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Factors influencing school board decisions on redistricting

Frank Edward Morgan

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Factors Influencing
School Board Decisions
on Redistricting

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

by Frank E. Morgan

April 1999

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ON REDISTRICTING

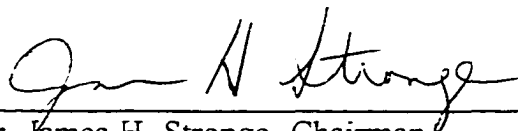
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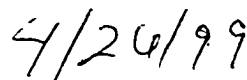
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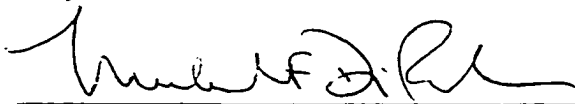
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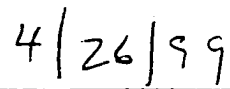


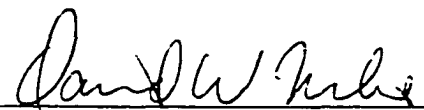
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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were: (1) to determine the factors that influence the decisions of local school boards concerning redistricting, and (2) to determine if the factors influencing redistricting decisions are more instructional or non-instructional in nature. The study employed a case study methodology, examining a specific school board involved in a redistricting process that occurred in 1996.

Data for the study were collected utilizing the following: interviews with school board members; interviews with staff members; interviews with members of the media who covered the redistricting process; interviews with community members; newspaper articles; school board meeting minutes and other internal documents about the redistricting process; and correspondence from the public to the school board about the redistricting process.

The study's conclusions were as follows:

1. The superintendent and the recommendations he made were a very strong influence.
2. Interest groups had an influence on the board, but not an overwhelming one.
3. Individual values influenced the board's decisions as members weighed the various alternatives.
4. Cultural/normative factors influenced the board's decision, especially in terms of the process to reach a decision.
5. The high level of emotion present during the process and the lack of viable alternatives influenced the board's decision.

6. The board was influenced by several concrete measurable criteria, including: building capacity/projected growth; cost effectiveness; feeder patterns; minimizing numbers redistricted; neighborhood schools/proximity of schools; socioeconomic/ethnic diversity; and travel distance and time. These factors served as a buffer against the high level of emotion in the process.

7. Non-instructional factors were the strongest influences on the board; however, instructional factors also played an important role.

Major implications of these conclusions included the need for accurate information on measurable instructional and non-instructional criteria; the need for establishing community and board consensus on priority redistricting criteria; the need for adequate time for decision making; the need for alternative means of gathering public input; and, the importance of process.

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to the many people whose inspiration, help and support have sustained me, especially during the difficult moments:

To my parents, for believing in me and, by word and example, teaching me the value of working hard and staying focused.

To Jean and Mike, for all the meals they ate, movies they saw, and time they spent without me while I got this done. I am blessed more than I deserve to have the two of you.

To my sister Anna and my brothers Joe and Tom, for their ceaseless encouragement.

To Pop and Ethel, who I wish could be there to share this with me.

To Dr. James Stronge, my advisor, for his flexibility and calm guidance.

To Annie and Lucinda, for frequently reminding me the end was in sight.

To the many other colleagues who have shared in the trials and tribulations of the work.

To Sister St. Paul, for opening my eyes.

To my late friend Pete Petrack, who I hope is enjoying this with me.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

History and Role of Local School Boards

Citizen involvement in school governance has been a long-standing tradition and practice in this country, one which originated long before the Revolutionary War with the town meetings in New England. Such involvement was later delegated to formal committees, which evolved into the local school board commonly known today. The city of Boston first used this structure in 1789, and by the eighteenth century, the local school board had become a widespread and recognized institution (Merz, 1986). In fact, the earliest elections for school board members in this country actually predated those for state legislators and governors (Cistone & Iannaccone, 1980). Danzberger (1994) noted that "local school boards are among the most venerable of U.S. public institutions, embodying many of our most cherished political and cultural tenets. One of these is a distrust of 'distant' government that dates back to Colonial times, when Americans were ruled from afar by governments that had little knowledge of the Colonial experience and no knowledge of local conditions" (p. 367).

In the late nineteenth century, however, there was a call for reform in school governance in response to the Draper Report. In this report, Andrew S. Draper,

Superintendent of the Cleveland, Ohio Schools, recommended that school governance be turned over almost exclusively to a superintendent and central office staff. The fallout from this report almost led to the elimination of the local school board (Merz, 1986). The thrust of the Draper Report was that school governance had become too complicated for citizen boards and too vulnerable to corrupt political influences, necessitating a greater degree of professional leadership. Proponents of placing control in the hands of strong executive leadership believed that doing so would maximize efficiency by taking education out of the realm of local politics (Cistone & Iannaccone, 1980).

Even though the local school board did continue to exist in the aftermath of the Draper Report, the model changed significantly to reflect more of a corporate board structure. Under this model, the school board was less involved in the day-to-day operations, which became the essential purview of the superintendent and a central office staff. Ellwood P. Cubberly, a recognized management expert of the early twentieth century, was a strong advocate of this change. He also believed that successful businessmen would make the best and most effective school board members because "they were used to handling business rapidly, were usually wide awake and were in the habit of depending on experts for advice" (cited in Merz, 1986, p. 401). The impact of this reform movement on local school boards was that from the early part of the twentieth century to the present day, there has been a large proportion of businessmen and other professionals serving on school boards.

During the past three decades, the role of the local school board has continued to evolve in response to changing political and societal circumstances. During the 1960s and 1970s, the federal government began to impinge upon the authority of local school boards, especially in areas related to identified special or protected populations. In the 1980s, the pressure for educational reform spurred by the landmark 1983 report A Nation at Risk caused state governments to engage in a higher degree of educational policy-making, which has intruded on the authority of local boards. Other factors impacting on the local school board in the past thirty years include an increased emphasis on educational quality in spite of growing student diversity, teacher empowerment, collective bargaining, the growth of the idea that schools must help to solve social problems, the expanding influence of special interest groups, fiscal pressures, the possible adoption of school choice or a voucher system, and the possibility of Congress adopting national standards and national achievement tests on these standards (Schmidt, 1994).

In the 1990s, the reform movement of the 1980s precipitated by A Nation at Risk has continued. During its earlier phase, reform had focused on top-down directives, mostly from the state level. Between 1983 and 1989, states enacted over 700 statutes to regulate local districts in areas including curriculum requirements, testing requirements, homework requirements, attendance requirements, and conduct requirements (Futrell, 1989). The focus of the movement, however, has changed in response to questioning by both scholars and policy makers as to whether or not top-down regulation was achieving the desired ends (Schmidt, 1994). As Danzberger

(1994) has observed, "the state reform initiatives of the early 1980s often stemmed from a lack of confidence in local boards and local professional educators. State policy-makers believed that they needed to take charge of what and how students were required to learn and how states would know if students were learning" (p. 368). As she also noted, "school boards came through the first phase of education reform relatively unscathed (though also ignored)" (p. 368). The current phase of educational reform, however, has included a thorough reexamination of school governance, including the role and function of the local school board.

Influences on School Board Decisions

In spite of the ongoing turmoil over the structure and role of the school board, it is evident that the over 15,000 local school boards in the United States, through the decisions they make, continue to play a major role in determining the direction of education in this country. And, in spite of all of the discussion revolving around reform and change, the general public seems to be relatively satisfied with the decisions being made at the local level. The 1997 Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Survey on Education reported that 46% of all respondents rated the schools in their area as an "A" or "B" and that 56% of the public school parents surveyed gave the schools in their area this rating, a trend which has been consistent for a number of years (Rose, Gallup, & Elam, 1997). This would seem to indicate that at the grassroots level, citizens perceive that reasonably good decisions are being made about the operation of their local schools. However, one may ask, how do school boards make these

decisions? What are the factors that influence the decisions of local school boards? An overview of the literature as to the influences on the decision-making of school boards identifies four major factors, including interest groups, the superintendent, cultural/normative factors, and the individual values of school board members.

Influence of Interest Groups

Feuerstein (1996) described what an interest group does by saying that "an interest group's activities revolve around its desire to influence decision makers regarding particular issues" (p. 15). Farrell (1989) described interest groups as being both internal or external. External groups would include the PTA, principals, teachers union representatives, town council members (or their equivalent), newsprint media, and television and radio media. Internal interest groups would include fellow board members and the superintendent. Farrell also saw principals, teachers, and union representatives as being internal interest groups, as well as external, because they are external to the board and internal to the school system (pp. 23-24). Feuerstein identified the groups that attempt to influence school boards to include "the business community, conservative groups, right-wing religious organizations, taxpayer associations, liberal political groups, booster organizations, and teachers' unions" (p. 8). In contemporary America, interest groups are a fact of life in all endeavors. Education is no exception.

The literature on interest groups indicates that their impact is somewhat dependent on the particular circumstances. Jennings and Zeigler (1970) concluded

that "regardless of the measure used, the more complex the school district, the more responsive the board is to group demands" (p. 4). Farrell (1989) added that "although they (interest groups) had the ability to make an issue salient, they had less ability to control the outcome of the conflict once it developed" (p. 10). Schmidt (1994) found that the viewpoint of a given interest group was more important to a school board than the group itself. She indicated that boards "seemed to give as much credence to the opinion of one citizen as they did to an entire group. Instead, the validity of the complaints or comments was of greater significance" (p. 300).

Influence of the Superintendent

Although the superintendent is sometimes considered an internal interest group, the literature indicates that the superintendent is arguably the strongest influence on school boards. Cistone (1977a) indicated that "indeed, the predominant fact of educational policy making today seems to be the inordinate influence of the chief school administrator, who, typically, enjoys a much greater latitude of discretionary authority than any other professional public administrator" (p. 97). Merz (1986) attributed this to the superintendent being the primary source of information for school boards. She noted that "an increasing need for information can increase a board's dependence on the superintendent" (p. 401). While interest groups are certainly a critical factor in board decisions, their influence can be substantially neutralized by the superintendent.

Influence of Individual Values

The literature also indicates that the individual value systems of school board members play a role in a board's decisions, Iannaccone and Lutz (1970) noted that "many studies of the policy making process assume that the decisions made reflect (at least in part) the values and personalities of the individuals involved" (p. 13). Cistone (1977a) asserted that the value systems of members of a school board tend to be similar because of "the tendency for school boards to perpetuate themselves" (p. 95). He saw this self-perpetuation as taking two forms--self-perpetuation by default and deliberate self-perpetuation. In Cistone's view (1977a), "self-perpetuation by default occurs with fairly high frequency because of the non-competitive nature of school board elections (when compared with the competitive nature of elections for some other municipal offices)" (p. 95). He perceived deliberate self-perpetuation as occurring when "incumbent school board members instigate the candidacy of others--engage in the act of sponsorship as it were" (p. 95). Understanding the values of the members of a given school board will undoubtedly provide insight into the decisions made by the board.

Influence of Cultural/Normative Factors

Related to the influence of individual values is the influence of cultural/normative factors on decision making. Such factors are related to individual values in that they are one of the forces that help to shape these values. Foss (1983) characterized cultural/normative factors as "the behavioral expectations the actor

perceives significant others to hold for him/her" (p. 283). In terms of decision making, Rugs and Kaplan (1993) described these factors as "the attention to the implicit or explicit norms conveyed by the solution preferences of others" (p. 148). Rugs and Kaplan (1993) also asserted that cultural/normative factors have the strongest influence on decisions related to what they called "judgmental issues," or "ones that lack a demonstrably correct answer but instead involve evaluative preferences" (p. 148). Because many of the decisions faced by school boards are judgmental in nature, cultural/normative factors will play an important role in the decisions that they ultimately make.

School Boards and Redistricting

In fulfilling their function, school boards make a large number of decisions, some routine and some extremely weighty. One of the most difficult areas in which school boards frequently have to make decisions is redistricting. Redistricting, or the redrawing of school attendance boundary lines, is a process that many school districts have to confront in an era when school enrollment is rising or declining at a rapid rate. In an article in The American School Board Journal in 1996, the National School Boards Association reported that children of the "baby boom" generation, swelled by immigration, have caused K-12 enrollment to rise to an estimated 51.7 million students, topping the 51.3 million children that were in school in 1971. Further, it is expected that 54.6 million students will be enrolled in grades K-12 in the year 2006 ("Ready or not, kids and more kids are headed your way," p. 58). This rise

in enrollment is causing many school districts to construct new facilities, renovate and expand existing ones, and realign attendance areas to make optimal use of new and existing space.

Establishing new attendance boundaries is, at best, a process fraught with difficulties. It is often a "no-win" situation because the rational consideration of factors such as building capacity, transportation impacts, instructional needs, costs, and long-range enrollment projections often become jumbled with emotional issues such as attachments to particular schools, positive and negative perceptions about particular schools and neighborhoods, and economic issues such as real estate property values. As Hyland (1989) stated, "few things are as potentially disruptive in a community as redrawing school district attendance boundaries; in fact, it's one of the most sensitive tasks a school board faces" (p. 29).

A wide variety of factors are considered by school boards in making decisions concerning redistricting. Creighton and Hamlin (1995) described most of the typical ones, including to "avoid frequent shifts in boundaries, retain neighborhood schools, attempt to establish a socioeconomic percentage of poverty students in each school that represents the district's average, equalize minority enrollment in schools at district level, limit non-contiguous zones, and [the] equality of building loading" (p. 19). The issue of diversity and/or racial balance is the one area that stirs the greatest amount of controversy in a redistricting process. In describing a redistricting process he chaired, Rieger (1994) indicated, "everyone on the committee wanted to improve the mix of students with different backgrounds, but disagreement came over what changes should

be made to achieve this goal. The 'promoting diversity' criterion became a divisive issue" (p. 27). Creighton and Hamlin likened redistricting to a "minefield" (p. 8).

This description is probably closer to reality than to hyperbole.

Purposes of Study

The purposes of this study are: (1) to determine the factors that influence the decisions of local school boards concerning school redistricting, and (2) to determine if the factors influencing redistricting decisions are more instructional or non-instructional in nature.

Research Questions

Based on the purposes stated above, the study was designed around the following specific research questions:

1. What are the specific factors that influence the decision making of a local school board concerning redistricting?
2. Are the factors that influence a local school board in making a redistricting decision more instructional or non-instructional in nature?

Operational Definitions

The operational definitions for key terms used in this study are as follows:

A school board is a body of laypeople that is responsible for the supervision of schools in a given school district. In Virginia, school boards generally consist of

from five to nine members and may be elected or appointed.

Redistricting is the redrawing of existing school attendance boundary lines.

Instructional factors are ones that are directly related to the design of curriculum or the delivery of instruction.

Non-instructional factors are ones that are not directly related to the design of curriculum or the delivery of instruction.

Theoretical Framework

Two related theoretical models will be of value in considering the questions examined in this study. These models both attempt to account for the context or environment in which decisions are made.

The Conflict Model of Consequential Decision-Making

The first theoretical model applicable to this study is the Conflict Model of Consequential Decision-Making developed by Irving L. Janis and Leon Mann (1977). This model addresses what Janis and Mann refer to as "hot cognitions" or "thinking about effect-laden issues" as opposed to "cold cognitions," or "routine problem-solving" (p. 45). The underlying assumption of this model is that when a challenge or opportunity presents itself to an individual or organization, the quality of decision-making is dictated by how the individual or organization responds to a series of questions. These questions include, "Are the risks serious if a change is not made?," "Is it realistic to hope for a better solution?," and "Is there adequate time to

search for a better solution and to deliberate?" (p. 71). How an individual or organization responds to these questions is a function of additional information that becomes available. The possible reactions to these questions include "unconflicted inertia," or ignoring warnings and continuing as usual; "unconflicted change," or changing to a new course of action without question; "defensive avoidance," or taking no action or procrastinating about taking action; "hypervigilance," or panic; and "vigilance," or high-quality decision-making based on a search for and analysis of information (pp. 72-75). According to Janis and Mann, the first four of these reactions increases the probability of a poor decision; however, vigilance increases the probability of a high-quality decision.

Janis and Mann (1977) also discussed how individuals or groups involved in consequential decision-making practice what they called "bolstering" a given course of action, particularly if it is a low-quality decision. As they described it, "bolstering is accomplished by magnifying the attractiveness of the chosen alternative--the gains to be expected are played up and the potential losses are played down" (p. 82). Likewise, bolstering may also involve diminishing the attractiveness of alternatives that were not chosen by playing down their positive features and playing up their negative ones.

The Constraints Model of Policymaking Processes

The other theoretical model that will be relevant to this study was developed by Irving Janis and represents an extension of the concepts presented in the Conflict

Model. This model, called the Constraints Model of Policymaking Processes (1989), attempts to explain why individuals and organizations make avoidable errors that result in low-quality policy decisions. The Constraints Model extends the Conflict Model of Consequential Decision Making because it provides insight as to why an individual or group might not effectively or thoroughly respond to the questions that drive the Conflict Model. According to the model, three factors or constraints cause low-quality decisions, including cognitive constraints, affiliative constraints, and egocentric constraints.

A cognitive constraint relates to problems in the amount of information and how information is analyzed. Cognitive constraints are ones caused by work overload or by the sheer complexity of the task. According to Janis (1989), persons or organizations affected by cognitive constraints will make impulsive, or "rapid-fire" decisions (pp. 34-35).

An affiliative constraint relates to limitations in thinking caused by personal relationships or friendships in a group. The need to maintain power or status or a need to be accepted by a group is indicative of an affiliative constraint. Janis (1989) also indicated that persons or organizations affected by affiliative constraints will do everything possible to seek a solution that "avoids punishment" (pp. 46-47).

An egocentric constraint is one that relates to self-interest or strong emotion such as greed, the desire for fame, anger, or simply the stress and conflict involved in making decisions. According to Janis, a person or organization affected by an egocentric constraint will resort to "defensive avoidance" or "bolstering," factors

which were also discussed in reference to the Conflict Model of Consequential Decision-Making (p. 80). An egocentric constraint also can lead to what Janis characterized as a "can do" response, or taking a reckless course of action (p. 78).

According to Janis (1989), any combination of these constraints will more than likely result in a poor or simplistic decision because the decision-maker(s) will resort to the easy or convenient solution. He described this situation by saying, "whenever a constraint does become dominant, the policy-maker will arrive at a policy decision by relying almost entirely upon simple decision rules to take care of that constraint, instead of using those decision rules (and other pertinent ones as well) as supplementary aids to problem-solving in a way that does not interfere with careful search, critical thinking, and planning" (p. 153).

Significance of the Study

This study is important from two primary standpoints. First, it will add additional knowledge as to how school boards make critical decisions. In spite of the fact that school boards have, until recently, received scant attention from those involved with educational reform, these bodies continue to make decisions of enormous consequence in a number of areas. Section 22.1 - 28 of the Code of Virginia states that "supervision of schools in each school division shall be vested in a school board." Virginia is fairly typical of most states in terms of the broad powers it grants to local school boards. Why is the understanding of school boards important? As Jennings and Zeigler (1970) stated, "to draw an imperfect analogy, trying to

understand the governance of local school systems without considering the board would be equivalent to comprehending national politics without paying attention to Congress" (p. 2). Perspective as to how a school board approaches consequential decisions is important to any individual or group that might wish to influence a school board on any particular question or issue.

Another possible benefit of my study will be to assist school board members facing a redistricting decision. Because of the volatility and pitfalls inherent to redistricting, a study that focuses on this controversial subject will be of use to board members, administrators, and community members interested in benefiting from the experiences of others. Although it is relatively easy to find "how to" articles about redistricting, very little exists in the literature that examines a redistricting process in meaningful depth. For this reason, this study will provide a useful strand to educational research literature.

Beyond these two areas, this study also will be of value to school board members by providing a means for them to examine their own processes and practices in a detached, impartial way. Hopefully, this study might serve as a mirror for school board members to view objectively themselves and what they do in this role. As Lyman (1993) observed, "people make decisions as persons embedded in a network of social relationships. People on school boards are no exception" (p. 22).

Limitations of the Study

This study will be limited to a case study of one specific situation to address the study's research questions. The case study will involve a redistricting process in which the researcher played a major staff role. The fact that the researcher was close to the situation must be acknowledged as a possible limitation. However, this circumstance will be tempered by the fact that the process was concluded over eighteen months before actual data-gathering and analysis for the study began. The methodology for this study will be qualitative. Further, it will focus on only one school board. Therefore, it will not be "generalizeable" in the classic sense of the term. It may be more appropriate to view this study in terms of what Schofield (1990), citing Guba and Lincoln, referred to as "fittingness," or "the degree to which the situation studied matches other situations in which we are interested" (p. 207).

Assumptions

Because much of the data for this study will be gathered through written records such as board minutes and newspaper articles, it must be assumed that these records are accurate. Further, since interviews of individuals involved with this redistricting process, including board members, staff members, and community members, will be used to gather data for the study, it also must be assumed that these individuals will be accurate and forthright in their responses to interview questions.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature for this study will focus on three main areas related to the decision making of school boards, including the influence of interest groups, the influence of the superintendent, the influence of personal values, and the influence of cultural/normative factors. In addition, various empirical studies on both the Conflict Model of Consequential Decision Making and the Constraints Model of Policymaking Processes will be examined, along with literature on criteria for redistricting. The literature that is reviewed will be derived from both the education and social science areas.

Influence of Interest Groups on School Board Decision Making

Definition and Types of Interest Groups

In order to examine the research on influence of interest groups, it would be useful to first establish a conceptual foundation as to their definition, their purpose, their types, and their activities. Zeigler, Jennings, and Peak (1974) stated that "groups originate in response to unsatisfied demands on the part of potential group members" (p. 96). Feuerstein (1996) cited Truman's definition of an interest group as "any

group that, on the basis of one or more shared attitudes, makes certain claims upon other groups in the society for the establishment, maintenance, or enhancement of forms of behavior that are implied by the shared attitudes" (p. 12).

Feuerstein (1996) also characterized interest groups as "potential" or "latent" and "organized" (p. 12). Potential or latent groups have a limited amount of structure, whereas organized groups reflect a great deal of structure. In spite of these differences, Feuerstein asserted that both kinds of groups have influence over educational decision making. Wirt and Kirst (1989) indicated that educational interest groups can be classified into three categories based on whether or not the group views education as an end in itself or as a means to an end. Those in the first category are usually made up of professional educators interested in professional issues. Those in the second category are interested in ideological issues such as taxes, patriotism, or morality. A third category described by Wirt and Kirst is "crisis" groups, which form quickly due to pressing issues and then disband (pp. 93-103). Feuerstein summed up the overall role of influence of interest groups in educational decision making by saying that "interest groups may be one of the most common forms of participation in school governance apart from elections" (p. 36).

Purposes of Interest Groups

Iannaccone and Lutz (1970) speculated that "the existence of local education interest groups is linked to the absence of true two-party politics at the local level" (p. 28). They stated that under the two-party system, "people combine their interests

under the 'tent' of a party structure" (p. 28) for public debate, building of coalitions, and compromise, and added that such a process "dominates only in the larger arenas of state and national elections" (p. 29). Iannaccone and Lutz (1970) also noted that "particularly in the realm of education, local politics are often marked by an absence of overt public discourse in the forging of decisions. Instead, efforts are made to achieve consensus behind closed doors" (p. 29). Such a situation, in their view, creates "opportunities for manipulation and control of local school boards and educational policies by relatively small and narrowly-based cliques" (p. 29).

Iannaccone and Lutz expanded on this idea through what they called "The Dissatisfaction Theory of American Democracy" (1986). Based on multiple ethnographic studies, they theorized that a school district's failure to react to socioeconomic or political changes in a community results in an increase of interest groups, a sharp increase in voter turnout, the defeat of incumbent school board members, and the ultimate demise of a superintendent. They further asserted that as changes occur in a community, opening the political process to interest groups will lead to more stability in the long term. They stated that "the special interests and values should be publicly debated and dissatisfied publics should be able to see that they are having influence on school policy and programs, or at least feel sure they are being listened to honestly" (p. 15). In the absence of such inclusion, Iannaccone and Lutz (1986) believed that stability decreases and the cycle of dissatisfaction gains momentum.

Activities of Interest Groups

Feuerstein (1996) cited five categories of interest group activity, including "educating about the extent to which the group's agenda has been implemented and the existing courses of action," "representing interests to decision makers by providing information and expertise," "acting as outlets for members to express hopes and frustrations," "helping to set the governmental agenda," and "acting as a watchdog during the process of implementing government decisions" (pp. 14-15). He added three other activities which characterize interest group activity relative to elections, including "supplying members with information regarding the reputation, records, and promises of the candidates," "contributing both money and time to the candidate whose slate best matches group interests," and "helping to 'get out the vote' in support of a particular candidate" (p. 17).

Davis and Wurth (1993) further expanded upon these ideas by attempting to classify interest groups in terms of what they refer to as "internal" and "external" dimensions (p. 437). The external dimension looks at an interest group "as an actor in the larger political system, with the groups varying in the extent to which their purpose requires them to differentiate between different citizens" (p. 437). The continuum of the external dimension would range from groups that seek benefits for a narrowly defined target population, which may or may not include the group's actual membership, at one end, and groups that seek benefits for the larger population at the other end (p. 437). The internal dimension is based on the "relationship of the group to its members" (p. 437). The continuum of the internal dimension would range from

groups whose members join to benefit from the group's purpose at one end to groups whose members join because of the guiding purpose of the group at the other end (p. 437).

Davis and Wurth (1993) delineated two specific kinds of groups based on the external dimension, including "discriminatory" and "nondiscriminatory" groups (p. 439). A discriminatory group "pursues preferential treatment for a subset of the polity" (p. 439). A union or a professional organization would be examples of a discriminatory group. A nondiscriminatory group "seeks no preferential treatment and does not need to discriminate because it does not depend on the exclusion of any portion of the polity from its beneficiary pool" (p. 439). Examples of nondiscriminatory groups would include animal rights groups, civil liberties groups, and consumer protection groups.

Davis and Wurth (1993) also described two specific kinds of groups based on the internal dimension, including "benefit" groups and "purpose" groups (p. 440). Benefit groups "sustain themselves by using politically procured resources as selective benefits to members and are concerned with the correspondence of benefits and membership" (p. 440). Purpose groups "do not realize their interest by providing selective benefits for members. They assume that group goals will provide 'purposive' or 'expressive' incentives to members" (p. 441). Benefit groups also attempt to restrict incentives to members. Where this cannot be accomplished, benefit groups face what Davis and Wurth refer to as "free riding" (p. 441), where

non-members realize benefits of the group. For purpose groups, "free riding" is not an issue.

Combining the aforementioned dimensions, Davis and Wurth (1993) described four specific categories of interest groups: "discriminatory benefit," "discriminatory purpose," "nondiscriminatory benefit" and "nondiscriminatory purpose" (p. 442). A discriminatory benefit group seeks to provide exclusive benefits for its membership, which is a limited subset of the population. For such groups, preferential treatment to recipients is seen as an incentive for membership. Such incentives might include professional licensing, tax concessions, or pork barrel kinds of projects. Failure to continue to provide such incentives would serve as a threat to the group's existence. A discriminatory purpose group advocates for specific causes such as the handicapped or underprivileged. Members of the group are motivated by a desire to seek benefits for the designated population. Benefits to members are not a concern, and a failure to achieve a specific goal or set of goals does not endanger the existence of the group.

According to Davis and Wurth (1993), a nondiscriminatory benefit group attempts to provide "goods like public services and infrastructure which exhibit economics of scale or have characteristics of social insurance" (p. 445). Hobby groups or membership pools such as the AAA are examples of a nondiscriminatory benefit group. This group does not limit membership; however, benefits are limited to members as an incentive for membership. Failure to continue to provide benefits to members and/or to expand benefits will endanger the existence of the group (p. 445). A nondiscriminatory purpose group takes positions on issues such as

political campaign finance, gun control, abortion, or the environment. Common Cause and the Sierra Club are examples of nondiscriminatory purpose groups. These groups do not restrict membership and do not restrict benefits to members. A failure to achieve a particular agenda will not threaten the existence of a nondiscriminatory purpose group. In fact, for these groups, just the opposite might be true. To illustrate this point, Davis and Wurth cited the decline in environmental group membership after controversial Secretary of the Interior James Watt resigned during the Reagan administration.

In examining how these groups promote their particular positions, Davis and Wurth (1993) indicated that "the resulting interaction of external and internal dimensions creates four distinct styles for 'selling' policy proposals" (p. 452). A discriminatory benefit group will typically resort to covert lobbying of government officials. A discriminatory purpose group will publicize goals in an open way and attempt to mount grassroots support. A nondiscriminatory benefit group will take on a less visible, low publicity approach designed to increase membership. A nondiscriminatory purpose group will conduct highly visible activities with heavy reliance on grassroots efforts.

