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**LEADERSHIP IN A QUALITY SCHOOL**

by

**Peter J. Bray**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education**

**University of San Diego**

**1994**

**Dissertation Committee**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **LEADERSHIP IN A QUALITY SCHOOL**

**BRAY, PETER J. ED. D. UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO, 1994, 444 PAGES.**

**DIRECTOR: JOSEPH C. ROST PH. D.**

Education in Western countries has been under attack in recent years. Numerous individuals and groups have made attempts to reform or restructure the system in which students are schooled. Such change is difficult and on many occasions the attempts at reform resulted in very superficial modifications. Significant change can come from a complex interaction of people where leaders and collaborators work interactively to achieve common purposes.

This research examined one school, which is part of William Glasser's consortium of Quality Schools, where significant changes took place. Glasser's control theory has played an important role in the change process. The challenge was to determine the nature of leadership in the school as the changes unfolded and so the focus was on the leadership processes that occurred. The study examined the various ways in which people used influence and how they established and sustained influence relationships to make substantive changes in the education processes at the school.

The researcher used a qualitative case study methodology to examine the school in rural California. Through this methodology it was possible to provide an outline of the range of strategies that people used to entice

others to enter into relationships with them, relationships that brought about significant change that reflected the mutual purposes of the people concerned.

The findings of the study indicate that for significant change to occur adults in the school must change their beliefs about the nature of the school, about their relationships with one another and about their relationships with the students. Leaders and collaborators can best achieve changes that reflected their mutual purposes when they confront the beliefs they have brought with them from their past and take steps to change those beliefs through enabling and encouraging noncoercive influence relationships to exist between them. Changing beliefs is assisted by changing the language that is used in the school, particularly changing the metaphors used to speak about the school and the relationships that exist there.

**Copyright 1994**

Dedicated to

My Father

Albert James Bray

My Sister and Brother-in-Law

Kathleen and Denis Frechtling

The De La Salle Brothers

in the District of

New Zealand, Australia and Papua New Guinea

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## LEADERSHIP IN A QUALITY SCHOOL

### Statement of the Issue

#### Introduction

Over the past decade numerous parents, scholars and government officials in English speaking countries have expressed concern about the quality of many students' experiences in schools. "Never have more people outside the schools been swept up in such discussion--from state governors to inner-city parents, from university presidents to college students considering careers in teaching, from state governors to high school newspaper editors" (Gross & Gross, 1985, p. 15). Various bodies and committees have compiled reports in, among other countries, the United States of America (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Holmes Group, 1986; Carnegie Forum, 1986; University Council for Educational Administration, 1987); in England (McLean, 1988); in New Zealand (Picot, 1988) and in Australia (Scott, 1989). Each of these reports argued that educational achievement did not live up to expectations.

These reports reflected, perhaps, a fragile consensus that "schools, as they are constituted, are not capable of meeting society's expectations for the education of young people" (Elmore, 1990, p. 1) As a result of these reports, Capper and Jamison (1993) claimed there was "a cacophony of voices calling for educational reform" (p. 25). There was a felt need for change. The

motives underlying these reforms, however, have been varied. There were business interests who argued that "economic growth, competitiveness, and living standards depend heavily on making investments in human capital. That means attending to the state of America's schools" ("America's Schools," 1988, p. 129). Other people saw the need for reform arising out of a lack of justice and equity (Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986). Still others saw the need for improving the quality of the teaching force: "The traditions of recruitment, norms of preparation, and conditions of work in schools have severely hindered efforts to improve the quality of teaching" (Holmes Group, 1986, p. 31).

There appears to be in all these calls for reform a "potentially powerful coincidence of political, business, professional and academic interests that could dramatically affect public education if they were to act in concert" (Elmore, 1986, p. 2). Unfortunately such a coincidence of interest does not guarantee any "well-articulated policy agenda for restructuring schools, much less any significant change in the nature and outcomes of schooling" (Elmore, 1986, p. 3)

### Various Proposals

In many cases politicians took the findings of these national reports and based their reform proposals on their recommendations. As a result, particularly in the United States, there was an "avalanche of school reports and a subsequent flood of activity in almost every state" (Boyer, 1985, p. 10). These reforms have taken a variety of forms, but generally have focused on testing and stiffening the requirements so that people can see the legislators "putting value" in diplomas (Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1991). There has been considerable use of terms such as *efficiency* and *effectiveness* that authors have borrowed from the ideas developed from the study of business

corporations or government bureaucracies. These ideas focus on the tendencies such organizations display to institute hierarchical structures of authority and privilege, some areas of specialization and division of work and a clear measure of output. Morgan (1986) outlined the implications of such organizations structures and illustrated how a whole network of expectations can develop to control the people in these organizations. When organizations become dominated by such thinking the result is an educational system that responds to the need for system control rather than the needs of students (Skrtic, 1991).

While a national system of education or some large districts may exhibit these organizational characteristics, the "categories and images of the literature of organizational and management theory are of but limited use when applied to individual schools" (Starratt, 1990, p. 3). Starratt argued that there are three realities in schools that justify his conclusion. In summary these are that (1) schools are too small to suit the powerful abstractions in the literature; (2) schools deal with young people in an environment that is deliberately geared towards development and, therefore, trial and error are part of the equation, and (3) the central task of schools and the ways work is done in them do not fit the categories used in business or government. As a result the language of efficiency and effectiveness is not appropriate to make sense of what happens in individual schools. That language may be useful in looking at economies of scale and in dealing with financial policies, but "to mount a national or state wide school reform effort exclusively around those terms and intentionally to link that terminology to simplistic economic outcomes of schooling is to superimpose on schools a conceptual framework that neither fits, nor is in fact workable" (Starratt, 1990, p. 4).



### Emphasis on Accountability

Despite the inappropriate transposition of these ideas from the management literature, authors still use them extensively about schools. The desire for empirical evidence showing that the schools have achieved clear and specific aims and objectives and that some outside objective agency has monitored these achievements leads many people to place stress on accountability and measurability (Picot, 1988). The Review Committee of the National Academy of Education in the United States highlighted the difficulty of applying this approach universally to education.

At root is a fundamental dilemma. Those personal qualities that we hold dear--resilience and courage in the face of stress, a sense of craft in our work, a commitment to justice and caring in our social relationships, a dedication to advancing the public good in our communal life--are exceedingly difficult to assess. And so, unfortunately, we are apt to measure what we can, and eventually come to value what is measured over what is left unmeasured. The shift is subtle, and occurs gradually. It first invades our language and then slowly begins to dominate our thinking. (1987, p. 50)

One of the reasons reformers become entrapped in such measures is because they bring so little creativity to the task that they do. They do things they know how to do rather than doing things that need to be done.

The fixation many of the reformers have with test results creates the impression that there is an aura of precision about any such scores. Hanford criticized this belief because it "fosters an unsuitable reliance on [scores] to the exclusion or neglect of other indicators that are equally important and useful" (1986, p. 9).

There is an underlying assumption made by many advocates of national testing that uniform tests will improve the whole system of education. Part of this implies that instruction will improve, resulting in benefits for both teachers and students. "Research evidence from the past two decades documents the fact that testing policies have not had the positive effects intended, while they have had unintended negative consequences for the quality of American schooling and for the equitable allocation of school opportunities" (Lieberman, 1991, p. 220).

Many scholars would agree with Glickman (1991) that it is important to keep in mind that "the measure of school worth is not how students score on standardized achievement tests, but rather the learning they can display in authentic or real settings" (p. 8), which is virtually impossible to measure.

#### Abuse of Testing

What is happening to schools in the countries mentioned above, as well as in other countries, as a result of these changes? There is a real danger that with such rapid changes the people involved will not have a clear picture of the issues at stake and so the changes will fail to improve education for students. Glickman's (1990) research suggests that when people do not have a clear picture of what reforms mean for them, legislators can assert that this failure to understand is simply another example of why governing authorities need to control and monitor teachers and schools more strictly than ever. Scholars and other interested people, therefore, have to ask questions about the implications of these changes for schools and where these educational reforms fit into the wider changes being made in the way countries are being governed. There is also the need to consider alternative ways to improve the quality of education in schools because of the failure of the imposed reforms to achieve excellence. The research by Elmore and

McLaughlin (1988) and Cuban (1990) shows that not only did many of the reforms that were imposed on schools not achieve excellence, they had little impact on what actually happened in schools.

The real challenge reformers are facing is to improve the schooling experience for young people, but the process many legislators and bureaucrats are using will not work. Wise (1988) argued that governments cannot easily solve the problems of the quality of education by edict. The emphasis on making schools into quality schools by top-down decisions has resulted in a reduction in quality. This reduction can come about, Wise claimed, because teachers can be so intent on meeting the bureaucratic requirements that they focus on the content of the tests and teach to the test. Thus, the teachers are in a bind. They know that what they are doing is not in the best long-run interests of the students, but because of bureaucratic pressure they compromise their principles and enter into an ethical conflict that often leads them to disengage from their work. Even while they are doing this, they know that as the test scores rise the quality of education is not necessarily improving (Wise, 1988, p. 330). Thus as teachers feel obliged to "teach to the test" the resulting scores from the tests become less and less an indication of the students' overall ability. While students become more proficient in aspects of the subject that will be tested, they do not improve other important aspects such as analysis, complex problem solving as well as written and oral expression (Darling-Hammond, 1991). This has become obvious in the trends of achievement in the United States. Since the early 1970s the trend has shown an increase in the scores on basic skills tests but a steady decline in the scores on assessment in virtually all subject areas of higher order thinking (Educational Testing Services, 1989).

Many groups have come to this same conclusion. "Officials of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the National Research Council, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, among others, have all attributed this decline to the schools' emphasis on tests of basic skills. They argue that the uses of the tests have corrupted teaching" (Darling-Hammond, 1991, p. 221).

Apart from this abuse of the tests the other disturbing factor is that more time has been devoted to teaching to the test to the detriment of teaching that would develop higher order skills. Thus during the period 1972 to 1980 the public schools used less and less of the student-centered discussion approach, writing along the lines of themes, research projects and laboratory work (National Center for Education Statistics, 1982).

It is understandable that this trend would occur. The stakes associated with good test results are high. Among other things, schools' reputations are usually built upon them and funding can be linked to them. The history of education in this country has, unfortunately, shown that when agencies external to the school set tests, when the results are used as the partial or sole determiners of future educational or career choices, or when they are used as positive incentives to allocate money, then they exert a strong influence on what is taught, how teachers teach, what pupils study, how they study, and what they learn (Madaus, Kellaghan, & Rakow, 1975; Madaus & Airasian, 1977; Madaus, Airasian, & Kellaghan, 1980).

This bureaucratic approach to schools is traditionally justified by claiming it is necessary so that those in charge can organize the schools smoothly and thus enhance learning. When the focus on smooth-running and control becomes dominant and dictates the educational practice of a school,

then McNeil (1988) found that "teachers react in ways that reduce educational quality rather than enhance it. In fact, teachers tend to control their students in much the same way as they are controlled by administrators" (p. 334). Pauly (1991) claimed that "it is difficult to exaggerate the scope of prescriptive policies in schools; they touch every part of classroom life" (p. 111).

### Calls for Better Teaching

*A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (National Commission, 1983), highlighted the problems of the lack of achievement in the schools of the United States of America. Similar reports in Britain, Australia and New Zealand illustrated that few students produce quality work throughout their time at school and many leave without minimum qualifications showing educational achievement. When asked to remedy this problem, most people emphasize the need for better teaching with more pressure on students to master basic skills. Thus, the response of the Nation at Risk Commission in the United States was to recommend longer school days and school years, tougher requirements for graduation and an increase in homework (National Commission, 1983, p. 24-33). The commission sought to address the problem by stimulating teachers and students in the hope that they would work harder, regardless of whether what was asked of them was satisfying or not (Gough, 1987 p. 656). There was a failure to realize that the problem had arisen because of the approach that had previously been taken as to what motivates students and how they learn. The imposition of more of the same did not seem a suitable response. A review of reform efforts following the report provides little evidence that the report has led to much significant improvement in schools (Futrell, 1989; Raywid, 1990; Shanker, 1990).

This response is not surprising. O'Neil (1990) asserted that "after decades of attempts to reform schools, most of which constituted little more than tinkering with surface parts . . . schools as they are presently organized must be overhauled in ways that fundamentally change the institution of schooling itself" (p. 4).

The main challenge is to find ways of bringing about such change in schools. It is not easy to do this. As schools have sought to respond to the educational malaise, they have become increasingly complex. Add to this the inherent confusion associated with any organization and the recipe is one of near chaos. When people come together in a group for whatever purpose, there is a dynamic at work that is complex, ambiguous and paradoxical (Morgan, 1986). Each person brings to that group a personality of incredible complexity together with a life history.

#### Difficulty to Change Thinking

The task of working in such an environment to bring about change seems Herculean. That change is needed is obvious. That change is difficult is accepted. To make that change is the challenge. One of the key tasks is to change people's way of thinking about schools. There is a clear link between the way people think and the way they act, and many problems in a school result from the way people think (Morgan, 1986). The system of thought that has dominated approaches to schools has led to the present malaise. More of the same will not result in improvement. Pirsig (1974) so clearly exposed the problem when he said that "if a factory is torn down but the rationality which produced it is left standing, then that rationality will simply produce another factory. If a revolution destroys a systematic government, but the systematic patterns of thought that produced that

government are left intact, then those patterns will repeat themselves in the succeeding government" (p. 102).

It is always difficult to bring about a change in the way people think because of the "strong connection between doing and affirmation. Current school practices have been continuously reinforced by the existing theory. As a result, their acceptance has become so automatic that they are considered to be unquestioned truths. Things are done in a certain way because they are supposed to be done that way" (Sergiovanni, 1994, p. 1).

To contemplate the number of areas where people who are involved in schools have to change their thinking is awesome. At the heart of such a change, however, is a change in the way they think about people, what motivates people and the way people bring about change in schools. These are three basic areas where people need to change their thinking.

The importance of these changes becomes apparent when the failure of the reforms is considered. If edicts cannot bring about quality, what is another alternative? Wigglesworth and Dudley (1991) argued that if students are going to learn, they must see quality and relevance in what teachers ask them to do, and this must be need satisfying. Good (1990) found that teachers cannot do all the helping, and she suggested they should not even try, but she discovered they could help create the climate where students could do quality work (p. 12). In addition, Gough (1987) claimed that while teachers cannot make students learn, they can help set up an environment so that students want to learn (p. 661). This implies a change in the way teachers and others involved in a school think about students and the interaction between teachers and students and teachers and administration.

### William Glasser's Proposal

One person who has railed again the present system operating in most schools is William Glasser. He maintained that the system that authorities have used to organize schools has failed and has to change. Sarason (1990) agreed with Glasser and claimed that the system as it is has an established power structure where power is distributed unequally to achieve the stated goals. The current power structure is not working and Sarason (1990) claimed the system has to change to enable people to establish new power relationships. One of the real difficulties in bringing about such change, however, is that the prescriptive approach to what teachers teach has become "so entrenched and so widely accepted by all sides in the education policy debate that most simply assume education policies must necessarily be prescriptive policies" (Pauly, 1991, p. 114). The assumptions that have under-girded the approach to organizing schools and instructing students are flawed. The people who are involved in a school must come to see what happens there as increasing the quality of their lives (Glasser 1992).

Through a process based on Deming's quality management and his own understanding of control theory, Glasser has devised a process for changing the system and the way of organizing schools. If educators implement his proposals, Glasser claimed that the people involved will experience an improvement in the quality of their lives. At the very heart of his approach is a change in thinking about what motivates people to behave. The acceptance of his approach requires a change in teachers' and administrators' thinking about themselves, their colleagues and the students and subsequently the way they interact with all of these.



### A New Understanding of Leadership Required

Allied to Glasser's approach is a requirement to think differently about the way people bring about change in the operation of the school. There have been calls for leadership in education at national, state, district and local levels (Lewis, 1989). Some see the problems facing the education system being so great that "it requires leadership; not ordinary leadership but astute leadership. Most centrally, it requires effective leadership for the educational program" (National Commission for the Principalship, 1990, p.11). Such calls, however, arise out of an understanding of leadership that is part of the problem, not part of the solution. These calls place the responsibility for leadership with individuals and isolate these people to carry out their leadership role. The image of leaders as extraordinary people does not make sense of reality that most people experience in schools. To tie leadership into personal characteristics makes no sense in the real world.

The image of the leader as hero can also undermine conscientious administrators who think that they should live up to these expectations. If leaders are supposed to have all the answers, for example, how do administrators respond when they are totally confused about what to do? If they have learned that leaders are consistently strong, what do administrators think of themselves when they are terrified about handling a difficult situation? Notions of heroism misconstrue the character of organizational leadership in many situations. Problems are typically so complex and so ambiguous that to define and resolve them requires the knowledge and participation of more than a visionary leader. (Murphy, 1988, p. 655)

What board members, administrators, teachers, parents and students need to do is to come to a new understanding of what leadership is all about

as this century comes to a close. Given the changing world in which the schools are immersed, a new understanding of schooling is going to be necessary if people are going to deal with the complexity of schools and respond to the urgent needs that many people have so clearly highlighted (Rost, 1985).

#### Failure to Agree on the Meaning of Leadership

While there has been an increasing amount written about leadership in recent years, most of it has not helped to elucidate the concept. Despite years of work by scholars and practitioners to arrive at an intellectually consistent understanding of the word, leadership as a concept remains elusive and enigmatic (Meindl, Erlich and Dukerich, 1985). Such a state of affairs has caused some anguish among concerned scholars. In lamenting this fact, Burns (1978) claimed in the prologue to his groundbreaking book that the crisis of leadership today centers on the mediocrity of so many men and women in power and that the "fundamental crisis underlying mediocrity is intellectual" (p. 1). Nothing is so powerful as an idea. It is from ideas that concrete proposals emerge, and there is a glaring need at all levels of local, national and international education for new ideas that will lead to new proposals.

Burns elaborated on the problem when he proclaimed that "if we know all too much about our leaders, we know far too little about leadership. We fail to grasp the essence of leadership that is relevant to the modern age and hence we cannot agree even on the standards by which to measure, recruit, and reject it" (p. 1). In responding to his own criticism Burns developed a concept of transformational leadership in an attempt to provide some clarification of what leadership is about. In doing this he sought to look at the nature of leadership rather than to try to predict leadership behavior. The

outcome was a definition that provided an "interpretation of leadership that embodies a vision, politics, and followership as well as a dynamic, reciprocal relationship resulting in a moral transformation for those involved in the leader-follower engagement" (Skalbeck, 1991, p. 9).

### The Failure of the Industrial Model of Leadership

The need for such a new understanding becomes apparent when people consider the complexity of schools. Many scholars are becoming conscious of the inadequacy of a model of leadership that arises out of an industrial way of thinking. They speak about this way of thinking as an industrial paradigm that is characterized by a very linear and hierarchical approach (Rost, 1991). In this approach the individual is the focus of attention and the emphasis on control and the imposition of the leaders will is paramount. Many writers have clearly demonstrated that the industrial paradigm, which provided the thought context for previous generations, is not an appropriate one for future generations (Block, 1993; Henderson, 1991; Kennedy, 1993; Nirenberg, 1993). The industrial context put an emphasis on compliance as a central idea people accepted. The pervasive use of a paternalistic autocracy was simply the obvious application of hierarchical thinking. The old way no longer works as was graphically shown in the downfall of Eastern Europe. The old way no longer makes sense of all the variables nor resolves the problems that arise. In the midst of the drabness of Eastern Europe, the human spirit has burst forth from the safety through compliance and longed for something better. To move out of the bind of the industrial paradigm, therefore, will require a framework that provides meaning for people that will allow them to cope with a context that is still being created.

What people need instead is what Rost (1991) referred to as a multi-disciplinary approach. Burdin (1989) refers to this when he stated that

people who engage in leadership need to be aware of and study "elements of all the 'ways of knowing'--the many fields of scholarship. Leaders need to understand both the individual fields and their interrelationships, and then to integrate the knowledge into practice" (p. 9). An even more emphatic call came from Burns (1993) when he claimed that "the study of leadership above all calls for the most resourceful use of a variety of disciplines -- history, philosophy, psychology, politics, sociology, theology, among others--as the student of leadership tries to comprehend the symbiotic interrelationships of psychological and other forces in the relentless and turbulent flow of change" (p. viii).

Part of this integrated understanding must come from the people involved in leadership processes being willing to examine carefully what will happen as a result of the decisions they make. Foster (1985) went so far as to say that people must very critically examine any move to improve education. "The responsibility of leadership, in the home or the school, lies in critical education; using one's own power to empower. In school administration, particularly, this is fundamental; our role as school leaders is not to control, to exert power-over: it is, rather, to empower, to, in a word, educate" (p. 3). From a similar position, Sarason (1990) claimed that educational reform has failed because the superficial conceptions of what happened in schools entrapped the people involved. He claimed that it was only when people confronted power relationships that reforms could begin to move towards desired goals.

Such a position severely questions the traditional understanding of leadership in schools. The difficulty with the old understanding of leadership is that it has been tied into the industrial paradigm, a paradigm that is in the process of changing. In the industrial paradigm, leadership, according to

Rost (1991), is essentially good management. Such an understanding does not provide a conceptual framework for dealing with the postindustrial paradigm that is evolving, a paradigm that will be characterized by an inclusive and shared purpose. The old understanding is being severely questioned because of its inadequacy to deal with this changing emphasis. This questioning has revealed that the focus of attention in leadership studies has been on what a number of scholars considered peripheral to the nature of leadership. "Leadership scholars and practitioners have been almost totally concerned with the peripheries of leadership: traits, personality characteristics, nature or nurture issues, greatness, group facilitation goal attainment, effectiveness, contingencies, situations, goodness, style and, above all, how to manage an organization better" (Rost and Smith, 1992, p. 194). Such preoccupations are endemic among people locked into the industrial paradigm of the 19th and 20th centuries.

#### A New Understanding of Leadership

An understanding of leadership is called for that will enable people to find meaning in what they are doing in the midst of the unraveling new paradigm. There is a need, therefore, to examine how this understanding of leadership is evolving. This requires a reflection on the way scholars and practitioners have understood leadership and then a consideration of what is happening with schools that are on the edge of new developments and pushing the limits of new ways of operating. Doing this will provide evidence of how the new postindustrial paradigm is playing out in practice. Thus through the analysis of the evolving theory and the examination of emerging practices, a better understanding of the leadership processes should emerge. People in the leadership dynamic, and those examining it,

need to be reconciled to a messy, complex process as they attempt to change a school.

It seems timely, therefore, to explore the efforts that the educators, parents, and students in one school have made to bring about change. These people have endeavored to respond to the needs of the students along the lines Glasser has suggested. In doing so they have stumbled into areas that have resulted in excellent outcomes and others they have abandoned because students have not benefitted from them. Throughout the past few years they have explored various avenues in an attempt to provide opportunities to be involved in the students' education. What is of particular interest to me are the leadership processes that permeated the efforts of the people who made these changes.

#### Purpose of the Study

The call for reform in education has been particularly strident over the past decade without many significant indications that improvement has taken place. Research is needed on the leadership processes that people used in schools where they developed and implemented significant changes. The purpose of this study is to explore, through a case study approach, the nature of the leadership processes as people experienced them in an elementary school where significant changes have occurred since 1986. The school is part of the consortium of schools that have contracted with William Glasser to move towards his idea of a quality school.

#### Research Questions

I investigated the following questions to provide an account of what happened at the school and what continues to take place:

1. What were the different ways influence was used in the school?

2. How were decisions made to adopt the proposals to change the school?
3. What real changes were intended and what changes have been implemented?
4. How did people in the school initiate and sustain relationships that intended real change?
5. How have changes been sustained?

### Significance of the Study

In recent years there has been considerable interest in many countries of the world to reform education. The people involved in this task are interested in discovering better ways of achieving the renewal of schools. There have been many attempts to provide a framework to enable those people responsible for organizing schools to bring about change in their schools, but the frameworks have had varying degrees of success. William Glasser has outlined an approach to working with students and organizing a school that has proved of great interest to an increasing number of people. He places great stress on the importance of "lead-management" in the operation of the school and uses W. Edwards Deming's approach to quality to encourage quality in the school. To date no one has undertaken a study on the nature of the leadership in enabling change to occur in a school seeking to follow Glasser's model. There have been numerous studies carried out on the use of Glasser's Reality Therapy approach in schools and other institutions but none on the leadership processes within the quality school as he uses that term (Green, 1993).

Most of the studies of leadership in schools have concentrated on styles and behaviors. The study by Shultz (1988) was a multiple case study and focused on how individuals whom people considered examples of what

leadership could be. In looking at fifteen outstanding superintendents Shultz was seeking to determine the productivity improvement that these people could bring to a district by modeling behavior. That is a very different focus from the present study.

A case study that examined one superintendent's influence on the school climate in the district was that by Murray (1991). The focus was again on the style the individual used and Murray sought to determine what the superintendent did to others that would improve school climate. That understanding of leadership is not the one the present study adopts.

There has been an interest in democratic approaches to organizing schools and Coffey (1992) carried out a case study of one school which tried this. Coffey examined democratic leadership in an attempt to determine how that approach allowed other people to be involved in the school. The focus was very much on style the principal used to allow other people to have some say. While there was a call for new forms of leadership, the study showed that what happened was a different form of the same hierarchical approach with followers being allowed some say. The principal was the one who finally made the decision and was the person who determined the parameters in which people could have a say.

While these last three examples focused on leadership, none of them attempted to examine the influence Glasser's understanding of control theory had on the attitude individuals brought to their relationships with one another and with the students.

The studies of leadership in schools that students have undertaken at the University of San Diego have also not been connected with Glasser's model of the quality school nor examined such schools from the leadership perspective undertaken here. Williams' (1989) study investigated the impact



of quality circles on a public secondary school in southern California but the link with Glasser's work is very tenuous through quality circles. It does not, therefore, deal with the issues covered in this study.

Both Chrispeels (1991) and Brice (1992) examined the school effectiveness movement but in both cases the focus was on a consideration of how effective certain schools were with some set criteria rather than being focused, as this study is, on the leadership processes that brought about change in a school. When Skalbeck (1991) examined transformational leadership she was looking at one specific person who was a change agent but again did not consider the processes throughout the school and particularly not in a school seeking to implement a specific approach to schooling. I feel confident, therefore, that this study's examination of the leadership processes in this one school will contribute to the knowledge about what enables organizations such as schools to make substantial changes.

Recent studies of leadership have indicated that there is a changing understanding of what this process means (Rost, 1991). Scholars have yet to explore fully the practical implications of this new understanding, and this study will add meaning to the theoretical base by examining the processes that have taken place in one school, thus broadening the appreciation of this new understanding.

### Definition of Terms

**Beliefs:** There is an extended discussion of teachers' beliefs in chapter two but for purposes of this section beliefs are considered "an individual's judgment of the truth or falsity of a proposition, a judgment that can only be inferred from a collective understanding of what human beings say, intend, and do" (Pajares, 1993, p. 316).

**Leadership:** I will use Rost's revised definition of leadership in this study. This is: "Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (Rost, 1993).

**Metaphor:** A metaphor is a "term for one object or relationship applied to another on the basis of some kind of similarity between them" (Smith, 1984, p. 329).

**Paradigm:** A paradigm is "a basic constellation of beliefs shared by a community of adherents and evidenced through a set of commitments, generalizations, values, and practices which comprise a view of reality and the problems which will be admitted and tried" (Gilliss, 1993, p. 33).

**Quality:** Quality is anything people "experience that is consistently satisfying to one or more of [the] basic needs" (Glasser, 1992, p. 10).

**School Culture:** "Culture is socially shared and transmitted knowledge of what is and what ought to be, symbolized in act and artifact" (Wilson, 1971, p. 90).

### Structure of the Study

I have organized the study into six chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the study and places it in a framework. This will enable the reader to see why I undertook the study and what will result from it.

The second chapter provides a background to the three areas that will feature prominently in the research. In it I will discuss the ideas and findings of scholars in the three areas and critique their comments and conclusions. These three areas are: (1) An outline of the scholarship literature on leadership and the exposition of an understanding of leadership that will permeate the research. (2) An examination of change through the work of

scholars who have researched and written about it. (3) Glasser's theories and the way he has applied them to schools.

The third chapter outlines the research design and methodology that I followed in carrying out this study and the rationale behind them. The study used a case study approach. This means I examined a single case in detail to provide an in-depth understanding of what happened at the school (Merriam, 1988).

The fourth chapter provides an outline of what happened at the school and the changes people there implemented. It provides a context in which to place the information that I gathered and creates a sense of what happened and is happening in the school as changes take place.

The fifth chapter discusses the reasons why the changes occurred and provides some insights into the processes that were employed.

The sixth chapter briefly answers the question set in this chapter and then provides a discussion of the underlying foundations of the leadership processes. In it I look at the implications of the findings and draw conclusions based on the information outlined in chapter four and five. At the conclusion of this discussion I indicate where I think future research should concentrate.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

This literature review provides a background to the major issues that I addressed in this research. The focus of the research is on leadership and the way people at a school have experienced it. I present an overview of the scholarship on leadership. This establishes the framework for examining the leadership processes in the school under investigation. This school has undergone considerable change in the past few years and so I included a discussion of research on change in organization. Part of this includes an examination of the intriguing area of teacher beliefs and the difficulty of enticing people to modify those beliefs to allow real change to occur in the school. One of the influences that has been evident in the school being studied is that of William Glasser. Through the training offered by what is now called the Institute for Control Theory, Reality Therapy and Quality Management, he has provided a framework for the school to pursue change. An outline of his thinking is presented to put his influence in context.

#### Leadership in Bringing about Change

There has been considerable dissatisfaction among parents, students, teachers, academics and the public in general with what has been happening

in schools in recent years. Many research studies have highlighted the need for change. These studies have also highlighted the very complex nature of bringing about that change (Goodlad, 1984; Powell, Cohen, & Farrar, 1985; Sizer, 1984). Schlechty (1990) argued that the key to school reform is effective leadership. He concluded that change begins wherever someone is able to recognize the need for a change and has the capacity to imagine and articulate the nature of the change. What the nature of this leadership is and how it becomes effective is the source of considerable discussion and disagreement.

