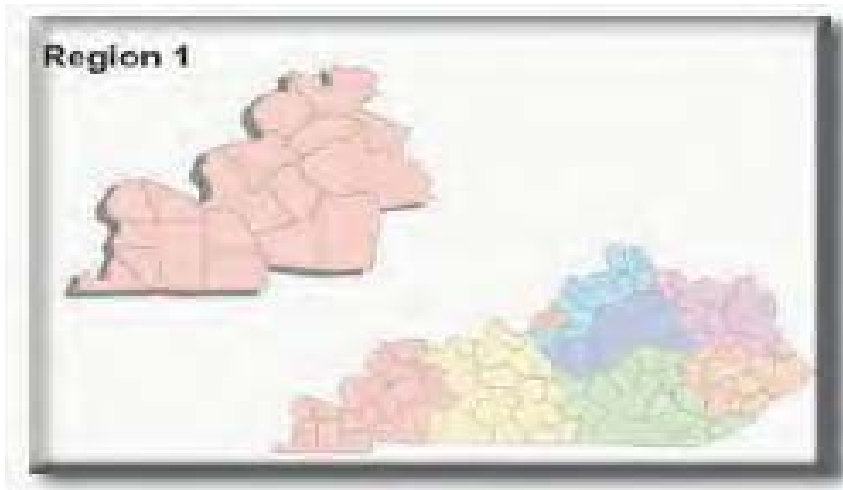
Anthony R. Sanders
410 Evangeline Court
Hopkinsville, Kentucky 42240
(270) 885-1042
A1Tonio@aol.com

If you consent to allow your school council to participate in this pilot study, please fill out the information and sign below. You may have a copy of this form for your records.

School Name _____

Principal's Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix H
Kentucky Regions 1 and Region 2



Appendix I
Kentucky SBDM Statute

160.345 Required adoption of school councils for school-based decision making -- Composition -- Responsibilities -- Professional development -- Exemption -- Formula for allocation of school district funds -- Intentionally engaging in conduct detrimental to school-based decision making by board member, superintendent, district employee, or school council member -- Complaint procedure -- Disciplinary action -- Rescission of right to establish and powers of council.

- (1) For the purpose of this section:
- (a) "Minority" means American Indian; Alaskan native; African-American; Hispanic, including persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Central or South American origin; Pacific islander; or other ethnic group underrepresented in the school;
 - (b) "School" means an elementary or secondary educational institution that is under the administrative control of a principal or head teacher and is not a program or part of another school. The term "school" does not include district-operated schools that are:
 - 1. Exclusively vocational-technical, special education, or preschool programs;
 - 2. Instructional programs operated in institutions or schools outside of the district; or
 - 3. Alternative schools designed to provide services to at-risk populations with unique needs;
 - (c) "Teacher" means any person for whom certification is required as a basis of employment in the public schools of the state with the exception of principals, assistant principals, and head teachers; and
 - (d) "Parent" means:
 - 1. A parent, stepparent, or foster parent of a student; or
 - 2. A person who has legal custody of a student pursuant to a court order and with whom the student resides.
- (2) Each local board of education shall adopt a policy for implementing school-based decision making in the district which shall include, but not be limited to, a description of how the district's policies, including those developed pursuant to KRS 160.340, have been amended to allow the professional staff members of a school to be involved in the decision making process as they work to meet educational goals established in KRS 158.645 and 158.6451. The policy may include a requirement that each school council make an annual report at a public meeting of the board describing the school's progress in meeting the educational goals set forth

in KRS158.6451 and district goals established by the board. The policy shall also address and comply with the following:

- (3) (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b)2. of this subsection, each participating school shall form a school council composed of two (2) parents, three (3) teachers, and the principal or administrator. The membership of the council may be increased, but it may only be increased proportionately. A parent representative on the council shall not be an employee or a relative of an employee of the school in which that parent serves, nor shall the parent representative be an employee or a relative of an employee in the district administrative offices. A parent representative shall not be a local board member or a board member's spouse. None of the members shall have a conflict of interest pursuant to KRS Chapter 45A, except the salary paid to district employees;
- (b) 1. The teacher representatives shall be elected for one (1) year terms by a majority of the teachers. A teacher elected to a school council shall not be involuntarily transferred during his or her term of office. The parent representatives shall be elected for one (1) year terms. The parent members shall be elected by the parents of students preregistered to attend the school during the term of office in an election conducted by the parent and teacher organization of the school or, if none exists, the largest organization of parents formed for this purpose. A school council, once elected, may adopt a policy setting different terms of office for parent and teacher members subsequently elected. The principal or head teacher shall be the chair of the school council.
2. School councils in schools having eight percent (8%) or more minority students enrolled, as determined by the enrollment on the preceding October 1, shall have at least one (1) minority member. If the council formed under paragraph (a) of this subsection does not have a minority member, the principal, in a timely manner, shall be responsible for carrying out the following:
- a. Organizing a special election to elect an additional member. The principal shall call for nominations and shall notify the parents of the students of the date, time, and location of the election to elect a minority parent to the council by ballot; and
- b. Allowing the teachers in the building to select one (1) minority teacher to serve as a teacher member on the council. If there are no minority teachers who are members of the faculty, an additional teacher member shall be elected by a majority of all teachers. Term

limitations shall not apply for a minority teacher member who is the only minority on faculty;

- (c) 1. The school council shall have the responsibility to set school policy consistent with district board policy which shall provide an environment to enhance the students' achievement and help the school meet the goals established by KRS 158.645 and 158.6451. The principal or head teacher shall be the primary administrator and the instructional leader of the school, and with the assistance of the total school staff shall administer the policies established by the school council and the local board.
- 2. If a school council establishes committees, it shall adopt a policy to facilitate the participation of interested persons, including, but not limited to, classified employees and parents. The policy shall include the number of committees, their jurisdiction, composition, and the process for membership selection;
- (d) The school council and each of its committees shall determine the frequency of and agenda for their meetings. Matters relating to formation of school councils that are not provided for by this section shall be addressed by local board policy;
- (e) The meetings of the school council shall be open to the public and all interested persons may attend. However, the exceptions to open meetings provided in KRS 61.810 shall apply;
- (f) After receiving notification of the funds available for the school from the local board, the school council shall determine, within the parameters of the total available funds, the number of persons to be employed in each job classification at the school. The council may make personnel decisions on vacancies occurring after the school council is formed but shall not have the authority to recommend transfers or dismissals;
- (g) The school council shall determine which textbooks, instructional materials, and student support services shall be provided in the school. Subject to available resources, the local board shall allocate an appropriation to each school that is adequate to meet the school's needs related to instructional materials and school-based student support services, as determined by the school council. The school council shall consult with the school media librarian on the maintenance of the school library media center, including the purchase of instructional materials, information technology, and equipment;
- (h) From a list of applicants submitted by the local superintendent, the principal at the participating school shall select personnel to

fill vacancies, after consultation with the school council, consistent with subsection (2)(i)10. of this section. The superintendent may forward to the school council the names of qualified applicants who have pending certification from the Education Professional Standards Board based on recent completion of preparation requirements, out-of-state preparation, or alternative routes to certification pursuant to KRS 161.028 and 161.048. Requests for transfer shall conform to any employer-employee bargained contract which is in effect. If the vacancy to be filled is the position of principal, the school council shall select the new principal from among those persons recommended by the local superintendent. When a vacancy in the school principalship occurs, the school council shall receive training in recruitment and interviewing techniques prior to carrying out the process of selecting a principal. The council shall select the trainer to deliver the training. Personnel decisions made at the school level under the authority of this subsection shall be binding on the superintendent who completes the hiring process. Applicants subsequently employed shall provide evidence that they are certified prior to assuming the duties of a position in accordance with KRS 161.020. The superintendent shall provide additional applicants upon request when qualified applicants are available;

