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TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ROLES AS DECISION-MAKERS UNDER CHAPTER 766

A Dissertation Presented

By

GORDON L. NOSEWORTHY

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

September 1981

Education

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AS DECISION-MAKERS UNDER CHAPTER 766

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Approved as to style and content by:

Dr. Albert S. Anthony, Chairperson

Dr. George Urch, Member

Dr. C. Lynn Vendien, Member

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School of Education

DEDICATION

To My Wife

Mary Ann

Whose Love and Inspiration

Encouraged this Endeavor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To many of my friends and professional colleagues I am indebted for their help and support throughout the writing of this dissertation. I wish to express especial gratitude to:

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- Finally, to my wife, Mary Ann, who had faith in me and my ability to make this accomplishment possible, my eternal love and gratitude.

ABSTRACT

Teachers' Perceptions of Their Roles
As Decision-Makers Under Chapter 766

(September 1981)

Gordon L. Noseworthy, B.A., McGill University

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This study was undertaken to collect the perceptions of teachers as sharing in the decision-making of curricular planning and implementation under Chapter 766. In particular, Section 322.1 of Chapter 766 of the Laws Relating to Education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts where a team approach must be practised was checked. Assumptions the study was designed to verify were:

Teachers tend not to perceive themselves as participatory decision-makers in special needs curriculum building.

Teachers mandated to shared decision-making do not perceive themselves as practising shared decision-making.

Richard Krey's Teachers' Perceptions of Curricular

Implementation Activities was used to determine perceptions of forty-seven teachers of the Frontier Regional School District in South Deerfield, Massachusetts. Ten questions listed personal and professional data. These tabulated data provide a description of the polled population. Sixteen questions of varying parts totalling forty-six items measured the teachers' perceptions. Each question is described. The results of all questions are tabulated.

Within the study decision-making is explored through the educational literature. An evolution from a purely administrative traditional style through consultative decision-making to shared decision-making is described and illustrated.

The study clearly indicated that Frontier Regional School teachers do not perceive themselves as sharing in decision-making. They see their input at the planning stages as minimal, their objections and suggestions as receiving little attention, and they do not consider final decisions as made by teachers. Teachers must learn to share information, consider alternatives and redefine consensus to reach a maximum feasible decision. Committed to their decision, all feel they "own" it. This is a positive step towards successful implementation. Since

teachers are required by law to share in important curricular decision-making, this study is timely.

The study produced recommendations to improve the approach of Frontier Regional School to curricular planning and implementation through training for shared decision-making. Characteristics of decision-making and steps in the process are defined for training. Recommendations for all systems in Massachusetts to identify similar needs, prioritize them, and plan for solutions through training are also included.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION iv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS v

ABSTRACT vii

LIST OF TABLES xii

LIST OF FIGURES. xiii

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION. 1

The Problem
Purpose of the Study
Significance of the Study
Delimitations of the Study
Design of the Study
Organization of the Dissertation
Background of the Study: The Legislative Mandate

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH. 26

Introduction
A Definition of Decision-Making
A Shift in Decisicn
The Decision-Maker in Traditional Secondary Education
Expanding the Process of Decision-Making
The Case for Sharing

III. METHODOLOGY 52

Description of the Instrument
Description of the Population

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA. 64

Introduction
Summary of Personal Data of Respondents
Analysis of Data Results

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 96

Introduction
Summary of Data Analysis and Conclusions
Recommendations for Future Directions

BIBLIOGRAPHY 109

APPENDIX 113

Chapter 766; Regulation 322.1 114
Teachers' Perceptions of Curricular Implementation Activities 117

LIST OF TABLES

1. Respondents' Teaching Experience in Years. 65
2. Respondents' College Preparation 66
3. Respondents' Age Distribution. 67
4. Respondents' Subject Area of Specialization. 68
5. Grades Taught by Respondents 69
6. Respondents' Frequency of Team Participation 70
7. Results of Question 1. 72
8. Results of Question 2. 74
9. Results of Question 3. 76
10. Results of Question 4. 77
11. Results of Question 5. 79
12. Results of Question 6. 80
13. Results of Question 7. 82
14. Results of Question 8. 84
15. Results of Question 9. 85
16. Results of Question 10 87
17. Results of Question 11 88
18. Results of Question 12 89
19. Results of Question 13 90
20. Results of Question 14 92
21. Results of Question 15 93
22. Results of Question 16 94

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Level of Decision (Authoritarian) 31
2. Level of Decision (Consultative). 38
3. Level of Decision (Shared). 49

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Little research has been done to indicate the perception teachers have of their role as decision-makers. The intent of this study was to look beyond routine classroom decision-making to investigate curriculum decision-making under the mandate of Chapter 766 of the Laws Relating to Education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Teachers of the Frontier Regional School District in South Deerfield, Massachusetts, were the target population of the study.

Historically, most aspects of school-wide decision-making in the secondary school have been left to the administrators. Teacher decisions were made in the classroom. Currently, a mandate requires a shared decision-making format to make decisions that were formerly beyond the realm of the teacher's responsibility.

The Problem

The problem posed in this study asked: Do teachers perceive themselves as effectively sharing in decision-making? The wording of Regulation 322.1 (Chapter 766) mandates shared decision-making for teams of teachers and yet there has been little or no required formal teacher

training in shared decision-making.

Buffie stated that team decisions are based on professional assessment of student needs.[1] This precludes a school system's faith in the professional competency of its staff to make decisions with consensus about what is to be taught and how it is to be taught. Without training for or assessment of this competency, the problem addressed by this study arose.

The extent of decision-making expected of teachers was examined. Habitually, teachers have looked to administrators for decisions. Public schools are organized bureaucratically for instruction and bureaucrats' decisions are based on directives from above in the hierarchy. However, the long held view that boards of education should set policy, administrators should administer and teachers should teach is rapidly disappearing.[2] Section 322.1 of Chapter 766 is a most suitable example of this trend, for this regulation clearly calls for teachers to share the decision-making. Furthermore, the decisions involved to comply with the regulation influence all aspects of the educational process.

Are teachers on firm ground for these decisions? Do they feel the necessary confidence? To work, shared decision-making must be a procedure to serve the student and not the regulation.

Berman discovered that persons who prepare prospective executives or administrators are aware of the importance of wise decision-making. They plan programs of preparation which include training for the decision-making process. However, trainers must note that team teaching studies such as Helier's showed that some teachers do not work well with other teachers in the planning stages of curriculum and instruction.[3] In such cases appropriate training must be offered for effective shared decision-making. To define more precisely the problem: Where training has not taken place, what is the teacher perception of involvement in shared decision-making? It seems to be taken for granted that individuals are good decision-makers, yet observations and experience indicate that such is often not the case.

With the mandate of shared decision-making such as that created by Chapter 766 in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, attitudes about decision-making and assumptions about decision-makers can no longer remain static.

Purpose of the Study

The problem identified a situation in which teachers who had not been trained in the decision-making process must share decisions in a group setting with fellow professionals. The intention of this study was to measure

the perceptions teachers have of themselves in their current roles as the decision-makers of curriculum and the methodology of its implementation for the student of special needs. To what degree do the teachers consider themselves effectively sharing in decision-making?

Decision-making will be defined, the traditional history of decision-making in education will be addressed. Styles of decision-making from authoritarian through consultative to shared will be researched. Variables of which one must be conscious in examining the decision-making process will be pointed out. The specific area of concern will be where presently teachers are placed by Chapter 766 regulations and team prepared curriculum with regard to decision-making.

Teachers may be convened in a forum for shared decision-making while perceiving their role as no different from working under the administrative format since they may see the outcome as an administrative decision. Yet it is the teachers who are in the field with the students daily. They assess needs, evaluate abilities, and measure aptitudes. Can teachers input into curriculum planning not then be crucial? To satisfy Chapter 766 teachers must pool their professional resources into the shared decision-making of an individualized educational plan. This method by which they go about completing the planning task must be clear to them, uniformly understood and geared through

training to success.

Significance of the Study

The reason for selecting this problem was timely for the rural regional school. A need existed to discover where teachers stood regarding the mandate of their participation in decision-making, their willingness and ability to handle shared decision-making, their degree of involvement, their perception of the value of their input and their role in evaluating the decisions they made.

To teachers who have been seeking an active role in the decision-making process, the mandate may have appealed. Granting the power to make decision, however, did not automatically provide the ability to do so with skill. As decision-making is a process, many aspects of it can be learned.

Hopefully, as a result of this study, new knowledge would be gained. Would clues surface as to the true nature of the decision-making process within the operation of Chapter 766? Since teachers are supposedly sharing in decision-making, would negative self-perceptions ascertained by this study validate the need for training in shared decision-making? Certainly administrators who aspire to provide the ideal leadership for the step-wise obligatory program of Chapter 766 must know how the teachers assess their own position.

Practical application of the study could bring about behavioral change among educators at the levels of administration and teaching. A significant step would be the challenge thrown to the school leaders to create a model for success in working together. The model must accommodate the group of educational decision-makers who must successfully design plans for individual student's learning.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was limited to measuring teachers' perceptions of their roles as sharing in decision-making. A program was not evaluated.

The reader may bear in mind that only one paragraph of 100 pages of regulations (Chapter 766) was the basis for researching mandated shared decision-making. The paragraph describes what a team is required to state in formulating curricular and instructional plans for the student of special needs.

A multiple choice questionnaire was used for gathering data. Ten initial questions from a total of twenty-six questions drew personal and professional information about the respondents.

For the sample population of teachers whose perceptions were measured, the writer selected the faculty of the regional high school of the Frontier

Regional School District in South Deerfield, Massachusetts. Teachers in the Frontier Regional School District have never been offered in-service training or workshops in shared decision-making. The High School serves Grades 7 through 12. Approximately six hundred students attend the school from the four surrounding small towns of Conway, Deerfield, Sunderland, and Whately. Forty-seven professional educators answered sixteen questions (in addition to the ten questions on personal and professional data) with forty-six different parts for a yield of 2,162 responses. Prior to Chapter 766 no formal body of teachers as shared decision-makers existed in the sample school.

Narrative conclusions were drawn from responses once they were summarized with the aid of computer equipment.

Design of the Study

Robert Krey's Teachers' Perceptions of Curricular Implementation Activities (T.P.C.I.A.) was selected as the instrument to measure the teachers' perceptions of their roles as shared decision-makers. Krey's research was to develop the instrument; this writer's intention was to carry research purposefully further in this study related to Chapter 766. The focus was on Regulation 322.1 governing the team as a group of decision-makers in curriculum planning and implementation.

Assumptions the writer attempted to verify through

the narrative interpretation of the T.P.C.I.A. responses included:

Teachers tend not to perceive themselves as participatory decision-makers in special needs curriculum building.

Teachers mandated to shared decision-making do not perceive themselves as practising shared decision-making.

An underlying assumption rising from the literature but not directly addressed by the T.P.C.I.A. suggested that lack of training as decision-makers inhibits shared decision-making for teachers.

The sixteen questions selected from the T.P.C.I.A. were those dealing specifically with the planning stages of curriculum building and subsequent evaluation of the same curriculum. Under Chapter 766 the formulation of an individualized educational plan is curriculum building of a highly specialized kind. To build such a plan, a group of teachers and fellow professionals must function in a shared decision-making format. The instrument is designed so that individual parts of it may be used to collect information without destroying the established reliability or validity of the separate measure. All items have been tested and Krey determined at the University of Wisconsin that his instrument was considered reliable and valid as a measure of teachers' perceptions of curricular implementation activities. Thus, it was well suited to

establishing at this time where teachers perceive themselves in the curricular planning under Chapter 766, Regulation 322.1. Note that the instrument was intended for use with this particular mandated curriculum planning in mind.

The varied backgrounds and professional assignments of the teachers were tabulated. An advantage of this population was the possibility of securing a 100% response. Some conclusions concerning the perceptions the teachers have of their roles currently in sharing decisions with regard to curricular activities and implementation under Chapter 766 were made. The narrative interpretation of statistics was based on the answers at the various degrees, "Always" through "Never".

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation includes five chapters, a bibliography and an appendix. Chapter I includes a statement of the problem, the significance and the design of the study and its limitations. A section on the background of the study concludes the chapter.

In Chapter II a review of the literature related to the evolution of shared decision-making in education is presented.

Chapter III deals with the methodology of the study. The sample population and survey instrument are described

as is the design of the study procedure.

The analysis of the data collected in the study is found in Chapter IV. The results of the responses to the questionnaire are listed and summarized.

Chapter V contains the conclusions drawn from the results of the study. Where the Frontier Regional School District teachers perceive themselves as shared decision-makers of individualized educational plans is the basis for recommendations the study presents for future directions.

Background of the Study: The Legislative Mandate

Chapter 766 and shared decision-making.