#### Assumptions About Leadership

One assumption that permeates virtually all of this research, however, is that leadership rests with those people in authority and that effective leadership occurs when the person in an authority position, usually referred to as the leader, is able to get the followers to do what s/he wants done. Throughout Hall and Hord's (1989) discussion of the leadership role of the principal, there is the assumption that the leadership in the school resides within the principal. Hence the discussion centered on the behaviors of the principal and the role s/he is to play in the school. The author just assumes that the leadership is identified with the principal. Lieberman and Miller (1981) took the same position in summarizing the research on the importance of the principal when they said: "the principal is the critical person in making change happen" (p. 583). In their report there is this assumption about the leadership of the principal but nothing about the nature of leadership itself.

In a similar fashion, Sergiovanni and Moore (1989) concluded that the accountability question is so important that there is a need for a top-down arrangement to ensure that it occurs. They focused on the fear that people in

authority positions have about the talk of shared leadership and teachers being empowered. To succumb to such an hierarchical notion of leadership betrays the creativity and ownership that can arise when people are truly empowered. It also traps people into an understanding of leadership as imbedded in individuals in positions. Such an understanding has bedeviled those attempting to see possibilities from a different perspective.

The same criticism can be leveled at the research carried out by Leithwood and Montgomery (1982). After trying to identify different types of principals as "effective" and "typical," the authors concluded that effective principals looked on themselves as responsible for the quality of their schools. Thus the focus of attention was on the principal. Throughout this piece of research, and through the leadership literature in general, there is a focus on what traits, styles and behaviors people brought to the role of being principal. In addition there is a very strong element of contingency theory evident in the stress laid on how the situation influences the potential for leadership (Hall and Hord, 1987). The influence of Fiedler is evident in this and the approach smacks of the utilitarian ethic where emphasis is placed on the leader adopting behaviors that best achieves the goal s/he has set. Fiedler (1978) claimed that the central factor in a group being effective is the degree to which there is a successful match between what he called leadership and the demands or contingencies of the situation in which the leader is placed.

In all these attempts to emphasize achievement, the focus is on what principals do or the qualities they have, with the implication again that leadership resides within that individual. The individual takes into account the contingencies of the situation and adapts his/her behavior to best accommodate the situation in order to achieve the goal s/he has set. This was

clearly brought out in Hall and Hord's (1987) research into the principal as a change agent when they stressed the need for the principal to adjust the form and function of the intervention in order to accommodate the viewpoint of the teachers, parent or students but the objectives don't have to be altered, just the way of reaching them. Such an attitude implies a lack of openness to the common purposes of the whole group and almost a cynical manipulation of means to get people to do what the leader wants.

Even when there was a willingness to have teachers involved in decision making, such as displayed in the study by Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis and Ecob (1988), the emphasis is still on the principal, as leader, allowing the teachers to do certain things. The principal is still the person wherein leadership resided.

This identification of leadership with positions and individuals reflects a desire among many people for the strong leader who can look after the problems arising from living and working in institutions (Maxcy, 1991). Such a position displaces the responsibility each person has for the welfare of the community. It also has inherent in it the dangers Heifitz and Sinder (1988) spoke about when they warned of people coming to depend on the "leader" pulling rabbits out of the hat.

It is ironic that several studies inadvertently shatter the myth about the principal being the main focus for change in a school. McNally (1974) found that even though there are clear instructional and program leadership functions associated with the role of principal and that these are widely accepted, principals did not follow them to any great extent. In a similar fashion Howell (1981) concluded that principals spent only about 14 percent of their time on curriculum-related matters and so questioned to what extent

they could be called instructional leaders in the way that title is generally used.

In the conclusion to their review of the literature on school change, Hord and Hall (1987) seemed to grudgingly admit that the principals are not the only change agents in a school. In all their discussion they focused on the characteristics that principals might have or the behaviors they might engage in. Such a focus causes great difficulty in trying to find a satisfactory response to the demands of an institution, such as a school, because there is no adequate discussion of the nature of leadership itself. The discussion fails to see that it is impossible for someone to do leadership in isolation. By definition a leader must be in a group and have established a relationship with members of that group. By focusing on the individual in what they called the leadership position, Hord and Hall (1987) lost sight of that relationship and did not recognize the importance of the members of the group in the leadership dynamic. Unfortunately this failure to deal with the nature of leadership is not a problem that is restricted to the literature on schools.

### The Context for Leadership

One of the problems that confronts people who attempt to grapple with the nature of leadership is the context in which they study leadership. — Change is such a dominant part of human experience during these latter years of the century that it is imperative for people who wish to examine leadership to be aware of what has been, what is and grope for what might be. People are immersed in a world that was supposed to provide a sense of security and meaning. What so many are experiencing is a realization that what they had believed in is not entirely true. As a result they have a tendency to abandon faith in everything else they have learned and with their



underlying assumptions and practice being challenged, they are floundering. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) claimed that when people are "deprived of the customary supports that cultural values had given them, they flounder in a morass of anxiety and apathy" (p. 11).

The way many theorists write about such patterns of core assumptions and practices is to use the word *paradigm* (Guba and Lincoln, 1981; Harman, 1979, 1988; Morgan, 1980). Thomas Kuhn (1970) began using the term in the 1960s, and more so in the 1970s, when he undertook an examination of the way science had been conducted. He focused his attention on the scientific community and examined their accepted practices and their underlying commitments.

Many other people have adopted the idea of a paradigm as a means of understanding the way people make sense of and cope with their world. Because people are embedded in their history everything they do is influenced by their experience of living. The circumstances of their lives and the people who have surrounded them all have their impact. In living their history, they have formed assumptions that represent the total framework they construct to best understand their universe (Rokeach, 1960, p. 35).

Such assumptions will affect the approach people take to being involved in the leadership dynamic. If they are paralyzed by fear about change in any aspect of their lives, then their willingness to be involved in the leadership dynamic, which is fundamentally geared towards bringing about change, will be dramatically affected. Covey (1989) spoke about such assumptions as maps that indicate a message to us that the way things are is the way they should be.

In Kuhn's use of paradigm the emphasis is beyond the individual and more on the shared assumptions and beliefs that a group or society holds.

Gilliss (1993), in her examination of theorists' discussion of paradigms, summarized her findings by defining a paradigm as "a basic constellation of beliefs shared by a community of adherents and evidenced through a set of commitments, generalizations, values, and practices which comprise a view of reality and the problems which will be admitted and tried" (1993, p. 33).

A paradigm in these terms provides a framework out of which people live their lives. When that framework does not continue to provide satisfactory solutions to the problems people face, then they search for new frameworks. This is not necessarily a conscious, rational and carefully thought out procedure. What seems to happen is that people begin to "lose faith and confidence in the legitimacy of norms or in any moral plane, and when they no longer have a conceptual framework in which to fit the information they encounter, life becomes hollow and meaningless" (Gilliss, 1993, p. 36). The process of moving from one such paradigm to another is a complicated and confusing one. It is something that cannot be induced but the old paradigm must be clearly seen to no longer work and there must be a growing faith in the new approach (Theobald, 1987).

Many people speak about a paradigm shift that is occurring during these latter years of the twentieth century. Starratt (1990) argued that there are major shifts occurring in various spheres of human life that have caused considerable confusion. His argument revolves around the rapid rate at which these shifts are occurring almost independently of one another in the various fields. Such change leads to these fields being out of phase with one another. He illustrated this paradox with the example that "within the last few years we read about the inadequacy of traditional management theory to explain or to guide organizational actions at the same time that we find

categories from this traditional management theory embedded in the policies for school reform" (p. 1).

Such confusion is understandable. The rapid change in paradigm places people in almost a permanent transition stage with little to provide stability. In this ambiguous state people struggle to establish their "own meaning, to develop context for action and to establish continuity with [their] surroundings" (Denhardt, 1981, p. 2). As individuals do this they have to develop approaches to living that enable them to cope with the circumstances of their times.

### The Industrial Paradigm

Our society is making tentative steps to move from what many theorists call the industrial paradigm. A severe critic of this paradigm asserted that modern society originally embraced industrialism with hope and pride (Roszak, 1973). His reflection on the outcome, however, is that the paradigm is disastrously inadequate. It hoodwinked people and did not deliver on its promises. People had such hope for a better life as a result of embracing the industrial paradigm. Instead it closed options leaving people desperately clinging to it because of fear to enter the struggle for an alternative. Central to this paradigm are the positivistic scientists and their entourage of technicians. Roszak (1973) claimed that "modern technology is the scientists' conception of nature harnessed and put to work . . . It is the practical social embodiment of the scientific world view" (p. 30).

Because the industrial paradigm is so rooted in the scientific approach, those people (the scientists) who claimed they were able to objectively discern the difference between what is reliably so and what isn't, and possessed the only means of determining that difference, became the high priests of the age. Their influence has been such that "all the metaphysical

and psychological premises of that claim have become the subliminal boundaries of the contemporary mindscape; we absorb them as if by osmosis from the artificial environment that envelops us and which has become the *only* environment we know" (Roszak, 1973, p. 31). Within such a restricted environment there became only one recognized way of knowing and one way to acquire knowledge. The upshot was that those people who were respected, listened to and acknowledged were those who claimed to know as the scientist knows: "dispassionately, articulately, on the basis of empirical evidence or experiment, without idiosyncratic distortion, and if possible by the intervention of mathematics, statistics, or a suitably esoteric methodology" (Roszak, 1973, p. 31).

#### Leadership in the Industrial Paradigm

In the midst of this paradigm an understanding of leadership developed that is permeated with the values and practices of that industrial paradigm. Rost (1991) claimed that whether the leadership theories are examined individually or collectively they are "(1) structural-functionalism, (2) management-oriented, (3) personalistic in focusing only on the leader, (4) goal-achievement-dominated, (5) self-interested and individualistic in outlook, (6) male-oriented, (7) utilitarian and materialistic in ethical perspective, and (8) rationalistic, technocratic, linear, quantitative, and scientific in language and methodology" (p. 27). All of these characteristics, he claimed, are descriptors that scholars have used to describe the industrial era.

As a result of being immersed in such a paradigm, the study of leadership in the past has generally focused on individuals and looked at the qualities the individuals possessed. Such a focus has highlighted the degree to which most scholars are imbedded in the industrial paradigm. In his

critique of the approaches to leadership he studied, Nicoll (1986) claimed that the approaches were "still rooted in Newton's hierarchical, linear, and dualistic thinking, so much so that they do not provide us with completely satisfactory models for the world we face" (p. 30). The individualistic focus has been evident in work done by such people as Bogardus (1934), Osborn and Hunt (1975) and through to the excellence movement epitomized by Peters and Waterman (1982). One of the real problems is the confusion of what a leader does with leadership itself. Nanus (1989) contributed to this confusion when he identified positions with leadership and then expounded on the activities leaders had to engage in. In doing this he became mired in the industrial paradigm. Thus he claimed that "leaders are easily recognized as those who take charge, who make things happen in an organizational or societal context" (Nanus, 1989, p. 46). He rightly diagnosed that there are problems in society and organizations but his solutions are, in essence, more of the same. "The new leaders must stand at the center of this vibrant dynamic system, acting as both its head and its heart" (p. 53). In doing that, Nanus claimed the leader is engaging in leadership but the focus is on what s/he is doing and not on the nature of leadership itself.

Many others have done the same thing. In a penetrating analysis of the ills in society and in organizations, Bennis (1989) was able to identify some of the real problems of the industrial paradigm. He isolated the individualistic, selfish and materialistic attitudes that have become acceptable and respectable. Within that environment he saw leaders almost as the saviors and had enormous expectations of them. His response was to take a different slant on the same understanding of leadership that is partly responsible for the mess he described. He did, however, provide some insightful slants on solutions. Among them was the realization that change is

a constant and crucial part of leadership. Allied to this is that "complexity is here to stay and that order begins in chaos" (p. 113). His call to face the reality of deception found in easy answers and scapegoats is sobering but true. (The epitome of this response is found in the one-minute answers made popular by Blanchard and Johnson, 1982). Yet this insight does not bring Bennis beyond the industrial understanding of leadership. He insists on more of the same and avoids coming to grips with the very nature of leadership. For him "leadership is at least as much an art as a science, and the key is the people themselves, their ability to know their strengths and skills and to develop them to the hilt" (p. 145). Thus leadership is still residing in the individual and is essentially what leaders do.

The work Kouzes and Posner have done in their exploration of leadership emphasizes this activity of the leaders and more particularly the action of the leader "to take a stand and go out in front . . . to step out into the unknown" (1990, p. 29). This isolationist stand is reminiscent of the great man/great woman approach and contradicts their emphasis on the bond between leaders and their constituents. In their attempt to measure transformational leadership, Kouzes and Posner (1987) presume that leadership resides in the leader and so consider the behaviors that characterize what they called exemplary leadership. They imply that leadership is a relationship but then spoke about the incredible responsibility the leader has: to struggle with leadership internally in order to make the right decisions, take the organization in the right direction and handle all the problems that will be landed on his/her plate (1987). Their recent book (1993) offers some interesting insights into the qualities individuals who become involved in the leadership dynamic need to develop. Nevertheless their focus is squarely on the individual who is leader. "Leaders are

adventurers who actively seek out opportunities to change the way things are . . . experimenting with innovative approaches to getting extraordinary things done" (1993, p. 88). Such discussion places them squarely in the industrial model of leadership. Leadership is obviously behavior in which the leader engages. Such an approach will not help to elucidate the understanding of leadership required to cope with the era that is not characterized by the industrial values.

This identification of leadership with the individual is also present in Sashkin et al's attempt to provide an understanding of what they called "visionary leadership" (Sashkin, Rosenback, Deal & Peterson, 1992). This approach moves beyond the behavior that mires Kouzes and Posner's work and considers the context in which the process is taking place. Even so, it still sees leadership residing in the individual leader who has certain personal characteristics that s/he brings to bear to express leadership in building culture in an organization. In a way similar to Bennis, Nanus, Kouzes and Prosner, this approach is definitely embedded in essentially management activities and basically views leadership as good management which is what Rost (1991) claimed characterizes the industrial approach.

Similarly embedded are the popular writings of De Pree (1989, 1992). He sees leadership residing in the individual and this is particularly obvious in his chapter in *Leadership Jazz* on watercarriers. The presentation is very appealing and attracts many people, but the framework out of which he worked is still the industrial one where the person in the position uses a great variety of means to get what s/he wants done.

Nicoll (1986), in his critique of the literature available to him, attempted to see beyond the focus on the individual leader and to see the importance of followers in the equation. In doing so he certainly highlighted

the essential relationship between the leader and the followers with the followers required to be active players in the mix. He goes so far as to say that the followers are "the creators of energy. . . the agents who show their leaders where to walk" (p. 34). Nevertheless he spoke about the leader as being in a position and separate although connected to the followers. So despite his criticism of the industrial model he was still caught in it himself.

While Sashkin et al's visionary leadership theory sought to provide a basis for understanding leadership, Nanus (1992) in his *Visionary Leadership* sought to provide a very practical, step-by-step process for developing vision and a mission statement. In doing so Nanus again confused what the leader does with leadership and his discussion revolves around the designated person whose responsibility it is to achieve something, namely the development of the vision.

On a different front, Kelly (1988) focused on the followers but the followers are seen in relationship to a person in whom leadership resides. In his description of effective followers, Kelly maintained that such people would not hesitate to bring their concerns to their leaders. While this may reveal an open relationship between the people, it again views the leader as someone in an established hierarchy who is controlling the framework in which the followers exist.

The mistake all these writers made is "seeing leadership as a property inherent to individuals rather than as an act performed within a social context. They see leadership in voluntaristic terms, abstracted from the structural--i. e., economic and political--features of the particular society or organization" (Foster, 1989, p. 181). Pervading these theories is an assumption that leadership has to do with someone in a position of power



somehow getting followers to change in some way as a result of being given an idea or vision.

### Alternatives to the Industrial Understanding of Leadership

One way around these problems associated with leadership is to avoid using the word *leadership* altogether. Block (1993) sought to do this by resorting to stewardship. His rejection of leadership is a rejection of the industrial understanding of that term. He claimed that the word was "inevitably associated with behaviors of control, direction, and knowing what is best for others" (p. 13). He saw the need for people in an organization to accept ownership and responsibility for it. In taking that position he found it incompatible to have one person "leading cultural or organizational change by determining the desired future, defining the path to get there, and knowing what is best for others" (p. 13). He accurately focused on the underside of the industrial understanding of leadership and rightly found it inadequate. "Successful leaders begin to believe that a key task is to recreate themselves down through the organization" (p. 15). His solution, however, does not provide the answer. The richness of the leadership concept is too important to dismiss and is too ingrained to die. It can be rescued. The alternative he proposed in stewardship has much to offer in coping with the unfolding paradigm. Rather than replacing leadership, however, his exposition of stewardship can provide an enriched understanding of it.

Besides renaming, a further alternative is to abandon the whole area of study, as Miner (1975) suggested. Again there is too much to lose from the richness of the associations with the word to allow it to be abandoned. Not quite so radical is the criticism that Mintzberg (1982) made of leadership scholarship. He claimed that the vast majority of the research is almost

worthless because it has not been grounded in the real-life experience of people who are out there trying to find better ways in which to work. There is need, therefore, to rescue the word and to redefine the concept to enable people to use it in a meaningful way as we move closer to the next century.

In more recent years there has been a move to view leadership from a broader perspective. The work of Burns (1978) was a catalyst in initiating this gradual movement. He sought to bring a relational aspect into the way people spoke about leadership. The "leadership-followership process . . . must be viewed as a totality of interactive roles before we can identify the focus and process at work and hence the role of leadership" (p. 53). Yet despite this move back in 1978, there has not been a radical change in the understanding of leadership. In an extensive review of literature on leadership written in the course of this century, Rost (1991) concluded that there were two major problems with leadership studies. These were that peripheral and content issues have distracted scholars from exploring the very nature of leadership itself. By peripheral he meant the "traits, personality, characteristics, 'born or made' issues, greatness, group facilitation, goal attainment, effectiveness, contingencies, situations, goodness, style and above all, the management of organizations--public and private" (p. 3).

#### Lack of An Integrated Understanding of Leadership

The focus on peripheral is quite evident from the above discussion and Chemers (1984) correctly assessed the situation when he claimed that "most contemporary theories adopt a contingency perspective" (p. 105). There is a strong strain of utilitarianism prevalent in much of the recent writings where the end product and bottom line are the highest value. The focus is certainly on the individual and particularly on what styles these theorists considered

appropriate in the situation. The upshot of such a distraction has been that no integrated understanding of leadership has emerged.

Many scholars have bemoaned this lack of understanding. Back in the seventies Stogdill (1974) concluded that "there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (p. 259). Burns complained that "leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth" (1978, p. 2). In a similar vein Bennis and Nanus (1985) added to Burns complaint when they reflected that "thousands of empirical investigations of leadership have been conducted in the last seventh-five years alone, but no clear and unequivocal understanding exists as to what distinguishes leaders from nonleaders" (p. 4). Nicoll (1986) in his turn lamented that despite all the efforts that had been made to explore the concept of leadership "we still see a leader as one person, sitting at the top of a hierarchy, determining, for a group of loyal followers, the direction, pace, and outcome of everyone's efforts" (p. 30).

#### Underlying Definition

Despite this lack of a clear, unequivocal and stated understanding, Chemers (1984) was right when he claimed that the "various theories say much the same thing in slightly different ways . . . The last twenty years of research has reinforced and clarified certain common threads . . . Almost all of the contemporary approaches are concerned with the degree of predictability, certainty, and control which the environment affords to the leaders . . . leadership involves a job to do and people to do it with" (p. 105).

Rost (1991) was able to focus those threads and show that they centered on an understanding that saw leadership as good management. This is not quite what Chemers had in mind because he believed that further development along the same lines would result in leadership studies being

"thrust into a new era of growth" (p. 105). The analysis Chemers made is definitely locked into the industrial paradigm and his prediction of more of the same leading to a new era of growth is misguided. Rost found that there is an understanding of leadership that permeates the literature. This understanding is: "Leadership is great men and women with certain preferred traits influencing followers to do what the leaders wish in order to achieve group/organizational goals that reflect excellence defined as some kind of higher-level effectiveness" (1991, p. 180). The theme that permeates the literature in the twentieth century is that leadership is good management. This was explicitly stated by Peters and Austin when they held Kelly Johnson up as an example of doing what's possible. "What's possible is a function of *good management (read leadership)* alone (1985, p. xxiv; emphasis in the original).

Such an understanding arose within the industrial era because of the demands that emanated from a way of viewing the world and particularly the business world. "Good management is the apex of industrial organizations, the epitome of an industrial society, the consummate embodiment of an industrial culture. Industrialism is unthinkable without good management, and understanding leadership as good management makes perfect sense in an industrial economy" (Rost, 1991, p. 94). Within the context of an era that adopted the values of the industrial paradigm that understanding of leadership made sense.

### Changing Times

The context in which people are now living out their lives has changed significantly in recent years. Harman (1988) claimed that this change is a profound one. At its heart is "a challenge to the prevailing knowledge authority system" (p. 34). The scientific outlook on knowledge can be traced

back to the revolt in the seventeenth century against a system of thought that was essentially speculative. The outcome of that revolt exalted the area of human experience that could be studied impersonally and mechanically. Thus the technology that arose gave people the sense that they could manipulate the physical environment. As a result knowledge associated with developing that technology came to be valued (Harman, 1988).

It is the inadequacy of this scientific worldview that is now being questioned and such questioning highlights implications that stretch their tentacles into the complex lives of struggling people. There is considerable confusion as the paradigm shift becomes more apparent. William Glasser (1972) identified this change when he claimed that few people recognize that "a society that lasted for ten thousand years has begun to dissolve. In its place a new society has been growing up, one in which the mores, habits, and goals of a hundred centuries are being profoundly altered" (p. 24). More and more people feel they are almost adrift in a sea of nebulosity without any obvious solution in sight. As a result there are many people calling for more leadership from government, industry and other organizations to turn around the pending disaster that is becoming evident at the local, state, national and global levels. The difficulty with such calls, however, is that most tap into exactly the same base of operating as that which caused the problems.

### A New Approach

What is needed is a new approach that bypasses the assumptions that have so influenced the course the world has taken. To confront the problems that face small and large organization, countries and nations, a new idea is needed. Burns (1978) claimed that the crisis of leadership we face today is intellectual and we need a new idea. What we need is a theory of leadership

that adequately explains what is happening. Kurt Lewin (1951) said that the most practical thing in the world is a good theory. What characterizes a good theory is its ability to give meaning to the experience of people. A theory of leadership for the twenty-first century must express the reality that people are living. As Foster (1986a) indicated, such a theory must "account for culture, politics and relations of power within both groups and organizations" ( p. 3). Sergiovanni (1992) claimed that the traditional mindscapes--the mental pictures in our heads about how the world works-- "do not fit today's world of practice very well and are unresponsive to what people want from their jobs" ( p. 9). It was Einstein who recognized "the world will not evolve past its current state of crisis by using the same thinking that created the situation" (Land & Jarman, 1992, p. 13).

#### A New Understanding Of Leadership

The industrial model of leadership is not working. A new idea, a new approach is needed. Rost's (1993) articulation of one seems to address some of the real shortcomings of the industrial model. In seeking to see beyond leadership residing in a person holding a position, Rost provides a framework to think of a leadership dynamic residing in a group or organization. In his approach Rost defined leadership as "an influence relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (1993, p. 99). This approach moves beyond the great man, do-what-the-leader-wants, trait theories that are part of the industrial paradigm of leadership. In contrast to these theories, Rost maintained that the very nature of leadership rests in a relationship. It is the dynamic of the relationship that exists among a group of people in which leadership resides. The nature of the relationship and the purpose for its

existence are central in this new understanding of leadership that is intended to bring about real change (Rost, 1991).

This definition of leadership includes four essential elements which must be present for the relationship to be called leadership. By using these as benchmarks, scholars and practitioners should be able to distinguish leadership from other human relationships human beings use to control and direct other human beings, especially the relationship called management.

1. The relationship is based on influence. This means persuasion is used to garner support but it is a noncoercive persuasion. As well, the influence is multi-directional, not just top-down.

2. The relationship is an active one involving leaders and collaborators. All do leadership. Leadership resides within that relationship so there is no such thing as followership.

3. Leaders and their collaborators intend real changes. Intend here means something definite is envisaged. It also means that leader and collaborators do not have to achieve change for leadership to be present, only intend it and then act on that intention. The intention is in the present while the changes are in the future. Real refers to substantive and transforming changes, not pseudo ones.

4. What leaders and their collaborators intend reflect their mutual purposes. The intended changes must be a common challenge and not just what the leader wants. The common purposes arise out of the noncoercive, influence relationship that develops within the group (Rost, 1993).

#### Leaders Influence Others

If the dynamic of leadership is to exist in a group these four elements need to be present. In this understanding, leaders are the people who have the most influence at a particular time. They do leadership in an episodic

manner with a fluidity that moves beyond established boundaries of a hierarchy. These people bring their available personal resources to bear without coercion in seeking to move the group in a certain direction (Rost, 1991). At the same time, however, they are open to the influence of others. They are leaders at the particular time because other people are willing to be persuaded by what they have to offer as mutual purposes evolve. The leader is the person, at the time, who is best able to articulate the needs of the group and provide some clarity in the process of arriving at mutual purposes. Thus, it is possible for a great variety of people in the group to be a leader at various times as they use their resources to influence other collaborators in this process (Foster, 1989). The collaborators choose the leaders with whom they will develop a relationship and those may not be the people who have authority over them.

By not linking leadership to individual positions in an organization a great deal of energy can be preserved. The people who are recognized as leaders for the present, can focus their energy on bringing about change rather than on ensuring that their position is secure. Likewise the organization will benefit because when leaders use their personal resources to influence others, they are probably at the peak of their creativity. In this understanding of leadership such people may then move aside as others bring their resources to bear on another problem. This allows an organization to be enriched by the variety of resources within the group and to avoid being hampered with people who have lost their creativity but cling to positions or do not have the personal resources to cope with very different problems. In such a situation "leadership can spring from anywhere; it is not a quality that comes with an office or with a person. Rather, it derives from



the context and ideas of individuals who influence each other" (Foster, 1986b, p. 187).

The cooperativeness that enables the dynamic of leadership to occur can arise in a shared awareness of a need inadequately being addressed. With this awareness that individuals are not isolated entities cut off from other people, "it is logical to view leadership as a process of collective effort rather than as something one person does in a vacuum" (Astin & Leland, 1991, p. 8). Leadership is not just something leaders do. It cannot be done alone. Leadership requires other people with whom the leader can interact. While each individual must take responsibility for ensuring that what s/he does contributes to the leadership dynamic, leadership itself arises cooperatively out of the shared awareness of the need that cries out to be met (Neville, 1989). This cooperation arises not from a desire to avoid conflict but from a desire to bring about real changes. It is desirable that people passionately hold views about how to achieve common purposes. The point is that if conflict is not resolved, it will lead to stalemate with no changes made. Through consensus building and cooperation people in the leadership dynamic must resolve conflict in order to make new policies (Lindblom, 1980). Astute people in the leadership dynamic will be able to exploit conflict and mobilize the bias that is evident to move the group to identify and move toward achieving common purposes (Schattschneider, 1983).

Because of the strongly held opinions people have, it is possible in any organization for several leadership relationships to be operating at any one time. Conflict can occur when these different groups seek to persuade other groups to adopt a particular approach. In these circumstances the people who become leaders take the risk of influencing others in a certain direction. Part of the impact of this influence can come from an analysis of information

available and partly from the political agenda individuals and groups have (Lindblom, 1980). Pfeffer (1992) saw the possibilities of influence across many areas. People are influenced by more than the context of the situation.

Organizations are not collections of isolated individuals making decisions and taking actions in splendid solitude. They are, above all, social settings in which people interact with their colleagues. We are influenced by what our colleagues are saying and doing--the effect of social proof--and we are swayed by the things others do to get us to like them and feel good about them. We are also influenced by the emotions that are created and used in social settings. (Pfeffer, 1992, p. 207)

#### Everyone in the Group Does Leadership

All the people in the group, however, need to accept their responsibility to establish leadership. This can mean taking a major role in influencing the group to meet their agreed-upon purposes, or being an effective collaborator in responding, clarifying, critiquing or supporting the initiatives others are taking (Neville, 1989). This collaborator role is crucial in determining which of the major influencing people will have the support needed to persuade the group to take a certain direction to achieve its purposes (Lundin & Lancaster, 1990). If a situation arises where real change is needed for the good of the group or society, then everyone must accept the responsibility for ensuring they enter into the leadership dynamic.

There is obviously a distinction here between what leaders and collaborators bring to the relationship. This is where Sashkin and Rosenbach (1993) misunderstood what Rost (1991) was saying. They asserted he was suggesting that the nature of the contributions of the leader and collaborators would be similar and they critiqued that position by arguing that the

contributions would be different. The leader in Rost's understanding brings his/her resources to bear on influencing members of the group to move in a certain direction that reflects their mutual purposes. The very fact that the leader is using influence and the collaborators are critiquing, assessing or supporting that influence means that what each brings to the relationship is different. The leader is using his/her personal resources to influence the collaborators to adopt the suggestions or policy s/he is putting forward. The collaborators, on the other hand, are considering what is being proposed and critically examining it. From their critique and assessment they will decide to support or not support the leader or they may decide to add some of their own ideas to the proposals. The leader at that particular time is exerting influence in a way that moves the group in a certain direction. It may mean that his/her influence is such that the collaborators change what they want. What the leader and the collaborators bring to the relationship during the time the leader is proving to be the most influential person in the group is obviously going to be different.

Being conscious of that difference, however, does not mean it is easy to have people accept and work from those different roles. People who want to establish a leadership dynamic within a group or organization must be conscious of the need to take other peoples' assumptions into consideration but they need not be immobilized by them. Such assumptions are but one of the factors involved in the dynamic. The challenge for all the people who become involved in this dynamic is to develop a vision that will inspire and entice others to risk involvement. Such a vision needs to provide a clear direction and define values associated with the group or organization.

Many authors placed great emphasis on the need to develop such a vision (Bennis, 1989; Foster, 1989; Nanus, 1992; Nirenberg, 1993; Senge,

1990; Sergiovanni, 1990; Starratt, 1990). This can mean drawing people into an awareness of their assumptions or the mental models that direct them and providing them with the opportunity of being part of a community of learners who support and teach one another (Senge, 1991).