Studies on the Influence of Interest Groups

"Responsiveness" to Constituents

With this conceptual foundation as a starting point, empirical studies on the influence of interest groups will now be examined. Jennings and Zeigler (1970) did

an investigation involving a national sample of 572 school board members in 96 districts to study what they termed "responsiveness" of board members, or their acting "on the basis of expressed preferences by constituents" (p. 6). In their view, responsiveness had two different dimensions--group responsiveness and individual responsiveness (p. 8). In general, Jennings and Zeigler found that the more complex the school district, with complexity being determined by the size and level of urbanization, the higher the level of responsiveness to group demands. They indicated that "rather than being an impediment to responsiveness, pluralism and complexity seem to enhance it" (p. 14). Jennings and Zeigler also found that the level of responsiveness to groups is a function of the level of citizen support. In reference to this point, they stated, "the more supportive the district, the less responsive the board" (p. 19). They explained this relationship by saying that in a supportive district, "there is less 'need' for group pressures, and so . . . group responsiveness falls off" (p. 19).

Jennings and Zeigler (1970) also found differences in the responsiveness of elected boards as compared to appointed boards, differences which counter the conventional wisdom. In discussing this area, they concluded "the results lend only partial support to the virtuous image of elected boards. Compared with appointed boards, the elected ones are somewhat less responsive to group pressures, but somewhat more responsive to individuals. Conversely, appointed boards, perhaps keyed in to larger segments of the district's political profile, can afford to pay more attention to group interests" (p. 24). In explaining this phenomenon, Jennings and Zeigler stated that "appointed boards may, in fact, overcompensate in their responsive

behavior in the absence of officially being 'the people's choice'" (pp. 26-27). Jennings and Zeigler further examined the impact of long terms of office on board member responsiveness to individuals versus groups. Again, their findings ran counter to what might be expected in that they indicated that a longer term of office seems to enhance responsiveness to individuals. They explained, "what actually seems to happen is that a longer term enables board members to override the compelling force of social complexity. This may be due to their becoming more recognizable and approachable by 'unattached' individuals, regardless of the social complexity at hand" (p. 34). Jennings and Zeigler also found a similar relationship between longer terms of office and responsiveness to groups in that a longer term seemed to enhance such responsiveness. They explained that this might occur because "boards with longer tenure conceivably feel freer to be responsive to various sorts of groups because there is a longer period of time in which bad group experiences and outcomes can be tempered" (p. 34).

Elected and Appointed Boards and Interest Groups

Kolet (1997) conducted a later study on role perceptions of elected versus appointed school boards within the context of the transition to elected boards occurring in Virginia. In 1992, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation giving localities the opportunity, through a referendum, to change how school board members are selected. At that time, Virginia was the only state in the country that did not permit appointment of school board members by election. Kolet's study attempted to determine whether the perceived role in school governance differed

between elected and appointed school boards as Virginia made the transition to elected boards. Kolet studied this question through four main areas related to school governance, including administration and organization, business and financial management, employee and pupil personnel services, and curriculum and instruction. Data was gathered through a survey sent to 64 superintendents and their board members and follow-up interviews with six school board members and six superintendents.

Based on the survey data, Kolet (1997) found that the most significant differences in role perception existed in the area of administration and organization, where both superintendents of elected boards and superintendents of appointed boards saw themselves as having more influence than their boards perceived them to have. In the area of curriculum and instruction, superintendents of elected boards saw their role as sharing equally with the board, while superintendents of appointed boards saw themselves as having greater influence. Likewise, appointed school boards were less inclined to want to share responsibility for curriculum and instruction with the superintendent, while elected boards were more likely to want to do so. In the area of employee and pupil personnel, there was no significant difference in that all four groups tended to see the superintendent as being primarily responsible, although the mean of responses from elected board members tended more closely to equal responsibility than did that of their appointed counterparts. In the area of business and financial management, all four groups saw themselves as sharing responsibility equally.

While this survey data indicated some statistically significant differences, Kolet (1997) found, based on follow-up interviews, that these differences were not of practical significance. She stated that "elected and appointed boards were found to be similarly involved in the school leadership process. Survey data, although statistically significant, does not support a practical difference. . . . Interview data confirms the active role of appointed board members" (p. 110). Kolet's findings imply that elected and appointed boards would not differ significantly in their degree of susceptibility to interest group influence.

Regionalism and Interest Group

Blanchard and Kline (1977) conducted a study designed to compare the decisional behavior of southern school boards with those in other parts of the country. Their data were collected at the 1975 National School Boards Association (NSBA) Convention based on randomly distributed questionnaires distributed to 1,091 board members and 116 superintendents attending various convention sessions. For the purposes of the study, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia, were classified as southern states.

Blanchard and Kline (1977) found that southern school boards placed less emphasis than their regional counterparts on the need to represent a constituency. Southern school board members were more likely to favor a "trustee" role, which likens a school board to a corporate board of trustees, versus a "legislative" role, which likens a school board to a representative legislature (p. 6). Paradoxically,

however, they also found that southern school board members were more likely to describe contact with community groups as occurring often (p. 10). Further, southern school board members were more likely than their counterparts in other regions to initiate contact with community groups (p. 11). Blanchard and Kline concluded that southern board members "seem increasingly to be realizing the political character of their roles and functions as school board members" (p. 18).

"Political" and "Professional" Boards and Interest Groups

Greene (1992) conducted a study that was somewhat similar to that of Blanchard and Kline (1977), but focusing on school boards in New Jersey. Greene attempted to determine if the school boards in the study were more likely to be "professional," which means they will "tend to vote unanimously and follow the recommendations of the superintendent" (p. 223) or "political," which means they will "be responsive to community groups, will frequently split their votes, and will be more independent of the superintendent" (p. 223). These two categories are very consistent with the "trustee" and "legislative" roles described by Blanchard and Kline. In his study, Greene also examined the factors that affect whether a board operates under the professional or political model and if there is a practical difference in the role played by either kind of board in school governance.

To gather data, Greene (1992) sent questionnaires to all school board presidents in New Jersey. The questionnaires asked three main questions. The first one asked how much time the board president spent each week responding to contacts from parents and community members. A board was defined as professional if less

than three hours were devoted to responding to such contacts and political if more than three hours were devoted to this activity. The second question asked the percentage of unanimous board votes. A board with less than 90% unanimous votes was classified as political and more than 90% as professional. The third question asked if the board maintained in practice the distinction that the board makes policy and the superintendent administers policy. An affirmative answer indicated a professional board and a negative answer a political one. Greene then gave each board in the study an overall classification based on the responses to all three questions. A board was classified as professional if responses on at least two of the questions were in a professional direction and classified as political based on the same proportion. Beyond these questions, respondents were asked about the competitiveness of board elections and the frequency of incumbent defeat in board elections. Demographic information from each district from the New Jersey Department of Education was also compiled for correlation purposes.

Greene (1992) found that 61% of the boards in the study were professional and 39% were political. He also found that socioeconomic status was not at all related to the orientation of a board. He did find a moderate relationship between the size of a district and board orientation in that larger ones tended to be more political. He also found moderate relationships between the number of students and the perceived competition in board elections and the tendency for a board to be political. The strongest relationship that was uncovered related to incumbent board member defeat. A board was most likely to be political if an incumbent had been defeated

during the previous two years (pp. 227-228). Greene offered two possible explanations for this relationship. The first relates to the aforementioned "Dissatisfaction Theory" of Iannaccone and Lutz (1986), which links conflict to a reticence to respond to significant community changes. His second explanation is that "boards that operate according to the political model may engender controversy within the community, which may lead to competitive elections in which representatives of different groups and perspectives vie for seats on the school board" (p. 229). Essentially, these two explanations attempt to determine if the chicken or the egg comes first, so to speak, in explaining incumbent defeat. However, this study does give credence to the idea that the influence of interest groups on a school board is at least partially a function of the operational style of the school board.

Other Public Bodies and Interest Groups

Abney and Lauth (1985) examined the influence of interest groups on public bodies outside of education in a study involving city administrators. Data for the study were obtained from a mail survey of police, fire, and public works department heads in U.S. cities of 50,000 or more in population. Cities of this size existed in 47 of the 50 states at the time of the study. Survey questions focused on the perceived influence of interest groups in general and the perceived interest of particular interest groups (neighborhood groups, business associations, etc.). Survey information was further analyzed to determine differences based on the specific department and the specific governmental structure (mayor-council versus executive-council).

Based on these data, Abney and Lauth (1985) found that department heads did not perceive interest groups as dominating the decision making process, although they were perceived as playing a role. Further, they found that interest groups had more influence in the areas of public works and police than in fire departments.

Respondents indicated that the chief executive and the city council had far more influence on departmental operation than interest groups. Results also showed the business community to be the most influential among the various interest groups and that the governmental structure of a city was not related to the perceptions of department heads as to interest group influence.

Some other findings in this study, however, could provide insight as to the influence of interest groups on school boards. Abney and Lauth (1985) found that city department heads perceived the city council to be most influenced by interest groups and that an activist city council was most likely to attract the attention of interest groups. The results also indicated that interest groups were most likely to focus attention on departments that have more discretion to make accommodations. Based on these findings, it could be argued that an activist school board, one that assumes the previously discussed "legislative" or "political" orientation, will be more influenced by interest groups. These findings might also explain why interest groups are attracted to school boards in that school boards do have reasonably significant discretion to make accommodations to group demands. Table 1 provides a synthesis of the research presented on the influence of interest groups.

Table 1

Influence of Interest Groups on Board Decision Making Cited in the Literature

Findings of Study	Jennings & Zeigler (1976)	Blanchard & Kline (1977)	Abney & Lauth (1977)	Greene (1992)	Schmidt (1994)	Kolet (1997)
Degree of interest group influence related to complexity of district, supportiveness of public, elected/ appointed status of board	✓					
Degree of interest group influence a function of geographic region		✓				
Degree of interest group influence based on operational style of board			✓	✓		
Degree of interest group influence based on the point of view of the particular group					✓	
Role perception of elected and non-elected boards in Virginia are not significantly different						✓

Influence of the Superintendent on School Board Decision MakingThe School Board and Superintendent Relationship

The relationship between the school board and the superintendent in the decision making process is a complex one and one that is not completely understood. Tallerico (1989) noted that "although the functional relationship between the school board and superintendent is a critical connection which stands at the apex of the organizational pyramid in education, there is little known about the dynamics of that

linkage" (p. 2). Although the literature on interest groups indicates that these groups do play a role in school board decisions, there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that the superintendent plays a significantly more important role. In discussing this role in light of their research findings, Zeigler, Tucker, and Wilson (1976) stated, "the overall conclusion . . . was that superintendents, in spite of the rhetoric, were the dominant factors in decision making, and that their decisions were only occasionally made within a context of community participation through interest groups" (p. 5).

As was discussed in chapter 1, the concept of executive leadership in education evolved in the late nineteenth century based on the idea that effective educational management required what Cistone and Iannaccone (1980) have referred to as the "neutral competence," which would be "independent of general community politics or the values of particular groups" (p. 412). They elaborated that "the proponents of neutral competence sought to develop scientific methods for maximizing the efficiency of public services" (p. 412). This desire for efficiency required placing control in the hands of a professional administrator, or superintendent.

The concept of executive management implies that the school board by itself is not capable of making effective decisions, that it must be guided by management to do so. This assumption creates a complicated and sometimes tense relationship between the board and the superintendent. While the school board is legally responsible for making decisions, the superintendent provides a great deal of the context in which decisions are made. Merz (1986) indicated that much of the superintendent's influence over a school board relates to the providing of information.

She stated, "board members rely heavily on the superintendent for information. Superintendents can control boards by supplying certain types and amounts of information" (p. 405). Zeigler, Tucker, and Wilson (1976) attributed this situation to the sheer complexity of the decisions that must be made. They stated, "problems and policy alternatives are now too complex for the public and its representatives to evaluate. Legislators solicit and follow the recommendations of professional administrators. The major source of power is information; the new norm of policy making is deference to expertise" (p. 3).

Studies on the Influence of the Superintendent

Level of District Conflict and Superintendent's Influence

To examine how school boards reach decisions, Minar (1965) conducted a comparative study of 48 suburban Cook County, Illinois elementary school districts. Over a five-year period, he collected and compared three kinds of data about these districts, including votes in district board elections and referenda, descriptive information on the districts, and census materials. Additional data about the dynamics of the board-superintendent relationship were gathered through intensive interviews with the superintendents of the districts in the study. Based on the data collected, Minar characterized the districts as "high" or "low" conflict. High conflict districts had more votes cast for losers in school board elections as a proportion of the total vote, more negative votes on referenda as a proportion of the votes cast, and higher

rates of participation in school board elections and referenda than occurred in low conflict districts. Minar found that the key variable as to the conflict level in a district was income level. Districts with high community income levels were more likely to be low conflict districts. Conversely, districts with lower community income levels were more likely to be high conflict districts.

Minar (1965) also discovered a significant difference in the influence of the superintendent over the board based on the district being high conflict or low conflict. In low conflict districts, the boards gave the superintendents a great deal of latitude and discretion and almost always followed the superintendent's recommendations. He also found very little indication in these districts that anyone but the superintendent and his staff participated in establishing meeting agendas or in taking initiative in budgetary matters. In high conflict districts, on the other hand, the superintendent was expected to involve board members, especially the president, in all matters. In these districts, the influence of the superintendent on decisions was far less significant (pp. 6-7). Based on Minar's work, the conclusion could be drawn that the boards of more affluent districts are more likely to be heavily influenced by the superintendent.

"Public Regardingness" and Superintendent's Influence

Cistone and Hennessy (1971) conducted a study to examine what they termed "public regardingness." This concept can be summarized by saying that an individual or organization with a high level of public regardingness is more inclined to believe in and seek public involvement in decision making (p. 588). To investigate public

regardingness, Cistone and Hennessy examined 26 demographically similar communities in the suburbs of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Fourteen of the communities had mayor-council municipal governments, and the other 12 had manager-council structures. The school board members in these 155 communities were asked to complete a survey as to the division of labor in educational management. The survey addressed 13 basic tasks. The 13 tasks were categorized as "participative" and "non-participative." Participative tasks included budget-making, public relations, use of pupils, use of school property, and policy initiation. Non-participative tasks included professional hiring, textbook selection, instructional policy, property maintenance, and child attendance regulations. Respondents were asked to indicate how they felt the division of labor and responsibility should be in an ideal sense between the superintendent and school board on these tasks.

Findings from Cistone and Hennessy's (1971) data indicated that school board members in communities with the manager-council structure believed in significantly greater dependence on the expertise of the superintendent in making decisions than did their counterparts in council-mayor communities. Further, the data indicated that respondents from manager-council communities were more willing to give even the tasks categorized as participatory over to the superintendent than respondents in mayor-council communities (pp. 592-593). While these findings point to a relationship between public regardingness and governmental structure, Cistone and Hennessy did not see their data as providing any insight as to the reasons for this relationship, indicating that "more survey research is needed to plumb attitudes of this

putative subculture, and to relate attitudes to structure and process" (p. 594).

Overall Influence of the Superintendent

Zeigler, Tucker, and Wilson (1976) conducted a study designed to be a follow-up to research they had done in 1968 on decision making in public education. Their work in 1968 had been based on interviews with school board members and superintendents in 51 school districts in the northeast and midwest. Their findings at that time indicated that in two-thirds of the districts, the superintendent was solely responsible for setting meeting agendas, that there was rarely opposition to the superintendent's recommendations, and that the superintendent's opposition to a proposal would usually result in the defeat of the proposal (pp. 4-5).

The follow-up to the Zeigler, Tucker, and Wilson's 1968 study was done based on a concern that the data for the original study had been based strictly on interviews. Therefore, data for the later study included records of board meetings, meetings of the superintendent's cabinet, and other formal meetings such as public hearings; surveys of interest group leaders, school board members, and senior administrators; and multiple interviews of board members, superintendents, and members of the public that made presentations to the board. Findings based on this more comprehensive data collection were nonetheless consistent with the earlier study. The most significant conclusion reached by the authors was that the superintendent was the most influential player in the decision making process. As they stated,

"despite varieties in participation, the superintendent clearly emerges as the dominant player" (p. 40).

Superintendent's Influence and the Need for Information

Brown, Newman, and Rivers (1985) conducted a study to determine how the superintendent's opinion on a particular decision affects the need for information by board members. To investigate this issue, school board members from 97 randomly selected school boards from 10 states were given a series of vignettes based on cases taken from newspaper articles, interviews with administrators, and surveys of educators. Each vignette contained a description of a program that might be presented to a school board. The programs were described as pilots that had been in existence for one year. Program descriptions included data on the success or failure of various aspects of each program. Descriptions of the programs were varied as to the importance of the decision to be made about the program, the amount of public interest in the program, and the possible impact on upcoming board elections. Vignettes were categorized as "high conflict" or "low conflict," according to these factors. Based on the vignettes, respondents were asked to respond to a survey focusing on what information they would need to make a decision about each of the programs described.

Results from the data collected indicated that for low conflict decisions, respondents wanted less information and were more confident of their own experience. For high conflict decisions, respondents wanted more information, more

time, and more contact with constituents (Brown, Newman, & Rivers, 1985, pp. 216-217). However, the most significant finding of the study related to the influence of the superintendent. If the superintendent indicated nonsupport for the program, board members wanted more information and informal input about the program and were less willing to base decisions on their own experiences. However, if the superintendent was supportive, board members wanted less contact with constituents and were more willing to base a decision on their own knowledge (p. 217). It should be noted that these results are very consistent with Janis and Mann's Conflict Model Consequential of Decision Making because they indicate a relationship between the importance of the decision and complexity of the process followed to make a decision. From these findings, the authors concluded that "knowledge of the superintendent's support or nonsupport for programs is so powerful that board members are no longer affected by public conflict" (pp. 217-218).

Superintendent's Influence on School Board Agenda Setting

Carpenter (1987) conducted a study concerning the influence of the superintendent over setting the agenda for school board meetings. In explaining why this particular area is significant, she stated, "control over the school board agenda is potentially an important source of the superintendent's capacity to forge coalitions of influence among board members" (p. 11). For the study, 30 superintendents from the Minneapolis-St. Paul area were interviewed regarding their role, influence, and general perceptions relative to board agenda setting. The sample of superintendents

was chosen to represent a cross-section of district sizes. Carpenter found that the sample superintendents perceived their role in agenda setting as more important than that of both the board chair and the total board. For the most part, they attributed this perception to their greater access to issues, to apathy on the part of the board, and to historical precedent. The superintendents identified teachers, parents, and taxpayers as groups that attempted to influence board agendas; however, they saw these groups as having little actual impact on agenda setting (p. 17). Carpenter concluded that "the overwhelming majority of superintendents use the agenda setting process as a means of asserting influence over the board" (p. 18).

Working Relationship of the School Board and Superintendent.

Tallerico (1989) did a study focusing on the working relationship between school board members and superintendents. To collect data, she conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with superintendents and school board members from a purposive sample of six school districts in the Southwest. Through the data, she classified a continuum of behavioral patterns for both school board members and superintendents. These behavioral patterns provided insight as to how board members and the superintendent interacted in the decision making process.

In terms of school board member behaviors, Tallerico (1989) identified three specific patterns based on how the individual board member collected and utilized information and the degree to which the board member was involved in district affairs. "Passive acquiescent" board members were "inclined to rely primarily on the

information and interpretations provided by administrative staff, limited their participation in district activities to regular board meetings or required ceremonial events, . . . referred constituent concerns to the superintendent . . . and consistently deferred to the superintendent's judgments and recommendations" (p. 3). "Proactive supportive" board members were highly involved in school affairs, but showed tendencies similar to those of passive acquiescent board members "in that their usual purpose is to advocate and support, rather than scrutinize and challenge, the superintendent's stances" (p. 3). "Restive vigilant" board members

. . . personally visited with teachers and central office staff on a regular basis, cultivated a wide range of information sources internal and external to the district, participated in district and state educational committees, followed up on suggested resolution of constituent concerns referred to the administration, persistently engaged in activities to build support for their preferred objectives, and purposefully exercised their right to oversee and govern the district providing a check and balance to the superintendent's and other administrator's operations. (p. 3)

Tallerico (1989) also described a continuum of two behaviors related to superintendents. "More controlling" superintendents "were inclined to use informal study sessions and other interactions with board members to channel selected information and educate and persuade towards a predetermined direction, consistent with the superintendent's or other educators' view of what is best" (p. 3). "Less controlling" superintendents "utilized the same study sessions to seek and foster a wide range of input or to negotiate agreements by surfacing and accommodating divergent expectations" (p. 3).

Tallerico (1989) went on to explain that where a superintendent or school board member operated on the particular continuum had to do with an individual view of educational governance. A superintendent or board member with a "traditional-normative" view sees educational governance as a process described as follows:

Local voters elect a presumably representative school board to serve as a legislative body, a superintendent is employed to serve executive and administrative functions, and it is assumed that the executive arm follows the instructions of the legislative body, which in turn acts in the best interests of constituents. (p. 4)

Further, according to Tallerico, a superintendent or board member with a "professional dominance" or "technological" view assumes "that professional educators are most likely to have the 'right' answer" (p. 5). However, she indicated that a superintendent or board member with a "democratic functioning" view takes a somewhat middle ground position between the previous two in that educational governance was seen as "a shared function, with superintendents and board members attempting to anticipate community expectations" (p. 5).

Tallerico (1989) connected the previously discussed continuum of behaviors to these views of educational governance. She indicated that passive acquiescent and proactive supportive board members generally gravitated towards a professional dominance or technological point of view that saw their job as deferring to the superintendent's expertise. Controlling superintendents also tended to adopt this point of view. In contrast, restive vigilant board members and less controlling

superintendents tended to operate based on the democratic functioning viewpoint, seeing the superintendent-board relationship as a partnership (p. 5).

Tallerico's (1989) findings implied that the influence of a superintendent over a school board is to large degree a function of how the philosophy and behavior of each side guides behaviors during the decision making process. A controlling superintendent will have the most influence in a process involving a passive acquiescent or proactive supportive board; however, the controlling superintendent will have less influence over a restive vigilant board. Likewise, a less controlling superintendent will attempt to exert less influence over a board and create a process that more actively involves board members in defining and examining alternatives. Nonetheless, a less controlling superintendent will still have significant influence over a passive acquiescent or proactive supportive board.

Elected and Appointed Boards and Superintendent's Influence

Earlier in this chapter, Kolet's 1997 study on the role perceptions of elected versus appointed school boards in Virginia was cited in the context of discussion of literature on the influence of interest groups on school boards. In her study, Kolet found that while there were statistically significant differences in some of the role perceptions, these differences were not of practical significance. These findings also imply that there would be no practical significance between the two kinds of boards in terms of the influence of the superintendent in the decision making process and that the degree of this influence with either type of board would be related to other

factors. Table 2 provides a synthesis of the research presented on the influence of the superintendent on school board decision making.

Table 2

Influence of Superintendent on Board Decision Making Cited in the Literature

Findings of Study	Minar (1965)	Cistone & Hennessey (1971)	Zeigler, Tucker, & Wilson (1976)	Brown, Newman, & Rivers (1985)	Merz (1986)	Carpenter (1987)	Tallerico (1989)	Kolet (1997)
Degree of superintendent's influence based on conflict level/affluence of community	✓							
Degree of superintendent's influence based on local government structure		✓						
Superintendent always the most influential factor			✓					
Superintendent's level of support affects board's need for information				✓				
Superintendent's influence based on board's need for information					✓			
Superintendent's influence based on control of board agenda						✓		
Superintendent's influence a function of operational styles of board/superintendent							✓	
Role perception of elected and non-elected boards in Virginia are not significantly different								✓

Influence of Individual Values on Decision Making

Individual Values and the Decision Making Process

Decision making is not a completely rational process simply involving an emotionless evaluation of alternatives and their possible consequences. The values of the individual or group making a given decision have significant impact on the consideration of various courses of action. Regarding this idea, Simon (1976) stated, "the psychological act of evaluating alternatives usually consists in measuring these alternatives in terms of certain values-indices that have been found to be generally associated with the realization of the values themselves" (p. 75). Schmidt (1994) asserted that the values that help shape the decisions of the individual school board member may be as much as anything else a function of the gender and social class of the individual board member. If this is the case, school boards will generally reflect more conservative or mainstream values. As noted in a 1996 National School Boards Association publication for board members, "board members still belong . . . to the power structure of their communities. They are still, largely, white, male, and affluent" (p. viii). This same publication also indicated that "sixty-three percent of board members identify themselves as politically conservative" (p. viii). Regardless of the specific value orientation involved, there is ample research to indicate that individual values are an important factor in school board decision making. The literature to be reviewed relative to this idea will come from both education and the social sciences.

Studies on the Influence of Individual Values

Personal Attitudes and Decision Making

Crain (1966) conducted a study on the decision making of school boards of eight large cities focusing on how these boards made decisions regarding the demands of the civil rights movement. Data collection was done through interviews with superintendents, board members, civil rights leaders, and influential members of the business community. Census statistics were used to analyze demographic factors in each of the cities. Crain found that decisions made by board members on civil rights policy were for the most part dictated by personal attitudes. Crain also found that because board composition in these eight cities was greatly influenced by what he termed the "civic elite," these attitudes reflected the values of this particular group. He also concluded that school board members did not assume any new behavior patterns in opposition to these values once they joined the school board (pp. 5-7).

Individual Values and Other Contextual Variables

Pflum and Brown (1982) conducted a study on contextual variables that impact upon the decision making of small groups. The study, which used simulation methodology, involved 89 graduate education students. During regular class time, the students were randomly placed in groups of four or five. Participants were given two separate reports concerning programs being proposed for implementation and asked to make a decision whether or not they should be implemented. Each group was given

25 minutes for the first decision and 10 minutes for the second decision. The contextual variables involved in the decision making problems included time, ease of reversibility of a decision, and potential gain or loss based on a decision. The researchers found that while these variables did affect decision making, the individual biases or values of the participants were also a major factor in their arriving at a decision (pp. 16-17).

Interaction of Values with Fixed Ethical Codes

In a study from the social sciences, Smith, McGuire, Abbot, and Blaw (1991) did research involving 102 mental health professionals, including social workers, clinical psychologists, and counselors, to determine the factors that dictate their decision making in a clinical environment. Each participant was given a two-part questionnaire which included biographical questions and 10 ethical dilemma vignettes developed from actual clinical cases. For each vignette, subjects were asked to indicate what they should do in the situation and what they probably would do. Eight rationales were also provided for the should/would choices, including upholding the law, upholding a code of ethics, intuition, upholding personal moral values, financial need, fear of malpractice action, fear of reprisal by the supervisor, the client, or a colleague, and protection of personal and/or professional reputation.

The researchers found that for all of the ethical conflict situations, the participants tended to think in terms of formal codes of ethics and relevant legal guidelines in determining what they should do, but were more likely to respond to personal values and practical considerations in determining what they actually would

do if faced with this situation (Smith, McGuire, Abbot, & Blaw, 1991, p. 235). The researchers therefore concluded that at least for the mental health professionals in the study, existing codes and standards are essentially guidelines rather than fixed rules of conduct and that assessment of a particular situation is based on these codes and standards in conjunction with individual values (p. 238).

Interaction of Practice Wisdom and Fixed Ethical Codes

Dolgoff and Skolnik (1996) conducted a somewhat similar study involving ethical decisions made by social workers when interacting with groups. The study itself focused on three specific ethical issues, including individual and group self-determination, confidentiality, and informed consent. In this study, 147 respondents from a randomly chosen group of 392 members of the Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups completed a written survey instrument on a set of vignettes involving ethical dilemmas related to the three ethical issues. Respondents were asked to develop a strategy for resolving each dilemma and then to describe the factor or factors that influenced their decision to use the chosen strategy. These factors included practice wisdom (a combination of experience and individual values), the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, another professional code, a particular philosopher or religious teaching, a book or journal, or another source.

The major finding by Dolgoff and Skolnik (1996) was that practice wisdom, which includes individual values, was the primary basis for ethical decision making. There was a strong tendency on the part of the participants to seek a compromise

solution rather than an "either/or" solution. The researchers interpreted this tendency to compromise as an effort on the part of the participants to seek a balance between practice wisdom and strict ethical codes. These findings are reasonably consistent with those of Smith et al. (1991) in that they reflect a desire for a balance between established codes of conduct and individual values and experiences.

Individual Values and "Media Frame"

Shah, Domke, and Wackman (1996) did a study to examine the decision making of two particular groups--evangelical Christians and university undergraduate students. In this study, the researchers specifically examined how the context presented by the media, or the "media frame," influenced the voting decisions of these groups. For the study, they defined two ways in which individuals interpret issues. These included an "ethical" interpretation, which is based on a sense of right and wrong or personal ethics, and a "material" interpretation, which is based on tangible concerns such as economics or personal experience. The main premise of the study was that a media frame presenting an ethical or material context will influence the way a person interprets an issue in making a voting decision (Shah, Domke, & Wackman).