The individual child. Since one room schoolhouses rendered individual attention to each child the norm for the schoolmaster, to the days where a knowledge of elementary psychology is required for all teachers, educators have borne in mind the essential awareness of individual differences. This awareness, however, was predominantly left to the expertise or talent of each particular teacher in the classroom with the "Psychology of Learning" course he/she took as an undergraduate as his/her resource; the brainstressing of the term "individual differences"; and the input of an administrator confined to periodic lesson evaluations when special concern for an individual's needs may have been noted.

Francis Bennie in her work, Learning Centers

Development and Operation, echoed this opinion as she said,

> Individualization of instruction has long been a goal of American public education. Although it is not a new concept, it is one that has been subject to more interpretations than perhaps any other major idea in education. Educators have frequently agreed upon the definition and purposes of individualized instruction; yet there has been little consensus with respect to the methodologies for best achieving this goal. As a result, a wide gap has persisted between theory or intent and actual practices in the schools. This failure to provide for the great diversity of pupil needs, a responsibility rendered mandatory by universal compulsory public education, has been harmful to both the academic achievement and the personal growth and development of students.[4]

Eventually special education did evolve and lines of classification were drawn across the range of intelligence quotients to syphon off the educables and trainables for their own brand of isolated public education. What existed were programs to deal somewhere between some people being different and all people being different.

The move to special needs. Educators now look beyond the category of the overall special youngster. The focus is on specific areas of incapability. Special needs are precisely defined and an entirely new perspective of these special needs - be they educational, emotional, social,

psychological, or otherwise - is being addressed.

In Massachusetts, state guidelines for the delivery of special services called upon educators for a renewed expertise. Local pressure was asserted as the demands of the state level must be met for reimbursement of services and programs to the communities. This seemingly mercenary ace up the governmental sleeve was, however, a blessing in its motivating force. Specifications of services and programs were detailed from the format of the individual educational plans worded in measurable objectives to the composition of an audit team state based but working on location. In between, significant and taxing work on the part of practising secondary school educators transpired. But this noteworthy shift from the special person to the special needs of the person was to be the result.

Administrative planning. Turmoil is certain to result if the school administrator does not make it his/her task to design a model for his/her school to implement special services. This is an all encompassing project. The approach cannot simply be the introduction as something new neatly slipped into place through memoranda or an option teachers can take or leave. Successful plans require faculty training, awareness, exposure, involvement, and continuous evaluation.

Once into the program one soon realizes that the

typical approach of a few workshops and some hand-out materials does not suffice. This merely scratches the surface. And it is given that everyone will not go back to school. But the program must work and usually must work with a great deal of mainstreaming and the resultant regular classroom modification. That is, when identification has been established, there remains the problem of tailoring a program unique to meet the needs which, barring outside placement, must function within the existing structure, however altered, of the planning school.

In essence, every school must have its own functional model, its policy and structure to process in any way the special needs of certain students. There is no blanket solution, although it is evident that the part teachers play must be clarified and then recognized to its fullest intent.

The intent of this study was to measure the perception teachers have of themselves in their roles as the decision-makers of curriculum and the methodology of its implementation for the student of special needs. How their assignment to this role came about resulted from the adoption in Massachusetts of Chapter 766 of the Laws Relating to Education.

Section 322.1 defined. The volume of regulations

originally promulgated on May 28, 1974 in compliance with all statutory requirements includes section 322.1 of Chapter 766. This section dealt with the classroom teacher's responsibility in the creation of the individual educational plan. In order to study the perception teachers have of themselves in the role of decision-makers, the extent of decision expected of them must be precisely examined. The reader may bear in mind that only one paragraph of 100 pages of regulations was the target of this research. In that paragraph was described what a team is required to state in formulating curriculum and instructional plans for the student of special needs.

In identifying educational decision-makers no longer does the hierarchy as described in Brubaker and Nelson's bureaucratic model universally apply to the public school. Chapter 766 promulgates the warning that decision-making cannot solely be in the domain of the administrator.

Who join the decision-makers? For this area of study, Section 321 of Chapter 766 answers the question. Apart from choices among a nurse, a psychologist, a physician, an administrator, a parent, a non-school system professional and the child himself/herself (upon request if from 14 to 21 years of age), the team consists of several teachers. These include the chairperson who is frequently a teacher; at least one teacher who has recently had or currently has the student in a classroom

or other teaching situation (for secondary schools "teacher" suggests one from each major subject area); the referring teacher; the regular or special education teacher who may be teaching the child, as soon as the identity of such teacher is known; the consulting teacher (generic teacher) or other individual who may be assisting the teachers as soon as the identity of such person is known; and/or an approved vocational educator if the team intends to make a vocational education prescription for the student.[5]

Together these teachers and their professional colleagues must reach a series of decisions revolving around all aspects of curriculum and instruction for the student of special needs. While Heller pointed out that experienced practitioners would agree that some teachers do not seem to be able to work harmoniously with other teachers in developing course goals and in carrying out instructional strategy,[6] that no longer remains a matter of choice and lends support for a need to study and learn about decision-making.

Areas of decision. The team is mandated the responsibility to write (322.1(a)) a statement of the student's performance level, that is what the child can do. Teachers must be teachers of children as opposed to teachers of subjects to compromise for consensus in

educational decision-making.

There are two key issues to understand. Many teachers still set course standards for all, the rationale being that to be credited with passing the course the set standard must be met. The extreme of this thinking is to expect bell curve grades for every class. To function within a student-need-objective structure, the uniform standard must be waived and the program modified to allow a student to progress within his/her especially tailored plan and be so evaluated. This amounts to considerable change in the teacher's outlook. Perhaps a contemporary definition of "teaching" such as that stated by Eye and Netzer in their book, School Administrators and Instruction, serves the planning team and the implementing teacher in their respective roles:

> Teaching involves the imparting of knowledge, the selection and presentation of learning experiences, and the evaluation of human achievement. It is obviously not a new thought that to evaluate truly human achievement we must deal with the learner and his potential. It is for an entirely new approach that we must be prepared.[7]

To tie in decision-making and the tone of such an approach, Berman insisted that to maintain a positive outlook on the process is crucial if decision-making is to be seen as something exciting and dramatically human.[8]

Secondly, consensus must be redefined at this point

in terms of practicality and reality so that all involved can reach a level of agreement in terms of a student's needs. It is essential that a team member be able to submit finally to the wishes of the majority even when individually he/she may disagree or disapprove.[9] For it is not only the background of the team members in terms of subject matter that dictates what each member of the team will contribute. Personality characteristics of the team members markedly influence in what way and to what extent the team operates. Each of these elements contributes to the determination of the particular operational procedures used. The team members determine by their interaction with each other how positive the functional operation will be.[10]

The team must determine (322.1(b)) a specific statement of the measurable physical constraints on such performance; that is, what the child cannot do in terms of his motor ability, and at all times must make specific reference to physical education. This determination may or may not go beyond the gymnasium to the regular classroom for modification.

A specific statement describing the student's learning style should be one of the least complicated areas for teachers to discuss and prepare since it is based on behaviors and performance already observed in a classroom setting. In any shared decision-making situation, each participant in the group or on the team serves the function

of providing in-put for the rest of the group designed to facilitate the making of the decisions. In the initial stages of the process outlined in Paragraph 322, (322.1(c)), the team must state specifically the student's learning style. Hence the representation on the team of the teacher experienced with the case to delineate methods which best seem to succeed with the individual's learning. At this point to be able to analyze is extremely important to decision-making, for however decision-making is described, data gathering is part of the process. Knowing which information is central and which is tangential to a problem is critical if adequate decisions are to be made.[11]

The degree of professional preparation through teacher training, post graduate work or in-service programs and how an individual has availed himself/herself of any such opportunities in the area of preparing measurable behavioral objectives influences the teachers' perceptions of their obligation under 322.1(d) to prepare a statement of the general (one year) educational objectives and the specific (quarterly) objectives which the child can reasonably be expected to achieve. Such objectives shall be measurable and shall be listed in order of priority. Listing by priority in group decision-making at the secondary level is a challenging task. As has been suggested above, many teachers covet their own standards and the importance of the subject they teach. A suggestion

of compromising this stand can be met with objection. One hopes that with practice writing objectives in terms of the learner and the subject matter he/she can handle, a vehicle to collectively listing priorities will surface.

Within a shared decision-making model teams must write a statement of the suggested methodology or teaching approach for meeting the general objectives. (322.1(e)) For the secondary school teacher this often means mainstreaming a student with an identified learning deficiency within a regular classroom. While the class at large is taught most commonly from a style of teaching native to and comfortable for the teacher, that teacher must then have a repertoire of various techniques to bring to mind and introduce in order to serve the special needs student. A prime resource for this repertoire can be the suggested methodology and teaching approaches delineated in the evaluation team meeting when such decisions are shared.

Where between guesswork and a scientific framework, from educational research and personal expertise or perhaps intuition does a team specify time slots? Wher the administrator on the team delineates available space, personnel, conflicts in the schedule for a myriad of combinations of special needs, does the shared decision-making of the team remain uninfluenced? Regulation 322.1(f) requires a statement of the types and

amounts of services (in terms of periods per day and per week) which are necessary to enable the student to achieve the objectives, including a statement of the duration and frequency of the periods during which the student should receive the services. Time and space limitations are part of the fabric of the decision rather than limiting factors, said Berman. If boundaries of time and space did not exist, decision would become a different kind of process, lacking the challenge which currently abounds in the process.[12]

Furthermore, teams heavily weighted on the teacher side in composition, are expected to make decisions which extend beyond the school and educational service centers and even into the home. In fact, a team must decide not only the parent-child instruction which is necessary to enable the student to achieve the objectives but it must also determine the competence of the parent. The team must specify the amcunts and types of services in which the parent is to be trained to provide to his/her child. To augment the direct intervention of the parent in reaching specified goals for the student, the team then decides the amounts and types of support services the parent will require.

In the actual delivery of the service of teaching a special needs youngster, professional latitude must be an integral factor. The team makes the decisions; the team

does not teach as a team. So decisions regarding specialized materials and equipment to meet objectives depend on team representation with familiarity or access to a market conveniently glutted with special education products.

A requirement of the shared decision-making process for Chapter 766 includes a statement of whether the particular services provided to the student should be accommodated in a classroom setting, in a small group, or on an individual basis. Again, the interplay of those who know the child, those who know what alternatives are available and those who know well the objectives as they relate to subjects taught must meet at that floating point of consensus to produce a workable setting. Just how confident teachers feel in this role at this particular stage with any given case is decidedly questionable. As Grannis said of the first cousin to this process, team teaching: "It exhumes the curriculum. It forces the teachers to confront decisions that in the self-contained classroom they may have surrendered or executed unwittingly."[13]

The precision of group decision is tested to the degree where it must recommend the daily duration of the student's program. A variety of broad prototypes are defined by the regulations but the behavioral objectives must specify the service to be offered and for how long

each day. The team need not, however, be confined to the school year. 322.1 (1) states that the team must recommend the number of days per year on which the student's program should be provided, with justification if the number differs from the number of days in the regular school year. One must realize that the consequences of this decision-making body extend into areas of budget, staffing and facilities beyond conventional school parameters. In fact, if local services are not considered adequate, the team can share in the decision of determining placement, tuition and transportation needs to place the student elsewhere. Is such a decision made by the elimination of what is known for the pursuit of what is needed or should decisions for change in school programs supercede? The challenges are boundless.

Conclusion. How confident do teachers feel about decision-making? Will the goal of the process better the student or simply comply with the 766 mandate?

When Chapter 766 was passed, teachers were made aware of its content; procedures were facilitated through the availability of step-by-step official forms; mainstreaming suddenly became a key word among educators in Massachusetts; modification in the classroom brought about generic teachers. New professional contract terminology for what technically constituted the number of

students in a classroom surfaced. The wheels were set in motion. However, the road to direct the motion was the decision-making process and it was generally overlooked. Teachers were physically placed in a group to make decisions; teachers were not trained to become decision-makers. The difference was evident. In business and industry those charged with decision-making study the process with good reason. The points of such study were emphasized by Berman:

> 1. Much decision-making is highly complex.
> 2. A need exists to become aware of the decision-making process so that persons will develop an understanding of the use of data in making a decision.
> 3. A study of decision-making enables one to see the relationship between goals, action and decision. Goal attainment can be facilitated or deterred by the quality of decision made.
> 4. Decision-making should be studied so that persons can learn to ascertain the quality of the decision. To differentiate between the merits of possible consequences of choices is a necessary learning.
> 5. A need to study decision-making stems from our relationship with others. The acceptance of the principle of individual freedom of choice helps the person realize that he/she himself/herself does nct enter into the decision of another except as the other person chooses to let others enter into the decision.

Berman concluded these points with the statement that decision-making is affected by how one perceives,

the values one holds, the knowledge one prizes, the persons one admires, and the modes of communication one utilizes. The process does not stand alone.[14]

Consider Shackles's definition: "Decision is choice in face of bounded uncertainty."[15] It seems to be taken for granted that persons will automatically become good decision-makers, yet observation and experience indicate that such is often not the case. The teachers of Frontier Regional School were asked how they perceived their roles as shared decision-makers under Chapter 766.