- (i) The school council shall adopt a policy to be implemented by the principal in the following additional areas:
 - 1. Determination of curriculum, including needs assessment and curriculum development;
 - 2. Assignment of all instructional and noninstructional staff time;
 - 3. Assignment of students to classes and programs within the school;
 - 4. Determination of the schedule of the school day and week, subject to the beginning and ending times of the school day and school calendar year as established by the local board;
 - 5. Determination of use of school space during the school day;
 - 6. Planning and resolution of issues regarding instructional practices;
 - 7. Selection and implementation of discipline and classroom management techniques as a part of a comprehensive school safety plan, including responsibilities of the student, parent, teacher, counselor, and principal;
 - 8. Selection of extracurricular programs and determination of policies relating to student participation based on academic qualifications and attendance requirements, program evaluation, and supervision;

9. Procedures, consistent with local school board policy, for determining alignment with state standards, technology utilization, and program appraisal; and
 10. Procedures to assist the council with consultation in the selection of personnel by the principal, including, but not limited to, meetings, timelines, interviews, review of written applications, and review of references. Procedures shall address situations in which members of the council are not available for consultation; and
- (j) Each school council shall annually review data on its students' performance as shown by the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System. The data shall include but not be limited to information on performance levels of all students tested, and information on the performance of students disaggregated by race, gender, disability, and participation in the federal free and reduced price lunch program. After completing the review of data, each school council, with the involvement of parents, faculty, and staff, shall develop and adopt a plan to ensure that each student makes progress toward meeting the goals set forth in KRS 158.645 and 158.6451(1)(b) by April of each year and submit the plan to the superintendent and local board of education for review as described in KRS 160.340. The Kentucky Department of Education shall provide each
 - (k) school council the data needed to complete the review required by this paragraph no later than November 1 of each year. If a school does not have a council, the review shall be completed by the principal with the involvement of parents, faculty, and staff.
- (3) The policy adopted by the local board to implement school-based decision making shall also address the following:
- (a) School budget and administration, including: discretionary funds; activity and other school funds; funds for maintenance, supplies, and equipment; and procedures for authorizing reimbursement for training and other expenses;
 - (b) Assessment of individual student progress, including testing and reporting of student progress to students, parents, the school district, the community, and the state;
 - (c) School improvement plans, including the form and function of strategic planning and its relationship to district planning, as well as the school safety plan and requests for funding from the Center for School Safety under KRS 158.446;
 - (d) Professional development plans developed pursuant to KRS 156.095;
 - (e) Parent, citizen, and community participation including the relationship of the council with other groups;

- (f) Cooperation and collaboration within the district, with other districts, and with other public and private agencies;
 - (g) Requirements for waiver of district policies;
 - (h) Requirements for record keeping by the school council; and
 - (i) A process for appealing a decision made by a school council.
- (4) In addition to the authority granted to the school council in this section, the local board may grant to the school council any other authority permitted by law. The board shall make available liability insurance coverage for the protection of all members of the school council from liability arising in the course of pursuing their duties as members of the council.
- (5) After July 13, 1990, any school in which two-thirds (2/3) of the faculty vote to implement school-based decision making shall do so. All schools shall implement school-based decision making by July 1, 1996, in accordance with this section and with the policy adopted by the local board pursuant to this section. Upon favorable vote of a majority of the faculty at the school and a majority of at least twenty-five (25) voting parents of students enrolled in the school, a school meeting its goal as determined by the Department of Education pursuant to KRS 158.6455 may apply to the Kentucky Board of Education for exemption from the requirement to implement school-based decision making, and the state board shall grant the exemption. The voting by the parents on the matter of exemption from implementing school-based decision making shall be in an election conducted by the parent and teacher organization of the school or, if none exists, the largest organization of parents formed for this purpose. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, a local school district shall not be required to implement school-based decision making if the local school district contains only one (1) school.
- (6) The Department of Education shall provide professional development activities to assist schools in implementing school-based decision making. School council members elected for the first time shall complete a minimum of six (6) clock hours of training in the process of school-based decision making, no later than thirty (30) days after the beginning of the service year for which they are elected to serve. School council members who have served on a school council at least one (1) year shall complete a minimum of three (3) clock hours of training in the process of school-based decision making no later than one hundred twenty (120) days after the beginning of the service year for which they are elected to serve. Experienced members may participate in the training for new members to fulfill their training requirement. School council training required under this subsection shall be conducted by trainers endorsed by the Department of Education. By November 1 of each year, the principal through the local superintendent shall forward to the Department of Education the