To study this premise, 172 members of five evangelical churches and 201 undergraduate students in a large midwestern city were given the same articles on three issues--the economy, education, and government cuts. These articles outlined the views of three candidates in an upcoming election. An experimental condition was created for a fourth issue, health care, with some participants receiving an article

that framed health care in ethical terms and some receiving an article that framed it in material terms. After reading the articles, subjects completed a questionnaire about how they would utilize this information in making a voting decision (Shah, Domke, & Wackman, 1996).

The researchers found that for both populations, the way an article framed health care had the most powerful impact on the way an individual interpreted this issue for voting purposes. For both undergraduates and evangelical Christians, an individual receiving an article with an ethical context on health care was more likely to interpret the issue ethically than those receiving an article with a material context. They also found that subjects in both populations receiving an article with an ethical context were more likely to use what the researchers referred to as "noncompensatory" evaluation strategies. A noncompensatory evaluation strategy will not allow the perceived positive aspects of a decisional alternative to offset or be balanced against the perceived negative aspects of the alternative. For subjects receiving the health care article with a material context, only the evangelical Christians were more likely to use noncompensatory strategies (Shah, Domke, & Wackman, 1996, pp. 526-528). These findings would seem to indicate that the way an issue is presented, or framed, interacts with the individual values of the decision maker. Table 3 provides a synthesis of the research presented on the influence of individual values on decision making.

Table 3

Influence of Individual Values on Board Decision Making Cited in the Literature

Findings of Study	Crain (1966)	Iannaccone & Lutz (1970)	Cistone (1977)	Pflum & Brown (1982)	Smith, McGuire, Abbot, & Blaw (1991)	Schmidt (1994)	Dolgoff & Skolnik (1996)	Shah, Domke, & Wackman (1996)
Values have a significant impact on decision making	✓	✓		✓				
Values of school boards dictated by self-perpetuation			✓					
Values a function of gender and social class of boards						✓		
Values interact with fixed codes of ethics in decision making					✓		✓	
Values of decision maker interact with how issue is presented								✓

Influence of Cultural/Normative Factors on Decision MakingCultural/Normative Factors and the Decision Making Process

The concept of cultural/normative factors and their impact on decision making is linked to the concept of individual values because of the role played by these factors in the formation of individual values. Bank, Slavings, and Biddle (1990) saw these factors as related to the concept of a reference group, which theorizes that "people act within a social frame of reference created by other individuals and groups with which they identify" (p. 210). Within this framework, Bank, Slavings, and

Biddle also saw cultural/normative factors as serving "to set and enforce group standards" (p. 210). In terms of decision making, Rugs and Kaplan (1993) indicated that cultural/normative factors play the most significant role when the decision involved is related to what they termed "judgmental issues," or "issues that lack a demonstrably correct answer, but instead involve evaluative preferences" (p. 148). In the educational arena, cultural/normative factors are often related to decisions in areas such as curriculum, programs, textbooks and instructional materials, and personnel, which are essentially judgmental decisions. Given the judgmental nature of redistricting, the impact of cultural/normative factors on this decision area could also be significant. The literature to be reviewed concerning cultural/normative factors will come from both the education and social science areas.

Studies on the Influence of Cultural/Normative Factors

Cultural/Normative Factors and Blood Donation Behavior

Foss (1983) conducted a study to examine the relationship between blood donation behavior and perceived normative support to donate blood. To study this relationship, a 22-item questionnaire was distributed to several sections of introductory sociology at two southern universities known to have substantially different rates of donation at bloodmobile visits. One hundred thirty-nine students participated at one university and 96 from the other. The survey included questions addressing basic demographic data, perceived community support for blood donation, knowledge about blood donation, and past exposure to blood donation. From the results of this survey,

Foss concluded that "perceived normative support can be added to the set of factors known to have a reliable effect on blood donation" (p. 288).

Cultural/Normative Factors and Persistence of College Students

Bank, Slavings, and Biddie (1990) conducted a study to determine the impact of cultural/normative influences on undergraduates' decisions to leave or remain at the university at which they began their education. The study involved 1,240 entering freshmen at a large midwestern state university. The participating students provided the researchers permission to access records concerning scores on national tests, high school class rank, grades, etc. The students also completed questionnaires about their backgrounds, housing arrangements, intended majors, and their opinions about academically relevant careers, the university itself, and taking a leave of absence from school. In addition, respondents were asked to attribute norms for these opinions to relevant others, including closest male friend, closest female friend, favorite teacher, coach, or advisor, mother/stepmother/female guardian, and father/stepfather/male guardian. Students who re-enrolled during the second semester were contacted again and asked to complete a second questionnaire so that changes could be noted. Students leaving at the end of the semester were contacted by phone to provide information to compare against students who remained. The researchers found that cultural/normative factors had an extremely strong influence on students' decision to stay in college. They also found the influence of peers to be the most significant relative to this decision.

Cultural/Normative Factors and Decision Making on Fertility Behavior

Zafir, Ford, and Ankomah (1995) conducted a comparative study of 1,100 women, ages 25-45, in two urban centers in Pakistan to investigate fertility behavior and the extent to which social, cultural, and attitudinal variables influenced decision making in this area. The variables examined in the study included beliefs and non-beliefs about family life, religiosity, and fatalism. Participants were administered a questionnaire which asked them to assess their beliefs about specific statements related to these areas. The researchers concluded that cultural/normative factors exerted an important influence on the decision making process of these women relative to fertility, an influence that was independent of economic factors. They summarized these findings by saying, "the persistence of values, norms, and traditions unfavorable to family limitation and small family norms is the explanation for high fertility and low contraceptive use in Pakistan" (p. 316).

Cultural/Normative Factors and Drug Use By Adolescents

Moore, Laflin, and Weis (1996) conducted a study to determine the interrelationship between self-esteem and cultural/normative factors and their correlation with adolescent drug use. They based their study on what they termed the "Social Deviance Model," which asserts that "the nature of the relationship between self-esteem and behavior depends on the cultural context or group norms. That is, people conforming to the norms of the culture will tend to evaluate themselves positively" (p. 525). An example to illustrate this concept would be that in a restrictive culture, high drug use would be correlated with low self-esteem.

In this study, the researchers worked with two groups of subjects, including 1,001 high school students from four rural/suburban high schools in the midwest and 1,226 college students from a medium sized university in the midwest. To measure drug use, participants were given a list of 25 substances in three separate categories, including tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs. The respondents were asked to indicate whether they had used any of these substances in the past, and if so, how often during the previous year. A separate measure was also done for marijuana and cigarettes. From the survey data, measurements for intensity (frequency) and variability (number of substances used) were calculated for each category and for marijuana and cigarette use separately. To measure culture/normative factors, respondents were asked to complete a survey to assess their perceptions about drug use behavior and to provide information as to frequency of church attendance. An established instrument, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, was used to assess the self-esteem of each subject. The researchers found that the relationship between self-esteem and drug use, as posited by the Social Deviance Model, was not significant. However, they did find the relationship between cultural/normative factors and drug use (permissive drug norms and/or infrequent church attendance to drug use and restrictive drug norms and/or frequent church attendance to non-use) to be significant.

Cultural Normative Factors and Purchasing Decisions

Na, Son, and Marshall (1998) conducted a study to assess the spousal influence in family decision making concerning purchasing habits in South Korea. The researchers examined a stratified random sample of 5,500 people from five major

South Korean cities. A questionnaire was administered to participants concerning 23 selected products to determine the influence of family members during the purchase process for these items. Information was also obtained concerning education, income level, the age of the parents, and the number and ages of children. The researchers found that the Korean norm of patriarchal authority was the strongest influence on purchasing decisions. The researchers concluded, "it seems that the strong cultural tradition of patriarchal dominance is overriding the strong, increasing levels of economic development that might have been expected to lead to far higher levels of shared decision making between spouses" (p. 563). Table 4 provides a synthesis of research presented on the influence of cultural/normative factors.

Table 4

Influence of Cultural/Normative Factors on Decision Making Cited in the Literature

Findings of Study	Foss (1983)	Blank, Slavings, & Biddle (1990)	Zafir, Ford & Ankomah (1995)	Moore, Laflin & Weiss (1996)	Na, Son, & Marshall (1998)
Cultural/normative factors have an impact on the decision to donate blood	✓				
Cultural/normative factors strongly influence students' decision to stay in college		✓			
Cultural/normative factors influence decisions on fertility in Pakistan			✓		
Cultural/normative factors influence the decision by adolescents to use drugs				✓	
The normative factor of patriarchal authority is the strongest influence on purchasing decisions in Korean families					✓

In an educational setting, cultural/normative factors will have impact because so many of the decisions to be made do not have a "right" or "wrong" answer, but are, rather, subject to judgment. As shown in the aforementioned studies, such judgment will be impacted by cultural/normative factors. The frequent controversies in education concerning areas such as textbook selection, library books and periodicals, programs like drug and sex education, and curriculum content give credence to this impact.

Criteria for Redistricting

Now that the various influences on decision making have been reviewed, it would be useful to examine the criteria for redistricting decisions described in the literature. A wide variety of criteria can be and is actually used in developing redistricting plans. Creighton and Hamlin (1995) indicated that "redistricting is not simply a matter of loading all buildings equally and at a high level, critical as that is" (p. 21). Establishment of specific criteria is important because it facilitates the analysis and evaluation of redistricting options. Creighton and Hamlin underscored the necessity for such criteria by saying that redistricting alternatives "need to be stated in terms of specific criteria against which the performance of alternative plans can be evaluated, either quantitatively or qualitatively" (p. 19).

Literature on Criteria for Redistricting

This section will provide a review of the literature related to criteria for redistricting. The criteria outlined in this literature will come from redistricting studies undertaken because of enrollment growth, enrollment decline, district consolidation, and a desire to address racial, ethnic, or demographic balance. Although redistricting in the 1990s is generally a result of enrollment growth, the criteria involved in redistricting to address enrollment decline and racial balance are substantively similar. However, it should be noted that rational criteria, while exceedingly important, do not and cannot factor in the emotional and perceptual factors that will typically surround any redistricting process. These factors are present in any redistricting process, but they are difficult, if not impossible, to measure in the same way as more concrete factors such as building capacity, travel time, or cost.

Criteria in the Context of Improving Racial Balance

Harker, Ellis, and Platt (1967) described the criteria used to develop a redistricting plan for the San Francisco Unified School District in the late 1960s. The impetus behind the development of their plan was to improve overall racial balance. Although racial balance was the driving factor for this plan, other factors were also utilized. These factors included: maintenance of the neighborhood concept, except for specific moves to accomplish racial balance; limiting travel distance to one mile for elementary students and 1.5 miles for secondary students; school capacity based on the implementation of a bond issue passed in 1964; natural geographic boundaries

such as highways and topography; using newer schools to the greatest degree possible; limiting busing to movement of less affluent students to more affluent areas; limiting enrollment of students bused for racial balance to no more than 40% of a school; and overall cost effectiveness. In their report, which the authors produced as consultants to the San Francisco School Board, they outlined 12 alternative redistricting plans and analyzed each of these plans against the aforementioned criteria.

Criteria for an Interactive Computer Program

Hurnard (1972) described his work to develop an interactive computer program to design a redistricting plan for a newly consolidated school district in Oregon. The components he built into the program included enrollment capacity of buildings as the first priority, with feeder patterns that allowed students from an elementary school to all go to the same junior high school and school proximity as secondary priorities. Hurnard stressed that this computer program "should be a decision-making tool for district administrators" (p. 3). He recognized that any set of criteria needs to be considered in terms of priority by saying that "the school board had to resolve the conflict of competing demands of, say, the taxpayer for minimal school construction and the parents for the right to send their children to the nearest school" (p. 4).

General Redistricting Criteria

DeGregori (1974) conducted a study to develop basic criteria that would be generally useful in changing school attendance boundaries. To do so, he convened a panel of individuals, including a superintendent, a high school principal, an

elementary principal, and two architects, all having expertise in the area of educational planning. This panel identified a set of criteria for redistricting based on their experience and previous literature. DeGregori then conducted structured interviews involving 18 parents and 18 administrators from rural, urban, and suburban school districts in Arizona as to the most useful criteria to be used in redistricting. Agreement on specific criteria between the panel and the parents and administrators interviewed were identified as being those criteria that would be the most useful.

Based on this process, DeGregori (1974) cited the following as basic criteria for redistricting: economic characteristics of the community; neighborhood school concept; hazardous barriers; size of school plants; length of school bus rides; availability of transportation; distance students would walk to school; scope of the educational program; overcrowding in a school; declining population; elementary students from the same family attending the same elementary school; students living in the same subdivision attending the same school; and the nature of the master plan of a community. DeGregori also cited projected ethnic composition, diversity of economic, social, and ethnic backgrounds, and minimum school size as criteria identified by the panel but not the interviewees. In discussing these criteria, he indicated that these areas "may be of great significance in that they may be the most difficult to implement or that they are the most value-laden" (p. 73).

Criteria in the Context of District Consolidation

Cuban (1979) discussed criteria for redistricting in the context of having to close and consolidate elementary and intermediate schools in Arlington, Virginia in

the mid-1970s. In this situation, the criteria used to establish elementary school boundaries included the following: minimum enrollment of 234, or at least three classes for every two grades; adequate space to meet all instructional, administrative, and special program needs; ethnic diversity based on a court-ordered desegregation plan that was in effect; operating costs for buildings; geographic boundaries; the frequency that a particular group of students had previously been redistricted; and the impact on community programs using school facilities. The criteria described by Cuban to establish attendance boundaries for intermediate schools were as follows: minimum enrollment of 500 students; the redistricting of as few students as possible; maintenance of adequate space for future programs and projected enrollment changes; and consideration of other possible programs that could be placed in a building. Cuban also noted that in Arlington at that time, there was significant community concern that test scores were not considered as a criterion for redistricting for both elementary and intermediate schools.

"Neighborhood Perception"

Wood and Boyd (1981) did a study to examine the impact of people's perceptions as to the desirability of neighborhood schools in making decisions about school closing and concomitant changes in school attendance boundaries. This research was part of a study on how public school systems respond to declining enrollments and the concomitant problems of declining enrollment. Data gathering was accomplished through observations of school board meetings in three districts facing school closings and redistricting due to declining enrollment, interviews of

superintendents and board members in these same three districts, interviews with 47 citizens who had spoken for neighborhood schools at board meetings in these districts, and interviews with 30 people in a random door-to-door survey in two of the three districts.

The researchers concluded that the concept of neighborhood schools is a prominent factor in the process of school closings and redistricting. They explained that the strong attachment between a neighborhood and a school had a great deal to do with what they termed "neighborhood perception," or "the condition that participation in the activities centered in a neighborhood school broadens and deepens a people's sense of being part of a neighborhood and their sense of belonging" (Wood & Boyd, 1991, p. 112). They further suggested that because of this relationship, the concept of what are perceived as neighborhood schools in a community needs to be as fully understood as the capacities and conditions of the facilities involved when school closings and redistricting are to occur.

Criteria to Address Declining Enrollment and District Consolidation

Twomey (1983) conducted a case study of two suburban school districts in the Boston, Massachusetts area that also faced school closings and redistricting due to declining enrollment and the fiscal constraints of a new state law limiting the amount of local real estate property tax that could be collected. Data for the study was collected through a review of relevant documents, including school board and town committee meeting minutes, correspondence from the school district, and newspaper accounts of the process. Interviews were also conducted with key participants and

decision makers in the process. Based on these data, Twomey concluded that decisions related to closing schools and redistricting in this particular situation were made based on three major considerations, including financial (reducing costs for staff, administration, support services, and operating expenses), educational (providing improved educational opportunities), and political (fostering support for a particular idea or need).

Perceptions and Preferences as Criteria

Moses (1984) examined criteria for redistricting by constructing a hypothetical plan based on the images and preferences of affected parents. This study, which looked at redistricting in the context of consolidation due to declining enrollments, addressed the need of a school district in Washington County, Pennsylvania, to consolidate with one of nine neighboring districts. Instead of using economic and logistical information to develop a proposal, Moses used data from a questionnaire administered to 450 parents concerning their preferences relative to the neighboring districts. The questionnaire included a section asking for preferences based on various pairings of the nine districts, a section asking respondents to rank order the districts, a section asking the respondents to give the perceived length of time for a one-way trip to each district, and a section asking respondents to identify perceived differences in the districts. Based on an analysis of this information, a proposed consolidation and redistricting plan was developed that encompassed respondents' perceptions and preferences relative to these factors. Since the survey did not ask respondents to elaborate as to their perceptions and preferences, the way in which financial,

educational, and social considerations impacted on survey responses could not be assessed. Further, the study did not analyze whether or not the proposed consolidated district was logistically and financially viable. This study is rare in that it attempts to delve directly into the issue of perceptions as a primary consideration for redistricting. Most other studies approach this area as a secondary consideration.

Practical Versus Emotional Factors

Hyland (1989) described seven major factors to be considered in redistricting based on his experience as a superintendent working with this area. These factors included life span of a plan, effective date of implementation, racial balance, resource equity, program impact, public impact, and financial impact. In discussing the use of a consultant to develop a redistricting plan, Hyland alluded to the more emotional factors involved when he discussed the need "to consider the broader climate and history of the schools" (p. 30).

Other Practical Factors Versus Diversity

Rieger (1994) discussed criteria for redistricting based on his experience chairing a committee studying this issue for a school district near Toledo, Ohio. He identified six areas that were chosen by this committee, including equalizing the number of students per building, maintaining the neighborhood concept, creating logical borders, encouraging diversity, considering transportation issues, and figuring in projected growth. In his description of this situation, Rieger also discussed how some committee members perceived the establishment of new boundaries as a means

of correcting past inequities. He further indicated that the diversity criterion, though well-intentioned, was an extremely explosive issue.

Conflict Among Criteria

Creighton and Hamlin (1995) identified six factors to be considered in redistricting based on their experience as consultants in this area. These included avoiding frequent shifts in boundaries; retaining neighborhood schools; attempting to establish socioeconomic levels in each school based on the district profile; equalizing minority enrollment at district levels; limiting non-contiguous zones; and equalizing building loads. In discussing these criteria, they emphasized that some of them may conflict; for example, retaining neighborhood schools may conflict with equalizing minority enrollment, and that tradeoffs and choices have to be made.

Optimization Criteria

Elizondo, Boyd, and Beauregard (1997) considered criteria for redistricting in terms of developing a computer optimization model to determine pupil assignment in the Houston, Texas Independent School District, a district encompassing over 200,000 students and more than 260 schools. In developing this model, the authors utilized two major factors, including building capacity and transportation costs. Building capacity was based on a formula that included square footage, number of classrooms, and numbers of students, with adjustments for the particular space needs for various special programs. Transportation costs were based on the distance of a student from a school and the length of the path a student must travel to get to a school, with

adjustments if a student must travel beyond a predetermined distance. However, the authors acknowledged that any optimization model is only a tool for problem solving because of the emotional and perceptual factors involved in redistricting. They underscored this idea by saying "property values are strongly affected by perceived school quality, and parents frequently make decisions to purchase a house near the school they want their children to attend. Any effort to redraw boundaries so that students attend a school of lower perceived quality will meet with strong opposition" (p. 156). Table 5 provides a synthesis of the literature presented on criteria for redistricting decisions.

Research on the Decision Making Models

Discussion will now turn to research on the two decision making models, the Conflict Model of Consequential Decision Making and the Constraints Model of Policymaking Processes. Although the studies to be cited do establish an overall credibility as to these models, no studies related to education could be found on the Conflict Model and only one study related to education could be found on the Constraints Model.

The Conflict Model of Consequential Decision Making

Description of the Model

The Conflict Model of Consequential Decision Making developed by Janis and Mann (1977) recognized that the decision maker must choose from among a set of

Table 5

Criteria for Redistricting Cited in the Literature

Criteria	Harker, Ellis, & Pratt (1967)	Hurnard (1972)	DeGregori (1974)	Cuban (1979)	Wood & Boyd (1981)	Twomey (1983)	Moses (1984)	Hyland (1989)	Rieger (1994)	Creighton & Hamlin (1995)	Elizondo, Boyd, & Beauregard (1997)
Overall cost effectiveness: transportation, staff, facilities, programs	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Neighborhood schools/ Proximity of schools	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	
Contiguous Zones/ Consideration of natural geographic boundaries and hazards	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓	
Feeder patterns		✓									
Building capacity and projected growth	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓
Building age	✓				✓						
Minimum school size			✓	✓							
Travel distance/time	✓		✓				✓		✓		
Limiting busing	✓										

Table 5 (continued)

Criteria	Harker, Ellis, & Pratt (1967)	Hurnard (1972)	DeGregori (1974)	Cuban (1979)	Wood & Boyd (1981)	Twomey (1983)	Moses (1984)	Hyland (1989)	Rieger (1994)	Creighton & Hamlin (1995)	Elizondo, Boyd, & Beauregard (1997)
Socioeconomic/ethnic diversity	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓	
Test scores				✓							
Instructional program impacts			✓	✓		✓		✓			
Minimize frequency of redistricting				✓						✓	
Minimize numbers redistricted								✓			
Keep families in some schools			✓								
Perceptions about schools							✓				✓
Relation to community master			✓								
Political considerations						✓					

alternatives, each of which has both positive and negative outcomes. The examination of these alternatives and their possible outcomes constitutes the decision making process. Janis and Mann perceived decision making as a process as opposed to an event, and their model was built upon this premise. In their view, this process involves an assessment of what they refer to as a "decisional balance sheet" which measures consequences in terms of four categories, including utilitarian gains and losses for self, utilitarian gains and losses for significant others, self-approval or disapproval, and approval or disapproval from significant others (p. 137). Janis and Mann (pp. 50-51) cited five basic assumptions that drive the model:

1. The degree of stress generated by any decisional conflict is a direct function of the goal strivings that the decision maker expects to remain unsatisfied: the more goals expected to be unfulfilled and the more important the needs to which those goals correspond, the greater the stress.
2. When a person encounters new threats or opportunities that motivate him to consider a new course of action, the degree of decisional stress is a function of the degree to which he is committed to adhere to his present course of action.
3. When decisional conflict is severe because each alternative poses a threat of serious risks, loss of hope about finding a better solution than the least objectionable one will lead to defensive avoidance of threat cues.
4. In a severe decisional conflict, when threat cues are salient and the decision maker anticipates having insufficient time to find an adequate means of escaping serious losses, his level of stress remains extremely high and the likelihood increases

that the dominant pattern of response will be hypervigilance.

5. A moderate degree of stress in response to a challenging threat induces a vigilant effort to scrutinize the alternative courses of action carefully and to work out a good solution, provided the decision maker expects to find a satisfactory way to resolve the decisional dilemma.

Essentially, Janis and Mann (1977) saw the level of stress involved in a decision as critical to the quality of the decision that ultimately was made. In their view, a low level of stress results in insufficient concern about the consequences and leads to maintaining the same course without much thought (unconflicted inertia) or changing to a new course of action without much thought (unconflicted change). An extremely high level of stress disrupts good decision making based on little hope of finding a better solution or insufficient time to find a better solution. These circumstances lead to ignoring the situation and taking no action (defensive avoidance) or panic (hypervigilance). Janis and Mann perceived the optimal environment of decision making as one in which a moderate level of stress exists. This environment leads to a thorough search for information and good decision making (vigilance).

Studies on the Conflict Model of Consequential Decision Making

The Model and Smoking Behavior

Much of the research based on the Conflict Model has been done in the area of health care, possibly because so many decisions made in this area are made based

on an examination of alternatives and their possible consequences in an environment where adequate time to make a decision and a limited number of acceptable alternatives may be critical factors. Velicer, DiClemente, Prochaska, and Brandenburg (1985) used the Conflict Model as the basis for a study about prediction of future behavior relative to smoking. They studied 960 people from Rhode Island and Houston, Texas. Subjects were divided into five categories: "Immotive" (currently smoking with no intention of stopping); "Contemplators" (currently smoking but planning to quit within the year); "Relapsers" (currently smoking but had quit for at least 24 hours during the past six months); "Recent Quitters" (currently not smoking but had smoked within the past six months); and "Long-Term Quitters" (currently not smoking and had not smoked for more than six months). Each participant first completed a Decisional Balance Questionnaire designed after the model which addressed the pros and cons of smoking. Six months later, participants filled out a second questionnaire to determine if information from the first questionnaire could be used to predict status as to smoking at the time of the second questionnaire. The researchers found that the Decisional Balance Questionnaire based on the model "proved to be a useful construct in predicting movement from precontemplation to contemplation and from contemplation to action" (p. 1288).

The Model and Programmatic Decisions

In a study of 63 persons on nursing school faculty, Brown and Prentice (1987) used the Conflict Model as the basis for two inventories they developed to examine the impact of decisional risk on the need for information as the faculty considered

programmatic changes. Through administration of the two inventories, one measuring decisional risk and the other decisional context (time, availability of a better solution), the researchers found that there was a strong correlation between the assessed decision risk and the need for information. They concluded that there was excellent utility for the Conflict Model in examining this correlation.

Jatulis and Newman (1991) conducted a study using the model "to investigate the effect of contextual and personal variables on the need for evaluation information for decision making in the health field" (p. 365). In the study, the researchers examined the responses of 259 community health nurse managers from 150 public, private, nonprofit, and proprietary home care agencies and hospital-based home care programs to four vignettes describing different home chemotherapy programs. Each respondent was asked to determine whether or not to apply for a grant for the particular program described. Each vignette was different in terms of the possible gains and losses of the program described; two vignettes were categorized as "low-loss" and two vignettes were categorized as "high loss." The respondents were told that one "low-loss" vignette had a one-week time limit to apply and that one had a four-week time limit to apply. The same limitations were placed on the two "high loss" vignettes. Respondents were also asked to complete Bandura's Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale and Newman's Decision-Making Information Needs Scale. For the purposes of the study, self-efficacy is defined by the researchers as "the belief that one can organize and implement patterns of behavior in situations that are ambiguous or stressful" (pp. 366-367). The researchers found that only the respondents with low

self-efficacy needed additional information and time to make a decision about the high-loss vignettes. They also found that defensive avoidance was most likely to be practiced by respondents with low self-efficacy. This study added an additional variable, self-efficacy, to the premise of the model that perceptions of possible loss or gain and lack of time create the need for a decision maker to need more information.

The Model and Decisions on "Pap Tests"

White, Wearing, and Hill (1994) conducted a study to determine whether or not the Conflict Model has application in examining why women choose or do not choose to be screened for cervical cancer using what is known as the "Pap Test." In this study, the researchers developed a survey based on the model which was administered to 450 Australian women. The survey asked questions designed to find out why the respondent had decided to be screened or why the respondent was avoiding doing so. The researchers found that women who were overdue for screening were experiencing the greatest degree of decisional conflict about whether or not to be screened and that these women demonstrated the greatest degree of defensive avoidance. They further found that the women who had been screened demonstrated a more moderate degree of stress and that their decision making process reflected a much higher degree of vigilance. Based on this study, the researchers concluded that "the model provided a useful framework for understanding Pap Test decisions among women who are overdue for the test. The results are promising enough to suggest that researching the model on other health behavior decisions is appropriate" (p. 71).

The Model and Decisions on International Crises

Herek, Janis, and Huth (1987) examined the Conflict Model outside of the health care area through an empirical study of the quality of decision-making during international crises. In this study, a sample of 19 major international crises since World War II were examined. Included in these crises were the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Invasion of Cambodia, the Yom Kippur War, and the Berlin Wall Crisis. Source materials on each crisis were examined and rated by a panel of expert historical scholars. Those materials judged to be of high quality were used to analyze the decision making process in each crisis. Analysis was based on seven pitfalls to vigilant decision-making attributed to Janis in the study as an extension of the model. These pitfalls included gross omissions in surveying alternatives; gross omissions in surveying objectives; failure to examine major costs and risks of the preferred choice; poor information search; selective bias in processing information; failure to reconsider originally rejected alternatives; and failure to work out detailed implementation, monitoring, and contingency plans. Independent ratings of the outcomes for each crisis were obtained from external experts who were not aware of the parallel analysis based on the model. The researchers found a strong correlation between the quality of the decision based on expert analysis and the degree to which the seven pitfalls related to the model cited by Janis were avoided in the decision making process.

The Constraints Model of Policymaking Processes

Description of the Model

The Constraints Model of Policymaking Processes was developed by Janis (1989) based on his studies of critical decisions made by executives in both the public and private sectors. The major premise of the model is that, particularly in difficult or stressful situations, cognitive, affiliative, or egocentric constraints can cause individuals or groups to make decisions guided by simplistic rules rather than ones guided by vigilant problem-solving procedures. Cognitive constraints are ones that limit vigilant decision-making based on a lack of information or poor analysis of information. An affiliative constraint limits vigilant decision-making based on personal relationships or friendships within a group. Egocentric constraints on decision-making result from strong emotional reactions that occur during highly stressful situations.