Footnotes

[1]Beggs, David W., ed., Team Teaching Bold New Adventure, "Potentials for Team Teaching in the Junior High School" by Edward G. Buffie, Unified College Press, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana, 1964, p. 66.

[2]Beggs, op. cit., "An Administrator Looks at Team Teaching" by Francis M. Trusty, p. 137.

[3]Beggs, ibid., "Qualities for Team Members" by Melvin P. Heller, pp. 146-147.

[4]Bennie, Frances, Learning Centers Development and Operation, Educational Technology Publications, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1977, p. xi.

[5]Massachusetts Department of Education, Regulations 766, September, 1978, p. 26.

[6]Beggs, op. cit., Team Teaching Bold New Adventure, "Qualities for Team Members," by Marvin P. Heller, pp. 146-147.

[7]Eye, Glen G., and Netzer, Lanore A., School Administrators and Instruction, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., Boston, Mass., 1971, p. 4.

[8]Berman, Louise M., New Priorities in the Curriculum, Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, Columbus, Ohio, 1968, p. 109.

[9]Beggs, op. cit., "A Teacher Comments on Team Teaching," by David Tomcheck, p. 118.

[10]Ibid., "Potentials for Team Teaching in the Junior High School," by Edward G. Buffie, p. 65.

[11]Berman, op. cit., p. 110.

[12]Ibid., p. 108.

[13]Shaplin, Judson T., and Olds, Henry F., Jr., eds., Team Teaching, "Team Teaching and the Curriculum," by Joseph C. Grannis, Harper & Row, N.Y., 1964, p. 131.

[14]Berman, op. cit., pp. 102-104.

[15]Shackles, op. cit., p. 12.

C H A P T E R I I

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Introduction

This chapter consists of a review of literature and research dealing with styles of the decision-making process. Decision-making is defined and traced from the administrative style to a shared decision-making model relating specifically to the secondary school. That setting consists of the hierarchy of a teaching faculty supervised by administrators. To understand decision-making helped to measure teachers' perceptions of their roles as decision-makers for team prepared curriculum under the regulations of Chapter 766.

An ERIC search and a computer search of the Psychological Abstracts on key words dealing with shared decision-making and teachers' self-perceptions produced only seven relevant documents for this study. This is indicative of the need for work in this topic area.

A Definition of Decision-Making

What is the decision-making process? Simplified, decision-making involves identifying a problem, suggesting various solutions, selecting the best solution and

implementing it. A broad definition, true for authoritarian decision-making or shared decision-making, taken from Elbing's Behavioral Decisions in Organizations, listed five steps:

> 1. Identification of a disequilibrium: observing and becoming sensitive to potential problem situations.
> 2. Diagnosis of the problem situation: attempting to understand what is happening in a particular situation.
> 3. Definition of the problem to be solved: identifying and stating a problem in relation to organizational and personal goals.
> 4. Determination of alternative methods and solutions and choice of the best solution: selecting a course of action from a series of alternatives.
> 5. Implementation of the chosen solution: the entire process of actualizing the chosen solution.[1]

With this definition in mind, decision-making is explored from that of the administrator's sole responsibility to a process shared by teachers in secondary education.

A Shift in Decision

To make a decision. Simply said and at times simply done. However, this ever-present concept of decision-making in education as seen through the research of educators over the past decade has modified. As society has hammered out the "rights" and "responsibilities" of its "persons", change has accordingly infiltrated all its institutions; schools are by no means the least affected.

Administrators and teachers face new demands of professional accountability. Decision-making as so long defined and accepted by both ranks is in certain situations to be mandated a shared task. The challenge thus thrown to the school leaders is to create a working model such that committees of decision-makers in education, particularly those designing educational plans for individual children, would succeed in producing horses, not camels! Furthermore, each member of the group must feel accountable for those curriculum decisions.

For many years decision-making in the eyes of educators was "the buck stops here" responsibility of the administrators. It was the administrators who were paid to face situations head on and through the interpretation of official established policy produce answers. Administrators must provide leadership through making the decision and supervising the implementation of decision which followed to assure the successful achievement of stated goals. Teachers openly preferred to have the buck stop elsewhere and go about their classroom business. While decision-making remained for them a part of daily classroom management, it did not affect general policies. If, in the event of a lesson approach or in on-the-spot handling of an individual child a decision proved wrong, it was locally altered or channeled along an alternative route to the goal of the lesson or the objective for the student.

As decision-making was seen through the literature as an integral part of educational administration, student teachers were not trained for decision-making processes. As Chapter 766 in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts required a shared decision-making approach to curriculum development, styles of decision-making in schools faced change.

The Decision-Maker in Traditional Secondary Education

Authoritative process. Decision-making has been defined by Griffiths et al and summarized in what Griffiths refers to as his Key Concept. In the words of Griffiths, Clark, Winn and Iannaccone,

> all judgements which affect a course of action are termed decisions. They are pragmatic in nature, with success determined by the resulting action. A decision covers a period of time ranging from an instant to long consideration. The decision-making process includes not only the instant of decision, but the period of time used in considering it and the acts necessary to make it operational. Decisions are nearly always sequential and interrelated. This makes it extremely difficult to trace the original decision on a matter.[2]

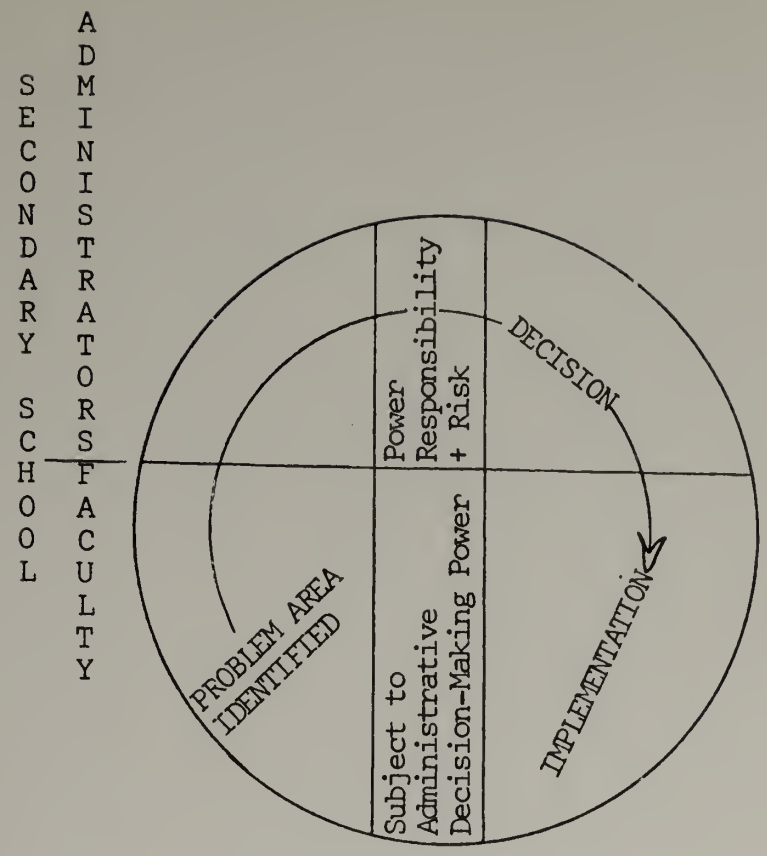
In summary, the Key Concept states that "all organization is built around a system of sequential decisions. Those who formally affect the decisions are functioning as administrators."[3]

This traditional role of the administrator as sole decision-maker will change. A transitional period must develop roles of subordinates in decision-making to an ultimate recognition of a clearly defined concept of shared decision-making. Hence, Griffiths et al's references to "the acts necessary to make it operational" and the "affect" and "functioning" of administrators will undergo a shift in meaning.

In terms of who makes decisions, Fenwick English was more specific in his perception of traditional decision-making. He termed "one-on-one decision-making: decisions made by a superior officer rather than by a consensus in a group setting".[4] "Oligarchical decision-making" was seen by English as a "decision-making style in which decisions stem from small groups usually confined to a series of officers at the top of the organization."[5] Clearly, English referred to systems in a hierarchical organization pattern still common in most schools today.

Figure 1 schematically represents decision-making in a hierarchical secondary school setting. The faculty alone is represented in the lower part of the diagram as it is not the writer's intention at this point to explore student, parent and community involvement in decision-making while acknowledging trends in this direction.

The solid arc at the top of the circle delineates diagramatically the area wherein lie both the power and the



Level of Decision

(Authoritarian)

Figure 1

responsibility of decision-making. The faculty is totally subject to the power structure to which it must turn for decision and by which decision it must abide. It is not that long ago that this power extended into the personal life of a teacher. Vertical channels were clearly defined and an authoritative system prevailed.

Brubaker and Nelson's bureaucratic model and decision-making. Brubaker and Nelson proposed their bureaucratic model of education. Within this pattern, according to Brubaker and Nelson the most common structure of our educational systems, "the ultimate judges of what good instruction is or what curriculum should be are the chief administrators in the school system rather than the teachers."[6] Their supporting evidence indicated that "governing bodies and their representatives, the administrators, set the conditions or establish the basic environment for curriculum and instruction. They determine class size, student composition in classes, number of days of instruction, the schedule for such instruction and who will teach."[7] Thus come to the surface the practical decisions which must be reached which bear highly significant impact on the learning environment in which the style of the teachers must somehow mesh with the style(s) of the learners.

Risk in decision-making. In aluding to the premise of a

"buck stops here" administrator's responsibility, the element of risk bears discussing. Its synonymity with "gamble" has a deleterious effect on the inclination of a majority of classroom educators to become involved. Risk has not been dealt with and this enforces in English's sense one-on-one or at best oligarchical decision-making. Brubaker and Nelson indicated that while compromise is an inevitable part of decision-making, this does not mean that the decision-maker avoids risk-taking. They went on to point out that

> the decision-maker must recognize that some decisions of the high gain type also require high risks. As the decision-maker wants to maximize gains and minimize loss, high risk decisions should be reserved for rare occasions in which the gains to organization are potentially high. The decision-maker who fails to reserve high risk decisions for rare occasions but instead frequently makes such decisions will soon find that he is not taken seriously since all of his decisions are extremist.[8]

This is a delicate situation and perhaps accounts for the teachers' complaisance with resting decision-making at the principal's door when one considers the balance an administrator must be capable of maintaining. For within this bureaucratic pattern that Brubaker and Nelson fitted so neatly over the majority of secondary school operations is the decision-maker tagged extremist. He/she may well find that his/her job is in jeopardy since

his/her behavior is judged to be erratic by his/her colleagues and bureaucratic superiors. Teachers have avoided that position.

In his book, School Administration: Challenge and Opportunity for Leadership, Richard A. Gorton claimed that the "administrator engages in decision-making perhaps more often than in any other process. In fact," he stressed, "some authors have even taken the position that it is the single most important process in school administration."[9] According to Gorton, education is still locked into the traditional operation. Despite what input from faculty the administrator considers, the final decision is not a consensus but his alone.

> Decision-making is basically the process of choosing among alternatives. In most situations there exist two or more alternative courses of action, and an administrator must decide which alternative to pursue. Before making a decision, however, the administrator should engage in diagnosis in order to better understand the nature of the situation calling for a decision, and the alternatives available to him as well. Then he should assess the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative and the probabilities for success in each case. During the process of reaching a decision, an administrator should involve teachers, parents, students, central office supervisors, or others as appropriate, in order to capitalize on any special insights and expertise which they may be able to contribute.[10]

To capitalize on a contribution does not constitute sharing

the decision; it is within the style of consultative decision-making.

Variables in decision-making. In their Introduction to Educational Decision-Making, Brubaker and Nelson identified "many of the variables that decision-makers must take into account - variables such as individual and group needs and desires, available resources, rewards and sanctions, group norms, and informal influence patterns."[11] The variable must not inhibit the goal of decision-making. That goal, as Knezevich stated, is that the output of the decision-making process is rules or policies to guide subsequent behavior. The influence of the decision-making is important to the organization.

Time and decision-making. Decision-making as executive level responsibility was addressed by the late President John F. Kennedy in 1961 during his State-of-the-Union Message to Congress: "Capacity to act decisively at the exact time action is needed has been too often muffled in the morass of committees, timidities and fictitious theories which have created a growing gap between decision and execution."[12] Some consider that Kennedy projected an image of a president able to make a decision confidently. The element of time is the variable of effective decision-making that the chief executive suggested must be

considered in an efficient process for the early '60's. Knezevich interpreted the decision gap as "a matter of concern to administrators of lesser institutions" as well. It may result from slowness in passing information vital to decision-making up the channels to where the decision is to be made or from slowness in passing the decision downward to the points where it becomes operative. This is a valuable point to bear in mind when designing a shared decision-making model for effective educational plans in a school organization.