### Influence Central to Leadership

At the heart of the leadership dynamic is an influence relationship. For this influence relationship to prosper and become effective in bringing about change it must, over the course of time, always allow people in the dynamic to disagree and still remain in the dynamic (Rost, 1991). The influence that is exerted, however, can be very persuasive and forceful. It can result in collaborators rethinking what they really want (Lindblom, 1980). This is again where Sashkin and Rosenbach (1993) showed they did not fully understand what Rost was saying. Their claim that in Rost's understanding the leader merely focuses and carries out the visions of followers fails to appreciate what influence means. Influence can be such that, as Lindblom (1980) illustrated, it can result in collaborators changing their preferences. Rost's understanding not only allows for transformation to take place but is geared towards enabling it to occur. The crucial point Rost made was that the energy of the group is directed towards mutual purposes. What these purposes are is obviously something the people in the group or organization negotiate as leaders use their resources to clarify what the best purposes for the group would be and seek to entice others to concur or further elaborate. To say this implies the leader is merely passively reflecting the feelings of members in the group badly misses the point. The leader obviously must listen to what the collaborators have to say but s/he can certainly use his/her personal resources to alert members of the group to other possibilities and reconstruct their preferences. For the leader "the art of influence is defining,

realizing, and gradually strengthening [his/her] personal agenda" (Dilenschneider, 1990, p. 9). The personal agenda of the leader gradually evolves as the mutual purposes are elucidated.

Even so, the use of coercion cannot be part of the leadership dynamic because its use changes the relationship into one of authority, power or dictatorship (Rost, 1991). A number of authors understand noncoercive influence as an important feature of leadership (Foster, 1989; House and Baetz, 1979; Jago, 1982). Bolman and Deal (1991) emphasized that leadership is not just what the leader does but must incorporate the collaborators. In the way they wrote about leadership they wanted to highlight that leadership happens in a relationship between leaders and collaborators. Because the leadership dynamic involves a relationship, the nature of the relationship is the focus of the leadership process and not the details of what the proposed changes might be. This does not mean that the nature of the mutual purposes is not an important and ethical question. Rather it is saying that the decision about whether leadership is ethical has to focus on the nature of the influence relationship because this is the crucial aspect of the dynamic. It is the way people arrive at the decisions that is central to whether leadership is ethical or not. If leadership is to be ethical it must be noncoercive.

### Ethics and Leadership

The ethical dimension of leadership has been addressed by several authors (Burns, 1978; Foster, 1989; Gardner, 1990; Greenleaf, 1977; Rost, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1990, 1992). Most of them were at pains to point out that the outcome of doing leadership should improve the quality of life of the people involved. They saw the achievement of this improvement as a requirement for leadership. Thus Foster saw leadership as "founded on the

fact of moral relationships; it is intended to elevate people to new levels of morality . . . [and] search for the good life of a community" (1989, p. 55). Burns (1978) claimed that "transforming leadership ultimately becomes *moral* in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leaders and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both" (p. 20, emphasis in the original).

There is an assumption in such assertions that somehow a consensus exists about what people consider to be ethical and what is not. Rost (1991, 1993) pointed out very clearly that there is no such agreement. In an incisive analysis of present-day morality, MacIntyre (1984) was outspoken in his conclusion that society today has "lost [its] comprehension, both theoretical and practical, of morality" (p. 2). He went on to elaborate at length the confusion and lack of any agreed-upon basis for making decisions. In a sobering conclusion he claimed that society is "already in a state so disastrous that there are no large remedies for it" (p. 5). Similar conclusions about a lack of consensus were obvious in the work of Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler and Tipton (1985, 1991) as well as Sullivan (1986). In an attempt to find a way out of the mess, Etzioni (1993) proposed a communitarian agenda. In doing so he claimed that people now "live in a state of increasing moral confusion and social anarchy" (p. 12).

Such a lack of consensus makes the assertions about leadership mentioned above meaningless. To presume there is some agreed-upon basis to judge the content of leadership only leads to the construction of interesting conceptualizations divorced from the world where people are living their lives--a perfect example of what Mintzberg (1982) criticized as not providing anything that will help Bill and Barbara.

Rost (In press) has issued an impassioned plea for work to be done to address this problem and provide people in groups, but particularly people in large organizations and at the national level, with a framework within which to make ethical decisions. Despite this lack of agreement about the content of leadership, it is possible to arrive at a decision about the ethics of leadership without being mired in the above debate. The present is the emphasis in each of the four elements of leadership referred to above. It is possible to decide if influence is present now. It is possible to decide if leaders and collaborators are in relationship now. It is possible to decide whether there is real change intended now. It is possible to decide if these changes reflect the mutual purposes of the leaders and collaborators now. With all these decisions able to be made now, it is important that the decision about the ethical nature of leadership also be made now. To have such a decision linked to a certain outcome means the decision can't be made until the outcome can be assessed. Apart from the difficulties mentioned above of establishing a basis for such a decision, not to be able to decide now whether leadership is ethical does not help Bill and Barbara.

Rost (1991, 1993) proposed a way of deciding whether leadership is ethical by focusing on the nature of the relationship and not the outcome. Because leadership resides in the relationship that exists among leaders and collaborators, it is this relationship that is the focus of attention. The processes used in the relationship and not the content of the decisions are where the ethical decision is made about leadership. He claimed that if the process is ethical according to the standards laid down, then provided the other characteristics are present, the dynamic is leadership. "Leadership correctly understood operates this way: Leadership adds to the autonomy and value of the individuals who are in the relationship. Leadership does not

require that individuals sacrifice some of their integrity to be in the relationship" (Rost, 1991, p. 161). To work from that basis and apply the ethical standard to any leadership relationships would lead to the following conclusion: "The leadership process is ethical if the people in the relationship (the leaders and followers) *freely* agree that the intended changes *fairly* reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 161, emphasis in the original). There are obviously some behaviors that leaders and collaborators would have to engage in and others they would avoid, to enable this process to happen. The process would have to be interactive with noncoercive influence being the ingredient in the mix to move the process along.

Such an approach allows for people to take diametrically opposed positions on the morality of issues and still be able to engage in a leadership dynamic. Such a framework can help Bill and Barbara decide whether leadership is present or not.

### Influence and Power

The discussion of noncoercive influence raises the question of where power fits into this understanding of leadership. Influence can obviously be viewed in different ways. Rosen stated that "in many societies . . . leadership and the use of power are inextricably woven together" (1984, p. 42). The discussions of such power have generally been equated with domination and control (Carroll, 1984; Schein, 1985). Schein went so far as to claim that "power is defined in terms of actual control of resources, the ability to reward or punish, and the possession of critical items of information" (p. 308). Rost (1991) and other writers in leadership and social science (Astin and Leland, 1991; Bergman, 1991; Blackmore, 1989; Burns, 1978; Foster, 1986a, 1986b, 1989; Miller, 1986; Watkins, 1989) found such a view of power far too restricted. Burns (1978) saw leadership as a special form of



power. He developed a view of the power process as one "in which power holders (P), possessing certain motives and goals, have the capacity to secure changes in the behavior of a respondent (R), human or animal, and in the environment, by utilizing resources in their power base, including factors of skill, relative to the targets of their power-wielding and necessary to secure such changes" (p. 13). Astin and Leland (1991) are feminist writers who articulated a somewhat different view of power. They saw power "as energy that transforms oneself and others, and identifies the effective leader as one who empowers others to act in their own interests" (p. 1). For them to engage in leadership activities is a way of empowering others.

The work of researchers on relationships, particularly feminists, has important implications for understanding power and an inclusive understanding of leadership. Bergman (1991) concluded from his research that if both men and women are able to see relationships as mutual where they "participate in a non-self-centered, mutual relationship, and grow in connection . . . [then we are] talking here about the creative spirit as evidenced in relationship: collaborative, co-creative, at work together" (p. 10). This emphasis on the mutual character of a relationship ties in with the findings of Gilligan (1982) who emphasized being "connected to" others and allowing people to respond in their own terms. By being so connected Blackmore (1989) discovered that people establish a powerful relationship in which it is possible to educate and strategically plan for action and so exercise leadership. It also means that leaders and collaborators empower people by the way they interact. When this happens, Gastil (1991) found that those people leading at a particular time did not prey on the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the collaborators and so make them dependent or demanding.

A use of power that avoids these negative characteristics is difficult and, as a result, can lead to a mistrust of this essential aspect of leadership. The fear some people have of exercising power reveals a mistrust and misunderstanding of what is involved. A good example of this mistrust is the early development of feminist groups where there was a suspicion of people using power. "After a time, however, a more sophisticated approach gained ground, and it was recognized that a lack of structured leadership can sometimes pave the way for unchecked tyranny by informal 'leaders' " (Freeman, 1973, p. 77). Thus, many people see a need for a wise, responsible use of power. What must characterize this use of power in order for it to come under the name of leadership, is the avoidance of domination as Gastil (1991) mentioned.

French and Raven (1968) found that power rests on five possible bases: reward, coercive, legitimate, referent and expert power. How effective these sources of power are depends to some extent on the perception the collaborators have of the leader. The Whiteheads (1991) in their work with groups, concluded that groups make leaders. They do this by accepting the *right* of the designated person to influence their lives. The leaders will evolve from the activity of the group, and they will interchange with the rest of the group, the collaborators, as they negotiate and compromise to reach a solution or a direction. In this process both leaders and collaborators use influence.

While acknowledging the importance of power, the very negative connotations associated with the word has led Rost (1991) to emphasize the word *influence* instead. It is interesting that Rosen (1984) highlighted the preoccupation modern democracy has with struggles over power and legitimacy. He claimed that in most primitive societies "the legitimate use of

power is almost completely unknown. Instead, they are characterized by the degree to which influence, the use of persuasion, is the one and only means by which leaders prevail" (p. 43). Cohen and Bradford (1990) spoke of influence as a tool for building "solid, mutually beneficial relationships to accomplish vital organizational goals, rather than as a manipulative 'technique' for acquiring power for its own sake" (p. 4). They explained: "it is the process of give and take that governs influence. Making exchanges is the way to gain influence; and that process leads to cooperation rather than retaliation or refusal to engage" (p. 23). Influence is a crucial part of the leadership equation for Rost (1991). It can take many forms, but it cannot be coercive and still be deemed leadership.

#### Leadership and Management

Rost's (1991) understanding of leadership makes a clear distinction between leadership and management. In doing so, however, there is no intention to denigrate management. Management is crucial for the ongoing good order of an organization and provides the context in which the leadership dynamic can operate. The point is this: management is not leadership. At the heart of leadership is change. At the heart of management is current good order. One of the unfortunate implications in Nanus' (1992) work *Visionary Leadership* is that as he sought to clarify his understanding of leadership he denigrates management. People who are good managers "are elevated to leadership positions only after successful managerial careers" (p. 11). This further illustrates his belief that leadership is really good management and, therefore, there is no call for ordinary management. What is needed is *good* management. This is also clearly illustrated by Gardner (1990) who understood the difference between leadership and management being simply a matter of degree. Leadership for Gardner was

more a function of a person's breadth of perspective and the type of influence that s/he used. Thus on the continuum, the broader the perspective and the better a person is at using the nonrational and unconscious elements of influence, the more s/he is on the leader end of the continuum than the manager end. To be a really good manager, therefore, means one is doing leadership.

Stewart (1982a and 1982b) saw influence as an important part of leadership but like Mintzberg (1982) she embedded leadership within a whole host of managerial job duties and so again identified leadership with what the leaders does. The same criticism can be leveled at attempts by Calder (1977), Hunt and Osborn (1982), and Tosi (1982) to develop a contingency model that enables people in positions to develop suitable leadership behaviors. Again there is a sense that management is not quite as good as leadership and that leadership is when management is done really well.

There is a growing awareness among scholars that there is a need to distinguish between leadership and management (Bennis, 1985; Foster, 1989; Hunt, 1984; Kotter, 1990; Mintzberg, 1973; Rost, 1991; Zaleznik, 1977). But to see leadership as a higher form of management, as Gardner did, or to denigrate management, in the way Nanus did, makes it very difficult for people who are managers to accept the practical use of the distinction.

### Managers Are Important

Managers play a vital role in the good ordering of organizations and it is important to see the way management can influence the possibility of leadership in an organization. The nature of the relationship between the manager and subordinates has a significant influence on whether the

leadership dynamic can operate in that organization. If the manager operates from a strongly authoritarian position where fear is a constant factor in subordinates' minds, then it will be very difficult for a climate to exist where individuals can enter into a leadership dynamic. The risk involved in establishing such a dynamic becomes too great.

If organizations of the future are going to provide an environment that will encourage the forming of the leadership dynamic, then they will have to be managed in a way that enables leadership to happen. This will require considerable change on the part of most organizations. One of the key challenges is to change people's way of thinking about organizations. There is a clear link between the way people think and the way they act. Many problems in an organization result from the way people think (Morgan, 1986).

If managers of organizations in the future can respond to this call and create a context where there is no fear, where people are open to learning, where individuals are prized, where cooperation is encouraged and where it is presumed people are wanting to learn and be involved, then the possibility for leadership is greatly enhanced. Within the learning organization as Senge(1990) envisaged it, an environment can be established that allows for the leadership dynamic to flourish.

#### Leadership Is Not Easy

People in the leadership dynamic need to be reconciled to a messy, complex process if they wish to change an organization. Part of this change process is changing individuals and the way they relate (Cummings, Mohrman and Mitroff, 1989). As Senge pointed out "organizations learn only through individuals who learn" (1990, p. 139).

In his study of obedience to authority, Milgram (1974) found that there is a real danger of people merging their unique personalities into larger institutional structures and virtually abandoning their humanity. If leadership is an influence relationship that reflects mutual purposes, then the people in the relationship need to be open to influence and be influenced and in doing so can assist one another to become aware of their psychic prisons and help free each other from them. Thus being involved in the leadership dynamic not only brings people into an interdependence but also "adds to the autonomy and value of the individuals who are in the relationship" (Rost, 1991, p. 161).

### The Process Is Crucial

Members of an organization work together for a great variety of reasons. The way a mutually satisfactory working arrangement is accomplished is through negotiation and compromise. The outcome may not be completely to everybody's liking in every case but given the overall picture they may be willing to settle for that accommodation because of some other factors. Thus the interests of individuals and the various groups within an organization arrive at a working arrangement if the organization is going to intend change that reflects their mutual purposes.

What is crucial about these arrangements is not just the end result but the process that people use to arrive at the arrangements. As people live their lives it is "by way of their intentions that [they] express bodies of moral belief in their actions. For all intentions presuppose more or less complex, more or less coherent, more or less explicit bodies of belief, sometimes of moral belief" (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 28). Hence because the leadership dynamic is about intending real change and making decisions about such changes, a philosophy of leadership, to be viable, must acknowledge and

deal with values (Hodgkinson, 1983). People are working from some value base when they analyze alternatives and propose courses of action. Such activities are not value free (Tong, 1986). People engaging in the leadership dynamic must respect each individual within the organization and work for the change they believe will raise their organization to "higher levels of motivation and morality" (Burns, 1978, p. 20).

### Creating the Future

How then can people create the future? People look toward the future which by its nature is unknown. At any moment people do not know what will happen next because they are part of an unfolding narrative with a history, there is a certain understanding of a possible shared future that is enticing or repelling them (MacIntyre, 1984). People can view this future as an adventure; an adventure on which they have embarked with some framework but with definite unknown characteristics. The stories and myths that the group or society tells about this adventure or the rituals in which they engage enable people to locate themselves in that group or society. The desire to locate themselves springs not from a wish to have dignity in itself but to be part of a struggle that is dignifying (Hauerwas, 1981). By so locating themselves people establish self-respect and with that a sense of integrity. This integrity enables people to see where they are in the adventure and become aware of the limits and possibilities of the part they can play in that adventure (Hauerwas, 1981). Being part of a leadership dynamic in a group or organization should be part of this adventure for people. The leadership dynamic can help them accept responsibility for their lives and that of the group to which they belong. Leadership can also provide the opportunity to reclaim a spiritual dimension in their lives. By stretching out with the certainty that there are others alongside them, people can take the

risk to venture into unknown waters. They can allow their creativity to give birth to different proposals to meet needs within the community. In doing this, people can create an experience in their institutions that is a living democracy because of the sense of ownership and responsibility that arises. In a real sense leadership is expecting people to do the work of their community which reveals a shared set of attitudes towards such responsibility (Heifetz and Sinder, 1988).

### Bringing about Change in Schools

One of the essential aspects of leadership is change. If people are going to do leadership in schools they must understand this aspect of change. For significant changes to occur in a school, it is vital for the people involved to grasp some understanding of how to bring about change in such organizations. A school is a complex organization. It encompasses the students for whom the school exists, the teachers, teachers' unions, counselors, administrators, parents, school board, citizens, district representatives, state and the federal educational advisors, local, state and federal politicians, special interest groups in the community, teacher/administrator educators, educational researchers and other people with innovations and ideas which they believe will be of value in the school. All these various groups have to find a way of working together to enable this conglomeration of people to function for the benefit the students. There are many different forces at work and these forces are not always pulling in the same direction.

To bring about change in the way such an organization operates is a difficult and involved process. There have been many recent calls for school reform. However, Cuban (1984) and Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) in their studies of change in schools found that most of these calls for reform had



little impact on what actually happened in schools. Although educational leaders may spend considerable time developing policy decisions, the subsequent impact of these decisions within schools is often small (Popkewitz, Tabachnick, and Wehlage, 1982). To illustrate this, Pipho (1991) reported that at the beginning of the 1991/1992 school year the Iowa State Education Association produced a report for the people in that state on educational reform. The report conceded that despite the reform movement that began in 1983 many schools were exactly the same as they were then. "Permanent structural changes in schools have not occurred" (Pipho, 1991, p. 182).

### Metaphors for Organizations

This failure raises the question about whether it is possible to change large organizations. The early moves at bringing about such change were based on the assumption that if the process was planned carefully enough and executed with enough determination and precision then the change would occur. Havelock (1971) described the attempts by some researchers to systematize change, working on the assumption that change was an orderly affair with a planned sequence that began with identifying the problem, moved to develop a suitable solution and then, with the people involved made aware of the solution, the change was implemented. Cunningham (1982) provided a detailed outline of this process which he suggested could be used if someone was attempting to change an organization. It was out of this model of change that the so-called "teacher proof" curricula of the 1960s emerged. Such an approach was out of touch with the reality of what organizations are like. There was an underlying simplistic view of organizations here and, therefore, a simplistic view of the change process. Cunningham, for example, does not even deal with the nature of change in

an organization. He simply proposed techniques. This simplistic view, in part, arises from the way people think about organizations. Morgan (1986) made the point strongly that "many of our taken-for-granted ideas about organizations are metaphorical" (p. 13). The dominant metaphor for understanding bureaucratic organizations is a machine and this has colored the way people think about how to change such an organization (Morgan, 1993). Not only have people thought about organizations in that way, they have "tried to design and run them as such" (Morgan, 1993, p. 4).

Obviously a machine is an idea that has been assembled sequentially according to very precise arrangements of component parts. While it may be a physical entity, initially a machine is an idea that has been formulated according to an hierarchical structure that could be called a system. To extend this understanding of a machine to an organization can provide some insights into the nature of such an organization, but it also involves a very limiting approach to understanding it (Morgan, 1986).

By considering an organization as a machine, the logical way to change it is through a sequential and very rational process. Thus, "the whole thrust of classical management theory and its modern application is to suggest that organizations can or should be rational systems that operate in an efficient a manner as possible" (Morgan, 1986, p. 29). Such an approach made efficiency more important than people and made the people fit the structure rather than the structure serve the people.

When applied to education this approach is fraught with considerable difficulties. The emphasis on efficiency raises that characteristic to a priority that is not deserved. While it is important that schools are well organized and that people involved continue to ask whether there are better ways for students to learn, efficiency is not the number one value. That some

proposed change is better because it produces a more efficient education "may be no more compelling than the claim that slavery would be justified if it could be shown that slavery increased the gross national product. Efficiency is not decisive" (Strike, 1993, p. 258).

Such a criticism can be leveled at a number of approaches to change that have been tried in schools. One that fits into this category was the application of organizational development (OD) to schools (Schmuck, Runkel, Arends, and Arends, 1977). In this approach the aim is to bring about efficient functioning of the various groups in an organization, but the theoretical framework out of which the practices arose is weak and confused. "The research upon which normative prescriptions are based was frequently of suspect quality and doubtful value to practitioners who want to learn how to bring about complex, multifaceted changes" (Ledford, Mohrman, Mohrman and Lawler, 1989, p. 6). Other criticism indicated there was little agreement on what the process was (Fullan, Miles & Taylor, 1980).

The rational, top-down approach has not lived up to the expectations people held for it. The Rand Studies (Breman & McLaughlin, 1978) showed that the changes that did result from such approaches evolved from mutual adaptation by those who funded the changes and those who received the funding.

### Educational Change

It appears that to bring about such change is a difficult and complex undertaking. There are numerous reports of failed educational change (Berman & McLaughlin, 1974; Herriot & Gross, 1979). Even those reports of reputedly successful school innovations indicate major problems with the effort to bring about change (Huberman and Miles, 1984; Louis, Rosenblum, & Molitor, 1981). The research on these attempts to change schools

indicates that those involved could have avoided a number of the problems through improving the design of the program (Crandall, Eiseman & Louis, 1986; Hall & Hord, 1987). Nevertheless there is also evidence that some problems cannot be "managed," but are a consequence of the way in which schools are organized (Weick, 1976) and the school's vulnerability to changing environmental pressures (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

These findings support Rosenblum and Louis' argument that "change in complex organizations, such as school systems, is mediated by both rational and non rational aspects of organizational functioning" (1981, p. 22). The rational approach places great emphasis on following a scientific process and does not take into account the context in which the change is taking place (Rosenblum & Louis, 1981, p. 22). Peterson (1977) outlined some of the "anomalies" that have led researchers to doubt the faith that some people have put in the rational approach. A summary of these produces the following points:

1. Innovations are seldom implemented as planned. Rather, they tend to undergo a process of continuous change as they enter the system. These changes result from unanticipated characteristics and events.
2. The introduction of identical innovations within outwardly similar organizations may lead to different implementation processes and outcomes.
3. Different implementation approaches and change-management strategies may produce similar results.

We can deduce from these anomalies that simply setting up a rational framework for change does not guarantee that change will result. These conclusions are supported by Berman and McLaughlin's (1977) research into federally-funded programs to support educational innovations. Obviously if the rational model with its machine-like thinking is not a satisfactory one,

then a different way of thinking about organizations and change in them has to be developed.

### Different Ways of Thinking about Organizations

There is no one way of thinking and speaking about organizations that fully comprehends their nature (McCaskey, 1988). It is like looking at a diamond and seeking to describe it from one angle. In doing this most of the diamond is not described because of the limited view. In the same way an organization can not be described from one angle. In looking at it from various angles, however, some aspects do not necessarily complement one another and can clash, leading to anomalies and ambiguity. Nevertheless, these ambiguities can be a small price to pay to achieve a more comprehensive picture of the organization.

When people come together in a group for whatever purpose, there is a dynamic at work that is complex, ambiguous and paradoxical (Morgan, 1986). In such a gathering the constellation of individuals with their own particular histories arrange themselves in some working order and all the complexities of those individuals are overlaid by a life the organization assumes that is greater than the sum of the individuals. Because of this complexity people dealing with organizations tend to work from a frame of reference that enables them to cope. In doing so, however, they are necessarily limited because these frames determine the questions they ask, the information they gather and ultimately the actions that are taken (Bolman and Deal, 1984).

What is needed, therefore, is a range of metaphors that will assist people to gain a more comprehensive view of schools so that they can creatively work to bring about change. The metaphors suggested by Morgan (1986, 1993), such as a machine, a culture, a psychic prison, an organism, a

brain, an instrument of domination, strategic termites, spider plants, etc., provide a good starting point because they force people to see other aspects of the school and, therefore, can instigate different possible responses.

The nature of the world in which schools are immersed is changing. The thinking that has taken place in the past fifty years has resulted in people viewing things differently. The reality of an Einsteinian world does not conform to the old structures and ways of organizing and so the old ways of doing things will no longer work. "In this [new] world, mechanistic thinking breaks down and managers have to find fresh images for understanding and shaping what they're doing" (Morgan, 1993, p. 9). The organizations of the future will be remarkably different. In the struggle to design these new organizations that will replace bureaucracies people will have to "invent organizations where process is allowed its varied-tempo dance, where structures come and go as they support the process that needs to occur, and where form arises to support the necessary relationships" (Wheatley, 1992, p. 68).

### Change Is Possible

If the challenge is so difficult, is it possible to bring about change? Fortunately there is some research that indicates that transforming change is possible. One study of innovations in education indicated that "innovation" appears to be an incremental process that involves a careful building of successful outcomes at successive stages of a change process (Rosenblum & Louis, 1981). These researchers argued that it is important to focus on the early stages of the innovation process and to have a program design that is comprehensive enough to incorporate many small innovations. There are many others, however, who claim that such an incremental approach results in merely tinkering with the system and does not result in significant and

sustained change (Banathy, 1991; Branson, 1987; Kaufman, 1992; Kaufman and Herman, 1991; Morgan, 1993; O'Neil, 1990). Branson (1987) went so far as to say that the current system cannot be improved further because it has reached its upper limit of development. What must happen is that the system must be fundamentally restructured. Sarason (1990) came to a similar conclusion when he reflected on his and other people's experience. His reflections led him to the point where he gave up hope on the possibility of reforming the system. O'Neil (1990) was equally adamant that education cannot be changed incrementally. What is required is a new phase of reform that is directed toward changing the very heart of teaching and learning process.

The difficulty is in achieving such a radical change. Essential aspects of such change are the critical reflection that Foster (1985) called for and the redistribution of power that was so much part of Sarason's (1990) critique.

While the planning aspects are important, what is obvious in the research highlighting successful attempts at change in schools is the importance of support for innovations (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Gross, Giacquinta & Bernstein, 1971; Herriott & Gross, 1979). These works indicate that the patterns of support and innovative thinking shown by people in authority positions in the schools and school districts are extremely important in determining the course of change. Although there are some reservations about the local nature of some of its work, one of the significant findings of the Rand Change Agent Study is the importance of support from those in authority. "In general, the more supportive the principal was perceived to be, the higher was the percentage of project goals achieved, the greater the improvement in student performance, and the more extensive the continuation of project methods and material" (Berman and McLaughlin,

1978, p. 31). Repeatedly, the influence of the superintendent has been a powerful factor in determining whether the program in a district succeeded or failed. Both researchers and practitioners have found this support from the top to be crucial.

Support for individuals is a vital element in any enduring change. There is abundant evidence that for any instructional change to occur the people in authority both at the school level and at district level play an important role (Crandall & Loucks, 1982; Fullan, 1982; Huberman & Miles, 1986). They are the people with control over the purchase and distribution of resources whether personnel, time, finances or materials. The exercise of that control can play a significant part in sustaining any innovation. Along with support from people in authority, however, Braid & Mitchell (1986) concluded that any major efforts at change in teaching and classroom learning appears to require establishing a social group in which the participants can interact. Thus support from peers is also an important ingredient. This idea of support from a social group is similar to the improvement models which emphasize the creation of a culture (Sackney, 1985).

#### Change Requires More than Knowledge

The research by Crandall and Loucks (1982), Emrick and Peterson (1980) and Stearns and Norwood (1977) all concluded that simply making research findings available to teachers, providing inservice experiences through courses offered in universities or special programs focused on the individual teacher, and/or the use of ad hoc consultation by some visiting expert were inadequate ways of bringing about change in schools. Each of these studies found that the impact of printed materials alone is minimal and that teachers do not change their practices as a result of simply reading what research has uncovered. Bailey and Braithwaite's (1980) findings endorsed



this conclusion. Seeking to bring about change through those means failed to appreciate the complexity of schools. Newton & Tarrant (1992) reflected in their review of the change literature that researchers have become more aware that "schools are complex organizations which are not amenable to crude attempts to engineer change" (p. 136). If change is to occur in the school, teachers need the involvement with people who can offer assistance over the course of the time the innovation is being planned, implemented and institutionalized.

These findings are corroborated by other researchers who found that while people involved in changing schools must keep in mind the complexity of the task, "face-to-face contact facilitates the adoption of disseminated practices to a far greater extent than the mere provision of information. Adequate materials and procedural guidelines, coupled with responsive, in-person assistance during later implementation, are imperative for maximum success" (Crandall, Eiseman and Louis, 1986, p. 23).

A number of researchers have investigated how much the size of an innovation has on its success. Crandall and Loucks (1982) found that rather than easing a school into a change gradually and tinkering with the system, the greater the effort and energy the teachers had to put into making the innovation work, the greater the likelihood of it being successful. These researchers concluded that people involved must strike a balance. The innovation had to be substantial enough to warrant putting significant and sustained energy into it, but not so massive that it became overwhelming and people had to develop coping strategies to survive. Louis, Rosenblum, and Molitor (1981) indicated that there was a clear relationship between how difficult teachers viewed the change and how much personal and organizational change occurred.

While it seems important that people who are affected by an innovation be included in the development of it (Bentzen, 1974; Berman & McLaughlin, 1978), this involvement, or the origin of an innovation, do not seem to be the overriding factors (Louis et al., 1981). Rather, several studies found that other factors are more relevant. The content, the amount and type of support appear to have more influence in involving teachers in the innovation (Corbett, Dawson, & Firestone, 1984). Behind all this, however, is this simple fact: What was most influential in enticing teachers to become involved was whether it made sense to them and whether it was of use, that is, whether it would help them in their work with their students.

The research of Louis, Dentler and Kell, (1984) showed that it wasn't enough for supporters to show teachers that a program or selected materials achieved certain educational goals. The people proposing the change had to convince the teachers that the changes they were proposing meshed with the teachers' understanding of usable knowledge. In the last analysis, as Hall and Hord were at pains to point out, "how the teachers feel about and perceive change will in large part determine whether or not change actually occurs in classrooms" (1987, p. 53). This again highlights the need for a change in thinking in order to ensure a change in practice.

### Difficulty in Changing Beliefs

This change of thinking comes about when people change the beliefs they have held. For any significant change to occur in an organization, it is necessary for people in the organization to change their beliefs, their underlying assumptions, their mental models or whatever name is given to the preconceptions and implicit theories that guide their actions (Clark, 1988). Such preconceptions and implicit theories are not some well thought-out logical framework that is consistent and rational. Rather, they "tend to be

eclectic aggregations of cause-effect propositions from many sources, rules of thumb, generalizations drawn from personal experience, beliefs, values, biases and prejudices" (Clark, 1988, p. 5).