Janis further describes "simple decision rules" (1989, p. 27) that are symptomatic of individuals affected by any of these constraints. According to Janis, a person or organization affected by a cognitive constraint will tend to make what he characterizes as a "rapid-fire" decision, or one made quickly or impulsively (Janis, pp. 34-35). Janis also identifies reliance on "nutshell briefings" as indicative of cognitive constraints. A nutshell briefing is a brief, oversimplified, and often biased review of a complex question (pp. 40-41). According to Janis, an individual or group affected by affiliative constraints will often practice what he calls the "avoid punishment" rule, which means that decisions or solutions will be chosen so as not to

damage personal relationships or cause disfavor with friends within a given group (pp. 46-48). An individual or group impacted by egocentric constraints will, based on the model, respond in a way consistent with satisfying self-interest or satisfying emotional needs. A self-serving response would be based on the question "What's in it for me?." Other examples of an emotional response would be to "rely on gut feelings" to adopt an unrealistic "can do" attitude, or to "take no action" (pp. 67-77).

Studies on the Constraints Model of Policymaking Processes

The Model and a Specific School Board Decision

Lyman (1993) conducted a case study of a series of decisions made by a school board in response to a well-regarded superintendent with 15 years of service to a school system being convicted of third-degree sexual assault of a 17 year-old female student. She examined the board's actions in the context of the Constraints Model and found that cognitive, affiliative, and emotive constraints all had impact on the course of action taken by the board relative to this situation. For example, when first apprised of the allegations, the board was impacted by cognitive constraints by choosing to rely solely on their attorney for advice and information. This caused the board to make several "rapid-fire" decisions without the benefit of other available information. The fact that the majority of the board had a long working history and personal relationship with the superintendent caused the board to make decisions about the case that would not jeopardize these relationships; in other words, that would "avoid punishment." Throughout the case, board members were reluctant to

make decisions that would result in the superintendent's disfavor. The emotions or egocentric constraints stirred by this situation, such as anger about the allegations having been made against a highly regarded individual and repulsion at possibly having to take action against a friend, caused the board to avoid taking action for a long time after the allegations were made. Lyman concluded that "board members may have allowed cognitive, affiliative, and egocentric constraints to rule to some degree and may not have practiced 'vigilant problem-solving' behaviors in making the two key decisions" (1990, p. 179).

The Model and Jury Decisions

Steel (1993) studied data from 58 jurors serving on six jury trials to determine how these jurors made decisions. Steel found that various cognitive constraints affected juror decisions, including limitation to access to information, confusion on the issues, and lack of background on the issue (such as knowledge of various medical matters). She also found that affiliative constraints, such as need for consensus on the jury and desire to meet the judge's expectations, also influenced decisions. Further, she found that egocentric constraints such as impatience and the ability or inability of the juror to place himself or herself in the place of another individual also affected juror's decision making. Steel concluded that "the findings in this study support Janis' Constraints Theory of Policymaking Processes and expand that theory to further explain the decision-making process of a jury trial" (p. 95). Table 6 provides a synthesis on the research presented on the two decision making models.

Table 6

Influence on Decision Making Based on the Two Theoretical Models Cited in the Literature

Finding of Study	Velicer, DiClemente, Prochaska, & Brandenburg (1985)	Jatulis & Newman (1991)	White, Wearing, & Hill (1994)	Herek, Janis, & Huth (1987)	Lyman (1993)	Steel (1993)
Studies on the Conflict Model of Consequential Decision-Making:	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Decisional risk affects need for information	✓	✓				
Decisional conflicts affect level of defensive avoidance			✓			
Best decisions in 19 international crises studied followed tenants of the model identified by Janis				✓		
Studies on the Constraints Model of Policymaking Processes:					✓	✓
Cognitive, affiliative, and egocentric constraints affected a specific school board decision					✓	
Cognitive, affiliative, and egocentric constraints affected jury decisions						✓

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study are: (1) to determine the factors that influence the decisions of local school boards concerning school redistricting, and (2) to determine if the factors influencing redistricting decisions are more instructional or non-instructional in nature. Based on these purposes, this study will be designed around the following research questions:

1. What are the specific factors that influence the decision making of a local school board concerning redistricting?
2. Are the factors that influence a local school board in making a redistricting decision more instructional or non-instructional in nature?

The methodology for this study will be qualitative. Before discussing the overall design of this study, the reasons for using a qualitative methodology will be delineated.

Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative research methodology, as compared to the more conventional quantitative methodology, has only recently gained relatively widespread acceptance.

In the introduction of his 1993 book on qualitative research, Lancy provided several pieces of evidence as to the growing credibility of this methodology:

Qualitative research now has its own journal . . . , several book series . . . and growing acceptance within the American Educational Research Association whose flagship journal recently issued a call for articles based on qualitative research methodology. . . . This volume also joins a veritable flood of texts on the subject. . . . Finally, more and more colleges of education are balancing quantitative with qualitative research by designating faculty slots for experts in the field and offering qualitative research methods and epistemology courses to complement existing courses in research methods and statistics. (p. 1)

But what is qualitative methodology, and how does it differ from quantitative methodology? Glesne and Peshkin (1992) stated that "qualitative researchers seek to make sense of personal stories and to ways in which they intersect" (p. 1). They added that "qualitative inquiry is an umbrella term for various philosophical orientations to interpretive research. For example, qualitative researchers might call their work ethnography, case study, phenomenology, educational criticism, or several other terms" (p. 9). Stake (1995) delineated three primary differences between qualitative and quantitative research, including "the distinction between explanation and understanding as the purpose of the inquiry, the distinction between a personal and impersonal role for the researcher, and the distinction between knowledge discovered and knowledge constructed" (p. 37).

To understand the difference between qualitative and quantitative methodology, it is useful to understand the opposing paradigms from which they are derived. Guba (1990) defined a paradigm as "a basic set of beliefs that guides actions, whether of the everyday garden variety or action taken in connection with a disciplined inquiry"

(p. 17). Quantitative methodology is rooted in two primary paradigms, positivism and postpositivism. The basic belief system of positivism is tied to the view that there is a true reality that is driven by natural laws and that the ultimate aim of science is to, in Guba's (1990) words "predict and control natural phenomena" (p. 19). Guba further stated "the positivist is constrained to practice an objectivist epistemology. If there is a real world operating according to natural laws, then the inquirer must behave in ways that put questions directly to nature and allow nature to answer back directly" (p. 19).

Postpositivism can be characterized as a modified version of positivism, although prediction and control of natural laws and forces are also its driving forces. As Guba (1990) indicated, "postpositivism moves from what is now recognized as a 'naive' realist posture to one often termed as critical realism" (p. 20). He described postpositivism by saying that "the essence of this position is that, although a real world driven by real natural causes exists, it is impossible for humans to truly perceive it" (p. 20). Postpositivists believe in objectivity as an ideal, but recognize that it cannot be achieved in an absolute way. However, they do believe that it is possible to achieve substantive objectivity by striving to be as neutral as possible, by being conscious of one's biases and predispositions, and by conducting research that is consistent with what Guba (1990) called "the existing scholarly tradition of the field" (p. 21). It is fairly easy to understand the philosophical connection between positivism and postpositivism and quantitative methodology in that the strict parameters and protocols of quantitative research are very consistent with an absolutist

view of reality.

Qualitative methodology is rooted in what is known as the constructivist belief system. Guba (1990) described this belief system by saying that for the constructivist, "realities are multiple and they exist in people's minds" (p. 26). He elaborated that "realities exist in the form of multiple mental constructions, socially and experimentally based, local and specific, dependent for their form and content on the persons who hold them" (p. 27). The implication of this paradigm for research methodology is that in Guba's words, "inquirer and inquired into are fused into a single (monistic) entity. Findings are literally the creation of the process interaction between the two" (p. 27).

According to Guba, there are two parts to the methodology of constructivists. The first one is the hermeneutic aspect, which "consists in depicting individual constructions as accurately as possible" (p. 26). The other part is the dialectic aspect, which addresses the "comparing and contrasting of these existing individual (including the inquirers) constructions (p. 26). For the constructivist, knowledge is "a human construction, never certifiable as ultimately true but problematic and ever changing" (Guba, 1990, p. 26). It is interesting to note that although a constructivist himself, Guba does not assert that constructivism is the superior paradigm. Rather, he sees existing paradigms as being a part of an evolution toward better and more informed paradigms.

This study is based on a constructivist paradigm because the researcher will undertake to construct and analyze a reality within which a redistricting decision was

made. The qualitative methodology is preferable for this purpose because of the complexity of this decision and the many rational and emotional factors impacting on it. The complexity of the interaction of these factors would not be as clear and evident if a quantitative methodology, such as a survey administered to a sample of school boards that had completed a redistricting process, was utilized. Miles and Huberman (1984) articulated this point well:

Qualitative data are attractive. They are a source of well-grounded, rich description and explanation of processes occurring in local contexts. With qualitative data, one can preserve chronological flaws, assess local causality, and derive fruitful explanations. Serendipitous findings and new theoretical integrations can appear. Finally, qualitative findings share a certain undeniability that is more convincing to a reader than pages of numbers. (p. 22)

The Historical Case Study

As previously noted, qualitative research encompasses a number of specific methodologies. The particular one to be used in this study is that of the historical case study. Borg and Gall (1989) stated that "the case study, in its simplest form, involves an investigator who makes a detailed examination of a single subject or group phenomenon" (p. 402). In terms of historical research, they indicated that it "deals with events that occurred prior to the historian's decision to study them" (p. 806). Logically, therefore, a historical case study is one that thoroughly examines a specific event or situation after the fact. Yin (1984) provided additional insight as to why a case study will be of particular value in studying a redistricting process when he said "the essence of a case study, the central tendency of all types of case

study, is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result" (pp. 22-23).

Research Design

Yin (1984) defined research design as "the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of a study" (p. 27). He added that "colloquially, a research design is an action plan for getting from here to there, where 'here' may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered and 'there' is some set of conclusions (answers) about these questions" (p. 28). The primary purpose of research design is to avoid a situation in which the evidence does not address the actual research questions. The sections that follow will describe the specific methodologies to be utilized in this study.

Data Sources

Borg and Gall (1989, p. 813) cited four types of resources used in any kind of historical study. These include: 1) documents such as newspapers, periodicals, letters, reports, memos and the like, 2) quantitative records such as census records, school budgets, and school attendance records, 3) the spoken word transcribed from audiotape, and 4) relics such as buildings, furniture, and textbook drawings. Yin (1984) indicated that "evidence for case studies may come from six sources: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts" (p. 78). Borg and Gall further classified documents as

"primary sources" or "secondary sources" (p. 814). Primary sources are "those documents in which the individual describing the event was present when it occurred" (p. 814). Secondary sources are "documents in which the individual describing the event was not present, but obtained a description from someone else, who may or may not have directly observed the event" (p. 814).

A researcher using historical sources must be careful to subject these sources to both internal and external criticism. Borg and Gall (1984) defined internal criticism as "evaluating the accuracy and worth of statements contained in a historical document" (p. 821). The purpose of internal criticism is to determine the accuracy of statements in the source. Typical questions to be asked include: How close was the witness to the event being described, geographically and chronologically? How competent is the witness? What is the bias of the witness? Borg and Gall (1984) indicated that external criticism is when "the researcher raises questions about the accuracy and worth of statements contained in a historical document" (p. 822). Questions about each document determine whether it is genuine. Typical questions of external criticism include: Who wrote the document? When and where was it written? What was the intention of the author in writing the document? The concern is not usually with forged documents, but with the different ways in which different sources might interpret the same event.

In this study, the following sources of data will be utilized: interviews with school board members; interviews with three staff members involved with the redistricting process; interviews with two members of the media who covered the

entire redistricting process; interviews with community members who were involved in and informed about the redistricting process; newspaper articles about the redistricting process; school board meeting minutes and other internal documents about the redistricting process; and correspondence from the public to the school board about the redistricting process. The majority of these sources will be primary in that the individual involved in producing them will have been a first-hand observer of or participant in the events involved. As data from these sources are reported in chapter 4, commentary will be provided as to both internal and external criticism of the specific source.

Triangulation

Stake (1995) stated that "in search both for accuracy and alternative explanations, we need discipline, we need protocols which do not depend on mere intuition and good intention to 'get it right'. In qualitative research, these protocols come under the concept of triangulation" (p. 107). Triangulation is a form of confirmation to see if what is being observed and reported carries the same meaning when found under different circumstances. Triangulation is especially important in countering possible criticism of construct validity, or establishing appropriate operational procedures to address what is being examined in a qualitative study. Yin underscored this point by saying that through the use of multiple sources of data for triangulation, "the potential problems of construct validity can also be addressed, because multiple sources of evidence essentially provide multiple measures of the

same phenomenon" (p. 91).

Stake (1995) described several types of triangulation, including data source triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, methodological triangulation, and member checking (pp. 114-115). Data source triangulation is an attempt to determine if what is being observed and reported carries the same meaning when found under other circumstances. Investigator triangulation occurs by having other researchers examine the same scene or phenomenon. Theory triangulation involves choosing co-observers, panelists, or reviewers from alternative theoretical viewpoints to see to what extent they observe a phenomenon in the same way. Methodological triangulation involves following a direct observation with a review of relevant records. Member checking involves asking participants in a study to examine rough drafts of reports where their words and/or actions are included, usually when no further data will be collected from the participant.

For this study, two forms of triangulation will be utilized. Data source triangulation will be achieved by comparing observations reported in interviews with school board members, staff members, the two citizens and the two members of the media. Member checking will be achieved by asking a school board member, a staff member, one of the media, and one of the citizens to review and critique rough drafts of results reported in chapter 4. Theory triangulation and methodological triangulation would not be particularly useful or practical for this particular case study.

Interview Protocols

Interviews will be a primary source of data for this study. As Yin (1984) stated, "interviews are an essential source of case study evidence because most case studies are about human affairs" (p. 84). Yin (pp. 83-84) described three specific kinds of interview protocols, including open-ended, focused, and structured. An open-ended interview asks participants to discuss facts and opinions about a particular event or situation without a specified interview protocol. An open-ended interview normally takes a longer period of time. A focused interview follows a specific protocol, although some deviation to the protocol might occur. A structured interview adheres to a protocol, much the same way as a survey. For this study, a focused interview format will be utilized. This approach will be used in order to direct the interview towards the questions being addressed in the study while allowing for some spontaneous pursuit of unforeseen, though possibly insightful, observation by participants. Too much structure would not permit this kind of spontaneity to occur. The lack of structure of an open-ended interview might result in the research questions not being addressed. The rigidity of the structured interview would not facilitate possibly fruitful spontaneity. The focused interview format, therefore, represents what will hopefully be a useful middle ground. All interviews for this study will be audiotaped and fully transcribed for review and analysis after the fact based on the study's purposes and questions.

The interview protocol itself will consist of three questions, as follows:

1. In your view, what specific factors most significantly influenced the Board's final redistricting decision?
2. What factors most influenced your own decision making?
3. What circumstances surrounding the redistricting process in general were most difficult for you as a board member?

These first two questions are designed to address the study's two major questions. The third question is designed to elicit insight into the factors described in the two theoretical models, which are more related to the context in which decisions are made. Data elicited from posing these questions to board members and others will be analyzed based on criteria identified in the literature described in chapter 2. The wording of these questions is designed for interviews with board members. The context of the wording would need to be adjusted slightly for interviews with staff members or others.

Data Analysis

General Description of Data Analysis

Analysis of qualitative data in such a way that defensible conclusions can be drawn is a challenge. As Miles and Huberman (1984) stated, "there are few agreed-on canons for analysis of qualitative data, and therefore the truth claims underlying such work are uncertain" (p. 22). Further, analysis of qualitative data is not as cut-and-dried a process as for quantitative data because it is ongoing throughout

the entire course of a study. Stake (1995) illuminated this point by saying "there is no particular moment when data analysis begins. Analysis is a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations" (p. 71).

Miles and Huberman (1984, pp. 23-24) described the analysis phase of a qualitative study as consisting of three activities that take place concurrently, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction is the process by which raw data from notes, interviews, etc. are broken down and simplified. As Miles and Huberman emphasized, "data reduction is not something separate from analysis. It is part of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organizes data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified" (pp. 23-24). Data display was defined by Miles and Huberman as "an organized assembly of information that permits conclusion-drawing and action-taking" (p. 24). Conclusion drawing and verification were described by Miles and Huberman as "drawing meaning from displayed, reduced data-noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, propositions. These conclusions are also verified, tested for their plausibility, robustness, sturdiness, and validity" (p. 24). Data analysis for this study will follow the format outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Data Reduction

In terms of data reduction, a coding system will be utilized. Coding is one of several methods of data reduction delineated by Miles and Huberman (1994). This coding system will be connected to the specific research questions and the factors

found in the literature said to influence school board decision making, in general; and, decision making on redistricting, specifically, in addition to the contextual factors described in the two theoretical models. For example, if the influence of the superintendent is cited in an interview or in some other document, it will be coded with an "S." Other influences will be similarly coded. Even as the coding process is taking place, it is expected that patterns will begin to emerge.

Data Display for Question 1

For all data display, checklist matrices, another technique described by Miles and Huberman (1994), will be used. Tables 7a and 7b show the matrices to be utilized. The first matrix (Table 7a) will be used to delineate all the factors that emerge from the data. The second matrix (Table 7b) will delineate the frequency of the factors identified in the data.

Data Display for Question 2

For question 2, two other separate matrices will be utilized. Tables 8a and 8b show these matrices. The first matrix (Table 8a) will categorize influences identified in the data as instructional or non-instructional. The second matrix (Table 8b) will delineate the frequency of the factors identified in each category.

Conclusion Drawing and Verification

As previously mentioned, it is not completely accurate to view conclusion drawing and verification as a separate part of the analysis process because it will inevitably begin to occur as reduction and display are done. Miles and Huberman

Table 7a

Data Display Matrix for Question 1 - Specific Factors Identified

Source	Superintendent	Interest Groups	Theoretical Model Factors	Individual Values	Cultural/ Normative Factors	Redistricting Factors	Other
Interviews							
Minutes							
Letters							
Newspaper							

Table 7b

Data Display Matrix for Question 1 - Frequency of Factors Identified

Source	Superinten- dent	Interest Groups	Theoretical Model Factors	Individual Values	Cultural/ Normative Factors	Redistricting Factors	Other
Interviews							
Minutes							
Letters							
Newspaper							

Table 8a

Data Display Matrix for Question 2 - Instructional Versus Non-Instructional Factors Identified

Source	Instructional	Non-Instructional
Interviews		
Minutes		
Letters		
Newspaper		

Table 8b

Data Display Matrix for Question 2- Frequency of Instructional Versus Non-Instructional Factors Identified

Source	Instructional	Non-Instructional
Interviews		
Minutes		
Letters		
Newspaper		

(1984) described four particular techniques, including: 1) counting, 2) noting patterns and themes, 3) seeing plausibility and clustering, and 4) making metaphors, or using a specific image to describe data (p. 27). Lancy (1993) saw such techniques as consistent with a more classic approach to conclusion drawing. For the purposes of this study, a combination approach of counting and noting patterns and themes will be utilized to answer both questions. The matrices used for data display are designed to facilitate this kind of analysis.

Because of the nature of the qualitative approach, verification is much more problematic. Miles and Huberman (1984) described this difficulty:

Conclusions drawn from any of the preceding tactics can be evocative, illuminating, masterful, and yet still unjustified. Looked at more scrupulously, the data may not support the conclusions. Researchers double-checking the site come up with discrepant findings. Site informants, asked to report on the findings, plausibly contest some or all of them. The phenomenologist chuckles, reinforced by the idea that there is not single reality out there to "get right." The psychometrician concludes that nonstatistical research is an albatross. (p. 27)

Miles and Huberman (1984) described twelve possible verification tactics; including checking for representativeness; checking for researcher effects on site; weighting the evidence for trustworthiness; making contrasts and comparisons within the data set; checking the meaning of outliers, using extreme cases; ruling out spurious relations; replicating findings in another part of the data; checking out rival explanations; looking for negative evidence; and getting feedback from informants (pp. 27-28). For this study, two techniques will be used mainly to verify conclusions. First, conclusions will be tested for consistency with data drawn from each source. For example, a conclusion about a particular influence will be compared with data

drawn from interviews with board members, staff, the media, and citizens and with data drawn from newspaper accounts and other documents. Table 9 shows the matrix to be utilized for these comparisons. Second, individuals interviewed as part of the data gathering will be asked to give feedback to proposed conclusions. In this way, the multiple sources used to establish triangulation can be connected to a verification of findings.

Validity and Limitations

Establishing the validity of a qualitative study also presents a significant challenge because of the very nature of this kind of research. As previously mentioned, construct validity, or establishing appropriate operational procedures to address what is being examined, for this study is addressed through the use of triangulation of data sources. Internal validity is not a concern for this particular study, because the study is not causal, or attempting to establish a relationship between one event or phenomenon and another. However, external validity, or the study's generalizability to other situations, is limited because it focuses on only one situation, albeit in a very in-depth manner. The very nature of qualitative research, in general, and of the case study, in particular, also makes generalizability difficult if generalizability is viewed in the same way it is for a quantitative study.

Some writers on qualitative research have seriously questioned the proposition that qualitative research is not generalizable. Donmoyer (1990) underscored this idea by saying that "social scientists' traditional, restricted conception of generalizability is

Table 9

Conclusion Verification Matrix

Conclusion:			
Source	Agreement	Disagreement	No Indication
Conclusion:			
Source	Agreement	Disagreement	No Indication
Conclusion:			
Source	Agreement	Disagreement	No Indication
Conclusion:			
Source	Agreement	Disagreement	No Indication

consistent with traditional views of social science but inconsistent with contemporary views" (p. 176). Speaking specifically about case studies, Yin (1984) stated:

. . . case studies, like experiments, are generalizeable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a "sample," and the investigator's goal is to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization). (p. 21)

The lack of generalizability in the classic sense for this study should not be viewed as a negative. The goal of this study is not, as Schofield (1990) stated, "to produce a standardized set of results that any other careful researcher in the same situation or studying the same issue would have produced" (p. 203). Rather, the goal of this study is more consistent with what Schofield, citing Goetz and LeCompte, described as "comparability," or "the degree to which components of a study—including the units of analysis, concepts generated, population characteristics, and settings—are sufficiently well described and defined that other researchers can use the results as a basis for comparison" (p. 208). The idea of comparability is similar to what Schofield, citing Guba and Lincoln, referred to as "fittingness," or "the degree to which the situation studied matches other situations in which we are interested" (p. 207). This study will be considered a success if an individual working with redistricting in another setting can read it and see a viable connection to the situations, issues, and problems described and hopefully make better decisions for having read it.

Ethical Safeguards

This study was conducted in a way that protected the privacy and anonymity of all participants. In order to maintain the confidentiality of all those involved in the study, pseudonyms were used in the study whenever a name of a person, place, or media outlet needed to appear, except for the name of the actual county involved. Maintaining anonymity was appropriate even though the facts of the study are a matter of public record because the events and decisions of the board that are examined in this study did stir a great deal of emotion in the community. In fact, the participation of one individual interviewed for the study was contingent upon anonymity.

In seeking the cooperation of participants, the researcher made a commitment to protecting confidentiality. In addition, the research proposal was submitted to and approved by the Human Subjects Committee of The College of William and Mary. The study was conducted in keeping with acceptable research practices. A copy of the findings of the study will be provided to any participant who requests one.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Background on the Redistricting Process in Albemarle County

Albemarle County

It is an understatement to say that Albemarle County is a study in contrasts. Its almost 750 square miles encompass a central urban ring that features most of the normal trappings of city life, a suburban area with the tidy homes and manicured yards that reflect a middle class lifestyle, and an extensive rural area that is home to middle class families, gentrified farmers, and poverty-stricken families living in dwellings that do not have indoor plumbing. Life in the County is significantly influenced by Heritage University. This influence permeates everything from economics to culture to politics to education and everything in between. The County, with the University providing a stable base, has a strong economy and, just as importantly, ample room for business and residential development. The area also has been cited in a number of national publications as one of the most desirable places in the country to live. Because of these factors, the County has experienced significant population growth in the 1990s. Between 1992 and 1998, the County's population grew by over 18%, with a similar trend projected in future years (Albemarle County

Proposed Operating Budget FY 1998/99, p. 314).

The political tenor of Albemarle County has always been, to say the least, spirited. The more liberal influence of Heritage University, coupled with the more conservative influence of some long-time residents and the large number of retirees that have come to the area, have provided a context for, at times, hostile debate. Issues such as taxes, budgets, education, waste disposal, zoning, appointments to boards and commissions, road construction, naming of streets, almost any issue where diverse points of view exist, will typically result in vigorous public discourse. Such discourse is fueled by an extensive local media. The area is served by a number of radio stations, a local television station, a daily newspaper, and four weekly newspapers, all of which provide detailed coverage of local news. A seemingly routine meeting of the School Board, the Board of Supervisors, the County Planning Commission, or even a relatively obscure advisory board or ad hoc committee will generally attract coverage by one or more media outlets.

The overall population growth in Albemarle County has been paralleled by enrollment growth in the schools. Between 1987 and 1997, school enrollment increased from 9,168 to 11,644, or about 27% (Albemarle County Proposed Operating Budget FY 1998/99, p. 315). Between 1990 and 1998, the school district undertook an ambitious capital improvement program. During this period, three elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school were built, and nine elementary schools and two high schools were expanded. During this same period, the school division also needed approximately 50 mobile classrooms to cope with enrollment growth.

Major capital projects planned for 1999-2003 include the expansion of an elementary school and a middle school and the construction of a new elementary school (Albemarle County Schools Capital Improvements Program FY 1998/99 - 2002/03, pp. 12-35). Due to this growth and expansion, redistricting has been an ongoing issue. The political environment of the community has caused redistricting to be an especially difficult issue.

Past Redistricting Processes

Previous redistricting processes have been fairly rancorous. A redistricting proposal in 1983 that would have closed two small (under 150 student) elementary schools and consolidated elementary attendance areas caused so much outcry that the two small elementary buildings were renovated and kept open in spite of the obvious inefficiency of doing so. A redistricting process in 1993 to redraw middle school attendance areas to coincide with the opening of a new middle school, Powell Middle School, caused similar community upheaval. In both of these cases, there was significant criticism from the public about lack of citizen involvement or input until near the end of the process. There was also significant criticism that all possible alternatives were not adequately examined during these processes.

Prelude to 1996 Redistricting Process

In January of 1995, a new Superintendent, Dr. Carl F. Henry, came to Albemarle County. Henry knew that the division faced a significant redistricting due to the planned opening of a new high school, Mountain High School, in the fall of

1998, and was hopeful that this process would not be similar to past ones. He had previously worked in a school district in another state that had utilized a community/staff committee structure to develop redistricting recommendations for the superintendent, who would ultimately make recommendations to the school board. He believed that the adoption of such a policy in Albemarle County would help to alleviate much of the criticism about lack of citizen involvement, in July of 1995, on Henry's recommendation, the Albemarle School Board adopted such a policy (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, July 24, 1995, pp. 4-6). At the same meeting the School Board passed this policy, it also received a staff presentation on a computer model developed by a professor at Heritage University that could be used to examine a wider array of redistricting options. The Board received this presentation enthusiastically because it appeared that the use of the model would alleviate much of the previous criticism concerning the failure to examine a wide range of redistricting alternatives (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, July 24, 1995, pp. 6-7).

Planning for the 1996 Redistricting Process

During the summer of 1995, the Board appointed a new Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Peter Bailey. One of Bailey's primary responsibilities was to be oversight of a comprehensive redistricting process within the parameters of the newly-adopted policy. The focal point of this process would be to establish attendance boundaries for the new high school. The process also was to address possible redistricting options to solve overcrowding in some schools and underutilization in others, especially at the elementary level. In the fall of 1995,

Bailey began planning for the redistricting process with the help of an internal work group and a local consultant and former education professor at Heritage University, Dr. John Parsons, who had expertise in the area of group process. Parsons facilitated a citizen committee that had been involved with the aforementioned 1983 redistricting process, and was familiar with the various controversies that had surrounded past processes. The internal work group included several staff members and two long-time Albemarle County residents who had been involved with past redistricting processes, but were not interested in serving on the committee for the coming one. Bailey felt that their sense of history on redistricting would help to avoid some of the missteps of the past.

The new policy stipulated that the committee charged with making redistricting recommendations to the Superintendent include a parent representative from all possibly affected school communities, with appropriate staff involved in an advisory capacity. The internal group recommended that the Redistricting Committee include a parent from each school, appointed by the PTA. The group also recommended that an administrator from each level, appointed by the Principal's Association, the Director of Building Services, George Leslie, the Director of Transportation, Ray Young, the County Director of Planning, William Chambers, a teacher representative from the Albemarle Education Association, and two current high school students join Assistant Superintendent Bailey as participants. A representative from each school was recommended because it was conceivable that every school in the division could be impacted. The concept of having the PTAs appoint the parent members stemmed

from a concern that was already being expressed in the community that the Committee would be "stacked" by the school administration with individuals who would simply "rubber stamp" a preconceived staff recommendation. In early January, Bailey sent a letter to all County PTA presidents outlining the envisioned process and requesting that a representative to the Redistricting Committee be designated. During a School Board retreat in January, 1996, the plan for the Committee's composition was presented to the Board, which, while taking no formal action, supported the direction being taken (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, January 18, 1996, pp. 9-11).