names and addresses of each council member and verify that the required training has been completed. School council members elected to fill a vacancy shall complete the applicable training within thirty (30) days of their election.

- (7) A school that chooses to have school-based decision making but would like to be exempt from the administrative structure set forth by this section may develop a model for implementing school-based decision making, including but not limited to a description of the membership, organization, duties, and responsibilities of a school council. The school shall submit the model through the local board of education to the commissioner of education and the Kentucky Board of Education, which shall have final authority for approval. The application for approval of the model shall show evidence that it has been developed by representatives of the parents, students, certified personnel, and the administrators of the school and that two-thirds (2/3) of the faculty have agreed to the model.
- (8) The Kentucky Board of Education, upon recommendation of the commissioner of education, shall adopt by administrative regulation a formula by which school district funds shall be allocated to each school council. Included in the school council formula shall be an allocation for professional development that is at least sixty-five percent (65%) of the district's per pupil state allocation for professional development for each student in average daily attendance in the school. The school council shall plan professional development in compliance with requirements specified in KRS 156.095, except as provided in KRS 158.649. School councils of small schools shall be encouraged to work with other school councils to maximize professional development opportunities.
- (9)
 - (a) No board member, superintendent of schools, district employee, or member of a school council shall intentionally engage in a pattern of practice which is detrimental to the successful implementation of or circumvents the intent of school-based decision making to allow the professional staff members of a school and parents to be involved in the decision making process in working toward meeting the educational goals established in KRS 158.645 and 158.6451 or to make decisions in areas of policy assigned to a school council pursuant to paragraph (i) of subsection (2) of this section.
 - (b) An affected party who believes a violation of this subsection has occurred may file a written complaint with the Office of Education Accountability. The office shall investigate the complaint and resolve the conflict, if possible, or forward the matter to the Kentucky Board of Education.
 - (c) The Kentucky Board of Education shall conduct a hearing in accordance with KRS Chapter 13B for complaints referred by the Office of Education Accountability.

- (d) If the state board determines a violation has occurred, the party shall be subject to reprimand. A second violation of this subsection may be grounds for removing a superintendent, a member of a school council, or school board member from office or grounds for dismissal of an employee for misconduct in office or willful neglect of duty.
- (10) Notwithstanding subsections (1) to (9) of this section, a school's right to establish or maintain a school-based decision making council and the powers, duties, and authority granted to a school council may be rescinded or the school council's role may be advisory if the commissioner of education or the Kentucky Board of Education takes action under KRS 160.346.

Effective: July 13, 2004

History: Amended 2004 Ky. Acts ch. 188, sec. 4, effective July 13, 2004. -- Amended

2003 Ky. Acts ch. 81, sec. 1, effective June 24, 2003. -- Amended 2002 Ky. Acts ch. 152, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2002; and ch. 302, sec. 5, effective July 15, 2002. -

- Amended 2000 Ky. Acts ch. 212, sec. 1, effective July 14, 2000; ch. 339, sec. 2, effective July 14, 2000; ch. 418, sec. 1, effective July 14, 2000; and ch. 527, sec. 14, effective July 14, 2000. -- Amended 1998 Ky. Acts ch. 493, sec. 14, effective April