Most scholars make a distinction between beliefs and knowledge (Abelson, 1979; Ernest, 1989; Nespor, 1987; Nisbett & Ross, 1980). Nisbett and Ross (1980) saw knowledge as a cognitive component which is schematically organized, while beliefs possess aspects of evaluation and judgment. Nespor (1987) argued that beliefs are based on episodic memory and draw their influence from previous episodes or experiences that then color the understanding of following events. This was born out by other researchers who found that memories of past experiences often became the filter through which new information is processed (Goodman, 1988). Clearly illustrative of this was Calderhead and Robson's (1991) study of preservice teachers. They found that these teachers held beliefs about teaching based on vivid memories of their own experience as students. It was through the filter of these experiences that these people decided how to use what they learned in their training and how they would use it in practice. These early experiences were overall more influential than what they were taught in their preservice courses.

Nespor (1987) argued that belief systems work at an individual level and do not, therefore, require a general or group agreement about how valid or appropriate the beliefs are. They don't even have to be internally consistent. This is in contrast to knowledge systems which require some general consensus and consistency. In such a system the knowledge is advanced or changed through reasoned and logical progression. In contrast, belief systems are basically unchanging and what tends to bring about change when it does occur is a "conversion or gestalt shift" (Nespor, 1987, p.

321). In such a framework, belief systems are not contained and their connection with reality is not bounded by logic. Knowledge systems, on the other hand, are more closely tied to reason. Despite this irrational nature of beliefs, Nespor (1987) concluded that they are much more powerful than knowledge in influencing how people set about dealing with the problems and tasks they face.

Whatever way is used to distinguish between the two concepts, it is important to see the impact each has. Pintrich (1990) wisely pointed out that no matter how the two are viewed, the research shows that "knowledge and beliefs . . . influence a wide variety of cognitive processes including memory, comprehension, deduction and induction, problem representation, and problem solution" (p. 836).

There is little disagreement among scholars about the importance of the beliefs teachers bring with them into the school. These beliefs have a significant influence on teachers' perceptions and the decisions they make, which in turn influence their behaviors in the classroom (Ashton, 1990; Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Buchmann, 1984; Dinham & Stritter, 1986; Fenstermacher, 1979, 1986; Munby, 1982, 1984; Weinstein, 1988; Wilson, 1990). The difficulty with investigating beliefs and finding ways to help people change them is that beliefs must be inferred. It is not possible to study beliefs except through the observation of people, listening to or reading what people say about them. While what people say is an important source for making such inferences, Wilson (1990) shrewdly remarked that what people do can reveal more about what their beliefs are. In making these inferences it is important to consider the data on which the inference is made. Rokeach (1968) highlighted three avenues for obtaining these data: the statements about beliefs, the intention to behave in a predisposed manner

and the behavior related to the particular belief. Despite this intention, however, Munby (1983) found in his study that there are numerous problems in obtaining information in an area which is by nature somewhat elusive.

Because people have beliefs about everything they come across on their journey, it is difficult to know, let alone study, what beliefs are influencing decisions at any particular moment. Teachers' beliefs about all the components of education are not just restricted to professional areas. This means that the educational beliefs must be understood not only in terms of their connection with each other but also in connection with other, possibly more central, beliefs in the person's belief system (Kitchner, 1986; Posner et al., 1982). For example, the teachers' experiences on an interpersonal level, which may have nothing to do with the school, will influence their beliefs about how to relate to other faculty and students. Thus beliefs are not compartmentalized but are pervasive. They arise from a process of enculturation and social construction (Pajares, 1992). The process of being exposed to others' ideas and mores allows children to gradually create beliefs that are fostered by their experience. These beliefs are developed through an internalization of what that person has been exposed to through interaction with other people and so the process of socialization leads to the individual appropriating as reality the established expectations (Berger, 1967). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) spoke about this by stating that "every experience takes place within a vast background of cultural presuppositions . . . Cultural assumptions, values and attitudes are not a conceptual overlay . . . [but] all experience is cultural through and through" (p. 57). The real difficulty in trying to change people's underlying assumptions is that each person has developed "a basic belief in what is real that it is impossible [for him/her] to conceive that others live in a different reality" (McWinney, 1989, p. 156).

These early formed beliefs generally remain unchanged unless they are deliberately challenged (Lasley, 1980). Once formed, these assumptions or beliefs can remain in people's unconscious and "retain hidden control of [their] adult experience until significant events reveal them as emotional as well as intellectual fallacies" (Gould, 1978, p. 39). These unexamined and incorrect assumptions often dominate people's thinking and in doing so dangerously distort reality (LaGrand, 1988, p. 5).

As a child develops, the inner structure emerges, according to Erikson (1982), in relation to the cultural "outerworld" and the child internalizes the parents' prohibitions and prescriptions into what psychoanalysis calls the superego. These cultural assumptions are not just an overlay that people place upon experience as they choose. Every experience occurs within a vast background of cultural presuppositions. All experience is cultural through and through and so the culture is already present in the very experience itself (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

This internalization has obvious implications for the development of the underlying assumptions people begin to operate from without really being aware they are doing so. People are in essence theorists about their social and natural world. They take the information available and draw inferences about themselves, their surroundings and their circumstances (Nisbett & Ross, 1980). People's early experiences strongly influence these inferences which become final judgments and then theories (beliefs). Once formed these beliefs become highly resistant to change and results in what is generally known as *theory maintenance* (Nisbett & Ross, 1980). When teachers are being enticed to change beliefs, it is important to remember this maintenance. Lortie (1975) was dismayed to find that all the education teachers receive in preparation for their work is insignificant when compared

to the influence of the many thousands of hours those teachers have spent in the classroom as students. These many hours are extraordinarily productive times for developing all sorts of beliefs which are then brought into the teacher education programs and subsequently into the schools and classrooms where the teachers will eventually work. Thus the judgments individuals make about teachers and teaching while a child moving through the system will virtually remain stable even as teachers become competent professionals. They come to the conclusion that "what constituted good teaching then constitutes it now" (Lortie, 1975, p. 66). O'Loughlin's (1990) review of research on teachers' beliefs confirms Lortie's fears.

The strength of that resistance depends on how early the beliefs are incorporated into the belief structure (Pajares, 1992). This is the case because once a belief is confirmed, it begins to influence people's perceptions and becomes a filter for new information. In this way the belief pervades an increasing amount of people's remembered experience. The longer it has been doing this, the more difficult it is to change because of the memory banks that have been influenced by it. To change would mean reconfiguring those memory banks. Munby (1982) found in his study that these beliefs can be so influential that they can discount the clearest and most convincing contrary evidence. This may involve some very astute mental juggling. Nisbett and Ross (1980) found in their study that people first take data that contradict their beliefs and through various cognitive tricks turn it to support those already held beliefs. People use various encoding and decoding biases in order to support their already-held beliefs and then choose information from their memory. Such choices are colored by the beliefs but these beliefs also influence how people recall the information. This can result in substantial distortion of experiences in order

to maintain the belief. "Once beliefs are formed, individuals have a tendency to build causal explanations surrounding the aspects of those beliefs, whether these explanations are accurate or mere invention" (Pajares, 1992, p. 317). To further engrain the belief is the cyclical process wherein people's perceptions are influenced by the beliefs which in turn impact on behaviors that support the belief and so reinforces the original belief. Harman (1988) claimed that "our experiencing of reality is strongly affected by our internalized beliefs. Our beliefs, in turn, are affected by our experiencing of what we perceive as reality--which most of the time reinforces the beliefs" (p. 19).

This paints a somewhat gloomy picture about enabling people to change their beliefs and thus enabling organizations to change. Nisbett & Ross (1980) reinforced this with their conclusion that there is substantial evidence to indicate that people will hold onto beliefs even when they are confronted with enormous evidence to the contrary.

Such commitment to beliefs, however, can provide people with personal meaning and help them come to terms with their reality. People who come together in social groups can find some structure, order and shared values in a belief system that is stable. This provides a safe place for them where dissonance and confusion are diminished even when the contradictory beliefs people hold may logically justify considerable dissonance. As people grow comfortable with their beliefs, they become emotionally attached to them and these beliefs become their "self" and so become very resistant to change (Pajares, 1992).

#### Nature of Organizations

Another way of considering this attachment is through looking at the language people use to talk about schools. A school is not just the physical



site where people assemble. When people speak about school, they are speaking of the organization that uses the physical site. The essence of the organization is relationship which cannot be observed. It is only the behaviors that indicate the existence of the relationship that can be seen. From observing behavior people can infer a relationship exists. An organization is presumed to exist because people infer from the pattern of behaviors they observe that agreed upon relationships are in place. Hence, like beliefs, the relationship can only be inferred from reflection on the observed behavior (Smith, 1982a). Schools, then, are social organizations. They exist as interdependent and collaborative relationships among people (Schmuck, 1990, p. 899).

Given that the organization does not exist in a concrete form, it follows that the only way people can speak about it is by the use of metaphors. Obviously, the metaphors people select to use to speak about schools will determine how they understand them. The system people use to talk is intertwined with what they talk about (Pondy, 1978). It is not possible for people to think about a school separate from the language they use to do so. Reality is filtered through linguistic systems that govern our thoughts.

Over time, people have developed a set of metaphors in the language they use to speak about schools. To do this they have taken things that have been most familiar to them for these metaphors. A critical issue here is how appropriate the metaphors are in describing the relationships. These metaphors may have been appropriate in the context of when they were selected. But how appropriate are they in describing the pattern of relationships that should exist in schools as we move towards the twenty-first century? A major problem has arisen in the use of language about schools. A set of metaphors, and the particular context in which they may

have been used, that were suitable at a particular time, have become accepted and fixed as the only way of thinking about schools. The result is that people find it difficult to think of schools in ways other than accessing those metaphors and contexts. A significant problem in dealing with this mindset is that many people do not realize that they are using metaphors. The old man in Patricia Warren's (1991) novel accurately reflected this when he said that "the person who lives in the square mind of today will have a hard time imagining what the world is like for people who see all Life as Circles . . . . They believe they understand the Circle mind. But they underestimate that their own thinking is square. So they translate everything through the square" (p. 5). These people assume that the way they talk about schools is reality, rather than a form of speech describing a pattern of relationships.

It is difficult for people to develop another set of metaphors and contexts. The established ones have become the touchstones for the entity known as school. If the fit between the metaphor and the school does not deal adequately with the nature of relationships that exist, the obvious thing to do is to change the metaphor that is used. While in theory this is obvious, the practice is not that simple. The reason is that the metaphor is often lodged in a larger understanding of reality that would be severely disrupted if the metaphor was changed. What can happen is that the nature of the relationships is put under pressure to conform to the metaphor because the prevailing metaphors have become paramount for people in the school (Smith, 1982b). Such metaphors become part of the teachers' belief system and the acceptance of established metaphors helps to explain the attachment the teachers have to their beliefs. As a result of this attachment, change in schools becomes difficult. Heckman (1993) pointed out that many of the

new policies that are promulgated have been developed by people who are part of the educational setting. These people have developed beliefs from having been students and what they recommend generally reflect what they have done and experienced. Such recommendations are, therefore, modifications of existing practices (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1990).

When recommendations come forward that do urge considerable divergent changes to the business as usual approach, few to no changes follow in the classrooms (Malen & Ogawa, 1988; Little, 1990).

This attachment to beliefs leads people to typically favor predictability of behavior, or norms, as an accepted way to express meaning so that they can share a sense of importance and rightness no matter what the composition of the group should be (Macpherson, 1987). It is out of this meaning that purposes arise in a particular institution. It becomes obvious, therefore, that great conflict can arise when change strategies ignore the specific cultural context.

Heckman (1993) concluded from his survey of studies trying to bring about change that

the lesson would seem to be that the unwritten norms and regularities of classroom and school life (the culture of school) transcend the written rules, regulations, and alternative ideas of the most ambitious and innovative administrators, policymakers, and curriculum developers. Discovering ways to shift these norms and regularities, then, becomes an important task for those interested in reforming and restructuring schools and education in this country." (p. 265)

"Change not only threatens the previous meanings people give to institutions, it also threatens an individual's confidence in his or her views on work, professional self, and more broadly, valued life. To disturb the

patterns of teaching and learning is to demand a crucial transition of all involved" (Pettit & Hind, 1992, p. 119). In all this discussion of resistance it is important to see a broader context in which threats are perceived and not to conclude that defensiveness about change necessarily means resistance to learning.

### Ways of Changing Beliefs

Against this backdrop how is it possible to lead people to change their way of thinking and hence their beliefs? The research on beliefs would indicate that it is possible but that it is a difficult and messy process. Posner, Strike, Hewson, and Gertzog (1982) studied college students and developed a way of talking about the process of how concepts may be changed. They began by referring back to Piaget's ideas of assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation involves dealing with new information that is compatible and is integrated into what people already believe. Accommodation, on the other hand, results when the new information is not able to be assimilated but has to be dealt with. Posner et al. claimed that in both cases beliefs were changed. Accommodation, however, required a more radical and more difficult change. They maintained that before accommodation occurred people needed to be dissatisfied with their existing beliefs and the new beliefs need to be presented in a way that was intelligible and plausible. At the same time the new beliefs had to be compatible with other aspects of the belief system. It would not be possible for a person to accommodate a belief that had no relation to any other belief they held.

The point that arises from this study is that it is not until people find their beliefs unsatisfactory that there is any chance of them changing. For change to occur the people have to be challenged to examine those beliefs and to see that some new belief is not able to be assimilated into existing

understandings. What Posner et al. (1982) found when this happened was that belief change was the last option. A great range of resistant behaviors were chosen first. The students rejected the new information, they deemed it irrelevant, through all sorts of logical difficulties they attempted to assimilate it, they boxed their understanding so it wouldn't conflict with their existing beliefs, among other things, before they would think about accommodation.

Accommodation would only occur when a certain number of conditions were present. First, the new information came to be seen as an anomaly. Second, it must be possible for the new information to be reconciled with some existing beliefs. Third, the people must desire a sense of peace and a reduction of the conflict among their beliefs. Under these conditions when a change does take place it will be some time before the old belief is put aside. What will happen first is that the new beliefs will be tested and they must be found to be more effective otherwise they will be rejected (Posner et al., 1982).

These findings were corroborated in a study Guskey (1986) did of staff development programs where he found that simply presenting the programs was not successful. However, significant change in attitude occurred when teachers were persuaded to become involved in using a procedure even when they were dubious about it, and then found it helped to improve student achievement. In order for the change to occur, it was important for teachers to use the technique and notice the improvement. Simply hearing about it or using it without the observed improvement did not result in a change in attitude. From this study Guskey concluded that it was only after the teachers had been enticed into doing something different that their beliefs changed. That is, change in belief followed change in behavior.

This was reinforced by Braid and Mitchell (1986) who found that effective changes in teaching and learning situations followed reflection on practice. This reflection occurred when teachers considered classroom practices in relation to what they wanted for students. While this process may appear straightforward, Braid and Mitchell found that there was a real challenge in establishing the conditions necessary for teachers to be reflective in this way.

Those wishing to be involved in bringing about change in schools must be aware of the importance teacher beliefs have in what happens in schools and in bringing about change. This was highlighted by Kagan (1992) who concluded that "the more one reads studies of teacher belief, the more strongly one suspects that this piebald of personal knowledge lies at the very heart of teaching" (p, 85). If change is going to come about in schools, teachers will be major players in the move. For any process to have any chance of succeeding the people proposing it must be cognizant of the beliefs teachers bring to their job. Prawat (1990) found that some of the new proposals, such as those centered on a constructivist approach, are at odds with the beliefs of many teachers, and people can't presume the proposals will be adopted by teachers without some change in those beliefs. These beliefs of individuals are set in a wider context of school-wide values and beliefs. Oakes and Sirotnik (1983) found little attention has been given to the examination of these, but the practices of the school are based on them. Such practices are manifestations of what has been called the culture of the school. Heckman (1988) claimed that, among other things, this culture guides the learning activities, group practices, the way teacher talk with one another and the way they evaluate what students do.

Culture is acted and public. It is an interactionally constructed and publicly held system of meaning and significance. The cultural meaning or significance of any particular behavior (or sequence of behaviors) is not in the interpretation given to that behavior by any one individual (including the individual who performed the behavior); but rather the cultural meanings and significance derives from the local system of meanings publicly constructed by people interacting with each other and in which the behavior is embedded. (Bloome, Puro and Theodorou, 1989, p. 267)

As was mentioned above in the discussion of beliefs, teachers developed beliefs about teachers and teaching while they were students. Through watching, listening, feeling, smelling and doing school they built up an understanding of the shared meanings (Heckman, 1993). Such stored memories are then carried through their own education and in many cases are brought back into the schools where they teach. "The culture of the school . . . particularly as it relates to teaching and learning activities, is in the minds of teachers and in the structures and activities of schools and classrooms" (Heckman, 1993, p. 266). As such, it guides and directs those within the schools. Because the culture of the school is part of the structure of people's underlying assumptions, very rarely will they spontaneously examine them. The assumption is that the way they think and do things makes sense.

If change is to occur in the way schools do things and the way people in schools think, what must happen is that these assumptions must be questioned. Richardson (1990) claimed that in order for change to occur in schools there is a need for teachers to continually ask questions about what

they are doing and how the school is structured. Such questioning would lead teachers to fundamentally examine their own beliefs and theories.

The purpose of such questioning, however, goes further than simply looking at what will be most effectiveness. Rather, the very reason for setting such standards of effectiveness and the guides that are used to establish criterion must also be scrutinized (Heckman, 1993).

One of the problems the teachers have with some of the new proposals for teaching is that new metaphors are being used to talk about the school and what is done there. If the school is seen as a set of relationships that can only be inferred and, therefore, can only be spoken about by the use of metaphors and their context, then by changing the metaphor people are changing one of the essential elements of the relationship. For schools to change, therefore, people involved in them will have to reflect on the metaphors they use and develop more adequate ones to make sense of the set of relationships in which they are embedded.

Metaphors are one of the aspects that have a significant impact on a school's culture. Another one is symbols. Bolman and Deal (1984) and Deal and Kennedy (1982) maintained an effective organization operated through the combination of interactive and widely accepted myths, symbols, and rituals. It follows, therefore, that for change to occur in schools there needs to be change in these areas. For this to happen, a shared meaning must evolve. This can only happen through reflection in action. The difficulty this poses for schools, however, is that privacy and isolation usually characterize the accepted norms within schools (Little, 1990; Lortie, 1975). For culture to change the shared norms must change. That requires collaboration and cooperation to become a school norm (Sarason, 1982, 1990).



One of the conclusions that can be drawn from all this research is that for people to change there must be a learning process which depends heavily on each individual's capacity and willingness to reflect on practice, to critically analyze it, to reflect with others, and to experiment with new ways of thinking and acting. Part of this process means creating new metaphors to more adequately describe their experience. In other words, the change process is essentially a learning process and it is through this learning process that improvement occurs. Through the learning that occurs, people will change their thinking and adopt more liberating ways of acting.

Foster (1991) emphasized this mind change when he wrote about reforming schools. He claimed that for schools to respond to the democratic ideals, there was a need to reconstruct the nature of administration and of teaching. Such a reconstruction would only come from a conceptual rethinking of the roles in a school and would require a "deep analysis of the *relationships* that apply between schooling and the political-economic context" (p. 58).

#### Importance of Meaning

At the heart of this whole process is a need for individuals to be able to make personal sense of what is happening. Unless people can connect the proposed new ideas or practice with their basic assumptions, beliefs and experiences they are likely to reject the change outright. One of the challenges for those involved in the change process is to make proposed change understandable and meaningful for those who are expected to implement the changes (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992).

Braid and Mitchell (1986) found it was vital for the people involved in implementing this desired change to see change as a process and not an event. One of the things that people had to do in this process was make

personal meaning out of what was being proposed and this takes time. Hence according to this approach change will only come in the long haul and cannot be legislated or crashed through.

To bring about change, then, is a complex and long-term commitment. Numerous research studies have illustrated the need for such commitment but have shown that it is not sufficient. Huberman and Miles (1984) found that even with genuine commitment at the local level, there are many factors working against change. The people higher up the hierarchy with different priorities and control of resources can undermine an innovation as can a high turnover of teachers and the constant pressure of new priorities. Most approaches to bringing about change in schools do not fully realize the complexity in school organization. Teachers and administrators relate in a variety of ways within schools, at times struggling with each other, at other time supporting or ignoring each other. In such a context conflicts become apparent at the personal, industrial and educational levels and these influence the ways people align themselves and those with whom they identify (Ball, 1986; Connell, 1985).

Such research highlights the need for establishing a broad base of support for long-term success. Sarason (1982) emphasized this point in his study of how innovations need to be institutionalized in order to sustain their impact. Institutionalization, however, needs to come after proven and acknowledged success because it is possible for schools to institutionalize hopeless projects and bury highly successful ones (Huberman & Miles, 1984; Yin & White, 1984). The long-term acceptance and use of an innovation are tasks that require a very balanced approach, and the literature consistently indicates the importance of intrinsic incentives on teacher

performance in general and on implementing innovations in particular, for it to be successful (Huberman & Miles, 1984).

An inspirational person may succeed in mobilizing teachers to work at developing the skills necessary to achieve a successful implementation. For institutionalizing the innovation, however, a formal and informal support system is necessary. Sarason (1982) found that a single individual rarely possesses both sets of skills in anything close to equal measure. While Sarason's underlying understanding of leadership has overtones of leadership residing in the individual, nevertheless he highlights the need for an influence and relational understanding of leadership in order to empower people in the school to effect real change to meet their mutual purposes (Rost, 1991).

#### A Change in Thinking Is Needed

If there is one thing that arises from reading research on change, it is that people wanting to change an organization must think about it differently for the change to occur. It is no longer possible to create new organizational forms in old ways to cope with the requirements of our times. Considerable imagination will be required because tinkering with current structures will lead no where (Morgan, 1993). At the same time, however, there is no one way of explaining how or why organizations change (Foster, 1986).

All this research seems very logical but also rather ponderous. Some of the recent innovative thinking about organizations have adopted rather different approaches. Rather than seeing change as something that gradually emerges from the past through the medium of distinct planned projects, some scholars are thinking of it quite differently (Land & Jarman, 1992; Wheatley, 1992). Land and Jarman saw change as "driven by the pull of the future to connect everything at broader, deeper more interpenetrating levels"

(1992, p. 109). They felt such an understanding was required because our world is now faced with problems that the traditional worldview, or the current interpretation of the newly discovered laws of nature, are not able to solve.

Land and Jarman (1992) claimed that "modification of our thinking patterns will not work. This new era requires a radical rethinking of the most basic and foundational ways we view the world" (p. 11). For schools this will mean "not more intensified solutions from the past, but a willingness to ask totally new questions about what is possible" (p. 36). In effect they called for a "massive change of mind" (p. 73).

In this new way of thinking, change does not evolve from a logical step by step process. Rather it is based on "three cornerstones: creativity, connecting, and future pull" (Land and Jarman, 1992, p. 110). To accept such a position requires a change of mind and Land and Jarman challenged people to devise ways to change their minds so that they move from a belief in the limits of rational, past-driven world to a belief in the limitless potential of a creative world. While they developed some creative and exciting scenarios, they did not deal adequately with how the change of mind or change in beliefs comes about. Their exhortations to believe certain things and think in a certain way did not provide the framework to enable people imbedded in their assumptions to experience the freedom they spoke about. As well, the main focus of the book was on the individual and what s/he should do. This neglected the major issue of change in masses of people and how that can be brought about. Nevertheless, there is a great deal of creative wisdom in the book and it offered some wonderful insights into new ways of thinking. Again the strong emphasis is on the need for a new way of thinking.

## William Glasser and Schools

What William Glasser proposes is essentially a new way of thinking about the way people are involved in schools. Out of his experience of working with delinquent girls, William Glasser developed a way of helping people which he called reality therapy (Glasser, 1965). Underlying this approach was his belief that people need to face their own reality and reshape their behavior to fulfill their needs (Hobbie, 1973). Glasser claimed the choices people make are their best attempt at the time to meet their needs, even if those choices are irresponsible and lead to failure.

This idea of choice is central to Glasser's approach because it grounds the responsibility for actions within the individual. Zohar (1990), in an extended discussion of choice, supported Glasser's view that choice is a free act an individual makes from a number of available alternatives. People generally give others, or at least themselves, a reason for the choice they make, but Zohar claimed that whatever the meaning attached to that choice, it preceded those "because" and was a leap in faith. Glasser claimed it would be the best attempt at the time to meet a need. Nevertheless, the choice was the responsibility of no one and nothing but the individual. The reasons people give, however, are not insignificant. Zohar (1990) asserted that while the reasons don't determine what people do, "the association between reason and choice makes the right choice easier, less energy demanding; it tips the balance, but it does not guarantee the desired outcome" (p. 184).

Central to the therapy process in Glasser's view is the relationship developed between the therapist and the client or in regard to school, between the teacher and student. It is in this relationship that the student will gain the support to take whatever risks are necessary to adopt more need-

fulfilling behavior. The essence of reality therapy is the acceptance of responsibility for one's own behavior, which enables the individual to achieve success and happiness (Bratter, 1976).

Glasser later provided a theoretical base to understand the practical procedures of reality therapy in what he called "control theory" (Glasser, 1984). In this theory Glasser maintained that all human beings are born with five basic needs built into their genetic structure: survival, love, power, fun and freedom. Throughout their lives people attempt to live in a way that will best satisfy one or more of these needs (Glasser, 1990).

According to Glasser's theory the only thing people can do from birth to death is behave. Acting, thinking, feeling and the concurrent physiology make up these total behaviors that are almost all chosen. The motivation comes from within a person not, as stimulus-response theory claims, from something external. As people attempt to meet their basic needs, they go through several stages. The first process is detecting a difference between what they are getting and what they want. When they become aware of this, people try new behaviors and develop hopeful responses that will satisfy their needs. Finally they redirect their behavior into a new pattern that reflects what they believe is their best chance for fulfillment (Davis, 1993). People select what seems to them to be the best attempt they can make to satisfy one or more of their needs, and they gradually build a picture album of what they find satisfies some needs (Glasser, 1984). It is this picture album that Glasser calls a person's "quality world." These pictures are what motivate people because when there is a difference between what they want from their quality world and what they experience, they seek to close that gap by behaving in what they consider a need-satisfying way. Thus, this quality world contains those picture albums people have built up of

pleasurable memories of things they have done that have met their needs (Glasser, 1990. p. 59). Glasser claimed these behaviors result from choices people make and are always a blend of the four elements of acting, thinking, feeling and physiology. Each choice a person makes has influence on later choices, and no choice is without some significance for the rest of the person's life.

### Origins of Glasser's Thought

Some researchers argued that Glasser's approach has its roots in Alfred Adler's individual psychology (Rozsnafszky, 1974; Whitehouse, 1984). Like Adler, Glasser stressed the importance of a person taking responsibility for his/her life. Both maintained that this responsibility was defined as the ability to fulfill one's needs (Whitehouse, 1984). Glasser, however, has modified and adapted his approach as experience has revealed inadequacies and further insights have resulted in developments. There are also definite similarities between Glasser's exposition of his need theory and that of both Maslow (1954) and Alderfer (1969). However Glasser has arrived at his position more from a reflection on his experience and that of others than from a systematic study in a research-based approach. This lack of research into the claims he makes is a real weakness of Glasser's approach. Nevertheless, he has been open to the findings of people who have taken his theory and researched it. There is a growing number of studies that have investigated the theory he has expounded and the practices he has proposed. At Northeastern University in Boston, an international resource library has been established which continually updates an annotated bibliography of all published articles and books relating to reality therapy/control theory. Abstracts of doctoral dissertations regarding reality therapy and control theory are also recorded. There are almost a hundred dissertations

investigating various aspects of reality therapy and control theory. As well, many of the hundreds of articles and books are investigations while others are simply reporting experience of working with the approach (Green, 1993). There is still much research to be done to move his theory from a hunch and anecdotal reports to something that is grounded in the lived experience of people.

Betz (1984) and Kanfer (1990) criticized both Maslow and Alderfer, and by implication Glasser, for not making more specific predictions about future behavior as individuals seek to satisfy particular needs. Such criticism misses the main point of what Glasser said. If people are making choices about the behavior that will, in their opinion, best meet the present need, then they are the only ones who know the range of behaviors from which they can choose. While there is the possibility of others seeing a pattern over time, if people are considered free agents then they will be the ones who make the decisions and those choices are their best attempt at the time to meet their needs. A choice that is not entirely predictable.

A criticism that is made of most psychotherapies can also be addressed to Glasser. A number of thinkers have been critical of the narcissistic overattention most psychotherapies give to the self (Foucault, 1965; Frank, 1975; MacIntyre, 1984; Rieff, 1966). The way in which the therapeutic approach has become dominant was well documented by Rieff (1966). He claimed that truth has been displaced by psychological effectiveness, and MacIntyre (1984) was devastating in his critique of the therapeutic approach and its invasion of education and religion.

Frank (1975) claimed that despite the appearance of many very different therapies, they all share a system of values that places individual self-fulfillment and self-actualization at the top of their priorities. From that



viewpoint the individual is the center of his/her moral universe and the presumption is made that once the individual develops self-realization then concern for others will follow. One of the implications of this position is that the individual becomes isolated from the context in which s/he develops. Zohar (1990) claimed that our present society bears testimony to the fact that the assumptions undergirding the therapeutic approach have not been fulfilled. People on the whole are not more self-realized or self-fulfilled than they were when Freud started his work. Rather the loneliness and alienation that characterized our time are greater than they were in Freud's. "The self thrown back entirely on itself, with nothing but itself as a source of meaning, truth, and value, has no nourishment on which to draw" (1990, p. 158).

While Glasser certainly falls in the category of psychotherapist and some of the above criticisms apply to him, he has also seen the value of moving away from isolation and the need for cooperation. He emphasized the need for the individual to take responsibility for his/her actions and later developed an understanding of a commitment to other people in a school in order to achieve quality there (1990). Nevertheless, his emphasis on therapy is very strong. In his book on the control theory manager (1994) one of the major ways of solving problems is through counseling which opens his approach to the therapy critique mentioned above

#### Glasser Moves into Schools

As he developed his theory, Glasser was involved in the lives of people in therapy. At the same time, however, he also began to examine schools to investigate the experiences of teachers and students during their school days. He felt that if schools were to have an impact on students, what was done there had to be need satisfying. When Glasser investigated schools, he found teachers and administrators managing huge numbers of students who

actively and passively resisted what those organizing them asked them to do. As a way of coping with managing such large groups, schools had become highly technical in the way they processed knowledge (McNeil, 1988). The centralized curriculum, centralized tests of outcomes, and standardized teacher behavior have led to frustration among teachers and a realization by students that much of what they did in school was separate from their lives (McNeil, 1988).