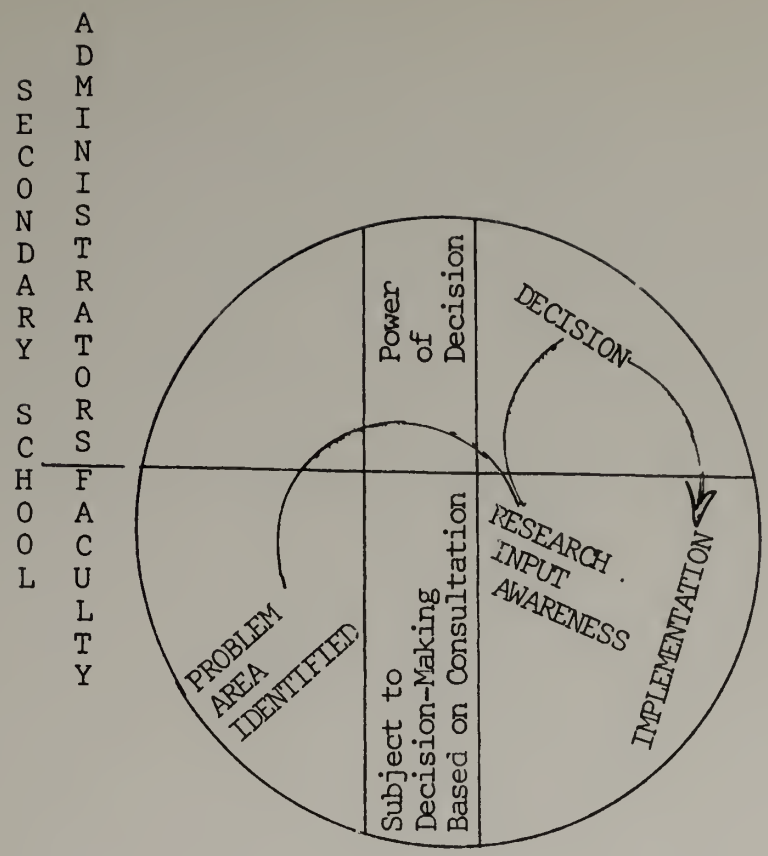
Expanding the Process of Decision-Making

In the interests of sharing the power to make decisions without detriment to decision being made, Griffiths, writing in Administrative Theory, proposed that "the specific function of administration is to develop and regulate the decision-making process in the most effective manner possible."[13] To expand the concept of decision-making beyond that of the traditionally administrator centered process to that of a more consultative style, Griffiths et al suggested that "Griffiths' theory does not imply that the primary executive function is that of making decisions personally. Rather, the administrator must organize and work with his staff to encourage decision-making without needless delay in a manner which allows all

the variable factors influencing the decision to be taken into account. The decision-making process must facilitate achievement of the objectives of the institution."[14] Shifting from decision-making "personally" may be the beginning of filling the gap.

In Figure 2 the relationship of the secondary school faculty to administration regarding decision-making does not indicate a one shift route from problem diagnosis to the "handing down" of the administrator's decision. Following the time line, there intervenes between problem and decision the researching of faculty input and the provision of their awareness of the available alternatives towards the decision. The power is distinctly retained at the top - that is, in Figure 2 within the solid arc at the top of the circle. Note, however, that the route to a decision is channeled back through the faculty who will ultimately have to implement the decision and hence their input of an informational value is sought. Consultation takes place.

Shared decision-making. An examination of some of the research to date reveals more elements directed towards a shared decision-making model. At this point it is appropriate to consider the turning point or transitional period wherein lies the shift towards greater involvement of educators at various levels in hierarchical



Level of Decision

(Consultative)

Figure 2

organizations in the decision-making process.

In Supervision, Staff Development and Leadership Berman analyzed decision. According to Berman, decision demands different kinds of behavior within a school than it does in other kinds of institutions or settings. Consideration needs to be given to many factors which have a bearing upon decision: a) the problem of creativity and group decision; b) the implementation of decision; and, c) the reaction to decisions which one has not had part in formulating.[15] (See Figure 1) One's personally invested interest at the decision-making level will prove to be a bonus at the level of implementation. That is, theoretically, involvement of a teacher sharing decision-making will bring about a greater commitment on the part of that teacher in dealing with the implementation of the decision.

Creativity versus implementation. What of the quality of decision, however? Griffiths claimed that very often an individual will make a more creative decision than will a group, although more alternatives might come from the group. The problem of creativity and enthusiasm versus involvement and alternatives arises. Berman posed the question: what is the place for the individual and for the group in decision-making which ultimately affects the larger group? If an individual is not involved in making a

decision, will he accept and implement it with enthusiasm? A direct relationship between involvement and commitment has been suggested.

Shackles, furthermore, talked about "empty" decisions or those which are essentially closed or noncreative. A group oftentimes will make an "empty" decision in terms of being able to predict rather clearly the outcomes of its decision. The need, according to Shackles, is to make "non-empty" decisions. "Such decisions contain an essential germ of inspired novelty."[16] Therefore, that dual problem, pointed out Berman, of making creative decisions while at the same time involving other persons is retained. With this awareness a need exists to search for ways to utilize persons in data gathering, in searching out alternatives, and in ascertaining the consequences of possible solutions without binding the person responsible for making the decision. (See Figure 2) Those decisions which are best made by the group, no matter what the outcomes, must also be determined. This leads to the role of the decision-maker cum implementor. Learning how to involve others enthusiastically in the process of decision-making which affects their lives is a critical part of the instructional leader's preparation.

Brubaker and Nelson viewed decision-making through their bureaucratic model as opposed to the professional organizational model. It was mentioned above that most

schools will lean more toward the bureaucratic model than the professional model. Brubaker and Nelson support this contention in that it is to be expected since all schools are government organizations and as such are organized bureaucratically for instruction. By definition of Brubaker and Nelson, the bureaucrat's decisions are governed by disciplined compliance with directives from superiors. In the Professional Organizational Model, the professional's decisions are governed by internalized professionalized standards.[17] The latter must be adopted to approach shared decision-making. This concept acknowledges the value of decision being made by those professionals who will implement that same decision.

In citing Frederick Herzberg's "Motivation Hygiene Theory" in Management of Organizational Behavior, Hersey and Blanchard provided an analogy from industry to support this theory of involvement. Summarily, what Hersey and Blanchard concluded was that people begin to satisfy their esteem and self-actualization needs by participating in the planning, organizing, motivating and controlling of their own tasks. Further studies of American society suggested that involving employees in decision-making tends to be effective.[18]

Berman went further in exploring the teacher role. In addition to participating in decision-making and implementation, instructional leaders need to learn

appropriate ways of reacting to decisions of others which affect them. The school situation is composed of a series of interwoven decisions, some of which the person has had part in making and some of which have been made for him/her. At this point the concepts of Figure 2 phase into Figure 3.

The Case for Sharing

Changes in education developed during the sixties, the militancy of teachers, and the shifting and differentiation of their roles have all served to bring about action or reaction among educators. As a result some teaching personnel have demanded more voice in the decision-making traditionally left to the non-teaching staff, such as supervisors, curriculum workers and principals. New modes of decision-making and fresh ways of viewing authority were important during this transitional period if the profession was to shape itself wisely so that its members had a relative degree of comfort within it.

Who should determine whether a child is so severely handicapped that he/she cannot be in a regular classroom? What should be the nature of the decision-making process in such cases within today's educational system? Extending the power to make decisions to novice decision-makers does not automatically provide the ability to do so

with skill. As decision-making is a process, many aspects of it can be learned. For this teacher attitude and characteristics come into play.

One attitude exists on the part of teachers which must be overcome. "Too often teachers act as though they were powerless," said Gerald Corey in Teachers Can Make a Difference.[19] Corey contended that they complain endlessly about the system that hampers their creativity, but rarely do they look within themselves to discover the source of their real power. He suggested that the key to educational reformation can be found within the courage of each teacher to become that person that he/she is capable of becoming. He/she can affect significant change if he/she has self-awareness, and if he/she is willing to engage in risk-taking behavior.

In Small Group Decision Making, Fisher asserted that risk-taking is a personality trait of individuals. Thus groups composed of high risk-takers will tend to make riskier decisions. This explanation may be true, but the findings indicated that generally all groups make riskier decisions than their members do individually. Greater risk-taking in a group can be attributed to a diffusion among group members of the responsibility for the group decision.[20]

Berman expounded on a personal rationale for a shared approach to the decision-making process. In

general, she suggested that our success in education and ultimately in society is going to have to involve finding new ways of achieving happiness and satisfaction in working together.

> Traditionally, we have been committed to individualistic kinds of approaches, but modern-day developments and practices necessitate team approaches, national and international, to many concepts, including teaching and supervision. A high priority among educational workers must be finding ways to achieve satisfaction in group, rather than individualistic, efforts. The involvement of large numbers of persons to achieve a vision which has been established by the group is necessary if we are to move ahead in ways which will make a difference to the masses whom we educate.[21]

Fisher added that a group must realize that it possesses a greater variety of resources. There are more minds to contribute to the decision-making effort, more sources of information. Unlike the lone individual, a group is able to divide labor among its members, having one individual work on his/her specialty, another working on another specialty and so on. The problem, however, of achieving consensus present in a group effort is not to be overlooked.[22]

Piper concluded that both decisions made by group consensus and decisions made by individuals "using information and advice from others are more correct than decisions made by the same individuals acting alone."[23]

Taylor rationalized the substitution of consensus decision for the old authoritarian administrative decision. He contended that in a complex organization and within a broad policy framework, decisions are best made at the point where most relevant information is available. Concerned with what to teach and how to teach it, the teachers alone are in a position to assess the individual needs, abilities and aptitudes of children, and to acquire the detailed knowledge required for curriculum and planning. However, Taylor was not inferring by any means that the power to make decisions merely be passed from the hands of the trained administrators to the hands of the teachers purely on the basis of their proximity to the majority of problems faced over curriculum and instruction. To ensure at least that minimum degree of conformity which comes from a real understanding of all the possibilities and consequences arising from adopting any one pattern, it is certain, affirmed Taylor, that all concerned with making decisions should be given training.[24]

What must a decision-maker accept as characteristic of the role? Berman said that the crux of decision-making is responsibility. To the extent that the individual does not deliberately assume responsibility for his/her own decision, to the same degree is his/her own decision-making apt to be helter-skelter, to lack any type of coherence, or to show little consideration of

guidelines. An individual must constantly review and examine his/her guidelines if his/her choices are to reflect a life which has established some types of priorities and an ability to work them out in everyday situations. What's more, to make fresh decisions demands on the part of the person, summarized Berman, a desire for risk-taking, a concern for the effect of decision on one's fellows, a feeling for the inter-dependence as well as the independence of man, a concern for the fruitful utilization of one's energy for worthwhile causes, a knowledge of one's own psychological stamina, and an attraction to the difficult.[25]

Young and Sturm's SNARE model suggested a positive organizational climate for shared decision-making. The acronym SNARE stands for Sharing, Narrowing, Agreeing, Recording/Reporting, Evaluating. The intent of the model is to recognize that

> 1. Agreements/disagreements are diversities that can be used to facilitate rather than block the group's accomplishment.
> 2. Clear understanding of the group's purpose is imperative regardless of individual differences or opinions.
> 3. Commitment and support given by individual members will affect the quality of group effort and outcomes.

Members are taught in sharing to focus, listen, clarify and understand. Clarifying, for example, is owning the responsibility to ensure that what is heard is what the

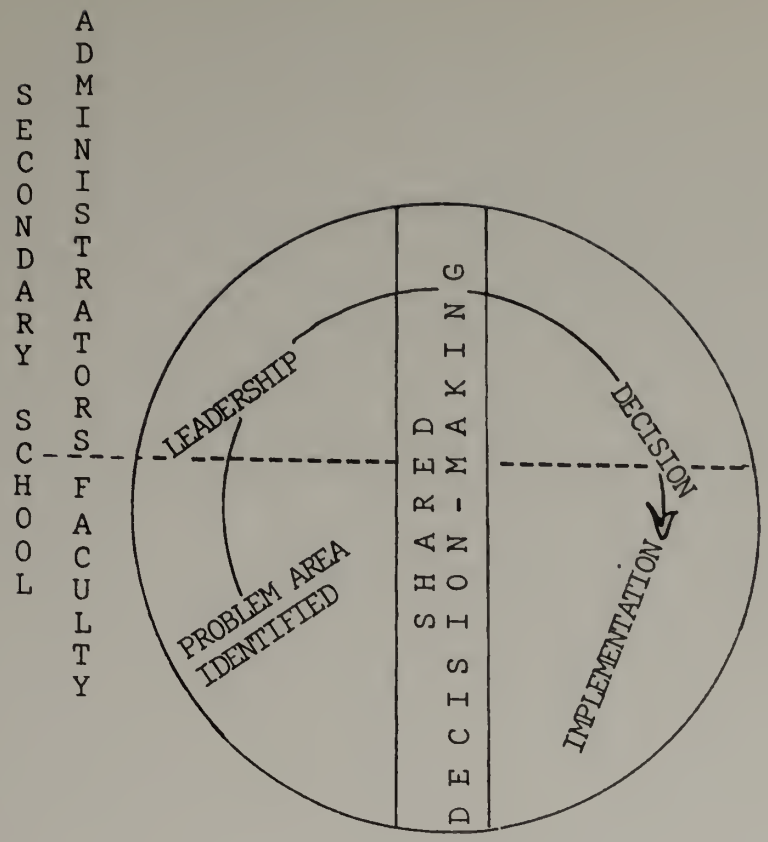
sender meant, and not what might have been interpreted or assumed. Understanding is demonstrated when the clarification takes place as suggested above.