School Board Dynamics

The Albemarle County School Board at that time was in a period of transition. Four of the seven members on the Board had been elected in November of 1995 during the County's first-ever School Board elections. Only one of the previous incumbent School Board members, Wesley Robertson from the Grange District in the northwestern part of the County, had chosen to run. Robertson had lost to Bob Coleman, who had long been active in the schools as his children had progressed through the system. The At-Large seat on the Board had been filled by David Farmer, an African-American and retired military officer who had worked for the school division as Director of Human Resources from 1991-93 and had previously served on the School Board in the mid-1980s. The other new Board members included Hugh Barnes from the Littleton District in the southeastern part of the County, who had also been active in PTA work, and James Cleveland from the

Meadow District in the northeastern part of the County, who had served for several years on the Board of the regional vocational-technical school. The new Board members joined Callie Michaels, the new Chair, who had represented the Bellevue District in the near western area of the urban ring of the County since 1992, Ron Garden, who had represented the Treetop District in the southwestern part of the County since 1993, and Mary Forest, who had represented the Martin District in the northern urban ring since 1994. Michaels and Garden had long been active in the schools through PTA and other committee work. Forest's previous direct contact with the schools had been as a foster parent for several high school-aged students and as a student teacher when she was completing her Bachelor's Degree.

Preliminary Public Forums

During February of 1996, while PTAs were identifying representatives, Bailey, with the help of consultant Parsons, organized and held two public forums on redistricting designed to identify baseline community issues and provide input for the Redistricting Committee. In addition, the consultant who had developed the redistricting computer model was contacted to begin work on preparing the model for the Committee based on up-to-date data as to where students lived, transportation time to the various schools from any point in the County, and building capacities. At Superintendent Henry's suggestion, Parsons was retained to facilitate the Committee's work so that Bailey and other staff could maintain some distance in working with the Committee. This step was taken to further alleviate the community concern about staff having a preconceived recommendation which it planned to force through the

Committee. Superintendent Henry's approach at this point was to remain informed of the process, but not to be directly involved based on the belief that this would help him to remain more open to Committee recommendations. The School Board assumed a similar posture.

Both redistricting forums in February, 1996 drew 40-50 people. Through the forums, several key issues to be considered by the Redistricting Committee were identified, including use of resources, consideration of transportation issues, consideration of facility needs, maintenance of feeder patterns that did not separate students from peers, and promotion of ethnic and cultural diversity. However, the specter of past redistricting processes and some of the hard feelings that still remained were also raised. Speakers at both forums expressed displeasure about the perceived lack of citizen involvement and sensitivity to community concerns in past redistricting processes.

"Open Meeting" Controversy

Another issue that came to light at this point had to do with whether or not Redistricting Committee meetings needed to be open to the public and the media. The School Board's attorney had advised that as a purely legal matter, these meetings could be closed under the state's Freedom of Information Act because the Committee was to serve in an advisory capacity to the Superintendent and did not include any School Board members. Assistant Superintendent Bailey consulted with Superintendent Henry, consultant Parsons, and other staff, and concluded that the meetings should be closed, primarily because the work of previous committees such as

the one for Family Life Education had been sensationalized to such a degree in the local media that rational discourse had become difficult, if not impossible. Bailey proposed to keep the community informed by having Committee representatives report back regularly through PTAs and by having the Committee hold public forums during its process to receive community feedback on possible recommendations.

The Redistricting Committee's first meeting was held on February 29, 1996. At its second meeting, on March 14, 1996, the issue of closed meetings was discussed. The Committee was receptive to Bailey's suggestion to keep the meetings closed and utilize other strategies to inform the community. There was a feeling within the Committee at the time that the glare of media coverage would cause Committee members to be inhibited in expressing ideas, opinions, and suggestions. The Committee also felt that Bailey's idea of communicating through PTAs and structured public forums was both reasonable and in the spirit of keeping citizens informed.

However, Barbara Blair, the News Director of one of the local radio stations, KVAL, protested and was joined by the area's daily newspaper, The Herald; a weekly newspaper, The Weekly Record; and the local television station, KMTN, in demanding that the meetings be opened based on the legal requirements of the state's Freedom of Information Act. In a letter to Assistant Superintendent Bailey dated April 5, 1996, John Mason, Editor of The Herald, requested that Bailey provide legal justification for the closed meetings. The newspaper also took an editorial position demanding open meetings based on the legal requirements. However, in doing so, the

editorial also noted that "we understand the impulse to close the meetings. In the past, similar meetings often have been so volatile as to have been rendered virtually useless (Secrecy on school lines is unhealthy, The Herald, April 7, 1996, p. A-6).

The Committee again discussed the matter at an April 12 meeting, and agreed that the original course of action should be maintained. However, the pressure continued. Legal action was threatened and influential community members privately and publicly appealed to the School Board and Superintendent Henry to direct the Committee to open its meetings. A second editorial on the controversy in The Herald changed direction from the first one on the subject by implying that the question was not actually a legal one, but a philosophical one. This editorial stated, "school officials have claimed that the secret meetings are legal because the committee reports to the superintendent but not the School Board. This sophistry merely takes advantage of a loophole in the law; it abides by the letter of that law but ignores its spirit" (Reconsider closed-door meetings, The Herald, April 16, 1996, p. A-6).

On April 18, Henry met with the Committee and asked members to reconsider their decision because of his concern that the Committee's recommendations might ultimately be tainted because of the controversy. The Committee agreed, albeit reluctantly, and opened the meetings. While the Committee's decision was editorially applauded by The Herald on April 23, 1996 (Honoring committee's openness, The Herald, April 23, 1996, p. A-6), the School Board was less enthusiastic. At a School Board meeting on April 22, five of the seven Board members expressed misgivings about the change in direction. Chair Callie Michaels went so far as to say that the

school division had been "bullied" by the media (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, April 22, 1996, p. 15).

"Public Proposal 1 "

While the open meeting issue was being debated, the Committee had continued with its work, coming together about once a week. While Committee members were quite anxious to begin drawing lines, Bailey and Parsons organized the first several meetings to develop a knowledge base for the Committee to use in making decisions. Transportation issues, building capacity, capital improvements and planned building expansions, instructional program issues, projected growth areas, and other cost factors were presented and discussed in order to familiarize committee members with all of the relevant considerations. Once a knowledge base had been established, the Committee established several priorities to be used in developing its recommendations. These included minimizing impact on families, planning for growth to avoid having to redistrict again for as long as possible, achieving diversity, preserving community identification with schools, limiting bus travel times, and planning for feeder patterns.

On April 29, the computer model was demonstrated to the Committee. As a starting point, the Committee asked Bailey to use the model to develop two alternatives, one that used building capacity the most efficiently and one that minimized travel time to the greatest degree. From this starting point, the Committee met seven more times through the end of June to develop a proposal which the Committee called "Public Proposal 1." At that point, the Committee decided to hold

two public forums in early July to explain the proposal and to receive public input on it and the related issues of "grandfathering," or allowing students living in areas affected by redistricting to stay in their current school, and "split" and "straight" feeder patterns, which refer to whether or not elementary and middle school students stay with peers in their school as they proceed to the next level. To promote as much public participation in these forums as possible, a mailing was done to every family in the school division to announce the meetings and to provide information on Public Proposal 1. In this communication, citizens who could not attend were encouraged to send in written comments.

The main features of Public Proposal 1 addressed issues all three school levels. Elementary school lines were adjusted to utilize building capacity more efficiently. Changes were also made to establish "straight" feeder patterns from elementary to middle to high school to the greatest degree possible given building capacities. Further, attendance boundaries for the new high school were drawn in a way that would alleviate overcrowding at one of the existing high schools, Central; utilize as much capacity as possible of the other existing high school, Riverside; and prevent the new high school, Mountain, from exceeding its capacity too quickly. Middle school boundaries remained relatively unchanged under the proposal because these lines had been redrawn when the new middle school, Powell, had been opened in 1994. Overcrowding and underutilization at several elementary schools were also addressed in the proposal. The Committee, however, had found that dealing with capacity and other logistical issues while trying to promote diversity was a difficult, if not

impossible, task without sending students to schools significantly further from home. As the May and June meetings wore on, the Committee had gravitated more towards addressing capacity, transportation time, and straight feeder patterns as first priorities. The Committee was hopeful that the two forums would provide useful feedback to help the group develop a final recommendation for the Superintendent.

Forums on Public Proposal 1

Both forums on Public Proposal 1 attracted approximately 100-150 people and received full media coverage, including live television spots on the 6:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. local news telecasts. The main issue that emerged at both meetings, in addition to a number of others that were more specific to particular schools and communities, was that the lines for the new Mountain High School in Public Proposal 1 would result in the school having a population that included a significantly larger number of poor, minority, and low-achieving students than the other two high school buildings. Residents of several of the more affluent subdivisions that would attend Mountain under Public Proposal 1 demanded that the Committee consider an option that would enable the three high schools to be demographically and academically equivalent, even if it meant that some students needed to be sent to a high school that was significantly further away from home.

In terms of "grandfathering," many community members who attended one of the forums or who submitted written comments strongly suggested that only ninth and tenth graders be required to change schools, with eleventh and twelfth graders being given the option to stay in their current schools. Other parents attending the forums

urged that any student affected by redistricting be permitted to "grandfather" until it was time to move to the next school level. Opinions on "split" or "straight" feeder patterns were fairly inconclusive, with most points of view expressed based on the specific situation of the individual expressing the particular point of view. The strongest opinions were expressed by parents living in a portion of the Explorer Elementary School attendance area in the western part of the County whose children attended James Middle School in the urban ring next to Central High School and then attended Riverside High School in the western part of the County. This scheme had been adopted in 1993 to alleviate overcrowding at Central High School and Williams Middle School and to utilize building capacity at James and Riverside. It had never been a particularly popular solution, although it had very effectively addressed the relevant capacity issues.

Committee Demographics Debate

When the Committee reconvened to consider the input from the forums, the issue of the demographics of the high schools came to the forefront. The issue had been discussed at length on several previous occasions, and the Committee had seemed to reach consensus that making students travel further for the sake of demographics was neither desirable nor appropriate. Now, however, Committee members from the communities raising the demographic concern were under intense pressure to push for a plan that would demographically equalize the three high schools. Making the issue more difficult was the fact that the computer model being used was not constructed to address demographics and achievement. Such statistics

had to be hand-extrapolated. While this was possible to do in a reasonably accurate way, it was a very time-intensive exercise for staff.

During three meetings held during the remainder of July, the Committee continued to debate this issue. Committee meetings, which in general had been sparsely attended by the public other than the media, now drew larger numbers of observers who vigorously lobbied Committee members before and after meetings and during breaks. The African-American community, which aside from expressing concern that no PTAs had appointed African-American members to the Committee (two African-American staff members were part of the Committee), now joined the fray based on the possibility that African-American students would be bused based on demographics to a high school other than the one closest to them. Committee debate and discussion also focused on the idea of providing additional resources to schools with the larger high-risk populations as a means of addressing worries about unbalanced demographics. However, there was concern within the Committee that additional resources would not be available to do so and that such differentiation in resources would come at the expense of schools in more affluent communities. The Committee was logjammed.

Alternative Recommendations

At an August 6 meeting, Assistant Superintendent Bailey suggested to the Committee that it could provide the Superintendent with two alternative recommendations and the rationale for each. Before he made this suggestion, he had confidentially discussed this idea with Superintendent Henry, who was supportive.

The Committee was receptive, especially given that members were beginning to wilt under the pressure from various community factions. From there, the two options were finalized during meetings held on August 13 and 15, and a meeting was scheduled during the first week of September to present the Committee's recommendations to the Superintendent.

For the most part, the two options brought forward by the Committee were identical for elementary and middle school boundaries. However, with one option, dubbed by the Committee as "Capacity-Driven," students would attend the closest high school. With the other option, named "Diversity-Driven," high school attendance areas were drawn so that some students in the less affluent areas of the County would continue to attend the high school that had been serving their community instead of attending the new high school, which would be closer to their homes. Further, both recommendations had students who had been attending James Middle School and Riverside High School going on to Central High School after attending James (Report of the Superintendent's Redistricting Advisory Committee, pp. 5-30).

The Committee also made several other specific recommendations as to implementation of any redistricting plan. The recommendation that received the most attention had to do with allowing only students in fifth, eighth, eleventh and twelfth grades to have the option of remaining in their current schools, albeit without transportation provided. Another had to do with adjusting resource allocation formulas for schools "so that all schools have the necessary resources to provide appropriate opportunities for all of the students in the school" (Report of the

Superintendent's Redistricting Advisory Committee, p. 31). This recommendation was an obvious outgrowth of the debate over individual school demographics.

Superintendent Henry formally received the Committee's recommendations in an evening meeting on September 5, 1996. (Somewhat ominously, a violent thunderstorm struck during the meeting, causing the lights to blink out on several occasions.) In his response to the group's presentation of the recommendations and the rationale behind them, Henry focused very specifically on his belief that schools need to be funded based on the particular needs of its students, although he gave no direct indication of how he would view the two Committee recommendations as he developed his own recommendations for the School Board.

Development of Superintendent's Recommendations

With the Committee recommendations in hand, Henry spent approximately one month familiarizing himself with the issues, working with the computer model, and talking with staff and community members. In late September, he directed Assistant Superintendent Bailey to prepare his recommendations to the School Board based on the Committee's "Capacity-Driven" option. Henry chose to make three changes to the Capacity-Driven scheme. The first change involved sending all Explorer Elementary students to Williams Middle School and Riverside High School instead of to James Middle School and Central High School as the Committee had recommended. The second change involved sending all students from Clay Elementary School, a very small (160 students) school, to Redmont Middle School and Mountain High School instead of sending a portion of these students to Williams Middle School and

Riverside High School. The third change involved sending students from a federal housing project called Northern Terrace to Quarry Elementary instead of to Firehouse Elementary School (Superintendent's Redistricting Recommendations, pp. 23-24).

Henry presented his recommendations formally to the School Board at a special meeting on October 7, 1996. In explaining why he chose to pursue the Capacity-Driven approach on high school attendance boundaries, he indicated:

In the late 1960s and 1970s, many school divisions in the country were ordered to bus students to create more balanced racial populations. It was hoped that this approach would result in more equitable educational opportunities. However, such busing did not consistently result in the envisioned academic gains. Therefore, other approaches to achieve equity are being explored and implemented. For example, in Prince George's County, Maryland, a more than twenty year-old busing plan is being replaced by a plan that provides additional staffing and other resources to schools having significant populations of disadvantaged students in order to promote attendance at neighborhood schools. Under this approach, resources are being targeted to students and instruction instead of transportation to ensure equity. In considering a redistricting plan that uses transportation to achieve socioeconomic and racial balance, the costs involved must be carefully weighed against the envisioned educational benefits. Resources allocated for the necessary transportation are resources that cannot be utilized for instruction. (Superintendent's Redistricting Recommendations, p. 13)

In his report, Henry outlined four basic premises that drove his recommendations. These included: 1) efficient use of resources for transportation and facilities in order to maximize resources for instruction, 2) maintenance of neighborhood schools to the greatest degree possible given building capacities, 3) limiting of travel time to the greatest degree possible given building capacities, and 4) providing equitable educational opportunities in each school (Superintendent's Redistricting Recommendations, p. 1). Under Henry's plan, it was estimated that

approximately 31% of the student body at Mountain would be eligible for free and reduced lunch, compared to 18% at Central and 15.6% at Riverside, and 15.9% would be minority, compared to 13% at Central and 5% at Riverside (Superintendent's Redistricting Recommendations, p. 17). A staff report to the Board later in the process further indicated that approximately 23.8% of the projected student body at Mountain had scored in the bottom quartile on the Reading portion of The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, as compared to 15.3% at Central and 10.8% at Riverside (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, November 11, 1996).

Public Reaction

Response was immediate and strong. Parents who had originally raised the concern about the demographics of Mountain High School had been organizing and began an immediate letter-writing, phone, and media campaign in an attempt to influence School Board members. Letters to the Editor denouncing the recommended plan began to appear frequently in The Herald, although letters supporting the plan also appeared. A local real estate developer, John Prince, whose father owned a great deal of land zoned for residential development in an area near Mountain High School, made a Freedom of Information Act request for test scores on every student in the proposed Mountain High School attendance area so that he could try to develop his own computer model based on average test scores for each school. Faculty members at the School of Education and other departments at Heritage University were enlisted to write letters about the harmful effects of a student body that would have 30% of its students eligible for the federal lunch program. At the same time, other groups

expressed support for the Superintendent's recommendation and denounced critics of the recommendations as bigoted.

A preliminary public hearing on the Superintendent's recommendations was held on October 14, 1996. A total of 51 speakers appeared. Twenty expressed opposition based on the demographics issue. Others spoke about grandfathering, adequate resources for all schools, and issues related to specific schools and neighborhoods. Twenty-three speakers spoke in specific support of the Superintendent's recommendations (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, October 14, 1996, pp. 5-45). The emotion of demographics issue was clearly in evidence. Tom Rutger, the parent of a student who would attend Mountain under the Superintendent's recommendation and who had served on the City Council in the adjoining City of Alden in the 1980s said:

I trust each of you will search your soul to do what is right for all of our school-age children. If you do, I am confident that you will reject the short-sightedness of Dr. Henry's proposal. This is a competitive world, and, whether certain administrators wish to acknowledge it or not, the County school system is in for the fight of its life with private schools over the next few years. This is a battle the public schools can win, but only if citizens feel that the School Board has been equitable and forward-looking in drawing school boundaries. (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, October 14, 1996. pp. 5-6)

After the public hearing, a number of community members demanded access to the computer model to determine if there were other and better alternatives than what was being proposed by the Superintendent. Based on this, Assistant Superintendent Bailey, Director of Building Services Leslie, and Director of Transportation Young set up a day-long session for the public to work with the model

on October 20, 1996. Approximately 20 community members, including the wife of developer Prince, took advantage of this opportunity. By now, it was clear that the idea of busing less affluent students living nearer to Mountain away from the school was controversial. Therefore, the focus of many of these sessions was to try to find a solution that evened out the demographics of the three high schools without busing. As Bailey and Leslie already knew, and had expressed frequently in public meetings, this ideal wasn't possible based on the housing patterns in the County.

School Board Work Sessions

The School Board began holding work sessions on redistricting on October 21, 1996. Prior to the first work session, each Board member had met individually with Bailey and Leslie to work with the computer model, both to examine the Superintendent's recommendations and to look at alternatives based on concerns being raised by community members. In addition to the issues being raised about the demographics of Mountain High School, two other major issues had gained attention. The first related to whether or not some students from Explorer Elementary School attending James Middle School should continue to be split from the rest of their peers to attend Riverside High School instead of Central High School. The Redistricting Committee's solution had been to send all of these students to Central High School after attending James, which would have resulted in more crowding at Central and less use of available capacity at Riverside. The Superintendent's solution was to send all of these students to Williams Middle School in the western part of the County and then to Riverside, which resulted in Williams having less capacity for projected

enrollment growth in the western part of the County and James having more unused capacity that it really needed given enrollment growth projections. The other major issue had to do with the elementary attendance area for students living in Northern Terrace, a federal housing project. These students had been attending Snow Elementary School, which was located in a growth area. The Redistricting Committee had recommended sending these students to Firehouse Elementary School, which would have brought this school up to and ultimately over its capacity until a planned elementary school in the northern part of the County was completed in 2001. The Superintendent had recommended sending these students to Quarry Elementary School, which also pushed the capacity of the school, although Quarry was slated for expansion.

The Board, at staff's suggestion, structured its work sessions around areas in the Superintendent's recommendations that it agreed it might want to consider for change. The aforementioned issues concerning high school demographics, Explorer Elementary students being sent to James Middle and Riverside High, and the elementary attendance area for Northern Terrace were primary issues. Other issues relative to specific neighborhoods and elementary schools were also identified. These included concerns about overcrowding at Morton Elementary School and the need to utilize more capacity at Clay, Rural Run, Butler, and Explorer Elementary Schools. Each work session centered around one or more of these areas. Each session started with an explanation by staff of the problem to be considered, the rationale behind the Superintendent's recommendation, and a description of possible alternatives and their

subsequent impacts. The computer model was then projected on a screen and various solutions were tested and discussed. Most work sessions were held in a room that seated approximately 30 people beyond the Board and staff. Work sessions were well-attended and fully covered by the media. Lobbying was intense. To avoid some of this lobbying, at least before the sessions, some Board members took to arriving just before the scheduled starting time.

Reduced Capital Improvements Funding

As the Board deliberated, it also examined possible alternatives in relation to projected facility expansion projects in the division's five-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and possible changes that could be made. In early November, the Board was informed by the County Executive that spending for the CIP would have to be decreased by approximately \$4,260,000. This caused the Board to backtrack and reconsider some of the Superintendent's recommendations and some of the decisions about which consensus had already been reached by the Board. Work by the Redistricting Committee, the Superintendent, and the Board up to this point had been done assuming a fully-funded CIP. Specifically, the projected reductions caused the Board to reconsider different attendance boundary options for middle schools so that projected additions at Williams, James, and Redmont could be delayed. Enrollment Projections indicated that even with such a short-term fix, these expansions would eventually be needed. Ultimately, the Board directed staff to make the necessary CIP reductions through deferral of renovation and maintenance projects, and to keep all planned expansions on schedule. Further, the Board directed that one

of the expansions, at Quarry Elementary School, be moved up a year as a means of alleviating the need to redistrict a larger number of students out of that school (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, December 2, 1996, pp. 2-8).

Demographics Debate

The issue of demographics at the three high schools, however, remained the front burner topic. Faculty from the School of Education at Heritage University continued to urge three demographically equivalent high schools. A local parent group, the African-American Parents Coalition, expressed strong concern that African-American students would be the ones bused to do so. The practice of sending some students from James Middle School back to Riverside High School also continued to generate a great deal of mail and phone contact for Board members by parents who wanted all of these students to go to Central High School in spite of the need to depopulate Central and populate Riverside. Parents urging a liberal grandfathering policy for affected students were also a continuing presence in the public discourse. Although the Board had not yet held a formal public hearing on its own proposal, the regular School Board business meeting on November 11, 1996, included eight speakers during the public comment period who wanted to remind Board members of their views on redistricting (Albemarle School Board Minutes, November 11, 1996, pp. 13-14).

Throughout the October-November time frame, the redistricting process was an ongoing focus for the local media. The Herald ran regular articles on the process, and its editorial page included Letters to the Editor on the subject almost daily. To this

point, the newspaper had taken a fairly non-committal editorial position, basically saying that it would probably be impossible for the School Board to balance demographics and geography (School zone assignment too tough, The Herald, August 27, 1996, p. A-6). In its Sunday edition on November 3, 1996, the paper ran an op-ed article written by Mary Mathis, a retired County teacher and a grandparent of a student slated to attend Mountain High School, advocating for balanced demographics at the high schools (Student mix critical for MHS, The Herald, November 3, 1996, p. D-1). Radio station KVAL, the most listened to station in the area for local news, ran frequent stories on various aspects and controversies of the process. Redistricting was often a story on the newscasts of local television station KMTN. The regional public radio station, KMOH, which serves much of central and western Virginia, also did a lengthy story on the process. All of this coverage was generally accurate. However, it also served to maintain a high level of emotion within the community.

FY 1997-98 Budget

During the period that the Board was wrestling with redistricting, it also began its preliminary work on a budget for Fiscal Year 1997-98. In October, Assistant Superintendent Bailey presented the Board with an overview of projected revenues and other issues related to the budget to frame a discussion of Board's priorities for the budget. One of the priorities directed by the Board in the development of a preliminary budget was that a staffing formula be devised within existing resources to provide additional personnel support for schools having higher levels of disadvantaged

students (Albemarle School Board Minutes, October 21, 1996, pp. 7-9). While this kind of formula had been discussed for several years, it had never been actively pursued because to do so within existing resources would require more affluent schools to lose staffing to support less affluent schools. The redistricting process and the issue of school demographics had finally forced the issue.

School Board Proposal

In late November, after five work sessions, the Board agreed on a proposal to present for a public hearing, scheduled for December 16, 1996. Essentially, the Board's proposal made relatively few changes to the Superintendent's original recommendations. The Board's proposal changed the Superintendent's proposal to send some Explorer Elementary students to Williams Middle and Riverside High in favor of maintaining the previously adopted practice of sending them to James and Riverside. The Board made this change based solely on capacity considerations. The Board also changed the Superintendent's proposed boundaries for Snow and Quarry Elementary Schools to reflect the currently established lines, with some attempt made to address capacity issues in these buildings by sending some Quarry students to Clay Elementary and some Quarry students to Rural Run Elementary. In addition, the Board's proposal moved about 18 students from Fulton Elementary, a school in the urban ring which was slated for enrollment growth, to Butler Elementary, a small school west of the urban ring which was not in a projected growth area (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, December 2, 1996, pp. 2-9).

The Board's other major deviation from the Superintendent's recommendations was to limit grandfathering at the high school level to rising seniors only, along with students in rising grades five and eight. The Superintendent had recommended allowing grandfathering of juniors and seniors, in addition to rising fifth and eighth graders, consistent with the recommendation of the Redistricting Committee. The Board, however, did remain consistent with the Committee and Superintendent recommendation that grandfathering not include younger siblings and that transportation not be provided for those who chose to stay in the current school (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, December 2, 1996, pp. 2-9). In preparation for the public hearing, a mailing was done to all families in the school division informing them of the public hearing and describing the proposed changes to attendance areas and the grandfathering guidelines.

Public Hearing on the School Board Proposal

On December 16, 64 speakers appeared before the School Board. Forty-one of the speakers asked the Board, often very emotionally, to take whatever steps necessary to adopt a plan that would allow the three high schools to be demographically similar. Letters from two faculty members from Heritage University were read opposing the demographic mix at Mountain High School. Members of the African-American Parents Coalition and the local chapter of the NAACP asked the Board not to pursue any busing strategy, but rather, to adopt a resource allocation formula for schools that would assure that every school had adequate resources to meet the needs of its particular student population. Predictably, other issues generating significant comment

included grandfathering, the split of Explorer Elementary students from James Middle School back to Riverside High School, and isolated concerns specific to particular subdivisions or neighborhoods. Not all of the speakers were negative. Several praised the openness of the process and the recognized the difficulty of the decision faced by the Board. A number of speakers asked the Board not to make a decision that evening, but to delay for further study and public input (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, December 16, 1996, pp. 2-14).

Adoption of the Board's Redistricting Plan

At the end of the hearing, which lasted from about 7:10 - 10:15 p.m., the Board recessed briefly and then reconvened in a smaller meeting room to deliberate. Spectators packed the room's 50-odd seats, with additional people standing along the walls. Each Board member was asked by Chair Michaels to share his or her thoughts, and discussion proceeded from there. The concerns about the demographics at Mountain were an obvious sticking point with Board members. However, none was willing to support the necessary busing to change them. There was some discussion of the grandfathering issue and of the split of James Middle students, but Board members were in basic agreement not to make any changes in response to testimony it had heard. However, the issue of demographics of the high schools kept coming up in the discussion. Each time it did, however, the Board shied away from the busing option, mostly because it would have necessitated busing economically disadvantaged and minority students who were geographically closer to Mountain High School.

Just after midnight on December 17, the Board decided to call the question and voted 5-2 to pass the plan it took to public hearing. David Farmer, the Board's only African-American member, voted against the plan because he still felt the demographics issue needed further consideration to verify that all possible alternatives had been explored. Mary Forest voted against the plan for the same reason. In an attempt to appease the faction pushing for equal demographics, the motion passed included direction to staff to develop and implement a differentiated resource allocation formula for schools and also to explore the magnet school concept for Mountain High School (Albemarle County School Board Minutes, December 16, 1996, pp. 14-18).

When the vote was taken, the meeting room was still packed; few spectators had left. After the vote, the room cleared and the Board handled several routine matters before adjourning at around 12:21 a.m. Despite the late hour, Board members, staff, and a few citizens lingered after the meeting, speaking in hushed tones. The media scurried about to interview the various players. The room did not completely empty for almost 30 minutes. But the long process had ended. Table 10 provides a synopsis of significant events in the redistricting process in Albemarle County.

Table 10

Key Events in the Albemarle County Redistricting Process

Date	Event
January, 1995	Dr. Carl F. Henry becomes Superintendent of Albemarle County Schools.
July 24, 1995	Albemarle County School Board adopts new policy requiring involving of citizens in the redistricting process through a Redistricting Committee.
July 24, 1995	Albemarle County School Board receives a staff presentation on a redistricting computer model.
Fall, 1995	Internal planning for redistricting process begins.
January-February, 1996	PTAs are asked to appoint members to the Redistricting Committee. Redistricting Committee formed.
February, 1996	Two preliminary public forums on redistricting are held.
February 29, 1996	First Redistricting Committee meeting is held.
July, 1996	Two public forums held on Redistricting Committee's "Public Proposal 1."
August 15, 1996	Redistricting Committee finalizes two options for Superintendent.
September 5, 1996	Redistricting Committee presents report to Superintendent.
October 7, 1996	Superintendent presents recommendations to School Board.
October 14, 1996	Public hearing held on Superintendent's proposal.
October 21- December 2, 1996	School Board holds five Work Sessions on redistricting.
December 16, 1996	Public hearing on School Board redistricting plan and final adoption of School Board redistricting plan.