If students are to gain control over their lives and do quality work in school, they must be convinced that the work they are asked to do satisfies their needs. The more it does, the harder they will work (Glasser, 1990).

In Glasser's view, the whole area of teachers managing students and administrators managing teachers is of utmost importance in the development of quality schools. If students and teachers are going to be able to meet their needs in the schools where they both work, Glasser was convinced that the system had to change. He addressed the need for educational organizations to change through the application of W. Edwards Deming's ideas on total quality management. In particular, he focused on those ideas associated with what he called boss-management and lead-management. What Deming saw as needing to be changed is relatively uncomplicated, but it requires a significant mind shift. The above discussion on change reveals that the adoption of anything new is difficult. Anything that calls for people to give up some of the beliefs they have held as dogma is extremely difficult. Deming's philosophy has not been widely adopted in America because it calls for major change--a revolution in ways of thinking about management (Scherkenbach, 1988, p. 16).

### Deming's Influence

Deming was concerned with change only in so far as it would lead to improvement. "The key element in Demingism is the way in which theory is linked with practice in order to make good decisions" (Holt, 1993, p. 385). Inherent in his approach is a moral dimension. He saw the pursuit of quality as a moral enterprise. His concern was not focused on organizations, goals or outcomes but rather the people who define the practice of an organization. Such people need a structure of management but this is subordinate to the demands of the process. Hence, he called for people in all areas of an organization to reflect on their own practices and develop theories that will make sense of and improve the quality of their lives (Holt, 1993). Deming's approach was essentially collaborative, noncompetitive, without fear and aimed at continual improvement. He was not interested in apportioning blame for mistakes. What he wanted was for people to feel safe, trusted and involved so that a credible solution could be found in order to improve quality. He asserted that "it is necessary that people feel secure and trust is a much better motivator than fear" (Garbor, 1990, p. 22). Such proposals and practices are dangerous in the dominant and conventional approach to management because they run counter to the static, line-management, top-down approach inherent in most organizations. It truly requires a change in thinking to operate in the way Deming is suggesting.

The criticism English (1993) made of Deming by equating his approach with that of Taylor fails to see the essential moral dimension to what Deming is saying. Taylor's model was clearly evident in the management by objectives (MBO) approach to organizations epitomized in Drucker's standard text and his statement that the whole organization "must be directed toward the performance goals of the business" (1977, p. 336). Nothing could

be further from Deming's mind than this approach. In his rejection of it, Deming stated that using such an approach was "like running a business by looking in the rearview mirror" (Aguayo, 1990, p. 9).

Unfortunately, many organizations who claim to be following Deming have not truly reflected his approach. Some people have learned a little about him and applied some ideas superficially and say they are following Deming's method without undergoing the change in thinking that is central to his model (Brandt, 1992). Some of these attempts are certainly open to English's (1993) criticism because their application of Deming's suggestions are merely other ways of manipulating people to increase the bottom line. People in these organizations have become the means to increase profits. These practices are not, however, what Deming himself was advocating.

Deming is but one of the people who are working on developing a systematic focus on quality in the work of organizations (Atkinson, 1991; Berry, 1991; Murgatroyd & Morgan, 1993; Oakland, 1989). These people claimed that organizations must develop such a focus to survive in a market that is becoming increasingly global in its dimensions.

What people need to keep in mind when considering using Deming's approach in schools is that he developed his ideas in a commercial/business setting. He was primarily concerned with the production process. His approach seeks to provide the means to monitor, control, and improve production systems. The appropriateness of taking this approach and applying it to education must be questioned. In light of the above discussion of metaphors, the move by schools to adopt Deming's approach is essentially a move to adopt a new metaphor. Sztjan (1992) criticized such a move because she claimed that all that is occurring is that the school-as-factory metaphor is being replaced by the school-as-enlightened-corporation one.

Essentially the metaphor is perpetuating the business/economic mentality. She questioned whether "any business metaphor truly aims at the socioeconomic improvement of society" and whether the use of such metaphors will "lead us through education, to a more humane society" (p. 37).

Advocates of Deming find it difficult to accept such a critique of what Deming is suggesting. It seems to be opposed to common sense. Historically education has been guided by the philosophy of regulation and order. Early in the century educational administrators adopted the work of Taylor and Fayol and viewed schools as machine bureaucracies that were orderly and rational systems that needed to be managed and regulated (Skrtic, 1991). Over time, that way of thinking has become the accepted, and, for many people, the only way of thinking about schools. Such an understanding helps to explain why there has been a rush to adopt Deming's approach. What Deming suggested gives the impression of a new approach but essentially it is linked into the old metaphor. As such, it is not completely threatening to the established metaphor, so people feel safe in adopting it. As such, it can be seen as the common sense solution to educational problems that schools are facing. Even in saying that, however, there is still a significant shift in the way of thinking for people wanting to follow the spirit of what Deming was saying.

While advocates of Deming's approach point out the limitations of scientific management within the structural functional paradigm, the approach has not shed all the baggage of that paradigm. The importance of authority and hierarchy, its relationship to power and metaphor, and its reliance on the scientific method, all indicate its links with that paradigm (Capper & Jamison, 1993). It is, therefore, important for people who are

advocating the use of Deming's approach to be conscious of the metaphor that is being used. Because people view reality through the linguistic system that governs their thoughts, the metaphor that is used in Deming's approach cannot be dismissed as unimportant. On the contrary, it will significantly influence the mental model people develop to think about schools. My biggest concern with the approach is in the frame of mind and the underlying assumptions that operate when people work within it. To dismiss this concern or to ignore it is a simplistic response. Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993), in the beginning of their book, deliberately avoided dealing with the ideological ground on which the quality approach they advocate is based. They claimed that they are seeking "to sensitize and help those now leading primary and secondary schools understand and respond to new contexts that government have legislated" (p. 2). Their discussion reveals that the utilitarian approach has a very strong influence on what they propose. The implication in their position is that it is possible to organize and manage without having to take account of the underlying assumptions that are operating. The above discussion of language and metaphor would severely question that position. The very language Murgatroyd and Morgan use reveals a certain frame of reference. The metaphors are from the business/industrial culture and imbedded in those metaphors are values. The appropriateness of those values for education must be examined. Moreover, the reasons for employing the strategies that are suggested need to be made explicit and critiqued. Simply finding an efficient system is not good enough.

There are, however, some very important advantages for education in some aspects of the quality model. Some of these are "viewing the interactions of an entire system, encouraging employee participation in

decision making, fostering participant feedback, utilizing data collection and analysis, and viewing system improvement as a processual rather than terminal exercise" (Capper & Jamison, 1993, p. 30). Like any process, however, it depends on why and how people use it. The above strategies can be used to empower people and bring about significant positive change, or they can be used to dominate, control, and coerce individuals and groups. This highlights the need for people who are advocating and using the approach, to be clear about why they are using it. If people are clear about providing students with an equitable education that will enable them to participate fully in society, then this approach has potential to assist in transforming education (Capper & Jamison, 1993).

The transformation of education, however, is not just to benefit the individual child. The focus within the approach on the importance of the customer must be kept in perspective. The customer is not just the individual student. The common good must also be considered and this does not always equate with satisfying students (Chickering & Potter, 1993).

#### The Need to See the Complexity of Change

If people want to use the approach in a positive way, they need to change their mental models. One of the problems with those who adopt Deming's approach, however, is a failure to realize the complexity of the change in thinking required to put Deming's model to work. The above discussion on beliefs and the difficulty in bringing about change in that area highlights this complexity. The process of critical reflection when people can come to see the inadequacy in the way they have been thinking and adopt a new one is not something people eventually acquire and then, as it were, "arrive." Rather the process of reflecting on assumptions, common sense knowledge and accepted behaviors is something the people in an

organization need to do all their lives. Thus the people in a learning organization see this process of reflection and action as part of their lifelong learning (Knowles, 1990). The Gitlows in their advocacy of Deming's approach, assume that the process of such change is relatively simple. They suggested that "once an employee is trained in the company's philosophy, learning how to perform the job is necessary" (Gitlow & Gitlow, 1987, p. 99). The implication is that exposure to a new set of ideas will mean a change in attitude and then it is simply a matter of teaching the employees some skills. Such an assumption cannot be sustained, and the discussion on change above illustrates that.

#### Moves from Boss-Management to Lead-Management

More attention is required within Deming's approach to the process of bringing about the mind change. Perhaps the biggest change is required in relationships within a school. The traditional approach has been a coercive, top-down one which Glasser (1990) calls boss-management. The irony of the boss-management approach is that while it promises control, in the reality of today's schools it fails to deliver on this promise (Glasser, 1990). From the students' point of view, the need-frustrating pain of memorizing low-quality fragments of information is as great or greater than the pain of whatever sanction they might suffer at the hands of the teachers (Glasser, 1990).

This boss-management approach also fails to realize that the coercive sanctions used prevent high quality work from being done. This follows from the fact that as soon as a teacher uses coercion, especially punishment, the teacher and student become adversaries. The result is that a rift develops between the student subculture and the official school culture that can easily become a chasm (Sergiovanni, 1994). Cusick (1992) argued that most



schools are structured in such a way that students are driven away from their studies and back into their own groups because of the way the bureaucracy absorbs students' time. Pintrich, Marx, & Boyle (1993) maintained that there is abundant anecdotal evidence that much of what happens in schools is driven by the need to maintain bureaucratic and institutional norms rather than scholarly norms. Such a situation can only lead to even further alienation from the main purpose of the school. Høglund (1991) indicated that administrators, principals and teachers who operated from a base of coercion and fear found it difficult to engender respect and loyalty from those they managed. Fear and quality work are incompatible, and there can be no improvements to the educational system until this is understood and accepted. While the students will probably do some good work, it will not be of the quality of which they are capable. As Guba and Lincoln emphasized, "it is possible to coerce people into compliance, but it is impossible to coerce them into excellence--by anyone's definition" (1989, p. 226). The failure of coercion to produce quality work was amply illustrated during the convict period in Australia's history when extremely violent measures were taken in dealing with people. When writing about the history of the convicts on Norfolk Island, Hughes illustrated the point in this way:

Everything went at a snail's pace, despite the threat of the lash, and the result was an almost parodical inefficiency. The harder the overseers and guards pushed, the more the convicts malingered. (Hughes, 1987, p. 481)

What was obvious from this early experience has not really been learned by most of those people working in schools. Despite the fact that it does not result in quality work, teachers are still coercing students in an attempt to have them produce quality work. Nelsen (1987) claimed that some teachers

are under the false impression that students continue to misbehave because the punishment was not severe enough to teach them a lesson. Because of this mistaken belief they punish again, more severely. Students on their part find even more clever ways to get even. Thus a revenge cycle is perpetuated.

As principals and teachers in schools continue to use the boss-management approach to organize the schools, more and more students look on their teachers and principals as adversaries. Such a relationship contributes to the student feeling of alienation. Bronfenbrenner (1986) spoke about this alienation as a lack of a "sense of belonging, to feel cut off from family, friends, school or work--the four worlds of childhood" (p. 430). It is this alienation that Glasser was so adamant needed to be overcome through the warm relationship the teacher develops with the students. If the relationship remains adversarial then fewer and fewer students will be able to achieve quality work. Even though federal, state, and district administrators may pass edicts, schools cannot coerce or command learning to take place. "The 'productivity' of a school depends on the autonomous learner more than it does on the talent and skill of the staff" (Starratt, 1990, p. 4). The decision to learn comes back to the learner.

The alternative to boss-management is what Glasser (1990) calls lead-management. In this approach persuasion and problem solving are central. Deming was quite adamant that the manager is responsible for the system in which people work. In his view the workers work *IN* the system; the manager works *ON* the system (Tribus, 1988). Thus in applying Deming's approach in a school, the administrators must constantly work at improving the system in which the teachers and students work. The system is what has to change. It is not possible to do anything *to* people, or really *for* people, to get them to produce more. What has to happen is that the school changes so

that students look at it and say: "In this school and with these teachers, I can satisfy my needs, if I work hard" (Gough, 1987, p. 656).

Glasser (1984) was adamant that unless authorities do something to restructure classes so that students see them as more satisfying, there is no sense in telling students how valuable the classes are and how much they need them. Sergiovanni (1994) pointed out that "students are not fussy about where they get their needs met. If the classroom is not the place then the school corridors will do. If the school is not the place, then the gang, the after school job, or some other setting will be the place" (p. 127). What the authorities need to do is to use a great deal of creativity and patience to develop a better system so that students are able to meet their needs in the school (Glasser, 1990). His program for quality schools was Glasser's attempt to work at changing the system operating in a classroom and in a school, and to seek to influence the wider system of which the school is part (1992).

People involved in schools, according to Glasser (1990), must adopt a lead-management approach that is noncoercive, collaborative, consistent and open. If schools are to be places where quality is present then Glasser claimed three conditions must be present (Harmon, 1993). Firstly, there is a need not only to drive out fear--that was a key component of Deming's approach--but to create a warm, supportive atmosphere with close relations among administrators, staff and students. "Teachers must take the first step to eliminate humiliation and punishment in order to create an environment that is nurturing, respectful, and more conducive for learning" (Nelsen, 1993, p. 78). Secondly, what is asked of people (staff and students) must be seen as useful. Thirdly, quality will only be achieved when the people involved self-evaluate and recognize the quality or lack of it in their work.

This last point relates back to Glasser's earlier work in reality therapy (1965) where he claimed that a person would only change his/her behavior if s/he judged the behavior as inadequate. Others may have made that judgment but until the individual makes it nothing will change. Glasser stated that the same thinking applies to producing quality work. For people to adopt such an approach requires a mind shift because they need to move away from the commonly accepted stimulus-response psychology (Harmon, 1993). Glasser totally repudiated that brand of psychology and insisted that people cannot make other people do a job, or anything they do not want to do (1991a). This is the case because people choose what they do, not because others make them, but because it satisfies basic needs within them.

Glasser saw the need for a fundamental change in the system's collective theory-in-use, about how the system should operate and how individuals in the system cope with their experiences. Such a change would require people to act out their espoused theories in order for the quality school to emerge. Glasser addressed this change process with the elaborate training and support system that he established through the Institute of Reality Therapy. Through this training and support system he wanted people to develop the needed skills by being involved in an atmosphere where feedback reinforces the new theory-in-use. He agreed with Argyris' (1982) findings that when people are encouraged to take the risk to try a new approach, they can increase their trust in the new way of thinking. It is this new way of thinking, however, that is critical. Glasser went so far as to say that if people don't have a willingness to conceptualize a new way of organizing and operating a school, then training will not work. If they are willing, however, "training can be a marvelous adjunct" (Harmon, 1993, p. 47).

When Glasser took the ideas of the quality world, as contained in his control theory, and applied them to schools, he developed a clearer purpose for schools. The purpose of a quality school is to educate children according to the following definition of education: "Education is the process through which we discover that learning adds quality to our lives" (Glasser, 1991b, p. 1). For him, quality was anything people "experience that is consistently satisfying to one or more of [the] basic needs" (Glasser, 1992, p. 10). In taking this position Glasser obviously tied the understanding of how people deal with their world to the meaning of quality in order to provide a consistent framework for people wishing to adopt his approach.

In his extensive program for initiating people into his approach, Glasser attempted to bring about a change in people's thinking. Through the training process he challenged people to evaluate what they were doing; he provided the theoretical base for them to conceptualize a new theory; he provided role models, training and experience in using the new theory and he attempted to provide an ongoing support as people implemented the new practices through the practicum process. In these ways he sought to address the aspects of bringing about change mentioned above. Yet in all these attempts there is still a failure to realize the implications of what is involved in enticing people to change their beliefs or replace items in their quality world. The resistance to such change is enormous and will only occur within the processes Glasser set up over time.

#### Glasser's Failure to Involve Parents

One area of concern is the emphasis Glasser placed on who is responsible for education. Glasser (1986, 1990, 1992) spent considerable time focusing on the changes that have to occur in the way administrators work with teachers and the way teachers work with students. In all this

discussion there is no acknowledgment of the part parents play in the education of their children. An assumption that can be present among administrators and teachers is that they are an elite who have an insider's understanding of what education is about and that parents simply provide the children for teachers to work with.

Such an understanding raises serious questions about the essentially democratic nature of education in Western countries. If administrators and teachers separate themselves from the parents in the process of education, they are not only making it more difficult for themselves but are also setting themselves above the group of people they are essentially serving. Education is a crucial part of the democratic process and essential for its survival. If this is the case then it is ironic if the process itself does not bear witness to democracy.

Glasser's failure to acknowledge parents as significant in the educative process and to ignore them in the processes he proposed, reveals significant weaknesses in the framework he established. In his attempt to overcome the significant and disastrous negative implications of bureaucracy, Glasser did not keep a balance between bureaucracy and democracy. In his efforts to be free from the stifling aspects of bureaucracy, he also moved away from the legislative authority. There is running through his works an underlying assumption that the administrators and teachers should work with the students to exercise power in organizing what is done in the school. Implied in this is an argument against democracy.

In his critique of professionalism and democracy, Strike (1993) outlined at length the dangers of developing an extreme notion of professionalism among teachers because of the danger that such practices pose to democracy. If professionalism implies some esoteric knowledge base about the ends of

education, then it is antithetical to democracy. He claimed that in liberal democratic societies "it is generally held that ends are either to be self-chosen by individuals or collectively chosen by some sort of democratic process" (Strike, 1993, p. 259). In Glasser's model there is an implication inherent in the processes proposed that teachers are determining the goals of education in the school. There is a need to explicitly work against this tendency and avoid the "erosion of democratic sovereignty over schooling" (Strike, 1993, p. 260).

The understanding of democracy used here is not simply a voting system based on the sovereignty of the legislature. Rather it is also a matter of coming to some consensus where persuasion by discussion can regulate the way people go about doing things. While there is a tension between these two approaches, a school should be characterized by both.

Citizens and taxpayers continue to have an interest in what goes on in schools even when they are not teachers or parents of current students. They have such an interest both because the education provided by schools eventually effects everyone in the larger community and because they are taxed to pay for schools. It seems clear that they cannot be denied a voice in its affairs. (Strike, 1993, p. 267)

If Glasser's model is to contribute to the improvement of schools there is a need for parents to be more directly involved and also to be influenced by what he proposed. In this way the environment created at school would be complemented by the way children are treated at home.

### Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the theoretical framework which this study has used. The examination of the school looks at the influence of the three areas outlined here. The main focus is on the leadership processes that

brought about the changes in the school. An integral part of those changes is the understanding of control theory advocated by Glasser. The understanding of leadership outlined above provides a platform to examine what happened in the school. The nature of the understanding makes it possible to examine an organization such as a school and determine if the various aspects of the theory are present. Because the theory places considerable emphasis on influence relationships and on change the study examines what happened in the school from those perspectives.



## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### Case Study Methodology

The purpose of this study is to explore the nature of the leadership processes that were experienced in a school as it underwent significant changes. It is this that I "want to be able to say something about at the end of the study" (Patton, 1980, p. 100). The nature of the questions that are the focus of this study are most appropriately answered through the use of a case study approach (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1984).

Yin (1984) elucidated what I have done when he defined a case study as an empirical inquiry that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (p. 23). The case study approach is appropriate because it is an approach that enables me to describe and analyze this particular school in qualitative, complex and comprehensive terms as it has developed and continues to develop. Such an approach focuses on meaning in context and "requires a data collection instrument sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data" (Merriam, 1988, p. 3). As the instrument doing this gathering and interpreting, I made use of methods that are best-suited to this task, namely interviewing, observing and analyzing. Guba and

Lincoln (1989) believed that researchers are a vital part of research because they are the data collection instrument. The researcher works in a natural setting using a variety of data-gathering methods to observe normal occurrences and arriving at reasonable interpretations of these data.

#### Site Selection and Participants

I have been interested in Glasser's work since the early 1970s and during the years I was principal I sought to apply his recommendations to the school where I was working. I was particularly interested in the application of his theories to schools in his book *The Quality School* (1990). When I came to the University of San Diego to enter the Leadership Doctoral Program, I wrote to Glasser informing him of the program and mentioned to him that I was particularly interested in looking at leadership in a quality school, as he used that term. He wrote back recommending I approach a particular school because he felt it was one that had moved a great distance along the path of becoming a quality school, in his use of that term.

For the purpose of this study I am calling the school Mountainvista School. It is a school in a rural setting where students are bussed to the school from an area measuring roughly five hundred square miles. The area is economically depressed with an 18% unemployment rate. In 1990 the citizens in the community had an average income of \$12, 250. Of the families who send children to the school 46% are deemed to be at the poverty rate so the children from these families are eligible for the free/reduced lunch program. Some students live without electricity or running water in tents or in cars for either short or extended periods of time. The majority of the students are from one parent families and less than a quarter of them live with both natural parents. The incidences of drug babies has begun to occur--almost 40% of the guardians in one kindergarten class

admitted that serious drug use either is taking place, or did take place in the home. While the Mountainvista student population remains largely Caucasian (95%), it has begun to take on many of the characteristics of the rest of the state with increased numbers of limited English speaking and Chapter 1 students. There are now 3% Spanish-American and 2% African-American students attending the school. This is a K-8 school of some 850 students with a staff consisting of a superintendent, two principals (one for K-5 and the other for 6-8), 38 teachers, 23 instructional assistants, ten classified staff, including bus drivers, ground keepers, kitchen and clerical workers.

The number of people involved in the school and the nature of its activities made it "impossible to interview *everyone*, observe *everything*, and gather *all* the relevant materials" (Merriam, 1988, p. 52). I had to make decisions about the sample I was going to use. I decided to choose a range of subjects and planned to interview them while at the same time being open to further sampling as information built up.

#### Sources of Information

Yin (1984) emphasized that the "case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence--documents, artifacts, interviews and observations" (p. 20). I used all such sources and developed the following outline to give me the greatest potential for gathering good data to answer my research questions.

Beginning in October 1992, during the preliminary visit to the school, I began gathering information. Because that first visit was an opportunity to explore the school and check on the feasibility of what I had planned, the amount of factual information I collected was meager. However, I came away with very vivid impressions which provided the stimulus for the

decisions I made about the areas I needed to gather information. The second visit was in March 1993 during which I began the formal interviews with the administrators, the board members, parents and some teachers. During that visit I was able to attend a board meeting and a meeting of teachers. The final visit for that school year was in May 1993 when I carried out follow-up interviews with the administrators, interviewed further adults and began the interviews with students, particularly those who were about to leave the school. I was able to attend two meetings teachers had. One was about curriculum matters and the other about organization of the middle school's graduation. The final visit to gather information was in October 1993. This visit provided the opportunity to check with key informants some of the tentative conclusions I had drawn, to fill the gaps that had become obvious in writing the story of the changes, to complete the interviews with adults, particularly some of those involved in the steering committee, and with students and to shadow the three administrators. It was during this visit that I attended a steering committee meeting and two meetings of task forces set up by the steering committee. During all the visits I took time to observe what was happening in the school at various locations and during various meetings. As well, I took opportunities to speak casually with whoever happened to be around. At such times I had conversations with teachers, teachers' aides, cafeteria workers, maintenance workers, students, parents who were visiting the school and on several occasions with visitors to the school either consultants, sales representatives or professional advisors. Table 3.1 summarizes the process of collecting data.

Table 3.1

Data Collection

S E T T I N G	Public places	Around buildings On tennis courts On playing fields
	Teachers' lounge	
	Classrooms	
	Private offices	Superintendent Two principals
	Main school office	
	Gymnasium	
	Library	
	Entrance	

E V E N T S		Formal	Informal
	With the board	Board meetings Interviews	Before/after meetings On their visits to the school
	Among faculty/staff	Faculty meetings Steering committee meetings Task force meetings	Before/after school Lunch/coffee break/recess
	Between faculty/staff and administrators	Faculty meetings Steering committee meetings Task force meetings Interviews	Before/after school Lunch/coffee break/recess Casual meetings in grounds/buildings
Between faculty/staff and students	In class presentations Disciplining Directed activities Student council meetings Assemblies	Contact in grounds Extramural activities Before classes begin/after they end	

Table 3.1 continued

A	Superintendent	Cafeteria workers
C	Principal Junior School	Maintenance workers
T	Principal Senior School	Students
O	Teachers	Board Members
R	Teacher's aides	Parents
S		

D	Newspaper cuttings
O	Policy statements
C	Board/ Steering committee/Task Force/Faculty minutes
U	Correspondence re changes
M	Handbook
E	Resource books
N	Memos
T	Students workbooks
S	

Note: Based on Rossman, Corbett & Firestone, 1984.

#### People Interviewed

The informants for this study were taken from the student body, employees of the school, members of the school board and parents. In this one school district, the superintendent is permanently on site and was a major focus of attention. In addition, my initial plan was to interview the two principals and six teachers, all five board members, five parents, and eight students. Because of some of the things that happened in the school, such as the emergence of the steering committee or TQM group, and approaches I made to people and some people made to me, those numbers were modified. In addition to the superintendent, I interviewed the two principals and twelve teachers. Three teachers' aides and three of the administrative staff agreed to be part of the investigation. All five board members, eight parents, and eight students were also interviewed to gain some idea of their perceptions of what has happened at the school. These numbers are somewhat arbitrary but a

selection was made to provide a range of people who could provide different perspectives on what has and is happening at the school. In making the selection I was working from the base that I wanted to discover, understand and gain insights and I needed, therefore, a sample from which I could learn the most. Chein (1981) used the analogy of consultants who are called to provide their special experience and competence. "Or the situation may be viewed as analogous to our more or less haphazard sampling of foods from a famous cuisine. We are sampling, not to estimate some population value, but to get some idea of the variety of elements available in this population" (p. 440).

Informants among the staff and parents were selected from a list of all the staff members in the school and a list of twenty-five parents who would be accessible. I asked the superintendent to vaguely indicate what position these people have taken in previous discussions about the changes that have taken place in the school. This information was essential for me because I wanted to interview people who were very supportive of the changes, tolerated them, or were opposed to them, in order to gain a balanced perspective on the change process. I would not have been able to obtain such a perspective without this information about the participants from the superintendent. With these lists before me, I randomly selected people to interview from within these vague categories.

In addition to the people I had planned to interview before the fieldwork began, I interviewed others because of what I learned during interviews, overheard, observed or discussed during a casual contact with somebody. Such additional sample selection fits Goetz and LeCompte's (1984) designation of "sequential" sampling where sensitivity to the emerging information requires further sampling.

### Procedures for Interviews

All the formal interviews were tape recorded, transcribed and the transcriptions returned to the interviewees for perusal. The interviewees were invited to delete, change or add to the transcript in order to ensure it accurately reflected what they wanted to say. I interviewed all the adults for about thirty to forty minutes. The focus of these interviews was on the individual's experience of being part of the change process. The interviews began with the informants outlining their involvement in the school. After they had established the time they had been involved and the nature of that involvement, they were asked to tell the story of what had happened to the school since they arrived. As the story unfolded I asked questions about how changes came to be made and who the influential people were. In particular, I was interested to find out how that influence was exercised and what behaviors the informants remembered that illustrated that influence. I was also interested to know what strategies had been put in place to ensure that changes became institutionalized. Besides asking them to tell the story I also elicited from them their opinions on the changes and procedures for bringing them about. In some interviews I took a devil's advocate position when the interview was well underway by asking the informant how they would respond if someone approached them with a scenario that the superintendent simply dominated the board and faculty and bulldozed the changes through. This provided the respondents with an opportunity to react rather than simply providing information. In this way I gained further insights into their recollection of what has happened. In the later part of the interview I focused on what was happening in the school at the time of the investigation. This involved considering how decisions are made and how influence is apparent. Part of this was discovering how people sustain relationships wherein it is



possible to have influence. I was particularly interested in whether the participants had noticed any change in the way influence had been used during the time they had been at the school.

I conducted four formal interviews with the superintendent and two with each of the two principals. I also did follow-up interviews with three of the teachers. Teachers were seen at times suitable to them, generally in their preparation periods, before and after school. I interviewed parents and board members at times suitable to them. Some of these were during the school day when individuals came to the school where I had use of a room allowing direct access from the car park. Others I interviewed at their homes in the evening. The superintendent gave his approval for me to interview the students and I interviewed eight students after I also obtained permission from them and their parents. The students were interviewed on one occasion for about twenty minutes during the school day at a time suitable to them. These students were selected from a list of twenty I obtained from the principals. I asked the principals to indicate the level the student was in the school and the length of time they have been at the school. I wanted to interview some students who had been at the school for all their schooling and obtain their impressions of the school. As well, I wanted to speak with students who have transferred into the school and to ask them about the differences they had observed. The students I interviewed ranged from fifth through eighth grade.

My intention in the interviews was, in Kahn and Cannell's (1957) terms, to have "a conversation with a purpose" (p. 149). I was eliciting information about the leadership processes in the school as the various informants perceived them. This information assisted me to gain an insight into the understanding of leadership of the people involved. In addition it provided

me with various perspectives on what has taken place at the school. I also used the information gained to formulate further questions for the interview as it unfolded or for subsequent interviews so that I could obtain a more complete picture of the leadership processes being used. Some of the information I gained from interviews led me to look at documentation that I had not been aware of and also to observe things that were happening in the school I would not otherwise have done.

### Observations Made

Stake (1978) observed that people mostly come to understand human affairs through reflection on personal experience. In addition to information gathered through interviews, I participated actively in the school by getting to know the faculty and developing a rapport that enabled me to observe activities as unobtrusively as possible. I did this by spending time with teachers in their faculty room, talking to them while walking around the grounds and generally taking the initiative to make those contacts. I also spent some time shadowing the three administrators during the course of part of their day. In this way I developed an understanding of the way the people in the school understand and exercise leadership. During all these occasions I tried to keep in mind the comments that were made to me, or which I overheard, and wrote notes on such snippets of conversations as soon as it was practical. I arranged more formal interviews with three teachers because these casual conversations brought to light material I had not found in other ways. As well, I was able to speak casually with five parents who were visiting the school for a school function. Such contact provided me with further insights from a parents' perspective.

During most lunch times I made a point of wandering around among students who were very willing to stand around and talk to me. It was on

many of these occasions that I gathered impressions from these students about how they felt being at the school. On several of these occasions students new to the school spoke about the differences they had found in coming from another district.

There were several formal meetings during my visits to the school and I was able to attend these. After I had interviewed all the board members I was able to attend a board meeting and observe the procedures they followed in dealing with material presented to them. It also provided me with the chance to see the board interacting with the superintendent and the two principals, all of whom were present.