SNARE moves towards consensus decision-making in that it addresses the most conducive group atmosphere as one that allows group members to have different ideas and opinions and to recognize that all will not agree, but will reflect acceptance of individual group members as worthwhile, important, and significant human beings. The model provides for narrowing and agreeing in this new sense of consensus. At the agreeing step, a written record of any decisions is important because it reduces the amount of interpretation; shows the degree of task accomplishment; provides a basis for and gives direction to implementation; and provides a benchmark for evaluation.[26]

Concerned with whether teachers really wanted shared decision-making or not, Duke, Showers, and Imber conducted a study at Stanford. Five costs of shared decision-making (increased demands, loss of autonomy, risk of collegial disfavor, subversion of the collective bargaining process and threats to career advancement) and three benefits (feelings of self-efficacy, a sense of shared ownership and advancement of workplace democracy) surfaced. The teachers interviewed rated the potential costs of shared decision-making as low and the potential benefits as high.

Nevertheless, many were hesitant to become involved because they saw little possibility that their involvement would actually make a difference.[27]

The desires and concerns, the knowledge and the training for decision-making become more than the recommendations of scholars. In an era of mandated shared decision-making they become an essential part of the regular classroom teacher. Risk, responsibility, creativity, and power surface. In Figure 3 these variables of the decision-making process no longer border an arc which is neatly sliced at the administrative level of decision-making. The shared decision-making model evolves.



Level of Decision

(Shared)

Figure 3

Footnotes

[1]Elbing, Alvar O., Behavioral Decisions in Organizations, Scott, Foresman & Co., Glenview, Ill., 1970, pp. 12-13.

[2]Griffiths, Daniel E., Clark, David L., Wynn, D. Richard, Iannaccone, Laurence, Organizing Schools for Effective Education, The Interstate Printers & Publishers, Danville, Ill., 1962, p. 58.

[3]Op. cit., p. 58.

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[6]Brubaker, Dale L., Nelson, Roland H., Jr., Introduction to Educational Decision-Making, Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., Dubuque, Iowa 1972, p. 39.

[7]Op. cit., p. 39.

[8]Ibid., p. 97.

[9]Gorton, Richard A., School Administration: Challenge and Opportunity for Leadership, Wm. C. Brown, Dubuque, Iowa, 1976, p. 50.

[10]Op. cit., p. 50.

[11]Brubaker, op. cit., p. 73.

[12]Knezevich, Stephen J., Administration of Public Education, Harper & Row, Publishers, N.Y., 1962, p. 32.

[13]Griffiths; Daniel E., Administrative Theory, Appleton-Century Crofts, N.Y., 1959, p. 104.

[14]Griffiths et al, op. cit., p. 57.

[15]Berman, Louise M., Supervision, Staff Development and Leadership, Charles E. Merrill Pub. Co., Columbus, Ohio, 1971, pp. 62-63.

[16]Shackles, George Lennox Sherman, Decision, Order and Time in Human Affairs, Cambridge University Press, London, 1961, p. 18.

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[18]Blanchard, Kenneth H., and Hersey, Paul, Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1969, p. 52.

[19]Corey, Gerald F., Teachers Can Make a Difference, Charles E. Merrill Pub. Co., Columbus, Ohio, 1973, p. 5.

[20]Fisher, B. Aubrey, Small Group Decision-Making: Communication and the Group Process, McGraw-Hill Book Co., N.Y., 1974, p. 37.

[21]Berman, op. cit., p. 87.

[22]Fisher, op. cit., p. 36.

[23]Piper, Donald, "Decision-Making: Decisions Made by Individuals vs. Those Made by Group Consensus or Group Participation," Educational Administration Quarterly, Spring, 1974, pp. 82-95.

[24]Taylor, George, ed., The Teacher as Manager, National Council for Educational Technology, Camelot Press, London, 1970, p. 12.

[25]Berman, op. cit., p. 56.

[26]Young, Joseph A., and Sturm, Jerry, "A Model for Participatory Decision Making," NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 64, No. 435, April, 1980, pp. 63-66.

[27]Duke, Daniel L., Showers, Beverly K., and Imber, Michael, "Teachers and Shared Decision Making: The Costs and Benefits of Involvement," Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 16, No. 1, Winter, 1980, pp. 93-106.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Description of the Instrument

Robert Krey's Teachers' Perceptions of Curricular Implementation Activities was selected as the instrument to measure the teachers' perceptions of their roles as shared decision-makers. The focus was on Chapter 766 Regulation 322.1 governing the team as a group of decision-makers in curriculum planning and implementation. Hence the sixteen questions selected from the T.P.C.I.A. were those dealing specifically with the planning stages of curriculum building and subsequent evaluation of the same curriculum.

The formulation of an Individual Educational Plan is curriculum building of a highly specialized kind where a group of teachers and fellow professionals must function in a shared decision-making format. The instrument was designed so that individual parts of it may be used to collect information without destroying the established reliability or validity of the separate measure.[1] All items have been tested and Krey determined at the University of Wisconsin that his instrument was

considered reliable and valid as a measure of teachers' perceptions of curricular implementation activities. Thus, it was well suited to establishing at this time where teachers perceived themselves in the curricular planning under Chapter 766, Regulation 322.1. Note that the instrument was intended for use with this particular mandated curricular planning situation in mind.

Description of the items. In each question the degree to which the teachers perceived their participation was indicated through a range of Always (A), Usually (U), Not Certain (NC), Sometimes (S), Never (N). The specific curriculum work on which they based their responses or degree of participation is summarized in Regulation 322.1 (a) through (n) of which a copy was provided with the questionnaire.

Question 1

I work on committees which plan the

a. agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans A U NC S N

b. types of activities which may insure the implementation of curricular plans A U NC S N

c. time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities A U NC S N

Question 1 dealt generally with the base organizational level of curriculum planning, the formation of the structure to set the wheels of curriculum building in motion. Teachers rated their involvement into which

specific areas of their concern are included as agenda items, what activities the school will guarantee to build into the system to secure implementation after planning and input into the design of a time line for curriculum procedures. Procedures are as important under Chapter 766 as in any curriculum planning.

Question 2

Objections I might have concerning the types of activities used for the implementation of curricular plans are

a. accepted	A	U	NC	S	N
b. considered	A	U	NC	S	N
c. put into effect	A	U	NC	S	N

If, indeed, teachers feel they are sharing in curriculum decision-making as a group of decision-makers of equal status, then that role must be in effect from the early stages of planning through the final making of decisions. In Question 2, three areas of preliminary objections to proposed curriculum activities were posed. Possibly, some objections reach a level of acceptance among the group; some may merely be considered; while others are put into effect. The five degrees of response for each category reveal how the teachers saw the reception of their objections.

Question 3

Objections I might have concerning the scheduling of the implementation activities are

a. accepted	A U NC S N
b. considered	A U NC S N
c. put into effect	A U NC S N

Teachers usually specify time allotments into their professional contracts prioritizing time as a matter of serious concern. How much is packed into a given amount of time is what is important to teachers. In relation to time consumption, for example, many contracts now call for classification of students with special needs in the regular classroom as more than one student counting toward the required complement by contract. Thus the value of having input into the scheduling of implementation activities is of primary concern. The child of special needs is pitted against the total number of students scheduled for any regular class into which he/she may be mainstreamed.

Questions 4, 5, and 6 best single out where teachers felt they fell in a style of decision-making. Were they left to themselves? Did they provide input which came into play in making the first decision? Was training lacking for a newly defined consensus "attempting to arrive at co-operative solutions?"

Question 4

Teachers make the final decisions on the

a. agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans A U NC S N
b. types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans A U NC S N
c. time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities A U NC S N

Question 5

Teachers participate on committees which make the final decisions on the

a. agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans A U NC S N
b. types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans A U NC S N
c. time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities A U NC S N

Question 6

Teachers and administrators attempt to arrive at co-operative solutions to problems concerning the

a. agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans A U NC S N
b. types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans A U NC S N
c. time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities A U NC S N

Question 7 highlighted more specifically the time element in measuring the teachers' perceptions of their input into implementation activities.

Question 7

My suggestions regarding the time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities are

a. accepted	A U NC S N
b. considered	A U NC S N
c. put into effect	A U NC S N

Similarly, Question 8 singled out types of activities and how strongly and to what degree either with acceptance, consideration or commitment that the evaluation team responded.

Question 8

My suggestions regarding the types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans are

a. accepted	A U NC S N
b. considered	A U NC S N
c. put into effect	A U NC S N

Question 9

Objections I might have concerning the agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans are

a. accepted	A U NC S N
b. considered	A U NC S N
c. put into effect	A U NC S N

Question 9 was an individual's opportunity to agree or disagree with what colleagues tend to include for implementation. Under Regulation 322.1 (a) dealing with the child's performance level, (b) dealing with measurable physical constraints and (c) describing the child's learning style and how much weight the teacher felt his/her input held may be of concern.

The team does not disband with the creation of a

plan. 322.1 (n) states that the team must determine the criteria for the child's movement to the next less restrictive prototype. Designated prototypes are based on the length of time an individual is removed from the regular classroom. Built into the plan is the time at which the team will reconvene to review the progress of the objectives it wrote in the first place. This mandate to evaluate the curricular plan is very clear-cut in the wording of the law. The regulations then detail procedures.

Teachers' perceptions of their roles in evaluation on an ongoing basis of the curriculum are equally important in the shared decision-making process Chapter 766 requires.

Question 10

To assist in the analysis and appraisal of past or existing implementation activities

a. I participate in fact-finding	A U NC S N
b. I attend meetings	A U NC S N
c. I am asked to attend meetings	A U NC S N
d. I am expected to attend meetings	A U NC S N

Question 10 determined the degree to which teachers perceived their involvement or obligation to attend meetings. Studies have indicated that a sense of one's input having been used in a given decision brings about voluntary and more participatory approaches to implementation. Elaboration of this concept appears in Chapter II in the evolution of the shared decision-making

model.

Question 11

My recommendations for the improvement of existing or past implementation activities are

a. accepted	A U NC S N
b. considered	A U NC S N
c. put into effect	A U NC S N

Question 12

My objections to past or existing implementation activities are

a. accepted	A U NC S N
b. considered	A U NC S N
c. put into effect	A U NC S N

Questions 11 and 12 measure the degree to which the teacher feels his/her contributions count in the evaluation of the original program.

Question 13

In regard to existing or past implementation activities, attempts are made by local professional staff to

a. co-ordinate teachers' suggestions and recommendations	A U NC S N
b. determine if teachers' expectations have been satisfied	A U NC S N

Question 13 tested the teachers' perceptions of how their fellow professionals on the team reacted to teacher input. Are they sharing the decisions?

Beneath evaluating the existing program is the method or technique of evaluation. Questions 14 and 15 provided a teacher the opportunity to rank his/her estimation of how often he/she shared in the formulation

of the curricular evaluation process.

Question 14

My assistance in selecting the criteria for evaluating implementation activities is

a. accepted — A U NC S N
b. considered — A U NC S N
c. put into effect — A U NC S N

Question 15

My assistance in planning the procedures for gathering evaluative information concerning the implementation activities is

a. accepted — A U NC S N
b. considered — A U NC S N
c. put into effect — A U NC S N

Question 16

Faculty committees feel free to express dissatisfaction with past or existing implementation activities. — A U NC S N

Finally, Question 16 looked at a team and asked how open team members felt one among another to criticize curriculum activities which were originally agreed upon.

Description of the Population

For the sample population of teachers whose perceptions were measured, the writer selected the faculty of the regional high school of the Frontier Regional School District in South Deerfield, Massachusetts. Forty-seven professional educators answered sixteen questions with a total of forty-six parts. The 2,162 responses were

categorized in an effort to draw some conclusions concerning the perceptions the teachers have of their role currently in sharing decisions with regard to curricular activities and implementation under Chapter 766. A narrative interpretation was based on the percentages answering the questions at various degrees (Always, Usually, Not Certain, Sometimes, Never).

The perceptions themselves are the purpose of this search. Krey developed the instrument; its present use is in the spirit of developing further research. The data collected in this study will lead to conclusions and recommendations presented in Chapter V.

Summarily, in secondary education administration and faculty must be able to convene, identify areas of need, plan, share decision-making and implement decision successfully. Many of these concepts have long been practised within varying degrees of the teachers' professional latitude. With Chapter 766 stressing individual cases and the format extending the responsibility far beyond that traditionally expected of the teacher, a revision of our view of or reassessment of our demands on the classroom teacher is necessary.