Analysis of Data from Written Sources

Description of Sources

Because this study is historical in nature, written documents were an important aspect of data collection. The following written sources were utilized to collect data on the study's research questions: School Board meeting minutes (including public hearings) concerning the redistricting process; correspondence from the public to the School Board about redistricting; and newspaper articles concerning the School Board's meetings on redistricting. The vast majority of the documents analyzed were generated between October 7, 1996, when the Superintendent presented his proposed redistricting plan to the Albemarle County School Board, and December 16, 1996, when the School Board adopted a redistricting plan. As part of the analysis of these documents, commentary will be provided as to whether or not the document is a primary or secondary source, in addition to commentary as to internal and external validity considerations.

Source and Validity Considerations

Borg and Gall (1989) indicated that primary sources are "those documents in which the individual describing the event was present when it occurred" (p. 814) and that secondary sources are "documents in which the individual describing the event was not present, but obtained a description of the event from someone else who may or may not have directly observed the event" (p. 814).

Internal criticism was defined by Borg and Gall (1989) as "evaluating the accuracy and worth of statements contained in a historical document" (p. 821). Internal criticism attempts to determine the physical and chronological proximity of a witness to a particular event, in addition to the competence of the witness and the possible bias of the witness. Borg and Gall further indicated that external criticism is "when the researcher raises questions about the accuracy and worth of statements contained in a historical document" (p. 822). External criticism attempts to determine whether or not a particular document is genuine by assessing when and where it was written and the intention of the author. The typical concern with external criticism is not whether or not a document is forged, but rather, with the interpretation of a particular event or set of events that might be contained in the document.

School Board Minutes

Specific Minutes Analyzed

Minutes of the following meetings of the Albemarle County School Board were analyzed: October 7, 1996; October 14, 1996; October 21, 1996; October 30, 1996; November 11, 1996; November 18, 1996; December 2, 1996; and December 16, 1996. Included in the analysis of these minutes are two major public hearings held on October 14, 1996 and December 16, 1996. A separate analysis of the issues identified in the public hearings will be provided. All of the minutes utilized are primary sources in that they were produced by one person, the Clerk of the Albemarle County School Board, who was present for these meetings, took detailed notes of the

proceedings, and utilized these notes and audiotapes of the proceedings to generate the minutes. These minutes were also ultimately approved at a later point in time by the Albemarle County School Board.

Internal and External Criticism

The minutes utilized in the study are not problematic in terms of internal or external validity. The Clerk of the Albemarle County School Board was physically present at all meetings cited. She was experienced in producing minutes, having served as Clerk for the Albemarle County School Board for over a year when these minutes were produced in 1996, in addition to having served as Deputy Clerk of the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors for approximately a year. The Clerk should not be considered as having had any particular bias as to redistricting which would have impacted on the contents of the minutes. The fact that the entire Albemarle County School Board ultimately had to approve these minutes provided an additional safeguard as to possible bias. The purpose of the minutes was simply to provide the record of the Board's meetings, as required by Section 22.1-14 of The Code of Virginia.

Methodology for Analyzing Minutes.

Data reduction of minutes of the Board's work and discussion to develop a redistricting plan was accomplished by identifying all factors raised in the Board's reported discussion and the frequency with which each of these factors was discussed. Tables 7a and 7b in chapter 2 were used for this purpose. To the greatest degree

possible, factors identified were keyed to those delineated in the literature on criteria for redistricting (summarized in Table 5 in chapter 2) and to the other influences described in chapter 2, including the influence of the Superintendent, the influence of interest groups, the influence of cultural/normative factors, and the influence of areas related to the two theoretical models. To do so required a certain degree of interpretation. For example, the amount of enrollment necessary to providing a full range of course offerings in middle and high schools was interpreted as an instructional program impact. Additional factors were specifically described. For example, athletics was not delineated in any of the literature, but was raised during the Board's discussion. Further, the specific Board member raising a particular factor was also noted, along with whether or not the factor related specifically to the Board member's own district, if this was reasonably evident. This approach produced a summary by Board member and in the aggregate of the factors identified, the frequency and percentage in which each specific factor was identified, and the frequency and percentage in which a Board member cited a factor directly related to his or her own district. The aggregate of factor identifications was further broken down by frequency and percentage of instructional versus non-instructional factors based on the definitions of these factors provided in chapter 1. This analysis was done using Tables 8a and 8b in chapter 2.

Analysis of Minutes of Board's Work and Discussion

In the minutes of the Board's work and discussion of redistricting, 31 separate factors were cited and 272 specific factor identifications were made. The most

frequent factor identified was building capacity/projected growth, which was cited at some point by all seven Board members and cited overall a total of 92 times (33.82%). The next most frequent factors identified were feeder patterns, which was cited by all seven Board members and cited overall a total of 23 times (8.46%), and instructional program impact, which was cited by six Board members and cited overall a total of 23 times (8.46%). Cost effectiveness was cited by five Board members and cited overall a total of 19 times (6.98%). Academic balance, or the balancing of academic achievement factors in the student populations of the three high schools, was cited by six Board members and cited overall a total of 14 times (5.15%). Of the 272 separate factor identifications, 216 (79.41%) were instructional and 56 (20.59%) were non-instructional. Table 11 provides a summary of all the factors cited during the Board's work and discussion on a redistricting plan.

The factors cited most frequently by individual Board members showed a reasonable degree of consistency with the aggregate for the entire Board. Of the 75 factor identifications he made, Hugh Barnes cited building capacity/projected growth 37 times (49.33%), cost effectiveness nine times (12%), instructional program impact six times (8%), and travel distance and time six times (8%). Of the 34 factor identifications he made, James Cleveland cited building capacity and projected growth nine times (26.47%), feeder patterns five times (14.71%), and cost effectiveness four times (11.76%). Of the 35 factors identifications he made, Bob Coleman cited building capacity/projected growth 11 times (31.43%), instructional program impact four times (11.43%), and the influence of the Superintendent's recommendation

Table 11

Factors Identified in Board Minutes

Factor (31 Separate Factors) (272 Total Factor Identifications)	Frequency/ Percentage		Number of Members Identifying	Instruc- tional	Non- Instruc- tional
Building Capacity/Projected Growth	92	33.82%	7	--	92
Feeder Patterns	23	8.46	7	--	23
Instructional Program Impact	23	8.46	6	23	--
Cost Effectiveness	19	6.98	5	--	19
Academic Balance/	14	5.15	6	14	--
Time Constraints	13	4.78	7	--	13
Neighborhood Schools/Proximity of Schools	12	4.41	7	--	12
Cognitive Constraints	10	3.68	5	--	10
Equity	9	3.31	6	9	--
Travel Distance/Time	9	3.31	3	--	9
Superintendent	7	2.57	4	--	7
Grandfathering	6	2.20	3	--	6
Availability of Alternatives	5	1.84	3	--	5
Interest Groups	4	1.47	3	--	4
Socioeconomic/Ethnic Diversity	4	1.47	3	--	4
Minimize Frequency of Redistricting	3	1.10	2	--	3
Minimize Number Redistricting	3	1.10	3	--	3
Mobility	2	.735	2	--	2
School Size	2	.735	2	2	--
Affiliative Constraints	1	.368	1	--	1
Athletics	1	.368	1	--	1
Best Interest of Students	1	.368	1	--	1
Change Dynamics	1	.368	1	--	1
Class Size	1	.368	1	1	--
Gifted	1	.368	1	1	--
Maximum School Enrollment	1	.368	1	1	--
Mountain High School Enrollment	1	.368	1	1	--
Special Education	1	.368	1	1	--
Special Needs of Schools	1	.368	1	1	--
Staffing Allocations	1	.368	1	1	--
	1	.368	1	1	--
Total	272	100		56 (20.59%)	216 (79.41%)

3 times (8.57%). Of the 30 factor identifications he made, David Farmer cited academic balance six times (20%), instructional program impact five times (16.67%), and cognitive constraints, or what he perceived to be a need for more information, five times (16.67%). Of the 32 factor identifications she made, Mary Forest cited building capacity/projected growth six times (18.75%), feeder patterns five times (15.63%), and instructional program impact four times (12.50%). Of the 22 factor identifications he made, Ron Garden cited building capacity/projected growth eight times (36.36%), feeder patterns four times (9.10%), and cost effectiveness two times (6.82%). Of the 44 factor identifications she made, Callie Michaels cited building capacity/projected growth 18 times (40.9%), time constraints, or the perceived time pressure to make a decision, four times (9.10%), and cost effectiveness three times (6.82%).

It is also interesting to note that 84 of the 272 specific factor identifications in the minutes (30.88%) related to the district where the specific Board member lived. Of the 75 factor identifications made by Hugh Barnes, 20 (26.67%) were related to his own district. Of the 34 factor identifications made by James Cleveland, 11 (32.35%) were related to his own district. Of the 35 factor identifications made by Bob Coleman, 11 (31.43%) were related to his own district. Of the 30 factor identifications made by David Farmer, 10 (33.33%) were related to his home district. Of the 32 factor identifications made by Mary Forest, 14 (43.75%) were related to her own district. Of the 22 factor identifications made by Ron Garden, 10 (45.45%) were related to his own district. Of the 44 factor identifications made by Callie Michaels,

eight (18.18%) were related to her own district. Table 12 provides a summary of factors most frequently cited by Board members and the proportion cited by each Board member related to his or her own district.

Public Hearings as Recorded in Board Minutes

Public Hearings Analyzed

The School Board held two specific public hearings on redistricting. The first was held on October 14, 1996 to allow the public to respond specifically to the Superintendent's redistricting proposal. The second public hearing was held on December 16, 1996 to allow the public to respond to the redistricting plan the Board was presenting after its own deliberations. Fifty-one individuals spoke on October 14 and 64 spoke on December 16.

Internal and External Criticism

The minutes of these hearings were also produced by the Clerk of the Albemarle County School Board and later approved by the whole School Board. For this reason, they should be considered an accurate representation of what was presented by citizens at these two hearings. Because of the biases of the various speakers, however, the accuracy of the facts and ideas presented must be considered with some level of caution. Many of the assertions made by specific speakers were subjective, and often emotional, interpretations of the issues involved. However, these statements did reflect the issues being debated.

Table 12

Three Factors Identified Most Frequently by Individual Board Members in Minutes/Factors Related to Own District Identified in Minutes

Board Member	Number of Factors Identified	Number/Percentage Related to Own District	Academic Balance	Building Capacity/Projected Growth	Cognitive Constraints	Cost Effectiveness	Feeder Patterns	Instructional Program Impact	Neighborhood Schools/Proximity	Superintendent's Influence	Time Constraints	Travel Distance/Time
Hugh Barnes	75	20/75 (26.67%)		37/75 (49.33%)		9/75 (12%)		6/75 (8%)				6/75 (8%)
James Cleveland	34	11/34 (32.35%)		9/34 (26.47%)			5/34 (14.71%)		4/34 (11.76%)			
Bob Coleman	35	11/35 (31.43%)		11/35 (31.43%)				4/35 (11.43%)		3/35 (8.57%)		
David Farmer	30	10/30 (33.33%)	6/30 (20%)		5/30 (16.67%)			5/30 (16.67%)				
Mary Forest	32	14/32 (43.75%)		6/32 (18.75%)			5/32 (15.63%)	4/32 (12.5%)				
Ron Garden	22	10/22 (45.45%)		8/22 (36.36%)		2/22 (9.1%)	4/22 (18.18%)					
Callie Michaels	44	8/44 (18.18%)		18/44 (40.91%)		3/44 (6.82%)					4/44 (9.1%)	
Total	272	84/272 (30.88%)										

Methodology for Analyzing Minutes of Public Hearings

Data reduction of the minutes of public hearings was accomplished by identifying and quantifying all factors identified in the statements made by citizens during the two public hearings, using Tables 7a and 7b. As with the minutes of the Board's redistricting discussions, factors identified were keyed to the greatest degree possible to those delineated in chapter 2. Additional factors were specifically described. For example, the impact of redistricting on property values was not cited in the literature, but was raised by a speaker at one of the hearings. This approach produced an aggregate summary of factors identified during the public hearings and the frequency and percentage of each factor identified. The aggregate of these factor identifications was further broken down by frequency and percentage of instructional versus non-instructional factors, using Tables 8a and 8b.

Analysis of Minutes of Public Hearings

A total of 183 individual factor identifications were made during the two public hearings, and a total of 45 different factors were cited. The factor most frequently cited was academic balance, which was raised 61 times (33.33%), followed by equity, which was cited 23 times (12.57%); and neighborhood schools/proximity of schools, which was also cited 23 times. It should be noted that 22 individuals spoke at both public hearings and essentially made the same points on both occasions, which skews the data to some degree. For example, 30 of the 61 cites of academic balance, almost half, came from this group. Of the 183 factor identifications during the two public hearings, 91 (49.73%) were instructional in nature and 92 (50.27%) were

non-instructional. This proportion is much more equally balanced than was reflected in the minutes of the Board's discussion. Table 13 provides a summary of the factors identified during the public hearings.

Letters to the School Board

Letters Analyzed

Between October 7, 1996, when the Superintendent's recommendations were presented, and December 16, 1996, when the Board adopted its redistricting plan, the School Board, through the Clerk, received a total of 77 formal letters from members of the public concerning redistricting. Some of the letters were signed by one individual, some by a husband and wife, and some by a larger group such as a PTA board or residents of a neighborhood or subdivision. Eighteen (23.38%) of the letters came from individuals who spoke at one or both of the public hearings. These letters should be considered primary sources.

Internal and External Criticism

The letters analyzed were copies of the actual letters received by the School Board through the Clerk. As with the speakers at the public hearings, the accuracy of the facts and ideas presented in them must be considered with some degree of caution because of the particular biases of the writers. This fact does raise some degree of concern in terms of both internal and external criticism. However, the issues raised in these letters were reflective of those being debated.

Table 13

Factors Identified in Public Hearings

Factor (45 Separate Factors) (183 Total Factor Identifications)	Frequency 10/14/96	Frequency 12/16/96	Total Frequency/ Percentage		Instructional	Non- Instructional
Academic Balance	20	41	61	33.33%	61	--
Equity	11	12	23	12.57	23	--
Neighborhood Schools/Proximity of Schools	17	6	23	12.57	--	23
Cognitive Constraints	3	4	7	3.83	--	7
Travel Distance/Time	2	5	7	3.83	--	7
Grandfathering	1	4	5	2.73	--	5
Time Constraints	4	1	5	2.73	--	5
Building Capacity/Projected Growth	4	--	4	2.19	--	4
Feeder Patterns	--	4	4	2.19	--	4
Minimize Numbers Redistricted	3	1	4	2.19	--	4
Process	--	3	3	1.64	--	3
Affiliative Constraints	--	2	2	1.09	--	2
Funding of Individual Schools	--	2	2	1.09	2	--
Instructional Program Impact	1	1	2	1.09	2	--
Academic Needs Versus Social Life	--	1	1	.55	1	--
Attendance Area - Firehouse Elementary	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Availability of Alternatives	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Avoidance of Accommodation	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Avoidance of Private School Environment	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Avoidance of Segregation	--	1	1	.55	--	1

Table 13 (continued)

Factor (45 Separate Factors) (183 Total Factor Identifications)	Frequency 10/14/96	Frequency 12/16/96	Total Frequency/ Percentage		Instructional	Non- Instructional
Benefit of Children	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Character/Performance of Students	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Class Size	1	--	1	.55	1	--
"Collective Mind" of Students	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Concerns about Academics at Mountain HS	1	--	1	.55	1	--
Cost Effectiveness	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Interest Groups	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Long-Term Effects	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Minimize Frequency of Redistricting	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Need for Consensus	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Negative Attitude About Schools	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Parental Anger	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Possible Population Shift	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Private School Flight	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Property Values	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Reason/Logic	-	1	1	.55	--	1
Represent All People	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Social Engineering Misguided	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Specific Child Issue	--	1	1	.55	--	1
"Thoughtfulness" of Proposal	1	--	1	.55	--	1
Unnecessary Busing	1	--	1	.55	--	1

Table 13 (continued)

Factor (45 Separate Factors) (183 Total Factor Identifications)	Frequency 10/14/96	Frequency 12/16/96	Total		Instructional	Non- Instructional
			Frequency/ Percentage			
Use of Data	--	1	1	.55	--	1
View of History	--	1	1	.55	--	1
"Zeitgeist"	--	1	1	.55	--	1
Zoning	--	1	1	.55	-	1
Total	70	113	183	100	91 (49.73%)	92 (50.27%)

Methodology for Analyzing Letters

Data reduction of the letters received by the Board was accomplished by identifying all factors raised in the letters, using Tables 7a and 7b, again keyed to the greatest degree possible to the areas described in chapter 2. Relatively few factors outside of those identified in chapter 2 were raised in the letters. This approach produced an aggregate summary of the factors identified in the letters and the frequency and percentage of each factor identified. The aggregate of these factor identifications was further broken down by frequency and percentage of instructional versus non-instructional factors, using Tables 8a and 8b.

Analysis of Letters

A total of 169 total factor identifications involving 20 separate factors were made in the 77 letters. The most frequently cited factor was feeder patterns, which was identified 34 times (20.12%), followed by neighborhood schools/proximity of schools, which was identified 26 times (15.38%), academic balance, which was identified 18 times (10.65%), and building capacity/projected growth, which was identified 16 times (9.47%). The feeder pattern issue primarily related to where students from Explorer Elementary School would attend middle and high school. Nineteen of the 34 times feeder patterns was identified in letters addressed this particular situation. Of the 169 factor identifications in the letters, 38 (22.48% were instructional in nature and 171 (77.52%) were non-instructional. Table 14 provides a summary of factors identified in letters to the School Board.

Table 14

Factors Identified in Letters to Board

Factor (20 Separate Factors) (169 Total Factor Identifications)	Frequency/ Percentage		Instructional	Non- Instructional
Feeder Patterns	34	20.12%	--	34
Neighborhood Schools/Proximity of Schools	26	15.38	--	26
Academic Balance	18	10.65	18	--
Building Capacity/Projected Growth	16	9.47	--	16
Travel Distance/Time	10	5.92	--	10
Equity	10	5.92	10	--
Instructional Program Impact	8	4.73	8	--
Cost Effectiveness	8	4.73	--	--
Time Constraints	7	4.14	--	7
Socioeconomic/Ethnic Diversity	6	3.55	--	6
Minimize Frequency of Redistricting	6	3.55	--	6
Cognitive Constraints	4	2.37	--	4
Specific Neighborhood Issue	4	2.37	--	4
Grandfathering	3	1.76	--	3
Affiliative Constraints	2	1.19	--	2
Minimize Numbers Redistricted	2	1.19	--	2
Staffing at Mountain HS	2	1.19	2	--
Availability of Alternatives	1	.59	--	1
Enrollment Prediction Accuracy	1	.59	--	1
Previous Commitment of Parents to a School	1	.59	--	1
Total	169	100%	38 (22.48%)	131 (77.52%)

Newspaper Articles

Articles Analyzed

The local daily newspaper, The Herald, assigned a reporter to all of the School Board's deliberations on redistricting. The articles analyzed were ones that specifically described the Board's deliberations leading to the adoption of a final redistricting plan. These articles appeared on the following dates: October 8, 1996; October 22, 1996; October 31, 1996; November 12, 1996; November 19, 1996; December 3, 1996; and December 17, 1996. These articles should be considered primary sources because they were eyewitness accounts of the meetings described.

Internal and External Criticism

The Herald assigned one reporter to the redistricting process, who covered everything that occurred during the process from the Redistricting Committee's work through the Board's adoption of a final redistricting plan. This consistency led to the reporter having a reasonably strong understanding of the issues involved, and therefore, also led to a higher degree of accuracy in the articles on the process. In general, the articles are factual representations of what occurred in that they describe the dominant issues discussed by the School Board in any given meeting. Because of the inherent space limitations of a daily newspaper, detail as to any of the discussion is relatively sparse when compared to the minutes of a particular meeting. This limitation also results in fewer factors being identified. The articles were reasonably objective and unbiased in that they did not reflect any of the editorial positions taken

by The Herald on redistricting. Further, the articles reflected a balance between the emotional issues surrounding the process and the more concrete logistical factors that the Board considered in reaching a decision.

Methodology for Analyzing Newspaper Articles

Data reduction of the newspaper articles was accomplished by identifying and quantifying all factors described in the articles, using Tables 7a and 7b, again keyed to the greatest degree possible to factors identified in chapter 2. This approach produced an aggregate summary of factors and the frequency and percentage of each factor identified. The aggregate of these factor identifications was further broken down by frequency and percentage of instructional versus non-instructional factors, using Tables 8a and 8b.

Analysis of Newspaper Articles

A total of 56 factor identifications involving 20 separate factors occurred in the newspaper articles. The most frequently cited factor was building capacity/projected growth, which was identified 11 times (19.64%), followed by academic balance, which was identified 8 times (14.29%), and cost effectiveness, feeder patterns, and the Superintendent's influence, which were each identified five times (8.93% for each). Of the 56 factor identifications in the newspaper articles, 13 (23.21%) were instructional in nature and 43 (76.79%) were non-instructional. Table 15 provides a summary of the factors described in newspaper articles.

Table 15

Factors Identified in Newspaper Articles

Factor (20 Separate Factors) (56 Total Factor Identifications)	Frequency/ Percentage		Instructional	Non- Instructional
Building Capacity/Projected Growth	11	19.64%	--	11
Academic Balance	8	14.29	8	--
Cost Effectiveness	5	8.93	--	5
Feeder Patterns	5	8.93	--	5
Superintendent	5	8.93	--	5
Travel Distance/Time	3	5.36	--	3
Equity	2	3.57	2	--
Grandfathering	2	3.57	--	2
Interest Groups	2	3.57	--	2
Minimize Numbers Redistricted	2	3.57	--	2
Neighborhood Schools/Proximity of Schools	2	3.57	--	2
Affiliative Constraints	1	1.79	--	1
Alternative At-Risk Measures	1	1.79	1	--
Best Interests of Students	1	1.79	--	1
Cognitive Constraints	1	1.79	--	1
Gifted	1	1.79	1	--
Instructional Program Impact	1	1.79	1	--
Private School Flight	1	1.79	--	1
Socioeconomic/Ethnic Diversity	1	1.79	--	1
Time Constraints	1	1.79	--	1
Total	56	100%	13 (23.21%)	43 (76.79%)

Summary of Data from Written Sources

The overall data found in the written sources indicated a tilt toward the stronger influence of non-instructional factors, both within the School Board and with the public. The School Board, based on the minutes of its work sessions and the reports in the newspaper of these work sessions, appeared to have been most influenced by the non-instructional factors of building capacity/projected growth, feeder patterns, and cost effectiveness. However, there is also indication in the data that the Board tried to balance these factors with instructional factors, as evidenced by the fact that instructional program impact was one of the three factors cited most frequently by the Board. The public, based on factors identified during public hearings and in letters to the Board, showed a somewhat stronger inclination towards instructional factors, in particular, academic balance and equity, than did the School Board. However, the non-instructional factors of feeder patterns and neighborhood schools/proximity of schools were also prominent. Reasonably enough, the Board's focus, based on the minutes and newspaper articles, was based more on "big picture" kinds of issues, while the public's focus, based on the public hearings and letters, was more on factors having the greatest impact on individual families and neighborhoods.

Based on the written sources, it appears that the Board, while considering the issues raised by the public during the process, was not totally swayed by this influence. Far and away, the factor most frequently identified by the Board in the minutes was building capacity/projected growth (92 times). This factor was not identified nearly as often during the public hearings and in letters to the Board (four

times in public hearing and 16 times in letters). The areas most frequently cited by the public during public hearings and in letters, academic balance, feeder patterns, and neighborhood schools/proximity of schools, received reasonable attention from the Board during its deliberations, but in lesser proportion than was the case with the public. Based solely on the written sources, therefore, it can be posited that the Board, while influenced by interest groups, was not dominated by this influence. Based on the written sources, the Board seemed to pick and choose the points of view presented by the public that it perceived to be most valid. Such a conclusion is supported by the fact that only about 30% of the factor identifications made by Board members related to an individual's own district. This circumstance is consistent with findings outlined by Schmidt (1994), who indicated that the perceived validity of the point of view of a particular group was of greater significance than was the group presenting the point of view. Table 16 delineates the three factors cited most frequently in each of the written sources. Table 17 delineates the proportion of instructional and non-instructional factors cited in each of the written sources.

Analysis of Data from Interviews

Background on Interviews

Interview Sources

An essential source of data collection for this study was interviews of Board members and other individuals who were closely involved in the Albemarle County redistricting process. All seven Board members who participated in the redistricting

Table 16

Five Most Frequently Identified Factors in Written Sources

Source	Total Factor Identifications	Academic Balance	Building Capacity/ Projected Growth	Cognitive Constraints	Cost Effectiveness	Equity	Feeder Patterns	Instructional Program Impact	Neighborhood Schools/ Proximity of Schools	Superintendent	Travel Distance/ Time
Minutes	272	14 times (5.15%)	92 times (33.82%)		19 times (6.98%)		23 times (8.46%)	23 times (8.46%)			
Public Hearings	183	61 times (33.33%)		7 times (3.83%)		23 times (12.57%)			23 times (12.57%)		7 times (3.83%)
Letters	169	18 times (10.65%)	16 times (9.47%)			10 times (5.92%)	34 times (20.12%)		26 times (15.38%)		10 times (5.92%)
Newspaper	56	8 times (14.29%)	11 times (19.64%)		5 times (8.93%)		5 times (8.93%)			5 times (8.93%)	

Table 17

Instructional Versus Non-Instructional Factors Identified in Written Sources

Source	Total Factor Identifications	Instructional	Non-Instructional
Minutes	272	56 (20.59%)	216 (79.41%)
Public Hearings	183	91 (49.73%)	92 (50.27%)
Letters	169	38 (22.48%)	131 (77.52%)
Newspaper	56	13 (23.21%)	43 (76.79%)

process consented to be interviewed. For triangulation purposes, three staff members, three community members, and two members of the media who were close to the process were also interviewed.

Staff members interviewed included Superintendent Carl F. Henry, Director of Building Services George Leslie, and Director of Transportation Ray Young. The two members of the media interviewed were Al Bender, who covered the entire process for radio station KVAL, and Marcia Reed, who covered the entire process for The Herald. The three community members interviewed included Mary Dolan, a parent of a student from Central High School who attended many of the Redistricting Committee meetings and School Board sessions on redistricting; Jean Smith, a parent of Riverside High School student who also attended many of the Redistricting Committee and School Board meetings; and, Jane Rutger, the parent of a Mountain

High School student who, along with her husband, actively supported a redistricting plan which would equalize demographics at the three high schools. These three individuals were chosen based on recommendations from Board members and other staff involved in the redistricting process. All three were eyewitnesses to much of the Board's discussion and were extremely familiar with the issues involved. All three were also extremely active in the school district, and therefore, were knowledgeable about the operation of the district.

Interview Methodology

All interviewees were first contacted by the researcher by telephone or in person to request their cooperation with the study. At that time, the study's purposes and structure were explained, along with the specific interview questions, procedures to be followed during the interview, and the procedures to be followed to assure anonymity. Interviewees were also offered the opportunity to receive a transcript of their interview and to review the study's conclusions. They were further assured of the option to terminate participation in the study at any time. Once verbal agreement to participate was given and a date, time, and place for the interview was established, a follow-up letter was sent which reiterated the procedural information that had been covered verbally and confirmed the date, time, and place for the interview. At the time of the actual interview, the purposes of the study were again reviewed and the interviewees were offered the opportunity to ask questions about the study if they so desired.

During the actual interview, subjects were given the option of having the individual questions read to them or to work from a sheet listing the questions. The researcher did not engage in any substantive dialogue with the interviewees during the interviews in order not to influence responses in any way. In several cases, the subject completed a question, went on to the next one, and then remembered something else to say in response to a previous question. This was not viewed by the researcher as problematic because it served to provide more detailed data. Because the researcher was not a stranger to the interviewees, the demeanor of the sessions was relaxed and congenial. Once interviews were completed, the audiotapes were transcribed by an individual having no direct ties to the study. No problems arose relative to the quality of the audiotapes of the interviews that would have impacted on the accuracy of the transcripts.