During the fall semester 1993 the school had a shortened day each Monday to allow faculty to work together to improve what they were doing with the students. I was able to attend one of the groups that met on the Monday during my last visit to the school.

The steering committee or Total Quality Management team met during my last visit and I was able to attend that meeting. There were nine people present at the meeting. These were: the superintendent, the two principals, three teachers, and three classified staff. There are two board members on the team along with three parents but, unfortunately, none of those could make it to the meeting I attended.

In addition, there were two task force subcommittees of the steering committee that met at other times when I was able to be present. One of these was of the fundraising committee. The superintendent chaired this and two teachers, two aides, a parent and a student were involved. The other was the discipline action team. The two principals attended this along with three teachers, three aides, the school psychologist and a parent.

Besides observing these formal meetings, I gathered information by watching activities in the various places listed in the above schedule. Obviously there were many things going on in the school. I focused on those behaviors that indicated there was some influence being used to move another individual or group to do something. That could be teacher with students; faculty with one another; secretaries in the office; administrators with faculty or students, etc. I took notes on these occasions and later wrote up my reflections on what I had seen.

### Documentation

The school administrators made available to me material related to the changes that have occurred in recent years. These documents included policy statements, grant applications, school board minutes, minutes of other groups that had met in the school, handbooks, memos, correspondence, newsletters and material that has been distributed to teachers and parents. I was able to scan the majority of these directly into my computer and I took notes on the remainder. I examined these documents and records as an additional way of discovering trends, showing relationships that exist, highlighting values and beliefs and in general providing support for data gathered in other ways. This approach is in line with the recommendations of Borg and Meredith (1983).

### People as A Source

People were the main source of information for this study. I spent time throughout the investigation developing open and positive relationships with the people at the site. During my first visit in attempting to gain access, not formally but into the confidence of staff, I devoted virtually the whole time to simply being around and taking any chance that came up to speak with people and become part of the scene.

During the fieldwork I was mainly with adults and I developed what I would call relationships of cordial formality. The school has a stream of visitors and has a reputation for making such people welcome. Within that context I was accepted. Until people became familiar with the details of what I was doing, they tended to politely acknowledge me. The students were more inquisitive. Many approached me as I wandered the grounds to ask why I was at the school. After I had spoken to individuals or small groups of students about why I was there, word spread rather quickly and towards the end of my last visit individuals approached me about whether they could be interviewed. While not so eager, adults were also much more willing to talk once they knew what I was doing. Several approached me unsolicited and offered comments that proved very pertinent. As a result of one of these approaches, I set up a formal interview to pursue in more depth what the person had mentioned.

An advantage I had was that having been a teacher and principal, as well as having a familiarity with Glasser and TQM, I could understand and speak the language the administrators and teachers used. Gussow (1964) reported that many teachers are hesitant about having observers in their classroom who might not be "sufficiently understanding of classroom life" (p. 234). I gained acceptance from the teachers as an observer who had experience in schools by being able to relate to them using familiar terms. While there may have been a concern for some teachers, I found that most were experienced enough with peer-coaching and support that they were very much at ease in having other people in their classroom. There were many indications that I had gained acceptance in the school scene. Among other things there was the willingness people showed to openly speak with me about their experience at the school; the invitations I received to visit

classrooms; the unsolicited approaches teachers made to tell me things or to show me work students had done. In saying that, however, I am aware that the tolerance of my presence does not imply their high regard and inclusion (Wax, 1971). Because of this, I did not presume that I fully understood the culture of the school and, therefore, always monitored how my comments and actions could be interpreted.

### Interviews

I tried to be sensitive in the data-gathering process to the people who were the sources of information. In approaching them and interviewing them, I tried to be sensitive to what was happening in their lives and to time my interventions to best suit them. They were all busy people who graciously made time available for me to speak with them. During the course of interviews I tried to read the cues of when to probe further or when to leave a topic and move on; when to wait in the silence and when to challenge a comment.

The interviews were carried out with the purpose of finding out what was "in and on someone else's mind" (Patton, 1980, p. 196). This could not be known directly but only through people being willing to share what was on their minds. I had to ask the right questions in the right way to elicit a response which revealed what they were thinking and so gather meaningful information. I spent considerable time, therefore, drafting possible questions that could trigger answers to provide me with such information. The interviews were semi-structured but flexible enough to allow me to pursue issues people raised that were obviously important to them and produced information I had not envisaged. In order to be sensitive to such alterations in direction, I had to listen very carefully. Guba and Lincoln (1981) emphasized the importance of listening. They strongly suggested that a

qualitative researcher must look and listen everywhere because it is only by listening "to many individuals and to many points of view that value-resonant social contexts can be fully, equitably, and honorably represented" (p. 142).

### Getting Inside the Case

In gathering information, I made the conscious effort to live-in-the-case and to carry on a conversation with reality (Burger, 1992). I sought to intersect theory and practice, to be involved intellectually and emotionally in the experience of the school and to be conscious of the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that were impinging on me (Burger, 1992). Because I was using a qualitative design, I did not attempt to manipulate the setting where I did the research. I was interested in exploring, discovering and seeking to make sense of the situation without imposing my expectations on the setting (Patton & Westby, 1992). I was conscious that in relying upon myself to be the primary instrument for data collection and analysis that it was possible to "produce brilliant insights about a phenomenon, or it can produce a pedestrian, incorrect, or even fraudulent analysis" (Merriam, 1988, p. 35). I had to weigh the design's benefits against its limitations in making the choice of how to conduct the investigation.

I used this qualitative approach to observe and gather information to reflect on the leadership practiced in a school that is part of William Glasser's Quality Schools Consortium. As a single school it conforms to what Smith (1978) called a bounded system. I focused on a single case to reveal the "interaction of significant factors characteristic of [such a school]" (Merriam, 1988, p. 10). In this study I looked at the leadership processes as the school changed in significant ways.

Merriam (1988) defined several characteristics that writers suggested are essential properties of a qualitative case study:

1. Particularistic, which means the focus is on a particular phenomenon. Case studies "concentrate attention on the way particular groups of people confront specific problems, taking a holistic view of the situation" (Shaw, 1978, p. 2).

2. Descriptive which means that the outcome of a case study is a rich, "thick" description of the phenomenon being studied. Thus, "case studies use prose and literary techniques to describe, elicit images, and analyze situations" (Wilson, 1979, p. 448).

3. Heuristic, which means the writer is able to bring new light on the phenomenon being studied and discover new meaning there. "Previously unknown relationships and variables can be expected to emerge from case studies leading to a rethinking of the phenomenon being studied" (Stake, 1981, p. 47).

4. Inductive, which means that researchers mainly use inductive reasoning so that generalizations, concepts, or hypotheses emerge from the data that they examine. "Discovery of new relationships, concepts, and understanding, rather than verification or predetermined hypotheses, characterizes qualitative case studies" (Merriam, 1988, p. 13).

In a case study the intention is to "get as close to the subject of interest as [possible], partly by means of direct observation in natural settings, [and] partly by . . . access to subjective factors (thoughts, feelings, and desires). . . . Case studies [also] tend to spread the net for evidence widely" (Bromley, 1986, p. 23). In making the effort to do this, however, I am aware that I could never have access directly to the participant's meanings. I had to construct those meanings on the basis of what I was told and what I saw



(Maxwell, 1992). Table 3.2 provides an overview of the sequence of the investigation.

Table 3.2

Sequence of Information Gathering

	Interviews	Observations	Documentation
Visit 1 October 1992  (3 days)	Casual conversations	Office area several classrooms, yard, cafeteria, teacher' lounge.	Parent/Student handbook, teacher handbook, grant submission, memos.
Visit 2 March 1993  (3 days)	Administrators Board members Parents Teachers	Board meeting Classrooms, office area, several classrooms, yard, cafeteria, teachers' lounge, library.	Board/Faculty minutes, further memos. Correspondence re changes.
Visit 3 May 1993  (7 days)	Administrators Teachers Students	Classrooms, office area, several classrooms, gymnasium, yard, cafeteria, teachers' lounge, teachers' meetings.	Newspaper cuttings, policy statements.
Visit 4 October 1993  (10 days)	Administrators Classified staff Teachers Parents Steering committee members Students	Classrooms, office area, several classrooms yard, cafeteria, gymnasium, teachers' lounge, library, teachers' meetings, Steering committee/ task force meetings Shadowed administrators.	Student workbooks, teacher resource books, steering committee agendas/minutes, task force minutes, newsletter, additional memos.

### Assumptions Brought to the Study

Because of my own experience as a principal of a school, I approached the study with some theories about what information would surface and where I would need to carry out further examination. These theories influenced the criteria I used for selecting the facts and the way I brought order to them (Riley, 1963). This was inevitable because "there must always be selection criteria and these are derived, in part at least, from theoretical assumptions, from ideas about what produces what" (Hammersley, Scarth, & Webb, 1985, p. 54). The very questions I am investigating arise from my own theoretical orientation as an educator and leadership student. Because of this, theory influenced my decisions in everything I did, from the initial formulation of the questions through to the final interpretations of findings (Merriam, 1988). This is another way of talking about my underlying assumptions about which I have written elsewhere in this study.

In as many ways as I could, I tried to be aware of the framework from which I was working. Scherr (1993) highlighted the need researchers have to find ways to discover and acknowledge their biases in order to understand more fully the world of the people being investigated. One way I used to become conscious of my biases was to notice when I was surprised by something I heard, saw or read. My reasoning was that I was obviously expecting something different to be surprised by what I found. I then attempted to identify what it was I had been expecting and so acknowledge the bias I was using.

While being conscious of these biases, I tried to "hold [any] conclusions lightly, maintaining openness and skepticism [while I was in the process of the investigation] inchoate and vague at first, then increasingly explicit and

grounded, to use the classic term of Glaser and Strauss (1967)" (Miles and Huberman, 1984, p. 22).

By using a case study approach in this investigation, I was able to employ a variety of research methods to gather data to explain how the school changed and how the leadership processes worked in the school. These included gathering data by observing what happened at the school, interviewing a range of people, and examining the documents and records held by the school. These multiple methods of obtaining information made it possible for me to employ what Denzin (1970) called *triangulation*. This means that each of these methods have strengths and weaknesses and "by combining methods, observers can achieve the best of each, while overcoming their unique deficiencies" (p. 308).

#### Challenges and Difficulties

One of the challenges was to develop the skills to listen to the many individuals and the many points of view. Another was to decide which of the myriad of things to look at and listen to. The questions I had set for myself provided me with a conceptual framework for limiting and focusing what I did. The limitation on time and the availability of people were restrictions that influenced what I did. I visited the school on four occasions. The first two lasted three days, the third lasted seven days and the final one was for ten days. I had to look at what would have the greatest potential to provide me with good data so that I could answer the questions I had set myself (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Within those restraints I planned some things I wanted to observe and then allowed for further observations depending on the data that emerged in the daily flow of events and activities and how I felt about them.

Once I became immersed in the fieldwork I made some modification to the original plan as the data suggested other areas that I had not thought of before. For example, when I first planned the data collection schedule, I based it on information I gathered during my exploratory visit. At that time the steering committee or Total Quality Management (TQM) group was not in existence. By the time of my last visit, it had become a major instrument of policy formation in the school. I, therefore, not only attended the group meeting and meetings of two task forces set up by the steering committee, I also interviewed the majority of the group members.

During the collection of data I wanted to observe and record rather than make any judgment about what was happening. I intended to remain in the background as an observer and display no sign of personal approval or disapproval of what I saw or what I heard in interviews. I found this difficult on numerous occasions. Hall (1966) highlighted the importance of nonverbal cues in communicating. I was conscious at times in monitoring my nonverbal responses as an observer that I was conveying a "message" by not reacting as much as when I did react. There was no way out of the impasse. In the end I tried to respond in a subdued way. It was possible that interviewees would read my response to what they were saying and then provide me with what they thought I wanted to hear. While this was a concern to me before I started to do the fieldwork, I was not conscious that it was a major difficulty while I was gathering data, even with the students, who were all very open and frank.

Another real difficulty I experienced personally during some interviews was the frames of reference some of the people I interviewed were using. On three occasions the people I was interviewing spoke about what was happening at the school and why the administrators were following a

particular course which I knew to be different from the administrators' perceptions. I found it difficult not to become an advocate for the administrators and to cite evidence that would indicate that the motives being attributed to them were not those of the administrators. What kept me from entering into such a discussion, and possible argument, was reminding myself that I was interviewing this person in order to understand the perception they had of what had and was happening at the school. The fact that the perception differed from mine was not the focus of the interview. I was not there to "put them right."

I was aware from the beginning that doing the study could lead to at least initial "friendships" as people shared insights and much of themselves. Because many of the things people talked about related to areas I had experienced as a principal, I felt a real empathy with them and found it very attractive to allow a deeper relationship to develop. The position I took, however, was to be a warm and sympathetic observer without making commitments that might compromise what I was doing at the school. Although the superintendent and the two principals all offered me accommodation during my stays, and I would have found accepting those offers personally very satisfying, I decided that to accept any of those offers had the potential to influence the way I wrote up the study, particularly if negative comments had to be made about the person with whom I stayed. I, therefore, arranged accommodation independently.

The superintendent is a key figure in this study. He was the one whom most respondents felt was largely responsible for encouraging and driving the changes that had occurred. Because I was investigating these changes, I had to be aware that some people might identify me with the superintendent and see me as an advocate for him. I was particularly conscious of this when

I was interviewing people who were opposed to the changes. I stressed to all those I interviewed that I wanted to obtain an accurate picture of what had happened and was happening at Mountainvista and I was not advocating any position. From the openness with which people shared their misgivings, I concluded that this problem should not be a major concern for me.

I found it difficult to accurately judge what impact my presence had on the way people behaved. The question in my mind when I began the fieldwork was how much people would put on an act for my benefit. I have no way of knowing the answer to that question. My impression is that people were very genuine. Issues that were raised and discussed at some length as serious concerns would have been a real embarrassment if the people had been trying to create an image. I raised this issue in my discussions with the administrators following the investigation and when I indicated some of the responses I had received, without revealing their source, the administrators agreed with me that there seemed little evidence that I had any significant impact on how genuine people were in what they said to me. I also witnessed difficulties some teachers had with students. The open way these people were prepared to speak about such incidents without attempting to cover up or make excuses reinforced my impression. In checking back with two people at the school, I found when I raised this issue they were quite surprised. They spoke about their involvement in such a way that I gained the impression they felt very much part of what I was doing and wanted to present as accurate a picture as they could. In other ways I sensed that the attitude of a number of people at the school to my investigation was that what I was doing there was part of their school's effort to understand itself better. They did not seem to view me as involved in something external to the school. This was their study on their school.

### Protection of Human Subjects

In carrying out this research I was conscious of the ethical issues that would arise. Like deVoss (1982), I felt that three major ethical problems needed to be addressed. These centered on: (1) obtaining permission to begin the study; (2) limiting the probing into personal lives; (3) preventing the endangerment of participant image or position as a result of personal revelation. I addressed each of these to adequately ensure that nothing unethical was done. I initially gained permission from the superintendent to begin the study. He approached the board and obtained its approval so that when I made my first visit to the school I had the approval of the appropriate authorities. I also made sure I had the approval of each person I formally interviewed. This was obtained both verbally and then in writing.

The second problem was addressed at the time I obtained permission from individuals. I made it very clear to each participant what I was investigating and that their involvement in the project was voluntary so that they could withdraw at any time without any negative implications. This was also written clearly on the form they signed. At the same time, I informed them that they could pass on any question they felt uneasy about answering. In addition, they were made aware that there was always the opportunity to erase comments they had made during the interview when they reviewed the transcript.

To cover the third problem I made it clear to all participants that the information given during the interviews was confidential. I told the staff, board members, students, and parents whom I interviewed that they would not be identified by name in any use I make of what they said. In the way I used their comments I avoided anything that to my knowledge could link comments back to any individual. Because of the nature of the roles the

superintendent and principals have in the school, it would be impossible not to refer to those administrative positions when discussing the leadership processes. The three people concerned were willing to have their comments attributed to them in their positions.

As part of the above mentioned discussion, I asked each person to read and sign a protection of human subjects form (Appendix A). The forms were designed to meet the needs of the various groups and what had been agreed with them. Thus the form for the superintendent and the two principals was different, to allow me to attribute their comments to them in their positions. As well, I had a different form to obtain permission from parents to interview their children. After the participants had signed the forms I made it clear that they would receive a transcript of what they said and they were free to erase or amplify material then if after the interview they considered it to be inappropriate. One of the interesting side effects of making people very aware that they would have a chance to edit what they said, was that some people were much more free in what they said. One person actually mentioned on occasions during the interview that she might take out something she had said, but that she would just talk during the interview as ideas came to her. Such a freedom added to the richness of the information I received. I made all the participants aware that they could choose to withdraw from the investigation at any stage.

I was the only person who has had access to the data I collected. I wrote up the notes and transcribed all the tapes so that anonymity was further enhanced.

Another ethical issue that I raised with the superintendent and the two principals during my first visit to the school was my presence during sensitive meetings. The understanding we reached was that I could attend



any meeting that was scheduled unless I was asked not to. I was conscious of this issue when I was shadowing the three administrators and they were interviewing individuals or small groups. At times there were delicate issues covered and I was aware that my presence could make it difficult for the people concerned. I was able to observe these three in interviews with a variety of people including students who were in trouble in school, parents who came to collect such children, business deals and talks with faculty members. On only one occasion was I asked to leave and that was because the principal felt the parent he was about to see could be upset by my presence.

On these occasions when I was with the administrators and also in other groups, the superintendent and the principals introduced me briefly so that people would have an idea of why I was there.

The above procedures were submitted to the University of San Diego Human Subjects Protection Committee and were approved by that committee (Appendix B).

### Data Analysis

At the beginning of the study I sought answers to general questions. Early in the investigation, however, I became aware that some questions were particularly relevant and others needed to be reformulated to direct my work (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). I was able to analyze some of the information as soon as I gathered the data to discover themes and patterns that highlighted the processes of leadership being used in the school. I used the results of the analysis to frame new questions for me to use in subsequent interviews, to focus my observations or to search documentation.

I combined the data from the various sources available to me and thus used the process of triangulation described by Guba and Lincoln (1987) as a

way of testing how accurate my interpretation of the data was as the project unfolded. On many occasions I asked questions during an interview that were specifically designed to check whether information I had gained from a previous interview, from another informant, from observing or from documentation was confirmed by the current interviewee. I also searched documentation and went to watch specific activities to verify what I had heard in an interview. In a similar way I checked details of written material or observations with people whom I interviewed or spoke with casually.

The analysis during the process of gathering data was extremely helpful in focusing on areas that I had not known about previously. For example, when I planned the investigation the steering committee was not in existence. As I began collecting data, however, it soon became clear that the committee had become a significant force in the change process. Through a simple analysis of what people believed to be important in the change processes, I realized the need to include an examination of the steering committee in the investigation.

On my return from the third visit to the school I transcribed the taped interviews and organized the observations and written material I had gathered. When I had completed those tasks I read back through all the previous material and then, without referring to anything, wrote the story of the changes at the school as it appeared to me at that time. This produced an outline of some five pages. The discipline of doing this highlighted for me the gaps in the information I already had. I was able, as a result, to redesign the format of my last visit to the school to allow me to gather information to close those gaps.

I transcribed the taped interviews myself and that task often provided me with insights into what the person was saying that later proved very

informative. Such insights I noted in memos for later use. One strategy I used that was particularly helpful in gaining insights into the information as I gathered it was to free-write immediately after I had completed the transcript of an interview. I wrote down anything that came to mind for as long as the ideas flowed. In going back through these memos I gained insights that would not have come from a systematic and logical analysis of the transcript. Using such strategies in the process of the investigation often provided me with previously unexplored directions for further interviews and observations.

I sent the transcripts of the interviews back to the interviewees and asked for any comments in line with the agreement they had signed. When the transcripts were returned to me I made any requested adjustments on my computer copy and used this for the basis of any further work.

The main aim in the analysis was to bring order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). I did this through a careful consideration of the data to discover significant classes of things, persons and events and the characteristics of these. I was aware that I had assembled much more data than I was able to use. The initial gathering of material was referred to by Yin (1984) as the case study data base and formed the source from which the edited and useful information would be taken. Through the process of identifying conspicuous themes, recurring ideas or use of language, and patterns of beliefs I gradually developed categories that were internally consistent but at the same time distinct from one another (Guba, 1978). I used a computer program called HyperQual to help in the coding and assembling of the themes and categories. Gradually I linked these together as I saw connections and recognized patterns emerging from the data.

I organized all of the information into my computer. That is, I had the transcripts of each of the interviews I had audio-taped; I typed in my observations, field notes, records, reflective notes I had written while at the site and the comments that had been made to me casually by people at the school and elsewhere and which I had written up subsequently. I also had some of the documentation from the school that I had scanned into a Microsoft Word file that I was able to transfer to a HyperQual file. The quantity of information was daunting and in order to keep me aware of what I was trying to do, I printed out the purpose of this investigation and the questions I was answering. I placed this printout next to my computer and referred back to it frequently as a way to keep focused as I worked my way through the selected material. I read through all the corrected interviews and other material. With all that fresh in my memory I free-wrote about what I recalled were the main themes that emerged from that reading. When I finished writing I went back through the text mindful of the impression I had of the whole investigation.

I identified segments of the material that I considered relevant to the purpose I had established. This meant leaving aside a considerable quantity of material that, while interesting, had nothing to do with the reason I was doing the research. Using the HyperQual program I selected the identified segments and then dumped them into a bin or, in other words, I decided in what category they belonged. With this process I established an organizing system where I tagged the segments and grouped them. Initially I took the first segment and tentatively categorized it. Following Lincoln and Guba (1985), I then compared the second segment with the first on the basis of "look-alike" or "feel-alike" and so on with subsequent segments (p. 347). If the segment was basically similar, I placed it in the same category. If it was

significantly different, then I created a new category. In this way I quickly created a variety of categories. The further I moved through the material, fewer new categories needed to be created as later segments fitted earlier categories. The program allowed me to try out ways of grouping and then to combine or further divide categories. It was possible for me to edit the code names at any time as names became obvious or others became less suitable. There were many segments that fitted more than one category and the program enabled me to code the segment in several ways so it was available under the various headings. It was also possible to link segments in various categories where I could see such a linkage would be an advantage.

I worked my way through all the material available to me and placed in categories the segments I identified as useful and relevant. While doing this I wrote memos highlighting the ideas that seemed to cut across significant portions of the data. HyperQual provides memo pads within the program for such reflections. In writing such memos I was able to subsequently create new categories and re-sort some of the material I had already placed in categories. I also used the memos to write any insights I gained as I was selecting and placing segments. These memos were quite unrelated to one another and represented ideas that were stimulated by the activity of selecting segments. Throughout the whole investigation I attempted to write down any insight I gained wherever I happened to be for later use.

### Dealing with Biases

In doing this analysis I was conscious of my biases creeping in. While it is not possible to eliminate such biases completely, I tried to follow Guba and Lincoln's (1981) guidelines to help lessen their influence. They suggested seven guidelines to help sort and analyze data into categories.

1. Include any information that is germane to the area and not excluded by boundary-setting rules.

2. Include any information that relates or bridges several already existing information items.

3. Include any information that identifies new elements or brings them to the surface.

4. Add any information that reinforces existing information but reject it if the reinforcement is merely redundant.

5. Add new information that tends to explain other information already known.

6. Add any information that exemplifies either the nature of the category or important evidence within the category.

7. Add any information that tends to refute or challenge already known information. (pp. 99-100).

Bearing in mind these guidelines I took each category and brought all the segments in that category together. This provided me with a thematic context for the segments and allowed me to link together related pieces of information as well as compare what the various sources offered.

### The Writing Process

When I came to integrate material from these segments into a comprehensive and coordinated whole, I wanted on occasions to know the context from which the segment came. The HyperQual program allowed me to return to the original source of the segment. Sometimes, because of the way I was incorporating the segment, it was helpful to include more of the context than I had originally designated in order to round out the impact of what was said. Thus I was able to select out the segments and yet not lose touch with their sources.

To help in the development of an understanding of what happened at Mountainvista, I read through each category and wrote down in a memo any observations that came to me as I read. Such memos focused my attention on emerging themes. The program allowed me to then filter the categories again to arrive at even more finely tuned categories.

Within the program it was possible to return to the original material. From this original material I carried out several word searches. This procedure enabled me to gain a sense of the importance of some concepts. For example, one such search was for the word *trust*. The search revealed how important this concept was for people as they stepped out to try something new. Virtually every interview dealt with this word at some stage and many placed considerable emphasis on it. By doing a search for such words I was able to gain an indication of material that was relevant to what I was researching.

When I had ranged through the categories several times, carried out a number of word searches and examined the many memos I had written, I began to write some coherent account of what I had discovered. In doing this I tried to live in the case and so I visualized the places I had visited at the school, the meetings I had attended and the people with whom I had spoken. To assist in the process of being there I used the names of the people at the school in writing the account and then subsequently substituted pseudonyms.

One thing I was sensitive to was not assuming that simply because I could see a connection between two variables that the connection was necessarily causal. Miles and Huberman (1984) warned against jumping to such conclusions because there are many relationships that can exist between conceptual elements in a study.

The process of writing was a disjointed one in the beginning. I took a category and wrote about what seemed to be emerging from the gathering of the segments within it. When I had exhausted my creativity on a particular category, I moved to the next category without seeing any obvious connection to the first. In this way I worked through several categories and in the process of writing I began to see connections. I ran with the hunches and initial impressions and allowed the ideas to flow. In some cases they led nowhere and I eventually abandoned them although not without allowing them to "sit" for some time. In many cases, however, the hunches pointed to conclusions that seemed reasonable.

I was so immersed in the data that the process of analysis was not confined to when I was sitting in front of my computer. On many occasions when I was out walking I would suddenly see a connection between various ideas or gain an insight into what was happening in some incident. On other occasions I would wake during the night with some insight and write down what I was thinking so I would have it available when I began work. There were several incidents when I was speaking with someone about the material I was analyzing and in the process of trying to articulate in a coherent way what I was doing, I gained new insights that proved of value. On still other occasions, in listening to other people speak about their school arrangements or in watching some group in action I could see parallels with the data I was working with and so gained a different perspective on the material I had gathered. I was also able to gain new insights by reading other dissertations and theoretical works focusing on schools . All such occasions were valuable turning points or junctions in the analysis. I was aware that such insights did not necessarily arise from some carefully planned, step-by-step process. There was a plan I was following but the insights I have just spoken



about were idiosyncratic and unpredictable. Nevertheless they were vital in the analysis of the data I collected.

### Trustworthiness of My Interpretations

The insights I gained and wrote about arose from my examination of the data I had gathered. Obviously they were my insights, my interpretation. I was looking at people's construction of their world and how they understood it. In doing that I was seeking to "represent those multiple constructions adequately . . . [and ensure the reconstructions I made were] credible to the constructors of the original multiple realities" (Guba, 1985, p. 296). I was not looking for "the truth" as such but trying to honestly represent the perspectives of the people at the school.

There were several approaches I used to check on the accuracy of my interpretations.

1. I have already mentioned the use of triangulation in gathering data that would confirm what seemed to be emerging. Thus in checking with people other than the original informant as well as documentation and observation provided me with a variety of sources of information.

2. After I had developed some interpretations I checked back with the people who had provided me with the information on which the conclusions were based. Initially, while I was still investigating the school, this was done with those people with whom I had follow-up interviews. As well, in casual conversations I checked with the other people and noted down their response. Between visits to the school I checked with some people by telephone to enable me to develop a direction for inquiry during a subsequent visit to the school. After the investigation was completed I checked back with several sources by telephone and discussed with them the interpretations I had made of information they had presented me with and

other information I had from other sources. In some cases I made adjustments in line with the comments I received.

3. Two colleagues of mine agreed to read through interviews and the interpretations I had come to from my analysis of those interviews. I asked them to tell me if they felt I was justified in coming to the conclusions I had on the basis of the information before them. Their comments provided me with other perspectives on the interpretations I had.

4. I mentioned above the biases I became aware of and attempted to take into account when interpreting the data I gathered.

In this qualitative case study I did not try to isolate any laws about human beings that could be shown to be stable if the study could be repeated. Instead I was seeking to describe and explain the experience of people at Mountainvista School as they interpreted it. Because I was the prime instrument of inquiry and was examining the world of Mountainvista as people there constructed it, the idea that repeating the study would prove it reliable was not a goal (Bednarz, 1985). Guba and Lincoln (1981) argued that internal validity and reliability are so intricately linked that to focus on internal validity satisfies reliability. "Since it is impossible to have internal validity without reliability, a demonstration of internal validity amounts to a simultaneous demonstration of reliability" (p. 120).

What I did, through the methods mentioned above, was show that the interpretations I made from the data available were consistent and dependable. I was aware that all the material I had access to was context-bound and, therefore, interpretations from that data were not necessarily generalizable. Some people would argue that seeking generalizable knowledge is inappropriate for interpretive research. Erickson (1986) was one such who argued that qualitative researchers are not searching for

abstract universals but rather are looking to see whether the general can be seen in the particular. He used teaching as an example when he wrote: "each instance of a classroom is seen as its own unique system, which nonetheless displays universal properties of teaching. These properties are manifested in the concrete, however, not in the abstract" (p. 130). What people learn from a particular case study, however, is transferable to situations they meet subsequently. It is through such a process that people learn to cope with their everyday world. Hence, what people learn from this case study will to a large extent depend on the situations in which the people who read it find themselves. Walker (1980) argued that "it is up to the reader who has to ask, what is there in this study that I can apply to my own situation, and what clearly does not apply?" (p. 34).

I have discussed below the limitations of this study. Such a discussion will help readers to understand better the nature of the data I worked with and highlight the partial state of my knowledge about the school. By outlining them I hope to elucidate for the readers how they should read and interpret what I have written.

#### Purpose of the Analysis

In taking the categories and considering all the segments that were grouped in them, in examining the memos I had written and in writing, I was trying "to come up with reasonable conclusions and generalizations based on a preponderance of the data" (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984, p. 139). I was attempting to discover meaningful patterns of concepts that would enable me to understand what had happened at Mountainvista School in the framework of the investigation I had undertaken. I am conscious that raw data have no inherent meaning and that my task was to bring meaning to

those data and then write a coherent and illuminating report. Table 3.3 provides an overview of how the investigation was conducted.