10, 1998; and ch. 609, sec. 3, effective July 15, 1998. -- Amended 1996 Ky. Acts ch. 34, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1996; ch. 74, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1996; ch. 146, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1996; ch. 318, sec. 52, effective July 15, 1996; and ch. 362, secs. 1 and 6, effective July 15, 1996. -- Amended 1994 Ky. Acts ch. 103, sec. 3, effective July 15, 1994; ch. 187, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1994; ch. 247, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1994; ch. 411, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1994; and ch. 484, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1994. -- Amended 1992 Ky. Acts ch. 376, sec. 3, effective July 14, 1992; and ch. 393, sec. 3, July 14, 1992. -- Created 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 476, Pt. I, sec. 14, effective July 13, 1990.

Legislative Research Commission Note (7/15/96). This section was amended by 1996

Ky. Acts chs. 34, 74, 146, 318, and 362. Where these Acts are not in conflict, they have been codified together. A conflict exists between Acts chs. 34 and 362. Under KRS 446.250, Acts ch. 362, which was last enacted by the General Assembly, prevails.

2002-2004 Budget Reference. See State/Executive Branch Budget, 2003 Ky. Acts ch. 156, pt. IX, item 16(i), at 1867; and State/Executive Branch Budget Memorandum, 2003 Ky. Acts ch. 143, at 772 (Final Budget Memorandum, at 363).

CURRICULUM VITAE

Anthony Ray Sanders
410 Evangeline Court
Hopkinsville, Kentucky 42240
A1Tonio@aol.com

EDUCATION

Associate in Arts (A.A.)
University of Kentucky-Hopkinsville Community College, Hopkinsville, Kentucky
(1983)

Bachelor of Science (B.S.)
Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky (1985)

Master of Arts in Education (M.A.Ed.)
Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky (1989)

Rank I Certification
Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky (1992)

Superintendent Certification
Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky (1996)

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
University of Louisville & Western Kentucky University (2005)

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

District Support Facilitator
Kentucky Department of Education, Frankfort, Kentucky (2004-Present)

Assistant Superintendent/Superintendent Intern (with Stu Silberman)
Daviess County Public Schools, Owensboro, Kentucky (2003-2004)

Principal, Highland Elementary School
Christian County Public Schools, Hopkinsville, Kentucky (1994-2003)

Adjunct Faculty
Hopkinsville Community College, Hopkinsville, Kentucky (1990-2002)

Teacher, Highland Elementary School
Christian County Public Schools, Hopkinsville, Kentucky (1986-1994)

Teacher, Browning Springs Middle School
Hopkins County Public Schools, Madisonville, Kentucky (1985-1986)

Music Director
Moore's Baptist Church, Hopkinsville, Kentucky (1993 – Present)

Music Director
Durrett Avenue Baptist Church, Hopkinsville, Kentucky (1981-1991)

Music Director
Cedar Grove Baptist Church, Hopkinsville, Kentucky (1977-1981)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING (abridged)

Superintendents' Assessment Center
Superintendents' Testing & Training Program
Graduate of Kentucky Leadership Academy
Kentucky Principal Mentoring Program (KPIP)
Kentucky Teacher Mentoring Program (KTIP)

INTERESTS

Musical Keyboards
Independent Gospel Singer & Songwriter
Computer Technology

HONORS & LISTINGS (abridged)

Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society
Western Kentucky University Chapter (2003)

Who's Who in American South & Southwest

Men of Achievement

5,000 Personalities of the World

Outstanding Young Men of America (Jaycees)

POSITIONS HELD (abridged)

Chairperson
Retired Seniors Volunteer Program, Hopkinsville, Kentucky (2000)

Associate Dean
1st District Association of Kentucky Baptists, Hopkinsville, Kentucky (1987-1990)

Chairman, Board of Directors for Youth
Durrett Avenue Baptist Church, Hopkinsville, Kentucky (1986-1988)