In Chapter II a range of decision-making models was explored from the strictly authoritarian through a fully shared decision-making process. Hopefully, the method best suited to an institution is applied. Not all

faculties could handle strictly authoritarian decision-making in the hands of the administration while some, through the evolution of their own particular modus operandi would flounder with shared decision-making. A verbal poll confirmed that academically teachers have not explored decision-making.

So where do the teachers stand regarding the mandate of their participation in decision-making? What is their willingness and ability to handle shared decision-making? How do teachers perceive their degree of involvement, the value of their input, and their role in evaluating the decisions they make? As the answers to these questions are unknown, measurement of teacher perceptions may prove to be a step in the forefront toward initiating the development of the best shared decision-making model for any given school. Perceptions may vary according to experience teaching, type and amount of preparation, sex, age, subjects and grades taught and the extent of participation on evaluation teams. While these variables exist in the field, the mandate of shared decision-making applies uniformly to all and administrators who aspire to provide the ideal leadership for this step-wise obligatory program must know just how all teachers fit in the picture.

Footnotes

[1]Eye, Glen G., Netzer, Lanore A., School Administrators and Instruction, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., Boston, Mass., 1969, p. 287.

C H A P T E R I V

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

This chapter is organized into two major sections. The first section summarizes the data collected from ten questions dealing with personal and professional information of the respondents. This serves not only as a specific description of the respondents but also reveals the frequency of their experience as shared decision-makers of curricular activities under Chapter 766.

In the second section are found the tabulated responses to the sixteen major questions of the Teachers' Perceptions of Curricular Implementation Activities. The 2,162 responses to all parts of the sixteen questions will be used to base the narrative conclusions and recommendations of Chapter V.

Summary of Personal Data of Respondents

Personal data were collected on the forty-seven faculty members of Frontier Regional School who participated in the research. The facts revealed a veteran staff, the majority of which has been in the field

of secondary education since before the implementation of Chapter 766 in 1974. Furthermore, due to a limited job market, reduced mobility in a declining American economy and a community which tends to attract and retain teachers, the statistics indicated that Frontier Regional School faculty members have practised all of or the greater part of their professional working life at the one school. In Table 1 vertical comparison substantiates this finding.

Table 1

Respondents' Teaching Experience in Years

Years	2-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20 or more
In Present Position	11 (23.4%)	5 (10.6%)	11 (23.4%)	9 (19.2%)	11 (23.4%)
At Frontier	11 (23.4%)	5 (10.6%)	12 (25.5%)	8 (17.0%)	11 (23.4%)
Total Teaching	9 (19.2%)	5 (10.6%)	9 (19.2%)	10 (21.3%)	14 (29.8%)

Specifically, 70% of the faculty have been in the profession for ten or more years; 65.9% of the entire faculty have spent ten or more years at Frontier Regional School. As the school complied with the regulations of Chapter 766, provided in-service education for teachers,

prepared forms and structure for the working of the law and eased it wholly into the daily functioning of the school operation, 65.9% of the faculty were directly involved. Another 10.6% were on the staff for most of that time. Therefore, 76.5% of the faculty polled for their perceptions were able to base their responses on lengthly experience with the regulations.

Courses in shared decision-making for curriculum building are not locally available nor has the school offered training in this area. However, personal data show an indication on the part of the polled population to seek graduate training.

Table 2

Respondents' College Preparation

Years	Number	Percentage
4 (Bachelor's)	6	12.8
4 - 5	9	19.2
5 (Master's)	10	21.3
5 - 6	5	10.6
6+	17	36.2

The group is split between public and private higher education in their professional preparation. Twenty-five (53.2%) attended private institutions and 22 (46.8%) attended public supported institutions. Further breakdown describes 23 (48.9%) as attending a Liberal Arts College, 13 (27.7%) as attending a Teachers' College and 11 (23.4%) as attending a University School of Education.

Twenty-nine (61.7%) males and 18 (38.3%) females responded to the questionnaire. The age range was diverse.

Table 3

Respondents' Age Distribution

Age	Number	Percentage
20 - 24	2	4.3
25 - 29	6	12.8
30 - 34	9	19.2
35 - 39	8	17.0
40 - 44	9	19.2
45 - 49	4	8.5
50 - 54	2	4.3
55 - 59	4	8.5
60 - 64	2	4.3
65+	1	2.1

A cross-section of subject area specialization and training was covered according to the disciplinary divisions in Table 4.

Table 4

Respondents' Subject Area of Specialization

Subject	Number	Percentage
English	6	12.8
Social Studies	7	14.9
Mathematics	6	12.8
Science	6	12.8
Foreign Languages	3	6.4
Business	3	6.4
Arts	6	12.8
Physical Education	4	8.5
Special Education	5	10.6
Guidance	1	2.1

A significant overlap in grades taught from Grade 7 through Grade 12 was evident. Data is reported in Table 5.

Table 5

Grades Taught By Respondents

Grade	Number
7	25
8	32
9	34
10	31
11	32
12	32

Frequently, individual educational plans for students are formulated in the lower grades. The intention is for maximum mainstreaming and the ultimate goal for the student is to return full time to the regular classroom. Also, in the higher grades there is a greater variety of courses from which to select a program. The result of this is that there are fewer students with substantially separate programs initiated at that level. Nevertheless, all students scheduled on individual educational plans are reviewed regularly by teams of teachers who must make decisions. Teachers at the student's current grade level are introduced to the group as he/she progresses.

Of the twenty-two teachers who indicated that they had served on five or fewer curriculum planning teams, twenty-one of them teach in the higher grades. Since teams convene with less regularity in the higher grades for the reasons cited above, it is understandable that that segment of the population polled would have less experience. Note, however, that whatever the extent of their experience, teachers based their responses on their self-perceptions.

Of the five teachers who have served on forty-six or more committees, three are special education teachers, one a guidance counselor and the fifth a teacher of mathematics.

The general distribution of teachers' frequency of serving on teams is summarized in Table 6.

Table 6

Respondents' Frequency of Team Participation

Years	Number	Percentage
0 - 5	22	46.8
6 - 10	9	19.2
11 - 15	5	10.64
16 - 20	4	8.5
21 - 25	2	4.3
26 - 45	0	0
46 or more	5	10.64

Analysis of Data Results

The responses to the T.P.C.I.A. were collected on answer sheets and transferred to 80-column IBM cards. Using computer sorting equipment, responses were totalled by degree. The degree range is Always, Usually, Not Certain, Sometimes, Never, and Reject. Totals are recorded in the tables which follow. The left hand side of the table - Always and Usually - registers positive responses. Not Certain is regarded as the mid-point. The right hand side - Sometimes, Never, and Reject (no response at all) - lists negative responses. Evaluation of the teachers' positive or negative perceptions of their roles as shared decision-makers was based on positive versus negative incidence of responses to each question.

The three parts of Question 1 revealed teachers' perceptions of their involvement at the planning stages of curriculum development. Overwhelming responses at the negative end of the range prevailed. Regarding input into agenda items it was felt nearly four to one that teachers' involvement was insufficient. In fact, nearly half of the teachers felt that they never provide items for the agenda.

Specific referral forms provided as a vehicle for teachers to submit input may account for the result of Question 1 (b). One quarter of the polled population perceived themselves involved in planning types of

Table 7

Results of Question 1

I work on committees which plan the	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans	1	2.13	8	17.02	2	4.26	10	21.28	23	48.94	3	6.38
(b) types of activities which may assure the implementation of curricular plans	4	8.51	10	21.28	4	8.51	15	31.91	12	25.53	2	4.26
(c) time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities	1	2.13	5	10.64	5	10.64	12	25.53	21	44.68	3	6.38

activities assuring implementation of curricular plans.

In the third part of Question 1, at a ratio of over six to one teachers did not feel that their voices were heard regarding time lines for implementation. Clearly, teams were not sharing in the decisions at the planning stage addressed in this question.

According to Question 2 less than one out of three teachers felt that objections they had in planning curriculum activities are accepted. However, half of the teachers felt that their fellows consider their objections. At best, some information is exchanged at the team evaluation level for a majority of teachers to rank their voices as being heard. While this does not constitute shared decision-making, it does lean towards consultative decision-making.

Sixty percent of the teachers ranked themselves in the negative realm as having confidence that their objections were put into effect as opposed to one-quarter of them who felt that their objections were heard. Summarily, the Frontier Regional School teachers then tended not to perceive themselves as clearly participating in the decisions concerning the types of activities used for the implementation of curricular plans. See Table 8.

Time conscious teachers obliged to mainstream a youngster with special needs into the regular classroom want input into scheduling the time needed to slide the

Table 8

Results of Question 2

Objections I might have concerning the types of activities used for the implementation of curricular plans are	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) accepted	1	2.13	13	27.66	3	6.38	21	44.68	4	8.51	5	10.64
(b) considered	12	25.53	12	25.53	1	2.13	15	31.91	4	8.51	3	6.38
(c) put into effect	1	2.13	11	23.40	7	14.89	20	42.55	4	8.51	4	8.51

individual plan alongside the regular curriculum. Sharing in the decisions regulating goals, objectives and their deadlines, whether annual or quarterly, is essential to a teacher. Question 3 deals with time. Teachers rated how they perceived reaction to their objections concerning scheduling of implementation activities. See Table 9.

The results showed that teachers were dissatisfied with the acceptance of their objections concerning scheduling of implementation activities. Three to one, teachers felt that their objections were not accepted nor were they put into effect. However, there is evidence of a level of consultative decision-making through the perception of many that their objections were considered.

Teachers will perceive themselves as being somewhere between being subject to traditional decision-making and being team members in a shared decision-making group. Questions 4 and 5 dealt with the initial stages of decision with regard to curriculum building. From the start where do teachers rank their perception of their part in the process? The results of Question 4 are summarized in Table 10.

Teachers indicated that they do not perceive their decision-making as carrying much weight. Sixteen to one they rejected their participation in planning agenda. Seventeen to one they did not consider that they decide the

Table 9

Results of Question 3

Objections I might have concerning the scheduling of the implementation activities are	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) accepted	1	2.13	9	19.15	6	12.77	18	38.30	8	17.02	5	10.64
(b) considered	10	21.28	12	25.53	4	8.51	11	23.40	7	14.89	3	6.38
(c) put into effect	0	0	8	17.02	11	23.40	16	34.04	7	14.89	5	10.64

Table 10

Results of Question 4

Teachers make the final decisions on	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans	0	0	2	4.26	13	27.66	19	40.43	8	18.02	5	10.64
(b) types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans	1	2.13	6	12.77	13	27.66	23	48.94	2	4.26	2	4.26
(c) time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities	0	0	2	4.26	12	25.53	18	38.30	11	23.40	4	8.51

scheduling of time for the implementation activities. However, occasionally a minority does see their decisions on types of activities appearing in the curricular plans. This suggested that some teachers sensed that they have made input into the decision. While 14.9% of the faculty did fall into that category, four times as many teachers denied perceiving themselves as the decision-makers on the same item.

The results of Question 5 are found in Table 11. A slightly less negative trend occurred when the teachers evaluated their decision-making as part of a committee deciding activities which may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans. Overall, however, the numbers did not support a perception of decision-making as conclusively and clearly reaching the goals of shared decision-making.

Question 6 examined the co-operative solutions arrived at by teachers and administrators further specifying teachers' perceptions of their sharing in decision-making. A tendency towards the level of decision as depicted in Figure 2 emerged. The results showed 50% of the teachers perceiving input into decisions with administrators. Again, a consultative technique is recognized. Question 6 results are summarized in Table 12.

Although fewer than half the population, some

Table 11

Results of Question 5

Teachers participate on committees which make the final decisions on	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans	1	2.13	7	14.89	6	12.77	19	40.43	10	21.28	4	8.51
(b) types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans	4	8.51	12	25.53	7	14.89	20	42.55	2	4.26	2	4.26
(c) time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities	1	2.13	7	14.89	11	23.40	15	31.91	10	21.28	3	6.38

Table 12

Results of Question 6

Teachers and administrators attempt to arrive at cooperative solutions to problems concerning the	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans	2	4.26	21	44.68	5	10.64	15	31.91	3	6.38	1	2.13
(b) types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans	4	8.51	17	36.17	7	14.89	18	38.30	1	2.13	0	0
(c) time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities	2	4.26	16	34.04	6	12.77	16	34.04	6	12.77	1	2.13

teachers did lean in a positive direction in self-perception of their roles as co-operating with administrators in decision-making. More teachers than not felt an attempt was made to reach co-operative solutions on agenda and implementation activities. Forms requesting consultations for teachers as well as teachers being a main source for implementation activities may account for recognition of this attempt toward co-operation. Such does not, however, constitute shared decision-making as further questions confirm.

An attempt to schedule as shared decision-makers leans toward the negative pole. When specifically addressed in Question 7, teachers three to one did not perceive their input as either accepted or put into effect. A majority sensed that their suggestions were not even considered. No evidence, therefore, surfaced to support achievement of consensus by the shared decision-making definition. Table 13 summarizes the results of Question 7.