Methodology for Analyzing Interviews

Data reduction of interview transcripts was, in similar fashion as was done with the written sources, by identifying and quantifying all factors raised in the interviews, using Tables 7a and 7b. The frequency and percentage of instructional versus non-instructional factors were also broken down, using Tables 8a and 8b. As with the written sources, factors identified were keyed to the greatest degree possible to those delineated in the literature on criteria for redistricting (summarized in Table 5 in chapter 2) and to the other influences described in chapter 2, including the influence of the Superintendent, the influence of interest groups, the influence of individual values, the influence of cultural/normative factors, and the influence of

areas related to the two theoretical models. Some degree of interpretation was required in order to consolidate factors into more manageable categories. For example, "exhaustion" and "lost sleep," which were identified during interviews as factors influencing the process, were classified as egocentric factors for the purpose of analysis because they related to the stress involved in the decision making process. Additional factors were also specifically described. For example, the influence of balancing the needs of the whole County against the needs of an individual Board member's district was not delineated in the literature, but was raised in multiple interviews.

For the interviews, any factor described was counted as having been raised once by a given individual, even if it was mentioned multiple times in an interview by that individual. This approach was used because factors were frequently repeated in interviews simply to synopsise thoughts that had already been stated. From the interviews, a summary of factors identified was produced for each person interviewed. Further, an aggregate summary of factors identified was produced, by group, for Board members, staff members, community members, and media. The aggregate summaries delineated the frequency that any factor was described by the particular group, and also, the frequency and percentage of instructional versus non-instructional factors.

Analysis of Interviews

Analysis of interviews with board members. In the interviews with the seven Board members, 29 specific factors were identified. The factors identified by a majority of the seven Board members included egocentric constraints (six members), neighborhood schools/proximity of schools (six members), travel distance/time (five members), equity (four members), minimizing numbers redistricted (four members), and whole community versus own district (four members). Of the 29 specific factors identified, one was instructional and 28 were non-instructional. This ratio reflected the same strong tendency toward non-instructional factors that emerged from the minutes. Table 18 provides a summary of factors identified during the interviews with Board members.

Analysis of interviews with staff members. In the interviews with the three staff members, 12 specific factors were identified. The factors identified by more than one staff member included academic balance (by three staff members), availability of alternatives (by two staff members), building capacity/projected growth (by two staff members), cost effectiveness (by two staff members), egocentric constraints (by two staff members), and travel distance and time (by two staff members). Of the 12 specific factors identified, one was instructional and 11 were non-instructional. Table 19 provides a summary of the factors identified in the three interviews with staff members.

Table 18

Factors Identified in Seven Board Interviews

Factor (29 Identified)	Number Identifying	Instructional	Non-Instructional
Egocentric Constraints	6		✓
Neighborhood Schools/Proximity of Schools	6		✓
Travel Distance/Time	5		✓
Equity	4	✓	
Minimize Numbers Redistricted	4		✓
Whole Community Versus Own District	4		✓
Availability of Alternatives	3		✓
Building Capacity/Projected Growth	3		✓
Feeder Patterns	3		✓
Interest Groups	3		✓
Lack of Interest Group Influence	3		✓
Superintendent	3		✓
Conflict of Two Committee Recommendations	2		✓
Computer Model	2		✓
Cost Effectiveness	2		✓
Lack of Cognitive Constraints	2		✓
Process	2		✓
Athletics	1		✓
Affiliative Constraints	1		✓
Committee Recommendations	1		✓
Data Overload/Conflict of Data	1		✓
Decisional Risk	1		✓
Information Lag with Public	1		✓
Lack of Time Constraints	1		✓
Logic	1		✓
Perception Versus Reality	1		✓
Policy Requirements	1		✓
Socioeconomic Ethnic Diversity	1		✓
Time Constraints	1		✓
Total		1 (3.45%)	28 (96.55%)

Table 19

Factors Identified in Three Staff Interviews

Factor (12 Identified)	Number Identifying	Instructional	Non-Instructional
Academic Balance	3	✓	
Availability of Alternatives	2		✓
Building Capacity/Projected Growth	2		✓
Cost Effectiveness	2		✓
Egocentric Constraints	2		✓
Travel Distance/Time	2		✓
Feeder Patterns	1		✓
Knowledge Base Provided to Board	1		✓
Process	1		✓
Socioeconomic/Ethnic Diversity	1		✓
Sorting "Real" Versus "Not Real"	1		✓
Superintendent	1		✓
Total		1	11

Analysis of interviews with community members. In the interviews with the three community members, 17 specific factors were identified. The factors identified by more than one community member included influence of the Redistricting Committee (by three community members), influence of the Superintendent (by three community members), availability of alternatives (by two community members), egocentric constraints (by two community members), lack of interest group influence (by two community members), and influence of the process (by two community members). Of the 17 specific factors identified, 1 was instructional and 16 were

non-instructional. Table 20 provides a summary of the factors identified in the three interviews with community members.

Table 20

Factors Identified in Three Community Member Interviews

Factor (17 Identified)	Number Identifying	Instructional	Non-Instructional
Committee	3		✓
Superintendent	3		✓
Availability of Alternatives	2		✓
Egocentric Constraints	2		✓
Lack of Interest Groups Influence	2		✓
Process	2		✓
Cognitive Constraints	1		✓
Ethnic/Economic Prejudice	1		✓
Feeder Patterns	1		✓
Lack of Cognitive Constraintsa	1		✓
Location of Riverside HS	1		✓
Need to Reduce Central HS Enrollment	1		✓
Path of Least Resistance	1		✓
Race as a Protection Strategy	1		✓
Reality of Mountain HS Profile (Academic Balance)	1	✓	
Size of County	1		✓
Whole County Versus Whole Division	1		✓
Total		1 (5.88%)	16 (94.12%)

Analysis of interviews with media members. In the interviews with the two media members, 11 specific factors were identified. The factors identified in both interviews included academic balance, egocentric constraints, minimize numbers redistricted, socioeconomic/ethnic diversity, and travel distance and time. Of the 11 specific factors identified, 1 was instructional and 10 were non-instructional. Table 21 provides a summary of the factors identified in the two interviews with media members.

Table 21

Factors Identified in Two Media Interviews

Factor (11 Identified)	Number Identifying	Instructional	Non-Instructional
Academic Balance	2	✓	
Egocentric Constraints	2		✓
Minimize Numbers Redistricted	2		✓
Socioeconomic/Ethnic Diversity	2		✓
Travel Distance/Time	2		✓
Cost Effectiveness	1		✓
Individual Histories of Schools	1		✓
Media Coverage	1		✓
Natural Geographic Boundaries	1		✓
Neighborhood Schools/Proximity of Schools	1		✓
Practical and Sensible	1		✓
Total		1 (9.1%)	10 (90.9%)

Summary of Interview Data

School Board Members

The data from interviews with both Board members indicated a strong tendency in the direction on non-instructional factors as influencing the Board's ultimate decision. Based on the interviews with Board members, the strongest of these influences related to maintaining the stability of neighborhood schools, to minimizing travel distance and time, and to minimizing the numbers of students needing to change schools. Speaking to the neighborhood and travel-related issues, Bob Coleman indicated, "I wanted to have kids go to their community schools. That's what I did when I grew up" (p. 2). In discussing the minimizing of students being moved, Hugh Barnes noted, "people (on the Board) did not see this as an opportunity to re-draw the map. They saw it as an opportunity to do what had to be done with the least possible changes" (p. 1).

Based on the interviews with Board members, it was also evident that Board members struggled with balancing the pressures and preferences of citizens from their own districts with what they perceived to be the needs of the entire County. Amplifying this point, James Cleveland said, "this was one time when I had to depart from representing my district, because as a whole I felt there were other disruptive issues that would occur for the entire County, and I have to concern myself with the school system as a whole" (p. 5). Supporting this idea, Callie Michaels indicated that she believed the Board's final decision had been the result of "a sincere attempt to find a compromise" (p. 1).

The interview data further indicated that Board members saw the concept of equity of academic programs across all schools in the district as a priority. Reflecting this issue, Callie Michaels said, "my one concern, which most influenced my decision making, was that all students at all schools would receive an equitable educational opportunity" (p. 1). David Farmer added, "I think fairness and equity is what finally influenced the Board" (p. 1). This emphasis on academics may not have emerged more prominently in other data because academic issues were difficult for Board members to quantify, and therefore, seemed to receive less attention.

The interview data also showed that Board members saw themselves as influenced, at least at times, by the emotional nature and stress of the entire process. Said Mary Forest, "I think emotions really got ugly. They played a big part in this for a lot of people, and we lost sight of the big picture when the emotions took over for us" (p. 5). David Farmer perceived the emotional factors in an equally negative light. He said, "what was difficult for me was to see American culture under attack. . . . I saw tinges of elitism, I saw tinges of racism, and I saw tinges of fright from some parents" (p. 2).

Non-Board Members

The data from the interviews with staff, community, and media members also indicated a tilt toward non-instructional factors. These data were consistent with that from the interviews with Board members in that these interviews indicated a perception that Board members were significantly influenced by proximity to schools,

distance and travel time. Newspaper reporter Marcia Reed underscored this consistency by saying, "what I remember influencing the Board's decision was convenience and what they thought was practical and sensible, and that was the length of bus rides and the vicinity of people to the actual schools" (p. 1).

Staff members George Leslie and Ray Young saw the influence of more concrete logistical factors as extending to the area of building capacity/projected growth. (Three Board members out of seven also cited this as an influence during interviews.) Commented Young, "what I saw in the end, what I saw the Board as having to come to grips with, was the fact that we had set capacities at the schools, and the facilities could only handle so much" (p. 1). Added Leslie, "the capacities of our schools was the single big issue that was concrete enough for them to get their hands around to deal with" (p. 1).

Interview data from non-Board members was also consistent with the Board interview data in that it indicated that Board members were influenced by academic issues. As radio reporter Al Bender indicated, "they did not want to be accused of dumping or setting up schools that were, I guess in some Board members' minds, pre-ordained to have more difficulty. Because they know that parents do examine the comparative scores and test rate passage, etc., and schools develop reputations" (p. 2). George Leslie indicated, "obviously the biggest distracter was the socioeconomic/test scores issues. The academic makeup of the new school, that was the one that gave us the most difficulty" (p. 1).

The non-Board member interview data were also consistent with the Board interview data in that it indicated that Board members were influenced by the emotions of the process. Speaking to this idea, community member Mary Dolan indicated that she felt that the hardest part of the process for Board members was "when parents started coming in and screaming and yelling and saying 'don't move my baby'" (p. 2). Newspaper reporter Marcia Reed added, "the biggest problem, I think, was hysteria" (p. 2).

The data from interviews with non-Board members differed somewhat from what emerged from Board member interviews in that it indicated a stronger perception that Board members were influenced by not being able to identify an alternative that they perceived as decidedly better than the one presented by the Superintendent, and therefore, adopted a plan that was very close to the Superintendent's recommendation. (This perception of a lack of a viable alternative and of the influence of the Superintendent was also verbalized by three Board members during interviews.) Community member Jane Rutger, who during the process advocated a plan that demographically balanced the three high schools, emphasized this idea when she said, "I'll never forget the quote from Callie Michaels that she gave a few weeks into the process after Dr. Henry presented his plan; she said, 'sometimes you have to vote for something because there is nothing else.' And that always stuck with me" (p. 1). Community members in particular were quite adamant in the perception that the Superintendent's recommendation held significant weight with the Board. Said community member Jean Smith, "and I really think that the Board really felt that they

had to stay with what Carl (Henry) said, so I think it made it easier for them. They could always blame him!" (p. 2).

This perception concerning the Superintendent's influence is supported by the fact that during the same period as redistricting was being considered, the Board directed staff to develop a model to differentiate resources for schools with large risk populations as a means of addressing this issue since an acceptable way could not be found to support this population through redistricting. The recommendation to do so had been included in the Superintendent's redistricting recommendation as part of his rationale for not presenting a proposal that balanced demographics in the three high schools. Hugh Barnes noted, "as people were pushing for academic balance, the Superintendent talked about differentiated funding" (p. 5). Superintendent Henry also perceived his influence in this area. He said, "the Board not only made a decision on redistricting, they backed up the decision by supporting the recommendation that differentiated funding would be an outcome that would support schools that have greater diversity" (pp. 2-3).

General Conclusions from Interview Data

Based on the overall interview data, it can be posited that the Board was most influenced by factors that could be measured in a tangible way such as travel distance and time, the number of students affected, the impact on specific neighborhoods, and building capacities. However, it can also be asserted based on these data that the Board struggled with the need to assure equal programmatic opportunities for all students in the district. Because the Board was unable to find an acceptable

alternative on its own that addressed both areas, it deferred to the Superintendent's proposal to adopt a redistricting plan which addressed the most tangible non-instructional factors and embraced his recommendation of the concept of differentiated resources to address the instructional ones. Director of Transportation Ray Young indicated that the Board was ultimately forced to address ". . . dollars and cents and what you can and cannot do, despite the fact that they wanted to spread out diversity" (p. 1). Board member Ron Garden added that ". . . neighborhoods, contiguity, and proximity as much as possible, and the transportation costs" (p. 1) were the major factors driving the Board's decision.

It may be further posited that the Board's adherence to more concrete and measurable factors may have been a way for Board members to deal with the influence of the emotions of the entire situation. The use of the computer model also contributed to this focus on the more concrete and measurable factors. Mary Forest commented, "the thing I was really glad we did was that we used the computer model from Heritage University, because I think that took--I wish it had taken more, but I think it took a lot of the human element out of it, which is the element which is often the most trouble, and made it more scientific, which is a good thing" (p. 8). In describing why the computer model reduced the emotions of the process, James Cleveland added, "the model had no biases in it" (p. 5). Table 22 delineates the most

Table 22

Factors Most Frequently Identified in Interviews

Factor	Board	Staff	Communi- ity	Media
Academic Balance		✓		✓
Availability of Alternatives		✓	✓	
Building Capacity/Projected Growth		✓		
Committee			✓	
Cost Effectiveness		✓		
Egocentric Constraints	✓	✓	✓	✓
Equity	✓			
Lack of Interest Group Influence			✓	
Minimize Numbers Redistricted	✓			✓
Neighborhood Schools/Proximity of Schools	✓			
Process			✓	
Socioeconomic/Ethnic Diversity				✓
Superintendent			✓	
Travel Distance/Time	✓	✓		✓
Whole Community Versus Own District	✓			

frequently cited factors in the interview data. Table 23 delineates the proportion of instructional and non-instructional factors described in the interview data.

Table 23

Instructional Versus Non-Instructional Factors Identified in Interviews

Source	Total Factors Identified	Instructional	Non-Instructional
Board	29	1	28
Staff	12	1	11
Community	17	1	16
Media	11	1	10

Composite Analysis of Written and Interview Data

Most Frequently Identified Factors Across Data Sources

Data Sources

Eight specific sources of data have been described in this chapter: minutes of Board meetings; minutes of public hearings; letters to Board members; newspaper articles; interviews with Board members; interviews with staff members; interviews with community members; and interviews with media members. This section of the study will attempt to synthesize the data obtained from these sources.

Most Frequently Identified Factors

In examining the data from these sources, the clearest tendency that emerged was that the strong majority of factors identified were non-instructional. Of the 18 factors most frequently identified across the eight sources, 15 were non-instructional and three were instructional.

The three instructional factors most frequently identified across the data sources included academic balance, equity, and instructional program impact. The 15 non-instructional factors were as follows: availability of alternatives; building capacity/projected growth; cognitive constraints; committee influence; cost effectiveness; egocentric constraints; feeder patterns; lack of interest group influence; minimize numbers redistricted; neighborhood schools/proximity of schools; process; socioeconomic/ethnic diversity; Superintendent influence; travel distance/time; and whole community versus own district. Academic balance was identified in six of the eight data sources. Travel distance/time was identified in five of the eight data sources. Building capacity/projected growth, cost effectiveness, and egocentric constraints were identified in four of the eight data sources. All other of these factors were identified in three or less of the data sources. Table 24 delineates the five most frequently identified factors in each of the eight data sources. Table 25 delineates the instructional versus non-instructional factors in the areas identified in Table 24. Table 26 delineates the percentage of instructional and non-instructional factors identified in artifact data (minutes, public hearings, letters, and newspaper articles) versus interview data.

Table 24

Five Most Frequently Identified Factors in All Sources

Factor	Minutes	Public Hearings	Letters	News-paper	Board Inter-views	Staff Inter-views	Commu-nity Inter-views	Media Inter-views
Academic Balance	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Availability of Alternatives						✓	✓	
Building Capacity/Projected Growth	✓		✓	✓		✓		
Cognitive Constraints		✓						
Committee							✓	
Cost Effectiveness	✓			✓	✓	✓		
Egocentric Constraints					✓	✓	✓	✓
Equity		✓	✓		✓			
Feeder Patterns	✓		✓	✓				
Instructional Program Impact	✓							
Lack of Interest Group Influence							✓	✓
Minimize Numbers Redistricted						✓		
Neighborhood Schools/Proximity		✓	✓		✓			
Process							✓	
Socioeconomic/Ethnic Diversity								✓
Superintendent				✓			✓	
Travel Distance/Time		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Whole Community vs. Own District					✓			

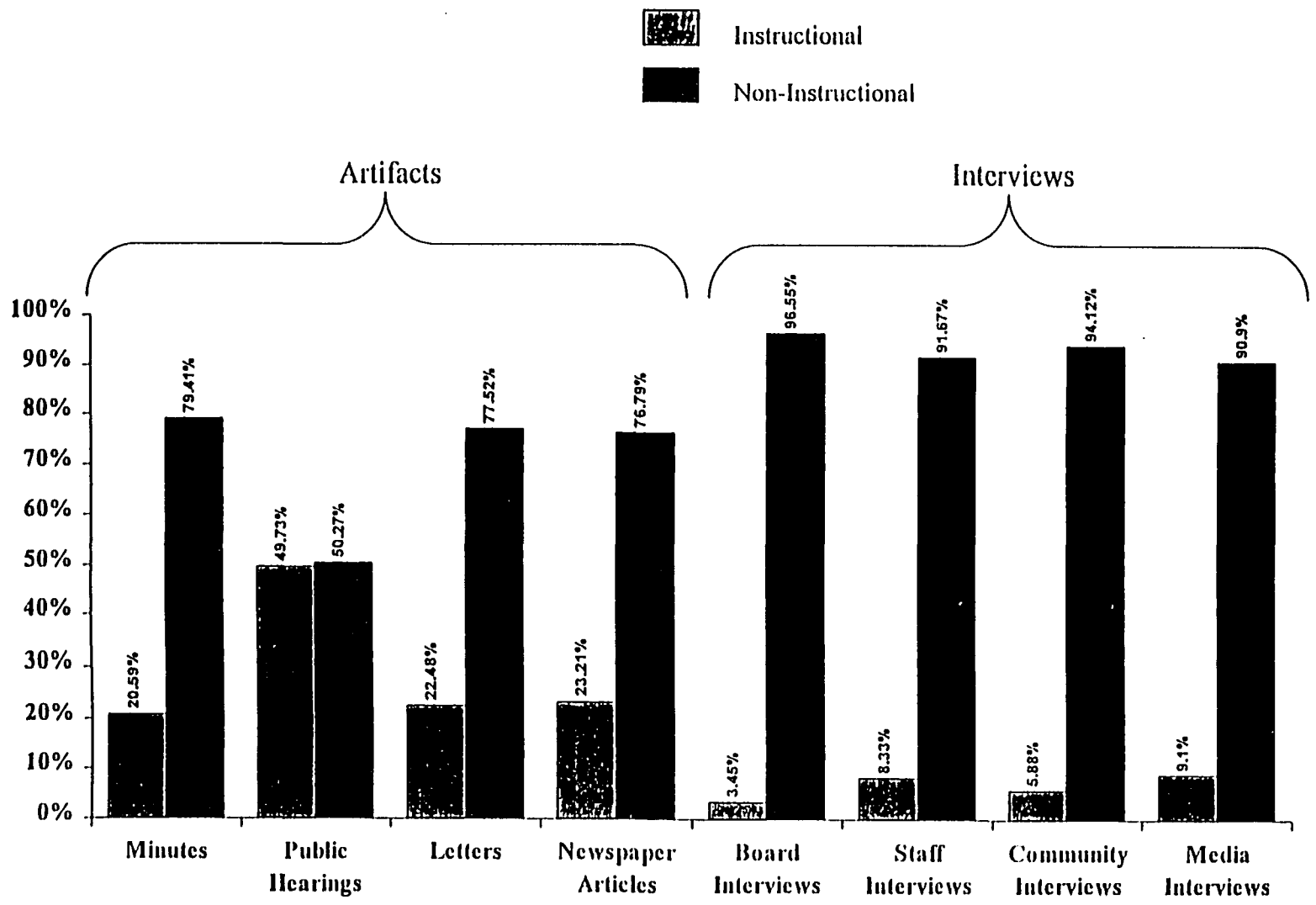
Table 25

Instructional Versus Non-Instructional Factors in Five Most Frequently Identified Factors in All Sources

Factor	Instructional	Non-Instructional
Academic Balance	✓	
Availability of Alternatives		✓
Building Capacity/Projected Growth		✓
Cognitive Constraints		✓
Committee		✓
Cost Effectiveness		✓
Egocentric Constraints		✓
Equity	✓	
Feeder Patterns		✓
Instructional Program Impact	✓	
Lack of Interest Group Influence		✓
Minimize Numbers Redistricted		✓
Neighborhood Schools/Proximity of Schools		✓
Process		✓
Socioeconomic/Ethnic Diversity		✓
Superintendent		✓
Travel Distance/Time		✓
Whole Community Versus Own District		✓
Total	3	15

Table 26

Instructional Versus Non-Instructional Factors--Artifacts versus Interviews



Synthesis of Written and Interview Data

The data from the written sources showed that the Board was extremely focused on balancing concrete logistical factors such as building capacity/projected growth, feeder patterns, and cost effectiveness with instructional factors such as academic balance and equity. These data also indicated that the Board, while attempting to address issues raised by the public through letters and testimony, was not excessively influenced by the public.

The data from interviews indicated that the Board attempted to consider both the concrete logistical factors and instructional issues. These data showed, however, that the Board was more comfortable with the more measurable factors such as travel distance/time and minimizing the numbers of students redistricted, possibly as a means of insulating against the emotional context of the redistricting process. In addressing the academic factors, the Board deferred to the Superintendent's influence. The interview data did not indicate that the Board was influenced in any significant way by interest groups.

General Conclusions from Written and Interview Data

In synthesizing all of the written and interview data, several general conclusions can be drawn:

1. The Board was most comfortable with more measurable non-instructional factors and therefore, focused more on them than on instructional factors. The most important of such factors for Board members seemed to be building capacity/projected

growth, cost effectiveness, neighborhood schools/proximity of schools, and travel distance/time. The stronger focus on non-instructional factors emerged from both the artifact data and the interview data. The degree of difference was more pronounced in the interview data, possibly because a smaller number of factors was explored in the interviews.

2. The focus on concrete, measurable factors helped Board members to cope with the strong emotional undercurrent of the entire redistricting process.

3. The Board was very concerned with instructional factors, but could not find an acceptable alternative to reconcile these areas with the non-instructional ones.

Therefore, the Board accepted the Superintendent's recommendation for a redistricting plan that focused more on non-instructional factors, with instructional areas and concerns addressed outside of the plan through reallocation of budgetary resources.

4. Interest group influence was part of the equation of the Board's decision making, but not an excessive influence.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Review of Research Questions

As discussed in chapter 2, this study was designed around the following research questions:

1. What are the factors that influence the decision making of a local school board concerning redistricting?
2. Are the factors that influence a local school board in making a redistricting decision more instructional or non-instructional in nature?

In the succeeding sections of this chapter, there will be detailed discussion of the conclusions that can be drawn from the data collected in this study. This discussion will be structured through an examination of the data in the context of the factors described in chapter 2, followed by a delineation of the study's specific conclusions in response to the research questions.

Discussion of Influences

Influence of the Superintendent

The influence of the Superintendent in this case study needs to be examined in terms of both the data collected and the plan ultimately adopted by the Board. In examining the written record, the influence of the Superintendent, or in this case, the influence of his recommended redistricting plan, is specifically cited seven times in the Board minutes and five times in newspaper articles. In interviews, it was cited by three of seven Board members, by all three community members, and by one staff member. The staff member citing the Superintendent's influence was Superintendent Henry himself. He perceived the overall redistricting process that he had successfully encouraged the Board to incorporate into policy and his actual redistricting recommendations to have been critical to the Board's decision making. In terms of the process he advocated, Dr. Henry stated,

I think the process that the Superintendent set up for redistricting--that took it away from a staff-based decision, as was previously done, to include the involvement of parents through a series of progressive steps to arrive at a report to the Superintendent, who in turn made a report to the Board--gave them confidence that everybody had tried to involve all the key people throughout the community. . . . I think that was critical. (pp. 1-2)

Superintendent Henry also indicated that he believed his experience with redistricting in another setting and the logic of his recommendations to the Board were significant influences. In reference to this, he stated:

An additional part, in addition to the process that influenced the Board, was in my opinion, the Superintendent's report. The Superintendent's report carefully outlined a position that was research-based on past practices, research-based in the sense that the Superintendent's experience of living through a redistricting in another state. . . . That knowledge base, coupled with the idea that instructional programs have to have a focus and support that vary depending on the diversity of populations, led the Board to an informed alternative that had logic to it that enabled them to support the plan beyond at least the emotions of a distinct group whose viewpoint was that the only way you can have good schools is to have each school being in a cookie-cutter way equal in diversity. . . . (p. 2)

Community members interviewed strongly gravitated to the perception of the Superintendent's vital influence. Jean Smith articulated this perception in saying, "I think this is just natural, but in the back of School Board members' minds, their thought was, 'Well Dr. Henry knows best. After all, he's studied this much longer than we have, and he's much more knowledgeable than we are'" (p. 3). Although only three of seven Board members directly identified the Superintendent's influence in their interviews, the impact of his recommendations was recognized as an important part of the picture. As Hugh Barnes stated, "the Superintendent gave us a fairly solid quality recommendation, and even though we reviewed it in detail, there wasn't enough strength to really change the picture dramatically" (p. 2).

Probably the strongest indicator of the Superintendent's influence, however, was the fact that the final plan adopted by the Board made relatively few changes from the Superintendent's recommendation. Further, the Board's adopted plan did not redraw the lines for the district's high schools to reflect academic balance, even though such an approach was strongly advocated by a large number of vocal and determined community members. This is not to say that the Board "rubber stamped"

the Superintendent's recommendation. On the contrary, the recommendation was intensely scrutinized by the Board during the almost 30 hours of work sessions and public testimony. But in the end, the Superintendent's influence was a key factor.

The high degree of influence of the Superintendent in this case is consistent with the overall direction of the literature related to school redistricting described in chapter 2. The fact that redistricting is a highly complex endeavor requiring a great deal of information for informed decision making caused the Superintendent's influence to be all the more critical, a point which was specifically articulated by Merz (1986).

Influence of Interest Groups

The influence of interest groups on the Board's decision in this case study should also be examined in terms of both the data collected and the direction of the Board's ultimate decision. The areas about which interest groups advocated during the redistricting process were most clearly identified in the data from public hearings and letters written to the Board. The factors that most strongly emerged from these sources included academic balance, equity, neighborhood schools/proximity of schools, and travel distance and time. The other data sources, especially the interview data, reinforce that all of these factors came into play in some fashion as the Board made its decision. Of these factors, the Board, as noted in chapter 4, was most influenced by issues related to neighborhoods and distances from schools. Interest group pressure, however, most strongly focused on academic balance.

In adopting its redistricting plan, the Board chose not to redraw lines to address the academic balance issue, as advocated by 20 out of 51 speakers at the October 14 public hearing, by 41 out of 64 speakers at the December 16 public hearing, in 18 of 77 letters written to the Board, and in a very visible op-ed piece by citizen Mary Mathis in the Sunday, November 3 edition of The Herald. Based on this, it can be posited that the Board was influenced by interest groups, but only as a measured part of the decision making equation and not as strong a part as the Superintendent. In this particular situation, interest groups, while extremely visible and vocal, did not dominate the Board. As James Cleveland noted in discussing the pressure placed on the Board to balance high school demographics, "I don't believe the percentage of free-and-reduced lunch really affected the Board's decision making process, because in the final analysis, it fell out of other factors. That was raised by the public and raised by the public, but I don't think the actions the Board took indicated they were as concerned about it . . ." (p. 1).

Schmidt's (1994) assertion that interest group influence is based on the perceived validity of point of view espoused by a given interest group seemed to best characterize this circumstance. In this situation, the Board gravitated to striking a balance as to how it reacted to interest groups. As Hugh Barnes stated, "the thing that was helpful to me was that there were voices on the other side--not that there were a lot of voices on the other side" (p. 4). He added that he tried to keep interest groups in perspective by ". . . being out in the schools and talking to people in that setting rather than just talking to people who were coming to the meetings" (p. 4).