One of the dangers in doing an analysis of so much material is to become lost in the detail. Stake (1978) advised researchers to keep in mind the purpose of such analysis, namely to bring together a myriad of related details to produce a complex, holistic description of the case. He went on to underscore the importance of keeping in mind this principle: the themes and hypotheses that arise from the study are secondary to an understanding of the case. Hence, the description should allow the reader to recognize the essential characteristics and so make generalizations to other cases a possibility. I sought to be mindful of this principle in the analysis I did.

Table 3.3

Structure of the Investigation

Preparation	Reading	1. Leadership 2. Change 3. Glasser 4. Research design
	Selection of Site	- Choose area for investigation - Leadership in a Quality School. - Choose focus of the study: Leadership processes as a school changed. - Choose type of research - qualitative case study. - Choose school- Glasser's recommendation.
Entry	Formal	- Letter to superintendent with outline of proposal and request to discuss an investigation. - Letter to Board formally asking permission.
	Informal	Exploratory visit - no formal data gathering, spend time being around, getting known.

Design	Preliminary	<p>Draw up areas to investigate before the first visit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During the first visit check out suitability and feasibility of plan and check out other areas that would need to be followed up. Keep the design open to change.</li> <li>- After the first visit evaluate design and decide on procedure.</li> </ul>
	Working	<p>Ask superintendent and principals for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- List of all faculty with comment on their attitude towards the changes.</li> <li>- List of twenty five parents and comment on their attitude towards the changes.</li> <li>- List of fifteen students from the senior classes.</li> </ul>
Research	Second Visit	<p>Arrange and carry out planned interviews, observations and collection of materials.</p>
	Analysis	<p>Transcribe tapes - free-write after each interview.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Send transcriptions back to interviewees and adjust transcripts according to their wishes.</li> <li>- Review materials gathered, transcriptions and field notes.</li> <li>- Adjust design on the basis of findings.</li> <li>- Formulate follow-up questions arising from information gathered during the first visit.</li> </ul>
	Third Visit	<p>Arrange and carry out planned interviews, observations and collection of materials.</p>

	Analysis	Transcribe tapes - free-write after each interview. - Send transcriptions back to interviewees and adjust transcripts according to their wishes. - Review materials gathered, transcriptions and field notes. - Write the story of the changes as it appears at this stage. - Adjust the design of the third visit to cover the gaps.
	Fourth Visit	Arrange and carry out planned interviews, observations and collection of materials.
Analysis	Organizing Material	Type in all observations, field notes, records, reflective notes and documentation.
	Keeping focused	Print out purpose of the study and the questions - post prominently!
	Reflection	Free-write on main impressions
	Categorizing	Identify segments and place in categories. Write memos about impressions while doing this. - Carry out word searches in original material.
Writing	Initial	- Take each category and write about emerging themes. - Link categories as themes emerge. - Write down any insight no matter when or where it occurs.
	Final	Link writings on categories together into a coherent whole.
Trustworthiness	Sources	Triangulate the interviews, observations and written material
	Informants	Check with informants on accuracy of interpretations.
	Colleagues	Have colleagues read information and assess the justification for the conclusions
	Bias awareness	Use Guba and Lincoln's guidelines.
	Scholars	Check congruence with literature.

### Limitations and Implications

In gathering data, however, I was aware of my limitations as a human being. I know there were opportunities missed and that personal biases were present. I was particularly conscious of this when transcribing the tapes. There were occasions when I could detect that I was attempting to lead a person towards some conclusion I may have subconsciously been seeking evidence for during interviews. There were other occasions when a follow-up question would have broadened what the person was saying and greatly enhanced the value of their comments. I was only aware of these when I was transcribing. I missed the opportunity during the interview. However, when I discovered these during the initial transcriptions I was able to go back and in some instances ask for an elaboration. As well, there were mistakes made in the way I approached some people, preventing me from obtaining what could have been valuable information. Every decision I made to seek one source of information meant I declined going after some other one. I will never know which source held the most potential for insights. All through the investigation I made decisions without having clear guideposts. I was in uncharted waters, and all the time as I floundered around in the steadily growing mass of information, I felt there was the possibility of coming across wonderful discoveries that would provide great insights.

Case studies done in qualitative research are limited. The number of subjects at the school is close to 900 and with the parents included there would be well over 2,000 people involved with the school, yet the number of people interviewed for the study was 42. Some people could question whether I had enough insight from such a small sample to provide a credible description of leadership in the school. What is provided, however, is the perspective gained from this limited sample that has its own value given the

purpose of the study was to capture the meaning of what happened in a school that underwent significant change within a sociological context.

Another limitation is how representative this one school is of how schools operate and, therefore, how relevant these findings are for other schools in different situations. The findings of research on bringing about change in schools highlight the unique nature of the way each school has developed its present culture and, therefore, the special attention people in the school must give to bringing about change in that unique set of circumstances (Heckman, 1987). This case study looks at only one school in a rural area of California. These facts necessarily limit the direct applicability of this research in other schools. Nevertheless, the findings are of value in showing the leadership processes in one school as it made significant changes.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### WHAT HAPPENED AT MOUNTAINVISTA SCHOOL?

#### Introduction

When I arrived at the University of San Diego at the beginning of 1992, I wrote to William Glasser. I outlined the program I was in and mentioned to him that for my dissertation I wanted to research the leadership processes that occurred in a school as it moved towards becoming a quality school, in the way he used that term. I asked if he could suggest a school where I could do my research. His prompt reply suggested I approach the superintendent and principal at Mountainvista School. When I approached these two people they were more than willing to have me do the research at this school.

I had not expected to know the school Glasser would suggest, but I had expected I would be able to find the town on a map! After scouring several maps I eventually found a small rural settlement. When I realized the size of it, I was initially disappointed. I drew conclusions about the size of the school on the basis of the information I obtained from the map. I had hoped for a reasonably sized secondary school somewhere close to San Diego. What I was faced with was a K-8 school in a small rural town. From the evidence before me I drew the conclusion that the school was a small

country one of some hundred or so students with five or six teachers. That seemed to be a reasonable conclusion based on my experience of towns of that size.

### My First Visit

Before my first visit I spoke to the principal and superintendent by telephone. During that conversation I focused on details of the arrangement, not on information about the school. As a result, when I was driving along the freeway towards the school for the first visit, I tried to rationalize the choice I had made to follow Glasser's suggestions and my mind roamed over the advantages of working with a small school and a limited number of faculty. Among other things I could interview all the adults working at the school and obtain a very full picture of what went on there. So I had come to terms with what I perceived to be the nature of the school.

As the countryside revealed itself to me, I began to absorb the wonder of the surrounding mountains and the splendor of the autumn colors. The rolling countryside and the mountains made for an uplifting setting for any school. I felt at ease about the prospect of working in the setting that was unfolding before me.

I turned off the freeway and drove down a country road through lush, green pastureland, reminiscent of New Zealand farmland. While not heavily stocked, the paddocks along the side of the road had a sprinkling of cattle grazing nonchalantly as I drove past. The fall rains had obviously been very welcome here. The setting was garnished by the freshness of the clean county air. As I drove towards the school along the riverbed and then up the hill out of the valley into the parking lot, I was conscious of the very rural setting in which the school was placed. Set in the midst of this pastureland and surrounded by beautiful mountains, Mountainvista School evoked a

sense of peace and tranquillity. Several hawks balanced gracefully on the wind overhead as they scoured the countryside. Perched on an escarpment, the school had a commanding view of the river valley and the surrounding mountains. There were farms on all sides of it. Open fields and animals were readily seen and, despite the occasional trucks driving up the road to a quarry, the quiet of the countryside was very obvious. I wondered what impact this rural setting would have on the students at the school.

After I parked the car I sat in wonderment as I looked at what lay before me. Far from being a small country school, this site was extensive. A large high peaked-roofed, central building stood at the entrance. Behind it was a gymnasium of almost equal size, and on each side of the central building were two rows of classrooms within flat roofed buildings. Beside the gymnasium, was another large peak-roofed building consisting of six classrooms and the library. It was, I eventually found out, a school of some eight hundred and fifty students. This first surprise was a reminder for me of the biases I was bringing to the study and caused me to be wary of other assumptions accompanying me on my journey.

Stretching grandly above the front buildings and providing a canopy of filtered light were four large trees that dominated the entrance. The large building immediately in front of the car park housed the administration offices and three classrooms. It was a wooden building painted cream with brown facings. Along the front and down the northern side was a verandah that was supported by poles that were also painted brown. The entrance to the offices was along the southern side of this main building.

After parking the car, I wandered towards the main building. Somewhat apprehensive at making this first visit, I was wanting to blend in as quickly as possible. The walk through the car park gave me the chance to

gather an initial impression. A small car park directly in front of the main school block was almost square but could not accommodate more than about thirty cars. The remainder were parked in a sealed section parallel to the road. This car park provided a wide buffer between the school and the road and also contained the area where students boarded their buses. A four feet high wire fence separated the bus zone from the car park. On each side of the main car park were classrooms. These were painted in the same cream and brown colors as the central building. There were three short paths leading out of the car park to the verandah in front of the main building. Separating these were flower beds and brown railings that added a rustic look to the entrance. I took the path at the left hand side of the building and followed the sign towards the main office. This course took me onto a wide concrete path between the building and the tennis/basketball courts where students were playing a game during a physical education period. There was a great deal of enthusiasm and it was obvious that the students were enjoying themselves. The courts were divided into two sections by a high wire fence. This fence surrounded the courts on three sides and prevented basketballs and tennis balls from coming near the administration building. Beyond the courts to the west was an area almost twice the size of a basketball court. This was strewn with small pebbles for safety purposes and various climbing, swinging and other pieces of fixed playground equipment were stationed there.

My arrival did not cause any commotion. There was much activity already going on. Several young children wandered across my path as they talked and laughed about what they had been doing. Without any hesitation one of the boys, probably in grade 4, nonchalantly asked me if I was okay and knew where to go. I replied it was my first visit to the school and said I

was heading for the administration building which was indicated by a sign. He pointed in that direction and told me the door was to the right. I entered an alcove where the door was in the wall at right angles to the tennis courts. It was in the corner of the office and led into a waiting area. As I moved toward the door two older students came out the door to the office and held it open for me as I walked in. They obviously guessed I was new to the place and one of the girls pointed to the counter and said: "Just go up there and Mrs. Grayson will look after you." I was conscious from the start that the students were used to having visitors walking around the school and seemed very at ease in dealing with them. I certainly did not feel that I was a burden to them or that they were wanting to ignore me. On the contrary, I found them very welcoming and helpful.

After such a welcome and introduction, I moved into the office and was warmly greeted by Grayson. I mentioned I had an appointment with the superintendent. She indicated that he had someone with him at that moment but if I liked to take a seat he would be available in a few minutes. I looked around the waiting area and then walked over to a seat at right angles to the counter. From there it would be possible to get a good view of the office and activity that went on.

The office area was almost square with the waiting area just inside the door taking up almost a quarter of the room. The counter, which separated the waiting area from the office, stretched about two thirds of the way across the width of the room. People going into the office space itself needed to go around the end of the counter to get there. Grayson sat at right angles to the counter facing the window that looked out onto the tennis courts. Before her was the phone network and she was busy accepting calls and either directing them to the people requested or answering questions about various aspects

of school life. Along the wall from her facing the tennis courts was the radio system connecting the school office to the buses transporting students to and from school. It was a large console occupying a prominent position in the office. Opposite the counter was a window into the office occupied by one of the secretaries. The doorway to this office was from the corridor that began in the middle of that wall. This corridor led to offices occupied by the district secretary, the superintendent, the two principals and the district bookkeeper. To the left of the corridor in the corner was the photocopier set against the wall in a very accessible place but not intruding too much into the office space. The wall opposite the one facing the tennis courts led to two small rooms that were used for various purposes. Sometimes, because the computer for records was stored there, various people used one of the rooms to update or add records or to refer to them. At other times they were used for students who were sick. A door led from the wall behind the counter to a room where teachers had their mail boxes. It was a compact office space with the ceiling following the slope of the roof. This gave the impression of a large open space even though the floor area was in fact not excessively large.

I watched the activity in the office for some five minutes while I waited. It was a busy office but not a frantic one. There was a sense of order and a very definite sense of purpose in what was being done there. The phone was a dominant feature of the place with Grayson constantly answering it. The calls were from outside the school or internal ones from other people in the school. Because every classroom had a phone, it was possible to direct calls to teachers but this also meant it was very easy for teachers to have access back to the office. Grayson was the first point of call for people coming to the office as well as those calling by phone. She was

very efficient and direct while being very pleasant. As I sat waiting several individual students and two small groups came to the office for various reasons. Each was spoken to directly without any condescension and certainly no put-down. One student, who would have been in first or second grade, had particular trouble making it clear why he was in the office. Grayson spent some time gently eliciting from him that he was supposed to collect a form for his teacher. The affirming way she dealt with him would encourage him to return on future errands and would certainly build his confidence, something he needed. As I sat watching and listening I was aware that this office was the funnel for a great variety of information. People here would have a good idea of what was going on in the school and I resolved to spend some time speaking with the people in the office.

After sitting in the waiting area for some five minutes, I noticed two people emerge from a room down the corridor from the office. They walked into the office where they parted with some friendly comments. Grayson indicated to one of them that I was waiting and he moved around the counter and greeted me warmly introducing himself as Brian Morgan, the superintendent of the district. He was a man of medium build who was in reasonably good physical shape. He walked towards me in a purposeful way with a crispness in his manner as he observed me through his glasses. He exuded an air of vigor and enthusiasm and the initial impression I gained was of a person who had a definite purpose and was willing to share it. He was dressed conservatively in a blue shirt and red tie.

We walked through the main office, down the corridor past the district secretary's office and into the superintendent's office. It was situated on the left side of the corridor with a large glass window into the corridor. Opposite his office was that of the principal of the senior school. This office also had

a large window into the corridor and another one opposite looking out to the tennis courts.

The superintendent's office was furnished sedately but efficiently. A round table with five swivel chairs stood immediately inside the door. It was covered with books and a pile of building plans. A desk was set facing the back wall and its appearance indicated that it was a place where the superintendent did a considerable amount of paper work. The positioning of the desk meant it was not possible for the superintendent to sit across the desk from someone. He faced them directly or, as with me, sat around the table with them.

The walls were decorated with a variety of photographs and posters. Prominent among there was a thank you photograph of a school basketball team the superintendent had coached. On the wall opposite the door was a series of photographs of early days in the local area and adjacent to the door a copy of the requirements for teachers published at the beginning of the century and highlighted the change that has taken place.

Next to the desk stretching along the wall opposite the door was a bookcase with a variety of books to do with schools and improvement of schools. Some of the books looked to be well used and were not there just for show. In addition there was a filing cabinet in the corner opposite the desk.

A variety of sporting equipment was on the floor next to the filing cabinet and gave an indication of the superintendent's immediate involvement with the students in the school.

The room had a business-like feel about it. This was obviously a place where people worked, where the life of the school was discussed and opinions shared and questioned.



Morgan invited me in and closed the door. He indicated a chair at the table where I might sit and then proceed to move some of the material from the table. Having done this he sat down himself and mentioned he was happy to have me do my research in the school and offered any assistance he could to facilitate the process. He was at ease in talking with me and was obviously not at all concerned about what I might find out. In the way he spoke about the school it was clear that he was hoping that something of value might come from the study that could help the school better respond to the needs of the students attending it. My initial impressions were that here was a person who had a deep commitment to the students who were attending the school and was on the lookout for anything that would help in providing these students with a better opportunity to develop.

We spoke for some time about the arrangements I needed to make to gain access to information. I asked him to give me an indication of how the staff thought about the changes that had taken place so I could obtain a range of opinions about the school when interviewing a sample of the people involved in the school. We also spoke about my gaining access to parents and students and he was very accommodating. He made it very clear that although I would have to work around the ordinary working of the school, he was available during any of my visits to discuss any matters that I wanted to raise with him.

After speaking about such arrangements for some fifteen minutes Morgan took me across the corridor and introduced me to Alan Nesbitt, the principal of the grades six to eight. The room was smaller than the superintendent's and was arranged in a different manner. Immediately inside the door was an area with three chairs opposite a desk set in the middle of the room facing the chairs and up against the window. The principal's seat

was behind this desk on which were several piles of papers and books that were obviously being used. At the rear of the room was a filing cabinet and a bookshelf on which were again many books that looked to be well used.

Nesbitt was a slightly built person who, as a keen jogger, had kept himself in good physical shape. He greeted me warmly and invited me to sit down. Morgan excused himself and in doing so invited me to call back any time I wanted to. After outlining to Nesbitt the purpose of my study and discussing with him some of the implications for people I wished to speak with, I asked him a little about the school. Because the purpose of this first visit was to gain access to people's trust so they would feel at ease in speaking with me on later visits, I was not interested in going into great detail or in taking extensive notes. I was able to reflect with him on some of the issues he was experiencing as principal because of my own experience in that position.

Throughout a brief fifteen minute meeting I felt very much at ease with Nesbitt and could see that he would be an important source of information on subsequent visits. I had determined to restrict my time with people on this first visit because I was wanting to make contact rather than gather information and I was conscious it was a busy time at the school. I did not want to unnecessarily take up administrator's or teachers' time and put them under pressure to get other work done.

At the end of the time with Nesbitt I asked if I might wander around and gain some impression of the place. He walked with me out into the office and obtained a visitors tag which he asked me to wear during this first visit to the school so people at the school who did not know me would recognize that I was a legitimate visitor to the school. He then invited me to take a look at any part of the school I wanted to. Because of the number of

visitors that had come to the school he made it clear that teachers would be more than open to have me wander into classes and watch what was going on.

### Wandering Around the School

I moved out of the office and along towards the gymnasium. A class was occupied in a communication exercise in the area between the main building and the gymnasium. This involved a blindfolded person being directed through a maze through the use of prearranged signals without speaking. The class had been divided into groups of four. They had to work together to establish a system of signals that would allow one of their members who was blindfolded to walk around chairs and pieces of equipment and arrive at a designated point.

As I stood watching, most of the groups who made early attempts underestimated what would be required and the exercise ended in chaos for them. Later groups became conscious of this and developed more sophisticated systems. What impressed me in watching these seventh graders was the lack of ridicule when some group failed in their attempt. There was a great deal of laughter and the task was very challenging to them, but they seemed to be able to enjoy each other's company and efforts without putting each other down.

As I was thinking about this I moved away towards the tennis courts where another class was having a physical education class. The path I took brought me past the door to the printing room. Just before I was opposite the door it opened and a teacher emerged. She was carrying a bundle of papers she had just photocopied and was heading back to her class. On seeing me she moved in my direction and asked me if I was being looked after and whether there was anything she could do. I briefly mentioned why I was at

the school and she showed considerable interest. When she asked if I would like to speak with some students who had recently completed a project that had gone particularly well, I indicated I would be delighted to have the chance.

I walked with her down the side of the tennis courts past the administration offices and then turned right towards a group of classrooms between the tennis courts and a large playing area. As we walked the teacher introduced herself as Brenda Courtney and briefly mentioned how much she enjoyed teaching in the school. When we reached her classroom we found the majority of the students sitting around talking to one another. Courtney mentioned to me that they had only just finished a major project and were preparing for their next piece of work. She introduced me to the class and told them I was looking at what was going on in the school. When she asked if one of the groups who had worked on the project they had just completed would like to tell me what they had done, a great cry went up from the class as each group sought to be the one to tell me. With that response Courtney selected one group and called them together. Once they were gathered she simply asked them to tell me about the project they had just finished. She then moved away and left them to it. There was some giggling amongst the group as they looked at one another and waited for someone to start. One girl then began to explain how the three groups had come together and that Courtney had asked them not to talk to people in the other two groups. She then asked me if I knew what archeology was. I admitted that I had heard of it before, so she proceeded to outline what the focus of the project had been. A steady stream of words gradually gathered momentum as several other students added their comments. The stream quickly became a torrent as words stumbled over one another and eventually cascaded down over me in

a cacophony of sound that left me gasping for breath. In mock surrender I held up my hands amidst gales of laughter. These students were obviously excited about what they had done and were eager to share what they had learned. Courtney came by and resting her hands on the shoulder of two students laughing asked me if I was getting a good understanding of what the project was about. Several students responded they were trying but the trouble was that everybody wanted to tell the story. Her only comment was that they would have to figure out a way to do it. She then moved on to another group.

The group began again and I pieced together what the assignment was about. Each of the three groups had been asked to research an ancient culture, make some artifacts that truly represented that culture, break those artifacts and then bury the pieces in a designated area of the campus. When that was completed the groups then moved to the area where another group had buried their pieces. The task before them then was to do an archeological dig, reconstruct the pieces they found and draw some conclusions about the culture from which the artifacts would have come. These conclusions would then be presented to the whole class. After they had pieced together this outline, the students were very anxious to show me where they had done their dig. Courtney was happy for them to take me across to the far side of the campus where the dig had taken place. As we walked across each of the students was trying to tell me some aspect of their experience in the project. The excitement was tangible. They knew what they were talking about and were excited by the what they had learned. When we reached the site there was chaos as each indicated where they had worked and tried to tell me how they had gone about it. They were crowding each other to share everything replaying in their minds as they remembered

their experience there. After a few minutes of such chaos and amidst much laughter they decided they would take turns to explain what had happened at the site. While not keeping entirely to their decision, they gradually unfolded for me an outline of what had been entailed in the dig and the detective work associated with drawing conclusions from what they had found.

As we walked back across the playing area towards the classroom, I counted the number of areas of study and skills that had been incorporated into this assignment. They had been reading and researching in the library and other sources; they had constructed the artifacts in the art room; they had measured out their dig and calculated the various sections of the site; they had taken evidence and tried to draw conclusions about the culture from which the evidence had come; they had written up their findings and presented those findings to the rest of the class. They had worked together in teams through all this in an interactive way that required them to produce something to be judged for its accuracy by the group who had made and buried the artifacts. What was most obvious was that these students had had a great deal of fun doing this assignment and were excited by what they had learned.

When we returned to the classroom Courtney asked the group if they had been able to explain what they did during the assignment. The group laughingly confirmed that of course they had. Courtney turned to me and in front of the group expressed her admiration for the way the class had been able to enter into the project and work together so wonderfully. The members of the group were obviously proud of their accomplishments and were happy to talk about the project to anyone who would listen.

Shortly afterwards I left the room and reflected at length on what I had just experienced. Those students were excited about learning. They

enjoyed what they were doing. They interacted with the teacher in a very warm and positive way. They worked together cooperatively and respected one another. Were these the characteristics of classes that I had known over many years? I had to admit that I had never come across a group of students who were so much in love with what they were doing and so happy to be on task working in school. What was going on here at this school?

I wandered back towards the administration building. As I walked around the corner of the building that stood between Courtney's class and the administration building, I came across a teacher who was talking to a boy I had noticed was sitting outside the room when I was on my way across to Courtney's classroom. I slowed and took in the conversation as I walked past. The boy had obviously stepped out of line in the classroom and had caused some disruption there. The teacher, however, was not berating him. The snippets of conversation I heard showed the teacher gently but firmly asking the boy to make a judgment about what he had done. He was not asking why the boy had acted in the way he had. Instead he was asking him to consider whether what he had done had been of benefit to himself and whether it had helped the other people in the class. The boy was reluctant to accept that he was responsible for what he had done and sought to put the blame on another boy in the class. The teacher reminded him that the boy had chosen what he did. The teacher then mentioned that until the boy was prepared to accept responsibility for what he did and work out some way of making up to the class for the disruption he had caused, then he needed to sit there outside the class. The teacher in a very friendly way made it clear that the class wanted the boy back with them, but that the boy had to make a decision about how he was going to accept responsibility for his actions.

It was a short exchange I had witnessed but it showed a deep respect the teacher had for the student. At the same time, the teacher was not dodging the responsibility of being a facilitator of learning for the class by allowing individuals to prevent others from learning. He spoke with that student in a way that revealed a deep concern for that individual and also for the other students in the class. Was that the normal experience I had witnessed with teachers dealing with students who had caused disruption in class? Not really! The majority of instances I had witnessed focused on the teacher exerting control over the student and trying to impress on the student how powerful the teacher was. Because of the teacher's power the student had better be warned that next time anything similar happened there would be dire consequences for the student. Fear was a dominant factor in such exchanges. Fear was completely absent from the exchange I had experienced. What was going on here?

I sat outside the administration building thinking about what I had experienced so far during my visit. During the ten minutes I sat there basking in the beautiful autumn sun, several students passed on their way to class or to the office. There was considerable student movement around the campus as well as small groups of students working outside the classrooms. Many of the students greeted me as they walked past, as did the various adults whether teachers or classified staff. Although I had only been at the school for a few hours, I did not feel like a stranger. There seemed to be an openness to people from outside being around the school and an attitude on the part of people at the school that these visitors were to be welcomed and made to feel at ease in the school.

As I sat there a kindergarten class walked past on their way back to their classroom. The teacher was at the head of a line of children who were



in pairs with hands joined. She was walking in between the first pair and holding hands with one on each side. She was talking to each of them and listening carefully to what they were saying. She stopped in front of me and after greeting me asked if I needed any directions. After I explained what I was doing she smiled an acknowledgment and lead her charges towards the classroom. They followed along, some of the skipping together as they went.

After I had been sitting in the sun for some ten minutes, the first group of students were released from the cafeteria and moved out onto the playing field and the courts. There was a great deal of activity with basketballs and in other ball games amidst much laughter. The students seemed to enjoy being at school. During the next twenty minutes I wandered around the playing field and the courts taking the opportunity to talk to any students who were not engaged in playing some game. The students were very willing to talk. They were curious about why I was at the school. When I mentioned that I wanted to find out what sort of a school it was and how things were done there, they wanted to talk. Every student who spoke to me mentioned what a great school it was. One student who was in seventh grade said: "I just love coming here. I have only been here two years but you should see my old school. I can't believe how good this is." Another said: "We've got a really good school. The teachers really look after us and make us feel we are important here." I became a little suspicious and as I wandered further to other groups I provided opportunities for students to focus in on negative things. No one did. Some mentioned that there had been some fights when I raised the question of having so many students together and the probability that people would come into conflict. However, they quickly moved to how the problems had been dealt with and how they liked the way the teachers spoke to them even when they were in trouble. They

acknowledged there were some students at the school who caused problems but they did not want to dwell on those students.

As I wandered I was aware of other adults moving around the playing area. I spoke to one who mentioned she was not a teacher but a yard supervisor. When I asked her what her role was she responded by saying she saw her responsibility being to help provide a safe place for the children to be during the break. That meant physically safe but also psychologically safe. She explained this by saying that often the pressure from teasing and bullying was more destructive than what might happen physically. She was trying to help in the fight against put-downs. After she had mentioned that I became conscious that the way students were playing and the way they seemed to talk to one another was in general very positive and without the constant joking and put-downs I had associated with groups of students. What was going on here?

In the course of the afternoon I wandered past the art room. There were three students sitting outside with a potter's wheel trying to turn some clay. There was much laughter as their attempts to work the clay turned into extraordinary shapes. One of the students had obviously had more experience than the other two. She was encouraging these two to keep trying and to relax as they did it. Her patience with them was extraordinary and finally paid off. The other two eventually produced something they were pleased with and which was in line with what they had intended. While I stood watching them and talking to them, the teacher came out to see if they needed any help. She introduced herself and invited me to wander around the class if I wanted to.

I accepted her invitation and saw students working individually and in groups on projects that stretched their imagination and their skills. The

teacher was not directing them in the sense of proscribing what they were to do. The impression I had was that she provided the outline or framework in which they explored with great variety of mediums. She was obviously a resource to which the students often referred. Her ability to listen to so many requests and respond positively and in ways that encouraged students to push out the boundaries of their knowledge and skills amazed me. When I spoke to some of the students about what they were doing they responded very positively. Many mentioned that this was the class they enjoyed the most of all their classes at the school. "Just to be able to create something and to use my hands to learn is great," as one student put it.

After I left the art room I began to move in the direction of the administration block. As I did I met a teacher who had emerged from her classroom. She greeted me and asked if there was anything she could do for me. I mentioned what I was doing at the school and she began talking about her experience there. At one point I mentioned that all the children I had spoken to seemed very positive about being at school. She responded that there were a few who were not, and some of these were a real problem, but that the vast majority were. She went on to say she had a problem in her class and that she knew some other teachers also experienced something similar. I was intrigued because I thought here at last I'm going to get some of the underside of this school. What she elaborated on, however, left me wondering even more about the school. She spoke about the way the students were involved in their work and how one of the focuses of the school was to make school a fun place to be, a place where students felt they belonged and where they felt they had some control over what they were doing there. The problem she eventually spoke about was related to students being so engrossed in their work and enjoying it so much that when they

were sick and should have been at home in bed, they would come to school because they were frightened of what they might miss out on. This was not a problem with which I was familiar and had no ready solution! What was happening here?

As I drove away from the school after that first day my mind was grappling with so many different impressions. "I really love this school." "I'm worried about children coming to school when they should be at home in bed because they are frightened they will miss out on something." "You are very welcome to come into our class anytime you want."

I was not naive enough to think there were no problems at the school. Given the almost nine hundred people who assembled there each day, there were bound to be some problems. What intrigued me was the atmosphere that existed in the school so that children were happy to be there and felt safe. This was not what I had been used to nor what I gathered was the usual position in schools in California. It was obvious that some major shifts had taken place in the way the school was organized and operated and that those changes were still unfolding. What had happened in the course of the past few years that created such an atmosphere? It is to this that we now turn.

#### The Story.

Mountainvista School resulted from the combination of some eight small schools in the early 1950s. These small schools were established as the area was being developed. They were gradually combined into one school as pressures increased to provide better opportunities for the children of the area. The school had been in the throws of change for some time. Prior to Brian Morgan's appointment as superintendent, there had been a series of superintendents over a relatively short period of time. The quality of the experience the students were having at school with these superintendents

was a cause of concern and frustration to some board members, teachers and parents. The lack of continuity and an unwillingness on the part of those superintendents to confront the issues facing the school resulted in a state of considerable unrest. The reputation of the school was declining but, with an influx of new people into the district, the role of the school was increasing. This increase was a source of some anxiety to the superintendent immediately prior to Morgan. He was organizing to cope with the increase in the school role but did not have approaches to deal with it in a way that ensured a worthwhile experience for students.

When the superintendent suddenly indicated he was going to resign, a number of board members saw an opportunity to make an appointment that would improve the quality of the experience the students were having. Some of these board members have clear recollections of the period when Morgan became superintendent. They were conscious that their previous attempts to bring someone in from outside had not been successful. The board had advertised widely for the previous superintendents and went through a process for selecting the person whom they considered best for the position, but the results were not satisfactory. They were prepared to consider someone they knew well and in whom they had considerable confidence. As one long-serving member mentioned:

We found that when we went out [of the district] for administrators that we went through the complete process and sometimes we ended up with one that wasn't so hot. We started to think that we have to choose from within somebody we know has certain ideas we are happy with.