Similarly in Question 8 no strong evidence of teachers perceiving their suggestions regarding curricular input as integral to a group consensus surfaced. Teachers contribute to the group discussion and wait to see if their individual idea becomes part of the educational plan. There were three negative teachers for every one who saw his/her suggestions as accepted. Half the teachers agreed that their ideas were considered, but a hefty majority

Table 13

Results of Question 7

My suggestions regarding the time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities are	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) accepted	1	2.13	9	19.15	8	17.02	19	40.43	6	12.77	4	8.51
(b) considered	5	10.64	12	25.53	4	8.51	17	36.17	6	12.77	3	6.38
(c) put into effect	0	0	10	21.28	8	17.02	18	38.30	7	14.89	4	8.51

never perceived their suggestions as put into effect. The power of decision remains remote from the teacher in the classroom by his/her own perception. The results of Question 8 are summarized in Table 14.

Krey's instrument provides teachers' perceptions of the recognition of their objections concerning the agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans through Question 9. From the data gathered in Table 15, the results were negative. Not one teacher perceived his/her objections as ever being put into effect. Nearly seven to one ranked their objections towards not being accepted; a majority felt they are not considered; and most line up close to those cited as never having their ideas put into effect. Individual educational plans are created from groups of teachers meeting to put forth ideas, suggestions, and objections. Decisions are made. But the evidence indicated that the teachers did not perceive themselves participating in a shared decision-making format. Rather, the decisions are coming from elsewhere.

The data from Question 10 indicated that the teachers tended not to perceive their participation in fact-finding in the analysis and appraisal of an educational plan. Furthermore, there was a greater response in that teachers felt expected to attend meetings as opposed to voluntary attendance. As has been suggested,

Table 14

Results of Question 8

My suggestions regarding the types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans are	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) accepted	2	4.26	10	21.28	1	2.13	28	59.57	2	4.26	4	8.51
(b) considered	8	17.02	11	23.40	3	6.38	20	42.55	2	4.26	3	6.38
(c) put into effect	1	2.13	9	19.15	2	4.26	29	61.70	2	4.26	4	8.51

Table 15

Results of Question 9

Objections I might have concerning the agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans are	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) accepted	1	2.13	4	8.51	9	19.15	24	51.06	5	10.64	4	8.51
(b) considered	6	12.77	7	14.89	10	21.28	16	34.04	5	10.64	3	6.38
(c) put into effect	0	0	7	14.89	8	17.02	23	48.94	5	10.64	4	8.51

were teachers to participate in a shared decision-making forum, their approach to implementation would likely be more voluntary and involved. These data, consistent with those collected to this point, are summarized in Table 16.

Thus far teacher perceptions of creating original plans have been addressed. Two questions assessed how teachers perceived their recommendations and objections once a plan had been implemented and was under review. The format for meeting and discussing past or existing educational plans is the same as the original meeting session. Frontier Regional School teachers did not sense that recognizable value is placed on their input into these sessions. The formal exercise is shared; the decision-making is not. Question 11 summarized in Table 17 and Question 12 summarized in Table 18 provide the data from the teachers to substantiate this conclusion.

Question 13 revealed that many teachers were positive about attempts being made to coordinate their suggestions and recommendations. Furthermore, some indicated an awareness of an attempt to determine if their expectations had been satisfied. This only supports the consultative decision-making theory, however. Teachers as groups of shared decision-makers do not follow through as mutually "owning" decisions.

Questions 14 and 15 found teachers were unable to show positive perceptions regarding their involvement.

Table 16

Results of Question 10

To assist in the analysis and appraisal of past or existing implementation activities	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) I participate in fact-finding	1	2.13	9	19.15	3	6.38	19	40.43	11	23.40	4	8.51
(b) I attend meetings	9	19.15	16	34.04	0	0	15	31.91	4	8.51	3	6.38
(c) I am asked to attend meetings	8	17.02	16	34.04	1	2.13	16	34.04	3	6.38	3	6.38
(d) I am expected to attend meetings	15	31.91	14	29.79	0	0	13	27.66	3	6.38	2	4.26

Table 17

Results of Question 11

My recommendations for the improvement of existing or past implementation activities are	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) accepted	1	2.13	9	19.15	8	17.02	22	46.81	2	4.26	5	10.64
(b) considered	9	19.15	10	21.28	4	8.51	18	38.30	2	4.26	4	8.51
(c) put into effect	0	0	9	19.15	8	17.02	23	48.94	2	4.26	5	10.64

Table 18

Results of Question 12

My objections to past or existing implementation activities are	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) accepted	1	2.13	9	19.15	7	14.89	23	48.94	2	4.26	5	10.64
(b) considered	9	19.15	12	25.53	2	4.26	18	38.30	2	4.26	4	8.51
(c) put into effect	0	0	8	17.02	7	14.89	25	53.19	2	4.26	5	10.64

Table 19

Results of Question 13

In regard to existing or past implementation activities, attempts are made by local professional staff to	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) co-ordinate teachers' suggestions and recommendations	5	10.64	24	51.06	4	8.51	10	21.28	2	4.26	2	4.26
(b) determine if teachers' expectations have been satisfied	3	6.38	18	38.30	7	14.89	13	27.66	3	6.38	3	6.38

For criteria selection or procedures for evaluation of implementation activities, teachers rarely felt that their input was accepted, considered, or put into effect. Data were collected for Questions 14 and 15 in Tables 20 and 21 respectively. For there to be consensus decision-making, a clear majority would have had to rank their perceptions of their input as "always" or "usually". The fact that the forum exists through annual reviews of curricular plans, that the bodies are present but that the teachers did not see a reflection of their input in the results indicated that the process is faulty. Shared decision-making is not taking place.

The essence of Question 16 dealt with how free teachers felt to express their dissatisfaction with implementation activities. It is advantageous to setting the tone for shared decision-making training that a hefty majority of teachers were positive about feeling free to express themselves. The figures are summarized in Table 22.

Table 20

Results of Question 14

My assistance in selecting the criteria for evaluating implementation activities is	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) accepted	2	4.26	6	12.77	8	17.02	21	44.68	4	8.51	6	12.77
(b) considered	4	8.51	11	23.40	8	17.02	16	34.04	4	8.51	4	8.51
(c) put into effect	1	2.13	5	10.64	9	19.15	23	48.94	4	8.51	5	10.64

Table 21

Results of Question 15

My assistance in planning the procedures for gathering evaluative information concerning the implementation activities is	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) accepted	2	4.26	3	6.38	7	14.89	26	55.32	5	10.64	4	8.51
(b) considered	4	8.51	10	21.28	5	10.64	20	42.55	5	10.64	3	6.38
(c) put into effect	1	2.13	3	6.38	9	19.15	25	53.19	5	10.64	4	8.51

Table 22

Results of Question 16

Faculty committees feel free to express dissatisfaction with past or existing implementation activities	Always		Usually		Not Certain		Sometimes		Never		Reject	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	7	14.89	23	48.94	6	12.77	5	10.64	4	8.51	2	4.26

In summary, Krey's Teachers' Perceptions of Curricular Implementation Activities proved useful to gather perceptions from the faculty of Frontier Regional School. The questionnaire was favorably received by the respondents. The results of the questionnaire provide valuable information for future directions. Establishing functioning shared decision-making of curricular plans and their implementation activities for students under Chapter 766 will be of primary importance.

C H A P T E R V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. The first purpose is to summarize the findings reported in this study and their relationship to the current literature. Simultaneously, the current status of Frontier Regional School faculty is identified regarding shared decision-making and Chapter 766 from teacher perceptions.

Secondly, the object is to recommend steps to be taken for future directions.

For seven years the researcher as a school administrator has observed Chapter 766 in action in Frontier Regional School. Individualized educational plans have been prepared for implementation. Special education staff has increased, job descriptions have become more specific and procedures have been refined to accommodate students under the new regulations.

Typical of obstacles which soon loomed up was the reception a regular education teacher gave to the special education teacher at the classroom threshold. Frequently, the latter intimidated the former who

incorrectly assumed insinuations that his/her teaching must be questionable if there was a problem with learning. Implementation of curricular plans for the classroom was an obvious problem. The route to resolve this dilemma was through public relations. In this manner the barrier was only lowered, not dissolved. Teamwork had not produced decisions.

Faily stated recently that participatory decision-making is effective because it:

> -Improves the morale of those involved;
> -Creates greater acceptance of whatever decisions are reached;
> -Improves the quality of the decision;
> -Reduces resistance to change;
> -Creates higher task motivation and job satisfaction;
> -Strives for considerable behavioral change; and
> -Places maximum responsibility to carry out a decision at the operational level.[1]

Concern over finding the solution to teachers in special education and regular education collectively building individualized educational plans and their implementation activities led to the suspected lack of shared decision-making among them. This study was designed as the first step to determine the teachers' perceptions of their roles as shared decision-makers.

Summary of Data Analysis and Conclusions

Narrative interpretation of Krey's Teachers' Perceptions of Curricular Implementation Activities affirmed the writer's original assumptions:

Teachers tend not to perceive themselves as participatory decision-makers in special needs curriculum building; and,

Teachers mandated to shared decision-making do not perceive themselves as practising shared decision-making.

Aware of the procedure required, Frontier Regional School teachers assemble with their fellow professionals in groups to design individualized educational plans. Teachers admitted that they attend meetings because they are expected to attend. They did not perceive themselves as sharing decisions of planning committees, nor were their objections or suggestions put into effect at this planning stage or later stages. Final decisions were rarely seen as the teacher's own, whether as individuals or working in a group or committee. Teachers did not enter the process conscious of their roles in shared decision-making.

Despite their negative perceptions of input into curriculum and implementation, many teachers sensed that an attempt was made to arrive at co-operative solutions

for meeting agenda, implementation activities, and scheduling. They also recognized attempts to coordinate suggestions and recommendations and to determine if their expectations have been satisfied. Many feel free, furthermore, to express dissatisfaction with implementation activities. These positive procedural observations, however, do not transfer to the practical perception of teachers sharing decision-making. Every teacher does not reach a point where he/she "owns" the curricular plan which a committee designs for implementation.

Apparently, while sitting as a group, the teachers nevertheless function as individuals. Rather than share in the responsibility of the product, namely an individualized educational plan, they look for a collection of their individual contributions. Not identifying their particular input, they must reject the concept of shared decision-making.

This supports the proposition that secondary school teachers have difficulty placing the measurable objectives that they must produce in order of priority. Teachers continue to covet their own standards within their own subject area. They lack training in the skills to rechannel their thinking. From the student in need to the prescriptive individualized educational plan, the goal must be a collective effort for every objective listed in

that plan.

Consensus, in this case, can never be pure agreement. Team members from varying backgrounds and personalities must interrelate for each objective and find their level of positive functional operation. The goal cannot be to vote for a decision based on a majority. Hughes and Ubben contended

> that simple vote taking is an appropriate way to resolve a simple problem. The issue is described to the group, some discussion of pros and cons ensues, and the group decides, with one vote over half sufficient to determine the decision. This process is especially effective when no one in the group really cares what the decision is.[2]

Yet according to Young and Sturm

> the "losers" may harbor some resentment, which may be shown in one or more of the following ways: sabotage, slow-down, protest, apathy or indifference. Therefore, during the implementation phase, the group leader should not expect the same degree of commitment by all group members as might result when employing the consensus method.[3]

The goal must be to share in the decision-making and this was not apparently happening at Frontier Regional School. Hughes and Ubben stressed that issues of curricular change require the more thoughtful process of shared decision-making. The process is recommended because it provides:

> (1) maximum participation of group members in the examination of curriculum;
> (2) sharing of pertinent information bearing on the problem;
> (3) emergent situational leadership based on expertise concerning the issue being confronted irrespective of formal position in the organization. For example, an administrator on a team must be a peer among peers.[4]

The literature and studies infer that it is possible to train groups in shared decision-making. Berman (as was addressed in Chapters I and II) strongly advocated training. Features - such as redefining consensus, facing risk, collectively weighing alternatives and adopting a solution must be defined, discussed and mastered. Tomchek stressed the need to train shared decision-makers in a new definition of consensus. Corey charged teachers to face risk as a real element of decision and become decision-makers. To understand the process of weighing alternatives and adopting a solution, Taylor advocated training.

Once the group is trained to realize that it is not after unanimity, rarely achieved on a complex problem, but rather after a maximum feasible decision to which all can commit themselves, progress in consensus decision-making can be made.[5] At Frontier Regional School this approach to decision-making was not occurring.