Influence of Individual Values

The area of individual values is another in which the influence on Board members has to be inferred because its influence was not directly raised within the data sources. Much of the research on this area cited in chapter 2 indicated that individual values come into play as a decision is made as part of the process of weighing the relative merits of alternatives. There is indirect evidence to support that individual values did influence the Board as it weighed the various redistricting alternatives.

The strongest indicators of the influence of individual values in this case study were the emphases placed by Board members in interview data on trying to find a fair and equitable solution and on balancing the needs of the whole community versus the needs of individual districts. Both areas were specifically cited by four Board members during their interviews. David Farmer succinctly underscored the influence of both areas when he said, "I think the Board decided as they did out of fairness for all of the children in Albemarle County" (p. 1). Buttressing this idea is the fact that only about 31% of the factors identified by individual Board members in the minutes related specifically to their individual districts. Board members were certainly not as parochial as they could have been as they deliberated.

A further indicator of the influence of individual values was the emphasis the Board placed on neighborhood and community-type issues. This area was cited in one way or another by six of seven Board members during their interviews and was a consistent theme in other data sources. This factor seemed to have provided the

Board a litmus test, so to speak, for alternatives being considered. Mary Forest reflected the Board's focus on this area when she stated, "I truly, truly in my heart believe in local schools, in community schools, in building a community" (p. 1). Added Bob Coleman, "the Board wanted to have people go to the closest school where they live" (p. 1).

Based on this, it can be posited that individual values related to equity, the common good, and the importance of neighborhoods and communities seemed to have provided a context for the Board's decision making. At points in the process where Board members were faced with multiple options, these values served as a balance against which to weigh the merits of a given option. This assertion is supported by the research on the influence of individual values reviewed in chapter 2, which indicated that decision making is very much a function of balancing individual values with other factors. The studies cited by Smith, McGuire, Abbot, and Blaw (1991) and by Dolgoff and Skolnik (1996) especially highlighted this concept.

Influence of Cultural/Normative Factors

The influence of cultural/normative factors is a further area which, like individual values, needs to be inferred. As discussed in chapter 2, cultural/normative factors have the most impact on decisions where no demonstrably "correct" answer is evident. Redistricting is undoubtedly such a decision area.

In this case study, the actual process followed by the Board to reach a final decision was a strong reflection of cultural/normative factors. The overall process that

led to the Board's final redistricting decision, which included a committee that met for almost seven months, two three-hour public hearings that involved 115 speakers, and approximately 24 hours of public work sessions, was the result of a cultural/normative expectation perceived by the Board for a maximum level of involvement, public input, and openness. This expectation clearly came to light when the Redistricting Committee attempted to hold closed meetings. Similar concerns had also been raised about previous redistricting processes. As Callie Michaels remarked, "the Board went into it (redistricting) with a very open mind and was very concerned that there be an open process with the community" (p. 1). In fact, the high level of involvement, input, and openness may have been taken to an extreme. Speaking to this, Bob Coleman indicated, "I think we went overboard--we had committees, we wanted to get public input--and I think that was another thing that influenced us. We tried to listen to everyone" (pp. 2-3).

It can also be asserted that the idea of equity, in addition to being an individual value that influenced the Board's decision, was also a cultural/normative factor from the community which influenced the Board's decision. It is evident from the data from the public hearings and letters to the Board that the idea of equity was one that permeated the community's sense of what should influence the Board's decision. The concept of equity, for all practical purposes, drove the discussion of academic balance in that many citizens felt that an equitable program could not be offered in a school that had a 30% population of economically deprived students. The Board was clearly sensitive to the equity issue, as evidenced especially in the

interview data. As Mary Forest stated, "provide equal opportunities--a keyword here--one of the speakers said we need to provide equal opportunities for our students, and I think we are. I think we have planned on it" (p. 6).

It can be posited that the influence of cultural/normative factors, in a way somewhat similar to that of individual values, influenced the Board's decision by providing a guiding context and focus for the decision making process. This function is consistent with overall direction of the literature described in chapter 2 in that the expectations of the community influenced both how the Board approached its task and, to some degree, what it valued in examining possible options.

Influence of General Redistricting Criteria

In chapter 2, a number of specific redistricting criteria cited in the literature are delineated. As noted in chapter 4, the Board placed strong emphasis on a number of concrete measurable factors from among these criteria. The most important ones, based on the data from all sources, included the following: building capacity/projected growth; cost effectiveness; feeder patterns; minimize numbers redistricted; neighborhood schools/proximity of schools; socioeconomic/ethnic diversity; and travel distance/time. In their interviews, Board members especially emphasized cost effectiveness, minimizing numbers redistricted, and travel distance and time. As noted in chapter 4, the emphasis on these factors may have been a way for Board members to insulate themselves from the emotional issues involved, the validity of which was at times difficult to discern. Speaking to this idea, Bob Coleman

commented that "trying to get the facts versus perceptions" (p. 3) was the most difficult part of the process for him.

It can be posited that Board members were significantly influenced by a number of the typical redistricting criteria. These criteria provided an anchor for Board members as the public discourse became more heated and the lines between perception and reality more blurred. The use of the computer model to manipulate some of these factors also helped to keep them in the forefront of the deliberations.

Influence of Theoretical Model Factors

Based on interview data from the Board, staff members, community members, and media members, the most significant factor from the two theoretical models described in chapter 2 was egocentric constraints, from the Constraints Model of Policymaking Processes developed by Janis (1989). In this particular situation, egocentric constraints referred to the emotional stress of the redistricting process. As described by Janis in the model, an individual or group impacted by an egocentric constraint will often respond in a way consistent with satisfying self-interest or satisfying an emotional need. Janis also indicated that the emotional response of an individual or group affected by egocentric constraints might be to "rely on gut feelings," to adopt an unrealistic "can do" attitude, or to "take no action" (pp. 67-77).

In this case study, much of the emotion of the process related to the concept of academic balance in the three high schools. It can be asserted that in response to this very emotional issue, the Board chose, for all practical purposes, to "take no action"

when they adopted the Superintendent's proposal, which included the concept of differentiated funding as a means of addressing the academic balance issue and allowed the Board to justify not redrawing lines for academic balance purposes. As Mary Forest stated, "I think the saving grace of the plan as we chose it was Dr. Henry coming through and saying, 'We will put more resources there to make it work, make it work right at Mountain, to remediate, to get these kids up to par--we will do that'" (pp. 2-3). Community member Jane Rutger saw the Board's avoidance of this issue as based on their fear of addressing it. She said, "many of the School Board members were not happy with this profile (of the Mountain student body) and its implications, but they were even more uncomfortable to address it and talk about it for fear of having to talk about the haves and have-nots. . . . So they took the path of least resistance" (p. 4).

The other significant factor from the theoretical models that had impact on the Board's decision related to the availability of alternatives, an element of the Conflict Model of Consequential Decision Making developed by Janis and Mann (1977). This influence was particularly noted in both staff and community member interviews. In this case, the Board was unable to identify an alternative it found acceptable to address the academic balance issue, and therefore, opted to accept the Superintendent's recommendations relative to this area. Janis and Mann indicated that an individual or group affected by a lack of viable alternatives will often resort to "defensive avoidance," or taking no action to address a problem, which also parallels the course of action described in the Constraints Model in response to egocentric

constraints. In this scenario, the Board avoided directly confronting the issue of academic balance by adopting the Superintendent's recommendation because no suitable redistricting alternative could be identified.

Responses to Research Questions

In chapter 4 and in the initial section of this chapter, the data collected for this study has been described and analyzed in detail. The purpose of this section of the study will be to tie this analysis back to the study's research questions. It is important and necessary to note that some of the conclusions to be drawn are directly supported by the data, while others are more inferred by the data and the direction of the Board's ultimate decision.

Response to First Research Question

The first research question asked what factors influenced the Board's final decision on redistricting. Conclusions drawn as to this question are as follows:

1. The Superintendent and the recommendations he made were a strong influence on the School Board. Although the data, especially in interviews, points to this influence, probably the strongest indicator of the Superintendent's impact was the fact that the Board's adopted plan made very few changes from the Superintendent's recommendation and was consistent with his recommendation not to redistrict for academic balance in the three high schools, even though a vocal and well-organized

interest group vigorously lobbied the Board to do so. Another noteworthy indicator of the Superintendent's influence was the Board's embracing of his recommendation on differentiated funding.

2. Interest groups had an influence on the Board's decision, but not an overwhelming one. The areas stressed most by interest groups, as delineated in letters and public hearings, were academic balance, equity, feeder patterns, neighborhood schools/proximity of schools, and travel distance and time. The Board's focus on these areas is supported through the minutes and Board interviews and especially reinforced in staff, community and media interviews. However, the Board was not swayed by interest groups on the academic balance issue, arguably the one that drew the most public attention, in terms of how they drew attendance boundaries. The Board did, however, attempt to address the concerns connected to this issue through adoption of the Superintendent's recommendation for differentiated funding.

3. Individual values influenced the Board's decision in terms of the Board's focus on trying to find a fair and equitable solution, on trying to balance the needs of the entire County with the issues of individual districts, and on maintaining neighborhood schools. All three areas were strongly noted during Board member interviews. Equity and neighborhood schools were also consistent themes in minutes, public hearings, letters, staff interviews, and media interviews. The fact that a relatively small percentage (30.88%) of the factors raised by Board members during their work sessions related to individual districts is a tangible indicator of the Board's attempt to balance broad district issues with more parochial issues.

4. The influence of cultural/normative factors is one that needs to be inferred from the data and an examination of the process. The actual process used by the Board to reach a decision, which involved a citizen-based committee, lengthy public work sessions, and two public hearings was indicative of a community expectation of a high level, perhaps even an inordinate level, of openness and involvement. The concept of equity, which was a thread woven throughout the entire fabric of the process, was also indicative of an important community norm.

5. The Board was strongly influenced by several concrete, measurable redistricting criteria, including: building capacity/projected growth; cost effectiveness; feeder patterns; minimizing numbers redistricted; neighborhood schools/proximity of schools; socioeconomic/ethnic diversity; and travel distance and time. These areas were consistent themes across data sources, most especially in the minutes and the Board member interviews. The emphasis on these areas may have been to some extent a way for Board members to insulate themselves from the emotions inherent to the process.

6. The factors from the two theoretical models that most influenced the Board were: 1) egocentric constraints, or the high level of emotion in the decision making environment; and 2) availability of alternatives. The emotional strain of the situation was cited consistently in the interview data from both Board members and non-board members as a significant factor in the process. The availability of a viable alternatives was cited strongly in staff and community interviews and was also identified in three of the Board member interviews. The influence of this factor was

also inferred by the fact that the Board could not identify a viable way to address the academic balance issue, and therefore, essentially adopted the Superintendent's recommendations.

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to attempt to single out one of these factors as having been dominant. Rather, some of these factors should be viewed to some degree as interactive, as relating to one another. For example, the Superintendent's influence was related in some measure to the lack of other viable alternatives available to the Board. The influence of measurable factors such as travel distance/time and building capacity/projected growth was at least partially related to the egocentric constraints, or emotions, of the situation. The relatively limited degree of interest group influence on the Board was related to the strong level of the Superintendent's influence. Certainly, any of these factors can stand on their own. But these factors were also interactive ingredients in the Board's final decision. The best analogy to use would be that of a mixing bowl. In this case, the process was the mixing bowl, and the Board's decision a product of all the ingredients blended in the bowl.

Response to Second Research Question

The second research question asked whether the factors influencing the Board were more instructional or non-instructional in nature. Based on sheer numbers and percentages, the tendency was strongly towards the influence of non-instructional factors in all data sources except for the public hearings, which reflected a more equal

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balance. This is understandable given that parents, who made up the vast majority of speakers at the hearings, would be more narrowly focused.

However, instructional factors, while seeming to have less influence on the Board's redistricting decision, did force the Board to examine other ways to address academic issues that came to light during the redistricting process. The implementation of differentiated funding was a direct result of the redistricting deliberations. Therefore, it would be invalid to assert that instructional factors were not an important influence on the final outcome. It is more accurate to say that the number of instructional factors was less than the number of non-instructional ones, but that both areas in their own way had a distinct and important influence.

Implications and Areas for Further Study

Implications of the Study's Conclusions

The conclusions of this study have several significant implications for any school board facing a redistricting process, as follows:

1. To address redistricting, a school board needs accurate information on concrete, measurable criteria such as building capacity/projected growth, travel distance and time, etc. This information will help a board make a better decision from a cost effectiveness and longevity standpoint, and also help a board maintain its perspective when the inevitable emotions of the process come into play. In this study, the availability of such information was a critical factor. The use of a computer model to manipulate some of this information was also a positive and useful strategy.

2. At the beginning of a redistricting process, it may be a useful strategy to conduct a parent survey to ascertain parental priorities on redistricting criteria. While the priorities identified in such a survey might be somewhat narrow, this information would help provide some direction and focus to the process. Further, the actual step of conducting the survey would provide parents a clear signal of the importance of their point of view.

3. Before looking at maps and options, a board needs to come to some consensus as to its redistricting goals and priorities. This will help the board to analyze options against some kind of standard, hopefully a responsible one. In this study, the Board didn't specifically do so, even though consensus on priorities did evolve informally during its deliberations. This additional structured step may have helped to alleviate some of the emotions of the process.

4. Sufficient time needs to be allotted for a board to consider a redistricting plan. Doing so will allow all options to receive adequate scrutiny and increase public confidence in the process and in the final decision. In this case, the Board did not rush itself, and even delayed its decision when new information became available. The time taken also allowed the Board to examine the Superintendent's recommendation very critically before it determined that no better alternatives were available.

5. During redistricting, a Board needs to find ways other than the usual means of public hearings, phone calls, and letters to gather input. What is received on a formal basis may not present a totally accurate picture. In his interview, Hugh Barnes

indicated that seeking other input sources had been very helpful to him in terms of keeping interest groups in perspective. However, it is unclear whether or not other Board members did or felt likewise.

6. Although it is easy to become focused on the non-instructional factors inherent to a redistricting decision, a board also needs to take steps to make sure that academics are kept in focus. To do so is difficult because many instructional factors are not easy to boil down to numbers. However, it is essential to focus on both instructional and non-instructional factors, even if the focus is not equal for each area. In this case, the Board attempted to do so, but did find it difficult because the non-instructional factors were much easier to grasp and manipulate.

7. Process is a critical issue, arguably the most critical one, in a redistricting decision. How a decision is made, and the degree to which citizens perceive themselves as having been involved in the decision making process, is a key factor in the acceptance of the decision that is ultimately made. Although a process that provides significant opportunity for participation and input might seem on the surface to be inefficient and unwieldy, it is, in the longer term, more efficient because of the acceptance that will be promoted in the longer term. Further, an inclusive process will tend to moderate the competing, and sometimes extreme, interests that inevitably emerge during redistricting. In this case, the Board pursued an extremely inclusive process. This process, while difficult, promoted acceptance of the plan that was ultimately adopted (see Epilogue). Further, this process enabled the Board to confront and address the equity issue it could not solve through redistricting.

Areas for Further Study

Based on this study, it would be useful to conduct a similar case study to compare the factors that influence a redistricting decision made in another setting. It would also be useful to conduct a case study on a school board making a decision in some other controversial area, such as budget, curriculum, facilities, materials, personnel, or programs. In both cases, it would be instructive to determine what factors influenced board decisions in these settings, and if, or what degree, they differed from the factors that influenced the Albemarle County School Board in making a redistricting decision. This additional research would serve to enhance what Schofield (1990), citing Guba and Lincoln, referred to as the "fittingness" of this study, or "the degree to which the situation matches other situations in which we are interested" (p. 207).

EPILOGUE TO THE CASE STUDY

With the completion of the redistricting process, the planning for the opening of Mountain High School, which was the primary focus of the Albemarle County redistricting process, moved forward. For the most part, citizens who had focused their attention during the redistricting process on the issue of academic balance for the three high schools, refocused their energies on the program that would be offered at Mountain High School. In January of 1997, an attempt was made by a prospective Mountain High School parent to request the School Board to reconsider its earlier decision. The Board, however, decided not to do so, and trained its emphasis on the planning for the opening of the new school and on the implementation of the redistricting plan in general.

During its twice-monthly regular meetings starting in February of 1997, the Board received formal staff reports on all aspects of the planning for Mountain High School and for redistricting. Several planning and visioning sessions were also conducted for prospective parents of Mountain High School and other interested community members to begin to flesh out possible directions for both instructional and operational areas in the school. (During this period, the concept of having a magnet school at Mountain, which the Board had directed to be explored, was delayed until after the school was opened and stabilized.) A number of parents who had been extremely vocal in their opposition to the proposed district lines for Mountain High School became very active in this process.

In late February of 1997, the principalship of the school was advertised and a national search was conducted to find a leader for the school. In May of 1997, after a screening and interview process that had involved a large number of Mountain's parents, Harry Lawson was appointed principal of Mountain High School. Lawson, an African-American who had been serving as principal of a large urban high school in a northeastern state, had impressed parents, community, and staff with his instructional background, innovative vision, belief that all students can achieve, and no-nonsense approach concerning discipline. Lawson also projected an almost ministerial zeal for his work that Superintendent Carl Henry believed would energize the community of the new school.

Henry's instincts proved correct. During the 1997-98 planning year for the school, Lawson threw himself into organizing and preparing for the school's opening in the fall of 1998 with intense energy. He visited homes of prospective students and spoke to innumerable church, business, and community groups. During the summer of 1997, he facilitated the inception of the school's PTA and involved prospective students in the choosing of the school's colors and mascot. His enthusiasm and vision for the school attracted tremendous interest on the part of teachers both inside and outside of the district to become part of Mountain's first faculty. Surprisingly, over half the seniors slated to attend Mountain, who also had the option of staying in their previous school, decided to come to Mountain. By the summer of 1998, Lawson's work and leadership had done much to ease community concerns about the school. In August of 1998, Mountain High School opened smoothly and the overall

redistricting plan was implemented equally as smoothly. Having the plan adopted and in place for over a year and a half prior to its implementation allowed a large number of possible problems to be ironed out ahead of time. The building capacity numbers projected in the plan worked out almost perfectly. Further, many of the dire predictions of parent flight and plummeting property values made during the redistricting process failed to materialize. In fact, the highest increase in assessed property values during Albemarle County's 1999 assessments occurred in the Mountain High School attendance area. New housing starts in the Mountain attendance area also exceeded projections.

Although the Albemarle School Board chose not to redistrict based on equalizing academic achievement levels at the three high schools, the Board continued its efforts to provide additional resources to meet the specific needs of schools having large risk populations. In the fall of 1998, the second generation of a staffing formula designed to provide all schools with an equal baseline class size with additional staff provided to schools having high at-risk populations was implemented. Further, additional monetary resources for remedial needs, including a pilot extended-year program at one elementary school with a particularly high at-risk population, were also provided to these schools. Although the Board's adopted redistricting plan did not in and of itself address the issue of unequal achievement of schools, the influence of this issue on the Board's allocation of resources to be felt.

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APPENDIX

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS Arranged Chronologically (Pseudonyms from Study Used or Names Deleted)

July, 1995

1. Albemarle County School Board Minutes--July 24, 1995

January, 1996

2. Albemarle County School Board Minutes--January 18, 1996

March, 1996

3. Letter to School Board from _____, March 29, 1996

April, 1996

4. Secrecy on school lines is unhealthy, The Herald, April 7, 1996
5. Reconsider closed door meetings, The Herald, April 16, 1996
6. Albemarle County School Board Minutes--April 22, 1996
7. Honoring committee's openness, The Herald, April 23, 1996

August, 1996

8. School zone assignment too tough, The Herald, August 27, 1996

September, 1996

9. Report of the Superintendent's Redistricting Advisory Committee

October, 1996

10. Superintendent's Redistricting Recommendations
11. Albemarle County School Board Minutes--October 7, 1996
12. Letter to School Board from _____, October 8, 1996
13. Letter to School Board from _____, October 8, 1996
14. Neighborhoods are schools' focus in redistricting, The Herald, October 8, 1996
15. Letter to School Board from _____, October 9, 1996
16. Letter to School Board from _____, October 10, 1996
17. Letter to School Board from _____, October 10, 1996
18. Letter to School Board from _____, October 10, 1996
19. Letter to School Board from _____, October 10, 1996
20. Letter to School Board from _____, October 11, 1996
21. Letter to School Board from _____, October 14, 1996
22. Letter to School Board from _____, October 14, 1996
23. Letter to School Board from _____, October 14, 1996
24. Letter to School Board from _____, October 14, 1996
25. Letter to School Board from _____, October 14, 1996
26. Letter to School Board from _____, October 14, 1996
27. Albemarle County School Board Minutes--October 14, 1996
28. Letter to School Board from _____, October 15, 1996
29. Letter to School Board from _____, October 15, 1996
30. Letter to School Board from _____, October 15, 1996
31. Letter to School Board from _____, October 15, 1996
32. Letter to School Board from _____, October 15, 1996
33. Letter to School Board from _____, October 16, 1996
34. Letter to School Board from _____, October 17, 1996
35. Letter to School Board from _____, October 17, 1996
36. Letter to School Board from _____, October 17, 1996
37. Letter to School Board from _____, October 18, 1996
39. Letter to School Board from _____, October 19, 1996
40. Letter to School Board from _____, October 20, 1996
41. Letter to School Board from _____, October 20, 1996
42. Letter to School Board from _____, October 20, 1996
43. Letter to School Board from _____, October 20, 1996
44. Letter to School Board from _____, October 21, 1996
45. Letter to School Board from _____, October 21, 1996
46. Albemarle County School Board Minutes--October 21, 1996
47. Letter to School Board from _____, October 22, 1996
48. Letter to School Board from _____, October 22, 1996
49. School Board oks budget with deficit, The Herald, October 22, 1996
50. Letter to School Board from _____, October 23, 1996
51. Letter to School Board from _____, October 23, 1996
52. Letter to School Board from _____, October 24, 1996

October 1996 (continued)

53. Letter to School Board from _____, October 25, 1996
54. Letter to School Board from _____, October 25, 1996
55. Letter to School Board from _____, October 27, 1996
56. Letter to School Board from _____, October 28, 1996
57. Letter to School Board from _____, October 28, 1996
58. Letter to School Board from _____, October 30, 1996
59. Letter to School Board from _____, October 30, 1996
60. Albemarle County School Board Minutes, October 30, 1996
61. School Board stymied by redistricting process, The Herald, October 31, 1996

November, 1996

62. Letter to School Board from _____, November 1, 1996
63. Letter to School Board from _____, November 1, 1996
64. Student mix critical for MHS, The Herald, November 3, 1996
65. Letter to School Board from _____, November 8, 1996
66. Letter to School Board from _____, November 6, 1996
67. Albemarle County School Board Minutes--November 11, 1996
68. Letter to School Board from _____, November 12, 1996
69. Letter to School Board from _____, November 12, 1996
70. County school district lines tentatively drawn, The Herald, November 12, 1996
71. Letter to School Board from _____, November 13, 1996
72. Letter to School Board from _____, November 12, 1996
73. Letter to School Board from _____, November 14, 1996
74. Letter to School Board from _____, November 14, 1996
75. Letter to School Board from _____, November 14, 1996
76. Letter to School Board from _____, November 15, 1996
77. Letter to School Board from _____, November 15, 1996
78. Letter to School Board from _____, November 15, 1996
79. Letter to School Board from _____, November 15, 1996
80. Letter to School Board from _____, November 15, 1996
81. Letter to School Board from _____, November 15, 1996
82. Letter to School Board from _____, November 15, 1996
83. Letter to School Board from _____, November 15, 1996
84. Albemarle County School Board Minutes--November 18, 1996
85. New school lines get preliminary ok, The Herald, November 19, 1996
86. Letter to School Board from _____, November 20, 1996
87. Letter to School Board from _____, November 20, 1996
88. Letter to School Board from _____, November 23, 1996
89. Letter to School Board from _____, November 24, 1996
90. Letter to School Board from _____, November 26, 1996
91. Letter to School Board from _____, November 27, 1996

December, 1996

92. Letter to School Board from _____, December 2, 1996
93. Letter to School Board from _____, December 2, 1996
94. Letter to School Board from _____, December 2, 1996
95. Letter to School Board from _____, December 2, 1996
96. Albemarle County School Board Minutes--December 2, 1996
97. Letter to School Board from _____, December 3, 1996
98. Letter to School Board from _____, December 3, 1996
99. Letter to School Board from _____, December 3, 1996
100. School districts redrawn, The Herald, December 3, 1996
101. Albemarle County School Board Minutes--December 16, 1996
102. School districts approved, The Herald, December 17, 1996

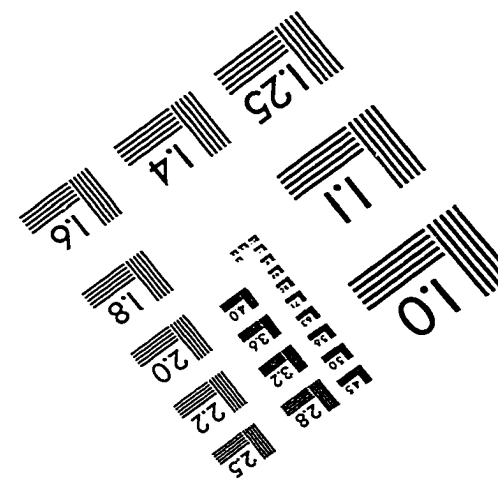
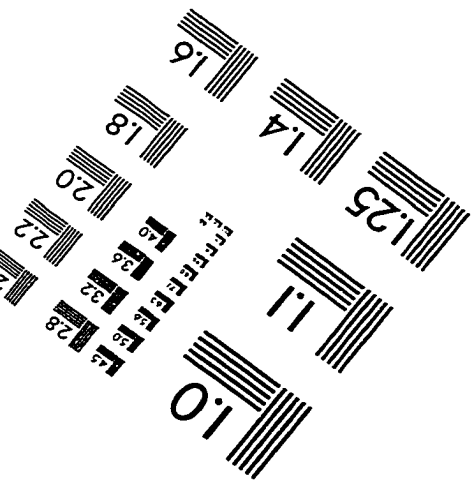
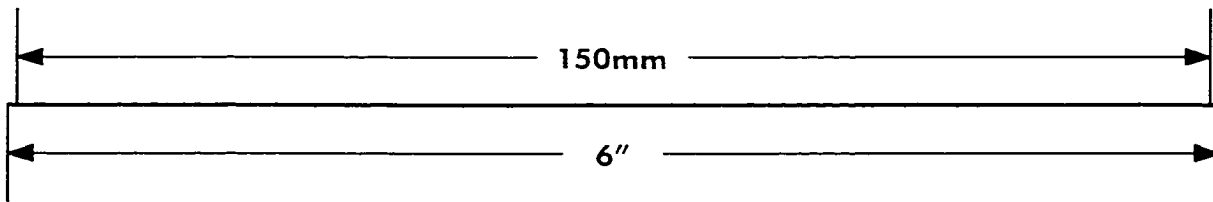
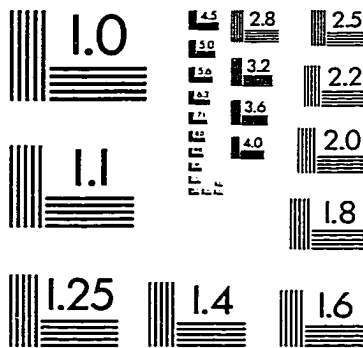
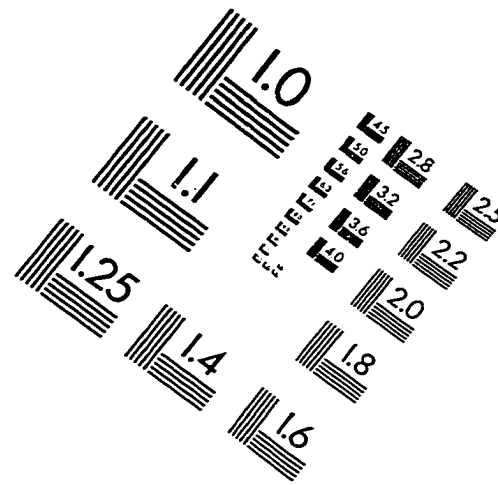
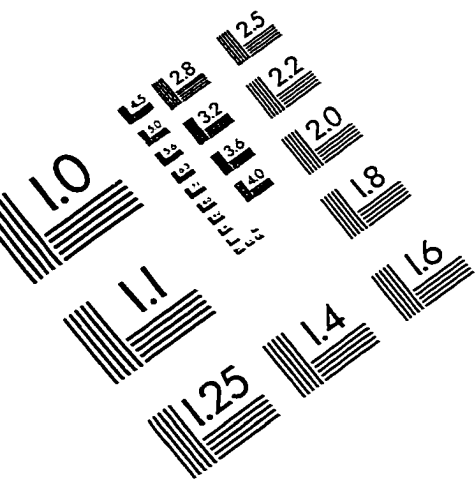
January, 1998

103. Albemarle County School Proposed Capital Improvements Program FY 1998/99 - 2002/03

March, 1998

104. Albemarle County Proposed Operating Budget FY 1998/99

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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