The maximum feasible decision requires processes

which make great use of the collective intelligence of the teachers on the team. Hughes and Ubben listed four assumptions to guide those who engage in shared decision-making:

> 1. People at the working level tend to know the problem best.
> 2. The face-to-face work group is the best unit for diagnosis and change.
> 3. People will work hard to achieve objectives they have helped develop.
> 4. Initiative and creativity are widely distributed in the population.[6]

Decision-making and implementation require varying degrees of expertise and varying degrees of faculty commitment. It largely depends on the complexity of the problem to be solved and the degree to which those affected by the decision will be required to behave differently in order for the decision to be implemented properly.[7] Teachers who indeed "own" the decisions will recognize the need to adjust behavior for the success of implementation. In this study the teachers did not perceive themselves as sharing in decision and hence their success of implementation is questionable. Training in shared decision-making is essential.

Essential but complicated. Most of us are not by nature participative involvers according to Richard C. Richardson. The families in which we were raised, our experiences with school systems and the

military, and the prevailing norms of our culture all extol the hard-nosed pragmatist and teach and reinforce the behavior that accompanies this concept.[8]

Young, discussing Teacher Participation in Curriculum Decision-Making: An Organizational Dilemma, quoted recent studies that clearly indicated that increased participation in curriculum decision-making holds little or no attraction for classroom teachers.[9]

She did, however, go on to say that the potential for teacher participation in curriculum decision-making in the context of the school is considerable. Young made four points:

First, participation in curriculum decision-making at any level requires teachers to expand their role beyond their classrooms.

Second, the teacher's traditional role as implementer of curriculum decisions made by higher authorities is cast aside, and teachers become initiators of curriculum decision-making as well as implementers of their own group decisions.

Third, the dominant-dependent relationships in school (administrator-faculty) are, to some extent, reversed. Teachers hold a dominant position in curriculum decision-making.

Fourth, participation in curriculum decision-making is no longer a "sometime thing" for it occurs on an

ongoing basis. Curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation are continuing responsibilities of a school staff and require constant input from teachers.[10]

Bearing current teachers' attitudes and perceptions in mind and the possibility of creating a new awareness of shared decision-making as a process, the situation this study has revealed must be tackled soon by the researchers and practitioners in secondary education.

Recommendations for Future Directions

Based on the data of the perceptions gathered in this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. That Frontier Regional School teachers be provided training in shared decision-making as soon as possible.

An April, 1981 audit on compliance with Chapter 766 revealed only one area of weakness - in-service training for regular education teachers. Asked to indicate areas of need seven out of twenty-eight teachers requested shared decision-making from a choice of five items. The need for in-service conveniently suits the need for training in shared decision-making. The purpose, however, of the training is to prepare teachers professionally to function as a group charged with the task of sharing decisions that could affect the entire educational life of

a youngster with special needs.

Most important, is to bridge the gap between planning and implementation, that is, to bring about "owning" decisions through group consensus.

Two workshop programs are proposed as in-service training. An outline of each follows. In the first, a review of the various styles of decision-making will be presented. Administrative or authoritarian through consultative to shared decision-making will be detailed and defined using audio-visual aids to highlight the differences. Exercises designed not simply to achieve solutions but to train in the step-wise process of making decisions individually and in groups will be administered. The individuals and groups will then analyze what transpired to reach their respective decisions. The workshop leader's goal will be to make teachers aware of a process through participation. The process includes such features as understanding and clarifying a particular problem; granting professional recognition, whether or not in complete agreement, to the input of all; listing solutions and, through an agreed upon consensus whereby all will stand by the decision, choose a solution; implementing the solution as one "owned" by all; and evaluating decisions made at a later date. Questions and answers dealing with the process of shared decision-making will be fielded.

In a second workshop, the newly trained teachers will be presented with the data on their self-perceptions of sharing in decision-making collected before the workshop sessions using the T.P.C.I.A. They entered mandated group sessions under a false guise which did not really constitute or breed shared decision-making.

Bear in mind the significance of this study confirms that they could not perceive themselves as shared decision-makers. Once familiar with the process of decision-making and, in particular with training in a shared decision-making process, the practical application of case studies will be introduced. Designing individual educational plans by a group process will provide teachers with a technique to master. Charts listing steps of the process learned in the first workshop will guide a notetaker. Each group will report back to the entire faculty on the process of their experience.

The goal of these workshops will be to enhance the professional preparation of teachers mandated to share in decision-making; heretofore they have been ill-prepared to do so. This recommendation is a prime outgrowth of the study which confirmed that teachers did not perceive themselves as shared decision-makers.

Newly armed with the skills, teachers will be able to have positive perceptions of sharing in decision-making and relate more positively as a result to the decisions

that are reached.

2. That all schools in Massachusetts survey the perceptions their teachers have of themselves as shared decision-makers with reference to Chapter 766 regulations. Follow-up on results should be classified as critical if a need for training is determined.

3. That all schools identifying a problem teachers have perceiving themselves as shared decision-makers, implement training programs for shared decision-making as in-service immediately. The workshops proposed in the first recommendation for Frontier Regional School serves as models for other schools.

4. That all schools have means to evaluate shared decision-making skills of staff members as organization and programs call for team work in decision-making. The process must not be lost as time passes and case loads increase.

Insufficient work has been done in this area educationally and it is hoped that future studies of this nature reveal more of the intricacies of teachers sharing decision-making for curriculum planning and implementation.

Footnotes

[1]Faily, Anwar, "Effective Administrative Behavior," NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 64, No. 433, February 1980, p. 32.

[2]Hughes, Larry W., and Ubben, Gerald C., The Secondary Principal's Handbook, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., Boston, 1980, p. 12.

[3]Young, Joseph A., and Sturm, Jerry, "A Model for Participatory Decision-Making," NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 64, No. 435, April 1980, p. 66.

[4]Hughes, op. cit., p. 13.

[5]Ibid., p. 15.

[6]Ibid., p. 31.

[7]Ibid., p. 32.

[8]Richardson, Richard C., "Decision Making in the 1980's: Pragmatists versus Involvers," The Education Digest, January, 1981, p. 41.

[9]Young, Jean Helen, "Teacher Participation in Curriculum Decision Making: An Organizational Dilemma," Curriculum Inquiry, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1979, p. 119.

[10]Young, op. cit., p. 123.

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A P P E N D I X

Chapter 766; Regulation 322.1

Teachers' Perceptions of Curricular Implementation Activities

Chapter 766; Regulation 322.1

After completion of the assessments which were part of the evaluation, and based on the results of those assessments, the TEAM shall meet to write the portion of the child's IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) for which it is responsible. That portion shall consist of the statements required by this paragraph (322.1) and any other information required by the division.

322.1 (a) A statement of the child's performance level, i.e., what the child can do.

322.1 (b) A specific statement of the measurable physical constraints on such performance, i.e., what the child cannot do.

322.1 (c) A specific statement describing the child's learning style.

322.1 (d) A statement of the general (1 year) educational objectives and the specific (quarterly) objectives which the child can reasonably be expected to achieve. Such objectives shall be measurable and shall be listed in order of priority.

322.1 (e) A statement of the suggested methodology and teaching approach for meeting the general objectives.

322.1 (f) A statement of the types and amounts of services (in terms of periods per day and per week) included within paragraph 503.1 which are necessary to enable the child to achieve the

objectives, including a statement of the duration and frequency of the periods during which the child should receive the services.

322.1 (g) A statement of any parent-child instruction which is necessary to enable the child to achieve the objectives. If the TEAM recommends parent-child instruction, the procedures of paragraph 323.1 shall be followed.

322.1 (h) A statement of physical education services for the child, in accordance with paragraph 502.10 (f).

322.1 (i) A statement, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 507.0, of the types of specialized materials and equipment necessary to enable the child to meet the objectives.

322.1 (j) A statement of whether the particular services provided to the child should be provided in a classroom setting, in a small group, or on an individual basis.

322.1 (k) A statement recommending the daily duration of the child's program.

322.1 (l) A statement recommending the number of days per year on which the child's program should be provided, with justification if the number differs from the number of days in the regular school year.

322.1 (m) A statement of the child's transportation needs, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 9.

322.1 (n) The criteria for the child's movement to the next less restrictive prototype.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF CURRICULAR IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Personal Data

1. Years of teaching experience in present position: _2-4 _5-9 _10-14 _15-19 _20 or more

2. Total years of teaching experience in Frontier Regional School District: _2-4 _5-9 _10-14 _15-19 _20 or more

3. Total years of teaching experience: _2-4 _5-9 _10-14 _15-19 _20 or more

4. Amount of college preparation:
_less than 4 years
_4 years or baccalaureate degree
_more than 4 years but less than 5 years
_5 years or master's degree
_more than 5 years but less than 6 years
_6 years or more

5. Type of institution in which pre-service education was required:

Check one

_Private institution
_Public supported institution

Check one

_Liberal Arts College
_Teachers' College
_County Teachers' College
_University School of Education

6. Sex: _Male _Female

7. Age: _20-24 _25-29 _30-34 _35-39 _40-44
_45-49 _50-54 _55-59 _60-64 _65 or over

8. Subject area of specialization: _English _Social Studies _Mathematics
_Science _Foreign Language _Business
_Arts _Physical Education _Special Education

9. Grades taught: _7 _8 _9 _10 _11 _12

10. Approximately how often have you been a team member in Chapter 766 curriculum planning:

_0-5 _6-10 _11-15 _16-20 _21-25
_26-30 _31-35 _36-40 _41-45
_46 or more

DIRECTIONS: Some factors are listed which may indicate participation in planning curricular implementation activities. You are to decide the frequency with which each factor occurs. Please respond to each statement by circling one category to the right of each item.

	Always	Usually	Certain	Sometimes	Not Never
1. I work on committees which plan the					
a. agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans	A	U	NC	S	N
b. types of activities which may insure the implementation of curricular plans	A	U	NC	S	N
c. time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities	A	U	NC	S	N
2. Objections I might have concerning the types of activities used for the implementation of curricular plans are					
a. accepted	A	U	NC	S	N
b. considered	A	U	NC	S	N
c. put into effect	A	U	NC	S	N

	Always	Usually	Not Certain	Sometimes	Never
3. Objections I might have concerning the scheduling of the implementation activities are					
a. accepted	A	U	NC	S	N
b. considered	A	U	NC	S	N
c. put into effect	A	U	NC	S	N
4. Teachers make the final decisions on the					
a. agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans	A	U	NC	S	N
b. types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans	A	U	NC	S	N
c. time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities	A	U	NC	S	N
5. Teachers participate on committees which make the final decisions on the					
a. agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans	A	U	NC	S	N
b. types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans	A	U	NC	S	N
c. time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities	A	U	NC	S	N

	Always	Usually	Not Certain	Sometimes	Never
6. Teachers and administrators attempt to arrive at co-operative solutions to problems concerning the					
a. agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans	A	U	NC	S	N
b. types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans	A	U	NC	S	N
c. time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities	A	U	NC	S	N
7. My suggestions regarding the time of year or the time of day for the implementation activities are					
a. accepted	A	U	NC	S	N
b. considered	A	U	NC	S	N
c. put into effect	A	U	NC	S	N
8. My suggestions regarding the types of activities that may assist teachers in the implementation of curricular plans are					
a. accepted	A	U	NC	S	N
b. considered	A	U	NC	S	N
c. put into effect	A	U	NC	S	N

	Always	Usually	Not Certain	Sometimes	Never
9. Objections I might have concerning the agenda for meetings on the implementation of curricular plans are					
a. accepted	A	U	NC	S	N
b. considered	A	U	NC	S	N
c. put into effect	A	U	NC	S	N
10. To assist in the analysis and appraisal of past or existing implementation activities					
a. I participate in fact-finding	A	U	NC	S	N
b. I attend meetings	A	U	NC	S	N
c. I am asked to attend meetings	A	U	NC	S	N
d. I am expected to attend meetings	A	U	NC	S	N
11. My recommendations for the improvement of existing or past implementation activities are					
a. accepted	A	U	NC	S	N
b. considered	A	U	NC	S	N
c. put into effect	A	U	NC	S	N
12. My objections to past or existing implementation activities are					
a. accepted	A	U	NC	S	N
b. considered	A	U	NC	S	N
c. put into effect	A	U	NC	S	N

	Always	Usually	Not Certain	Sometimes	Never
13. In regard to existing or past implementation activities, attempts are made by local professional staff to					
a. coordinate teachers' suggestions and recommendations	A	U	NC	S	N
b. determine if teachers' expectations have been satisfied	A	U	NC	S	N
14. My assistance in selecting the criteria for evaluating implementation activities is					
a. accepted	A	U	NC	S	N
b. considered	A	U	NC	S	N
c. put into effect	A	U	NC	S	N
15. My assistance in planning the procedures for gathering evaluative information concerning the implementation activities is					
a. accepted	A	U	NC	S	N
b. considered	A	U	NC	S	N
c. put into effect	A	U	NC	S	N

	Always	Usually	Not Certain	Sometimes	Never
16. Faculty committees feel free to express dissatisfaction with past or existing implementation activities	A	U	NC	S	N

An Instrument to Determine Teachers' Perceptions of Curricular Implementation Activities, developed by Robert D. Krey, Department of Educational Administration, University of Wisconsin, 1967.