Morgan was well known to the members of the board. His application was encouraged by some board members and was warmly accepted when it came.

When Brian took over he seemed like he really wanted to do the job. There were a lot of things that he liked to do that were also in line with my thoughts and I will never forget the time when he said: "I would like to be the superintendent." And I said: "I'm not sure that you are going to be able to do the job." He said: "Why don't you try me for a year." So I said: "You're on! Anything is better than what's been going on." He was just so excited and so adamant about things he wanted to do and at the end of the year I looked at him--I'm sure he had forgotten--I looked at him and said: "You know what? You are the best thing that has ever happened here."

Morgan had taught in the school for a number of years prior to being appointed superintendent.

I started teaching here in 1975/76 school year. I was teaching in the junior high at that time and I taught here until 1981, somewhere in that area. So for about five or six years I had taught and then they were going to hire a half-time vice-principal and so I applied for the position and got that position. The dates are kind of rough on me but I think it was 1980/81 that I was half-time vice principal and half time eighth grade teacher. The next year I went full-time vice-principal and at the end of that second year the superintendent left and so I was hired as an interim superintendent/principal for the remainder of 1981/82 and in the beginning of 1982/83 I was hired as the superintendent/principal.

As a one school district with a relatively small school population, the position of superintendent was combined with that of principal. The position was split for the beginning of the 1985-1986 school year.

Then Alan Nesbitt came on as the vice-principal. So I was the principal/superintendent for several years and then we decided to split the title. Alan became the principal and I became the superintendent and we pretty well split the principal's duties but kept the names fairly well separate.

Because both these people had come from within the ranks of the teaching staff, they had a good grasp of what had happened and what problems the school was facing. There was an expectation on the part of the board and many other people that changes would be made that would improve the school.

There were very strong opinions held by people about not only the nature of the changes but the way they came about. The majority of the teachers had been at the school for some time and while many saw the problems, not all wanted to do anything radical about them. There were, however, a small group who not only saw the need for change but were prepared to find some solutions. Although they didn't realize it at the time, these people came to appreciate Machiavelli's comment that "there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things" (1952, p. 49).

#### The Initial Moves

Once in the position, Morgan had to decide what direction he was going to take. He was faced with a number of problems.

As a teacher here I realized that the school was floundering, not that it still doesn't have some of those same characteristics. There was

always a cadre of high quality people but there were a few people that was basically, if you will, by reputation drawing the rest of us down to the lowest common denominator, kind of the weakest link is your strongest part. So staffing was a problem from the word go and that is where I started.

The period of becoming acquainted with the position brought a few surprises for him. The greatest surprise was the complexity of the education process.

I had actually looked at education in a very simplistic way. You disseminated a certain amount of information and most of it will stick or some of it will stick, and we will go on about our business. So I guess that was a rather simple view of the role of the teacher and the role of the leader in some sense. So that was a big surprise. I think it is a very complex situation with all the individuals, both students and adults having their own agenda. They all have their own personality and idiosyncrasies, and so to get everybody on the same page and get them to move in the same direction is not an easy task.

With what he considered a healthy questioning of the system, Morgan began to confront the problems that faced the school. He was adamant that the school existed for the welfare of the students who attended it. These young people deserved to have the best opportunity possible under the circumstances. A small group of teachers were equally concerned about the need for change. With Morgan's blessing and encouragement, these teachers began to experiment with new approaches. He trusted them as professionals and sought to stimulate them to find better ways to be involved with the students' education. With teachers who were not prepared to change, however, he pursued aggressively what he considered the weak links on the staff. The outcome of that approach was that even though he was "a novice



at it, through luck and good fortune and some other factors, [he] was able to eliminate a lot of the weak links early on." This was not without its pain and a number of teachers took great exception to the way they felt he was treating them. The result was considerable confrontation and anguish. Some of the teachers could not accept the changes and the way the changes were being introduced and so they left the school. Others conducted a rear-guard campaign to counter what Morgan was attempting to do.

Morgan does not attempt to cover up the approach he initially took to his position. Part of this approach was a belief in his own rightness. His military background and his own experience had led him to the position that it was simply a matter of finding suitable ways to persuade people to adopt the solutions he had. "I knew what direction we should go, and I would get limited input and then I would expect everyone to jump on the train and ride with me as I engineered the train." This approach resulted in a certain self-righteousness and intolerance of what other people had to offer, particularly if they were taking a position different to moves he was trying to make. His justification for adopting that approach was the need for change in the school.

I knew what we were doing was not good enough. Nobody had to convince me that we had to do things differently. I almost felt like anything we were doing could be and should be improved on. So there were no sacred cows for me. I felt, rightly or wrongly, that any direction was a good direction and any change or movement was a good change or a good movement simply because it got us off a status quo. Even if it was a futile effort, it at least told us that was a path that was not worth traveling.

The initial process, working from this attitude, was to support those teachers willing to attempt changes and to confront those who were not. At times Morgan was rather abrasive and this resulted in considerable antagonism. Such antagonism was met head on and changes were forced through. Morgan recalled an incident in 1989:

Let me give you one story. Dittoes were one instance. A ditto is simply a work sheet you run off on a copy machine and hand it out to a student and he fills in the blanks. That's the epitome of a ditto and people like Frank Smith and other people attack that concept of teaching. If you look at much of teaching then and even now, a lot of teaching comes from the teacher disseminating this ditto sheet and then it is a pencil and paper task. We began educating the staff and saying dittoes were not a good thing, we need to decrease the number of them. They are not something that creates the kind of learning environment that is going to make a difference in kids' lives. Many of the staff moved to that and embraced it, but there were a few who would not and refused to give it up.

Then I realized that I had some unused resources, that basically I controlled the amount of paper they ran through the ditto machine, so I just told them "You will only have half as much paper next year as you had this year." Not many people said much until the beginning of the next year when reality set in and they began to think they were going to have to change their teaching style. To make a long story short, we had confrontations on that and I just went into a meeting one time and had a pile of books that supported my move. I told them if anybody wanted to argue with me and they could match the size of

my stack that said that dittoes were good then we would talk but until then we were not going to discuss it, it wasn't worth discussing.

As a result of such tactics, considerable bitterness developed among those teachers who were somewhat wary of making significant changes.

### Instituting Change

It would be a mistake to think that Morgan was the only person pushing for change. The school had a number of teachers who were very concerned about making changes to improve the quality of what was offered at the school. Along with Morgan, the two principals have been significant people in creating change or at least in permitting and encouraging it. Alan Nesbitt was the principal for the whole school up until the beginning of the 1992/93 school year when the board decided to split the school into two smaller units. Nesbitt continued to be principal of the grades 6-8 section and Victor Howell was appointed to be principal of the grades K-5 section. Howell had also been a teacher at the school for a number of years and had been very prominent in the development of different ways to improve the students' experience at school. When I confronted several board members about the dangers of inbreeding resulting from the three administrators all being from within the ranks of the teachers, they were not concerned. The feeling was that "there is an open-mindedness towards education here so I don't think that is a problem." Morgan was also conscious of all three coming from within the staff, but was likewise unconcerned.

The advantages we see is that we have someone who knows the system. We know the person. We are not hiring, as it were, the pig in the poke. So we know what we are getting and [the board] knows what they are getting into within reason. The disadvantages, of course, is that it becomes like the proverbial country town. It becomes

inbreeding where we don't really solicit and get the new ideas from outside. But I think we have enough freshness coming in from outside in a variety of ways that keeps us from having that happen to us. We are working with a lot of outside consultants who are high powered people. Our new staff who are coming to us, although most of them are inexperienced, come with some new ideas.

From very early in the change process, the people in the school calling for change were very conscious of how some societal changes in recent decades were having a serious impact on children. Morgan was among those who were most vocal in this call. He saw the ailment as being an invested commitment to the status quo.

Status quo is an ailment in the late twentieth and twenty-first century organization because it develops a sense of inertia. Our status quo was an inefficient status quo and not doing what we have been mandated to do, which is to educate virtually all the students who come through our doors to a level of education that they can function in the twenty-first century.

Even before Morgan became superintendent he and others were aware of the need for change. This awareness arose from considering what was happening in the school but also from a reflection on society itself. They became conscious of how some children were neglected and/or abused and had no place where they could feel safe. In considering what happened at school they reluctantly came to the conclusion that school wasn't necessarily a safe place for them either. Morgan summed up the attitude well:

The way I looked at it, the school was at war with the kids and the kids were at war with the school. To a certain degree that is because we made the rules, we enforced the rules and if they didn't like them

we smashed them. That's an oversimplification but to a degree that's how things worked, and my argument is that if you want to take the warrior out of the student then you take the war away from them. So you just don't go to war with people. I realize you have to at times but you try to keep the battles out of the environment, out of the culture.

I remember an interdistrict student came and I knew him on and off for years because he was the same age as my son. He was at war with that school, and the school was at war with him. When we interviewed him to see if he was going to come to our school, I just simply said to him: "We will not go to war with you. We are not at war with you. You can be a warrior but there is no war to fight." He didn't know what to do. For a while I think he just floundered. He stayed at our school and he was never academically successful, but he turned out to be a very pleasant kid by and large. There was not a continuous battle with him. He has subsequently gone on to high school with my son and he is doing well. If he continues the way he is going he will graduate. He is a decent kid but he saw schools as something to fight.

One of the motivations the administrators had, along with some of the staff, to bring changes was to ensure that a safe, warm, accepting environment was created at school. They wanted a place where children would feel people cared about them, a place where they could explore and develop. To create this environment the people had to examine their approach and, more particularly, the assumptions underlying those approaches. This was a painful and difficult process.

Allied to this was an awareness that what may have worked in education in previous times was no longer a suitable approach. The

publication of the State Education Department booklet *Caught in the Middle* (1987) was the stimulus for considerable discussion and debate. It brought to the attention of the teachers some things they had felt but perhaps not articulated, some of their unease with the system in which they were involved. Howell recalled the impact of some aspects of the report:

The kids weren't getting what they needed, and there were too many confrontations between the teachers and the kids. No one was winning in that situation. Teachers weren't happy and the kids weren't happy. Things that kept coming up in *Caught in the Middle* were that teachers and kids need to have a bond and that no teacher can know two hundred kids. We had as many as two hundred and ten kids that I would have to know. I would see all two hundred and ten kids every two days. I would see those faces. You can't know that many kids. There's a quote in that book that says: "A student ill-known is a student ill-taught." It defined the maximum number of students a teacher can get to know as eighty to ninety kids. So we started to look at ways of playing around with the schedule.

Out of discussion on such issues arose a deep desire to establish an environment that was safe for students, an environment where they were known and where they were not belittled or put down, a place that would be fun and affirming for them. Such an atmosphere would be in marked contrast to what had been happening at the school. Morgan's comments above about students being at war with the school accurately reflects the concerns of these teachers. Howell expressed the sense of commitment and involvement this way:

My memory is that most of the effective changes were mutual changes. They didn't come from any one person. We loved to discuss

the ideas of change. There was a core of teachers: myself, Kevin Jackson, Jane Gilles who is no longer here, Robert Jacobs in the last couple of years, and Andrea Foye. We worked together. We talked a common language of change and of student involvement in doing something that is meaningful and useful.

They would talk after school, over lunch, when they passed on the grounds. The challenges were enormous. Howell, Jackson and Earle went to considerable lengths to discuss *Caught in the Middle* and to look at the practical implications that followed from taking it seriously. They began to see that if there was going to be any change in what was done they had to do it. They were influencing one another, and they began to make changes in the way they did things in their classrooms. These changes were without reference to what anyone else was doing. It seemed to resemble almost anarchy with people hiving off and doing their own thing. There did not initially seem to be any coordinated plan of how the changes would be brought about. Howell was grateful that Morgan was prepared to trust him and to believe that he was capable of providing a worthwhile experience for the students.

While this discussion was going on, some teachers and administrators began reading other materials and tried different approaches. Morgan is an avid reader and was able to distribute some materials he had discovered. He also encouraged others to share what they had found challenging, those materials that give an indication of a possible direction in which to move. Some of the readings were related to recent research that was being done on the brain. For those who were taking these materials seriously, it soon became obvious that there was a real conflict developing. If what this research was saying was true, then much of what they were doing in school

was not helpful. This conclusion became very clear to them in regard to teaching reading. As a result several of them came together and decided they needed to change the way they taught reading. A search for suitable methods compatible with the research ensued.

Several of these teachers, along with Morgan, were convicted by what they read and discussed. Something had to change. Morgan pondered what he saw as he visited classrooms and challenged teachers to find better ways to educate students. There were several young teachers on the staff who wanted to do the best thing for the students and to do more than talk about it. Howell spoke about the responsibility he and others felt to "walk the talk" and make sure their discussions led to some real differences in the experience of the students.

I felt the only way I could talk about [the changes] and be credible was to actually do it. I wouldn't broadcast that this is what I'm doing and look how great it is or anything like that, but over the years the work that came out of our classrooms, at least I believed and others believed, was testimony enough to show that these changes do work with kids who are getting something that is meaningful. When they present to a hundred teachers at a science conference, that's never been done before. All the teachers at the science conference would want to know what they did and why they did it and how they could do that and how they could get enough time to do that. That was due to restructuring our schedules. Our lessons and curriculum didn't fit into the old schedule. Our new schedule was flexible and adaptable enough to accommodate things we wanted to do. So when the science teacher, myself, and the art teacher and the math teacher wanted to do a nine week unit on the Branston Circle Spill we could do that.



Some major changes were made in the way students were organized and how they discovered information as a result of teachers taking the readings seriously. Textbooks, standardized tests and dittos were greatly restricted in use and homework was severely reduced.

### Changes in the Middle School

Because most of the teachers in this group of change agents were from the middle school, significant changes began to occur there. The school had been organized around a very rigid schedule with little flexibility and required teachers to be involved with large numbers of students. The issues of students slipping through the system without being known because of the large number of students each teacher had to relate to each day was a real concern. The schedule exacerbated this problem. Morgan confronted the issue by stating that the teachers were not bonding enough with their students and something had to be done. Some teachers took offense to the way attention was drawn to the issue, but their own experience and the input from *Caught in the Middle* confirmed what Morgan had said. He kept returning to this document and using it to highlight deficiencies in the school.

As I presented the evidence, the defense, I mentioned examples. For instance, I stated there were more gotchas on kids in the junior high than any other place. Even though at that stage I had not read Deming, I explained that it was not their fault, it was the system's fault, the process's fault. That is easy to say but hard to believe. They began to read *Caught in the Middle* out of self-defense. They needed to read it because I was beating them over the head with it. That is not necessarily the greatest approach as these were smart dedicated

people. Their eyes were opened up and basically at that stage of the game I could probably have gotten out of the way more than I did. There was considerable anguish and heartache during 1988 when so many things were being questioned and teachers were feeling uncertain. It became obvious to the people who were thinking through the implications that a change in structure was going to be necessary. It was not a pleasant time for the administrators or for teachers who were feeling extremely threatened. Because those advocating the changes were not absolutely clear on where they wanted to go, opposition was very vocal at the beginning of the process. Attempts were made to find ways of making the transition a little less painful.

To provide some space to be with one another and in order to have time to confront the implications of the issues arising from the reading and discussions that were going on, two summer junior high institutes were suggested for about a week each. Morgan contacted the California Department of Education consultants and asked about persons who knew about middle schools. He was told to contact a professor at one of the state universities who might be prepared to facilitate the gatherings. After some negotiations the professor met with all the teachers in the middle school for the first summer institute at Lake Erehwon in July 1990.

We had a very good session. We talked about schedule, the structure of our day. With that came a philosophical change to a hands-on activities. Change of structure was a big, big part of that. We had to give people time to do the things we wanted kids to do which was impossible in the forty minute periods.

This chance to spend an extended time with one another talking through the implications was critical for the restructuring that was to occur. With every

teacher in the middle school present it was possible for people to express their hesitations and doubts and to talk through the implications. Being away from the school site and having no other distractions certainly aided the process. One of the side-effects of the isolation, however, was that the decisions reached after considerable discussion looked much easier because of the distance from the school.

There were differences of opinions but those were ironed out and being a long way away from the site it seemed that things would run fairly smoothly. Once we got back here, however, and tried to put decisions into practice there were problems. Whenever problems came up there were a couple of people who were feeling more secure in what was known, they wanted to revert back to a more authoritarian, more dictatorial type of system.

There was, however, a deep commitment on the part of an increasing number of people to resist a return to the past. Even though they were not completely sure what the future held, they were determined that they had to make it better than it was in the past. The result was considerable conflict as implications of decisions made during the summer institute became obvious in the daily operation of the school. Howell recalled some of the frustrations that emerged during that early period when structural changes were being introduced:

We would have meetings that would become full blown shouting matches with people crying and yelling at each other. There were some really wild meetings. We worked through that kind of frustration and in some respects the anger was not all bad. Feelings got hurt and some things were said that never got repaired but I think once you go back to brain theory, how kids learn, what's best for kids

there isn't any other choice. We kept coming back to that. After we had those yelling sessions and that kind of thing, we would come back to what are we here for, what are we trying to do. Are we here to make this a more comfortable place for us or a better place for the kids. Once things had settled down we came to wanting this to be a better place for the kids. We have been fortunate in education because now we do have some educational research. The last ten years have generated some massive amounts of research in education about how kids learn. So now we really do have something to hang our hat on. When we get mad, when we get frustrated with all the changes we just say, "Look here's the research, here's how kids learn. Here's what Larry Lowery has found out in his years at U. C. Berkeley. Here's what Leslie Hart has found, here's what Frank Smith is saying. Here's what the State Department of Education in California is saying."

The year following the institute for the middle school was a traumatic one for the school as decisions made during the institute were implemented. While there was considerable disruption because of the change in schedule, the atmosphere in the school gradually changed as priorities were altered.

The next year [July 1991] we had [the professor] back. We had grown to the point where we almost didn't need him that second year. He was not as helpful as the first year because we were going beyond the more traditional junior high departmental approaches: Combining math and science, combining language, art and social studies, really doing it not just talking about it and having extended periods--things like that.

During this time there was considerable experimentation in classes. Several teachers had been involved in organizations outside the school which

resulted in significant changes in the school. Howell had been appointed to the California State Instructional Materials Evaluation Panel (IMEP) for science in the summer of 1985. He had a very significant experience there when the panel rejected all the textbooks the publishers had submitted to the panel and found that no textbook was suitable for science education in the state. The fact that the following year the math panel did the same led him and other people at the school to question the role textbooks played in the life of the school.

I experimented in my classroom the following year. I went for the entire year without getting a textbook off the shelf. I found myself having to develop a lot of curriculum and look for things to fill in where the textbook would have occupied a large part of the day for kids in answering questions out of the back, doing tests, etc. I had to work out how I was going to occupy their time, what I wanted them to know and how I was going to teach. It took a while and it wasn't easy. The fact is that it is never easy. It is a very difficult way to teach but I found the rewards were much greater teaching that way. I was able to tie the lessons and my classes to the community. We used the creek. We used the railroad spill, the river. We could use things here locally that meant something to the kids because it was local. They got involved and were motivated. So through that process I got involved in some of the early authentic assessment practices at the school.

Through talking to other teachers and being willing to ask searching questions, Howell was able to gradually influence others. The development of the curriculum along lines that grounded it in the local area eventually led most teachers to feel that there was a need to move away from textbooks and to use that money for more useful classroom materials. There was no formal

ban as such but Morgan kept asking teachers what value there was in textbooks and who was directing what was happening in their classrooms.

On the curriculum front there were issues on the boil all the time. The administrators encouraged people to pursue interests and to find different ways of organizing material so students could learn more effectively. The hands-on approach came to be the dominant one. Teachers were given encouragement to attend seminars and to visit other schools where they could learn about better ways of teaching. Morgan was an unstinting advocate of getting teachers to get out of the school and to find better ways of organizing classes. Initially he almost bribed teachers to go by offering to make an extra \$50 available in their classroom budget for each seminar they went to or visit they made.

Out of such interaction and involvement with one another and with other schools, new approaches emerged. Questions kept arising as new moves were made. When the teachers kept asking the question; "Is there a better way?" they were finding there was. The move to keep asking that question resulted in a growing dissatisfaction with what they were doing. The teachers were not always sure where to head but, like Morgan, many came to the conclusion that it had to be somewhere other than where they were. Many began researching their questions while others read what Morgan and others made available to them. As one teacher remembered:

I ran across things by Johnson and Johnson on cooperative learning, ran across things by Karl Glickman, Art Costa and all these guys talking about different methods of assessment, authentic assessment, portfolio assessment, no assessment, humanistic assessment, subjective instead of objective. They began to make sense to me.

The result was that there were changes being made all the time as teachers found more satisfactory ways to work with their students. By being open to ask questions, the teachers began to confront real challenges and to find ways of following through on them. Howell recalled the implications of facing up to what he felt uneasy about:

I went to a meeting once in the county and they outlined a typical year. You would have seventeen days for testing and so on and that struck me. "Seventeen days. That's how many days I'm testing in a year? I could be doing all sorts of things in those seventeen days." Then I began thinking about what I was getting from the tests, what the kids were getting out of that test. I don't care about the test. The test doesn't have anything to do with how I grade a kid. The kids hate the tests. Does it do them any good? No. Most kids get more negative attitudes about school and it puts a lot of extra stress on them and kids fail. If I quit giving tests then the kids wouldn't fail. So I did that for about three years.

#### A Shared Approach Emerged

The atmosphere of serious inquiry and a willingness to take risks began to pervade the school. The impact of the Middle School teachers was considerable. However, work to bring change was also being done in the primary by a number of teachers who were allied with the teachers in the Middle School. While it looked like anarchy in some ways, there was a common bond that united those who were trying to find better ways to work with students. Teachers were prepared to try things but to also share them. One teacher commented:

I don't think I see [teachers] hiving off and doing their own thing. I think that if you are doing your own thing good enough people will

notice. That's the idea here. It's not: "Hey, look what I'm doing!" to draw attention. If you are doing what you are supposed to be doing you can't help drawing attention. Winning takes care of itself if you are prepared properly.

Because of the willingness to share with one another, teachers gradually built up a sense of mission that not only encouraged but also challenged them. They sensed they were in this change together. They trusted one another in their search and were prepared to consult and cooperate with one another. Out of such an atmosphere a method of portfolio assessment emerged that became a model for the state. While always looking for improvements, Kevin Jackson developed an approach that was sought by teachers and those developing such an assessment. He did not guard his approach jealously. Rather he was readily available for teachers and committed to share what he had.

I have invited teachers to come into my classroom. I have said: "You drop in any time. I don't care what time." I think early on that was a very important strategy because a lot of teachers in the classroom early on were very, very nervous about having someone come into the classroom, whether it was one of their colleagues or not. For someone to say: "Hey, drop into my room any time, I don't care when." That was a revelation for them. So that was an early strategy. Another strategy was to say: "Hey, how can I help you. I'm serious. I will give you time. How can I help you? What can I do?" I have had several mentorships in math and science and I have done lots of teacher training so I used some of those strategies in working with the teachers at this school.



Part of the atmosphere that was built up revolved around teacher failure. Morgan decided that if change was going to occur, then risks had to be taken. If teachers were going to be terrified by the thought of failure, then they were not going to risk. The approach the administrators took was to trust people to be professional and to expect them to find better ways of being involved in the students education. In doing this administrators knew there would be mistakes and failures but the focus was on finding better ways to do things.

The adoption of this attitude to failure was significant. Those teachers who were prepared to try something new were encouraged to do so. The administrators felt it was their responsibility to provide a structure where a new initiative that was going to be of benefit to the students could succeed. If it didn't they considered it their responsibility for not providing the best possible conditions. Some teachers found such an attitude put a great deal of pressure on them to ensure that they did everything possible so the initiative would succeed.

#### Changes in Relating with People

While these changes were going on in the way the schedule was being organized and what was being taught, there were other changes in process. These focused more on the attitude people took to one another. One of the teachers recalled that the initial direction was rather vague. In 1989 as Morgan mused on what was happening in the school and as he read and talked to people, he gradually began to articulate a sense of what the people in the school were concluding. One teacher recollects that Morgan was gradually able to articulate what a number of teachers were feeling:

Brian got an idea that if we do nothing else in this school, we don't harm the children. If we don't teach them anything, we don't do

anything that will harm them. So he started going through different things and trying to find out more about this and then hooked up with Glasser and Alan Nesbitt started to read a lot by Jane Nelsen and so forth. So we started getting some memos and things started to filter down from the top to the teachers.

From such a starting point Morgan began in the course of 1991-1992 to explore other ways of relating to students and began asking what it was the educators were doing with students while they were at school. He recalled how the light came on for him as he watched what was happening at the school.

I came to the conclusion just through reading and through different things like getting into Glasser's materials and realizing that schools were not treating students in a way that fostered any kind of warm feelings between the two . . . .The way I looked at it, the school was at war with kids and the kids were at war with the school.

Morgan began to challenge teachers to think about how they were relating with students and treating them. The teachers examined the discipline system that was in place. They decided a better way had to be found. Many of the teachers came to the conclusion that they needed to find ways of dealing with students that showed them more respect. As these teachers searched for a better discipline system Morgan promoted William Glasser's approach to discipline. Others had discovered H. Steven Glenn (1989). In subsequent discussions it became obvious to the teachers that more than a change in a few structures was required. To take Glenn and Glasser seriously would require a change in thinking about how people are motivated. There were very practical implications for teachers if this was followed through. Initially these were not so obvious but as the

understanding deepened some people became very excited by the possibilities while others became upset at the way the changes were unfolding. There was then a concerted effort to entice people to obtain training in newer approaches of dealing with students.

At the heart of Glasser's approach is a belief that individuals are motivated from within and, therefore, choose their behavior to meet their basic needs. As a result they are responsible for what they choose to do. The challenge for the teacher was to lead students to accept that responsibility. Teachers were accustomed to making judgments about whether a student's behavior was acceptable or not. In Glasser's approach the key issue is to get the student to make that decision. Glasser claimed that until the student comes to the conclusion that his/her behavior is unsatisfactory, then no matter what the teacher concludes, there will be no long-term change. Glasser provided strategies for working with students and an understanding of why the strategy worked through his control theory.

The process of moving from one approach to the other was not a smooth path. Students don't readily accept that they are responsible for what they do. Most have been imbued with the stimulus/response psychology and believe things out there make them behave in certain ways. Add to this that most teachers were untrained to make such a change even if they wanted to. The process of training teachers in a new way of thinking was a long, slow process. Morgan enticed other teachers to consider Glasser's approach. He provided them with reading and followed up by eliciting their reaction to that reading. Finally by February of 1991 he enticed sufficient teachers to sign the document to enable the school to become part of Glasser's consortium.

Two further difficulties confounded the process of incorporating the new approach. Firstly, there was the influx of new teachers who had not taken part in the development of the approach. They found the change from what they had experienced themselves at school confusing. It took some time and imaginative strategies to bring these people on board. Secondly, there were some teachers at the school who knew very little about the process and didn't want to know any more. They were satisfied with the system they had. They were in charge and the students did what they were told. Any change to this dominant arrangement was looked on as a real threat by these teachers. Despite these difficulties the process was launched in 1991 with a series of seminars for teachers in September and October and then in April an inservice day for classified staff.

We started with some presentations done by Alan Nesbitt on H. Stephen Glenn's approach. We also dealt with Jane Nelsen and some other materials that showed that the stimulus-response approach is not an adequate approach. It was only after that we got heavily into the Glasser material. So it started there and we got more heavily involved when we got into the Glasser material. That's when we really used the reality therapy to bring that to the forefront of everybody's thinking. I think we have something like twelve teachers who have not been trained at least to one degree or another. We have started on the classified staff, and everybody with only a few exceptions--this is interesting phenomenon--have made in their own minds, as we understand, major transitions in how they view things.

The commitment to develop this new approach was not something that was just talked about. The board was persuaded to allocate money to enable the training to take place. The administrators adopted an attitude of encouraging

as many teachers as possible to seek out training that would eventually be for the betterment of the students. The investment in such ongoing training has been significant. The board felt, however, that it was only with a new way of thinking that new approaches were going to be possible. For the long-term benefit of the students such training was of significant importance. One teacher, with some surprise, confirmed:

I have never been turned down or denied the privilege of going to any workshop, taking any class, even visitations to other schools. It has always been with approval. I did the advanced week for reality therapy and that is a thirty hour thing with a sub in my classroom.

#### A Change in Morgan's Approach

Through continued reflection on what he was reading, his experience, and the experience of others, Morgan gradually saw the need for a complete turn around in the way he interacted with the people at the school--both adults and students. Initially he had taken a rather aggressive and almost dictatorial approach in obtaining what he wanted and pushing through some of the changes. His motivation was to provide an environment for the students that would best enable them to grow as confident and resourceful people. Slowly he came to the awareness that the approach that emerged from his experience in the army was not serving him well. His war metaphor was a dominant one with teachers who were not entirely supportive of the changes being promoted. He realized he was at war with some of his staff.

What I was pursuing was how you structure a school to meet the needs of the students. Through that process I began to realize that the structure I had developed and had participated in, in terms of a person of authority in relation to other adults, needed to be changed as radically as the things I was asking the adults to change between

themselves and the students. It started first when we began looking at curriculum and I think particularly when I started getting into the culture. I knew that was the problem but I didn't know where to look, and that is when I stumbled onto Glasser. That's when the lights came on and I began to realize what I had been doing and that changed my perceptions about how I would deal with my fellow employees.

Morgan began to seriously question the way he had approached the change process. His growing awareness of the approach Glasser advocated for dealing with students caused him to rethink his approach to dealing with adults. He became convinced of the need to create a culture in the school where people accepted responsibility for their actions and had the opportunity to make choices about what they were doing in school. This conviction led him to explore other avenues for relating with the people involved in the school.

#### Change in Structure

When Morgan became superintendent the school was organized in the traditional way. Most of the teachers were thinking that they had to approach what they were doing in a certain way and there was no possibility of them teaching any other way. Howell recalled this time.

There were a lot of mindsets that needed to be broken and then what we had to do was to provide a system--or a nonsystem is a better word--to be able to allow them to make their moves. Junior high is a classic example because in the junior high we had our seven periods and out. Seven forty-five minute periods and then you're out. People did not think that any of the changes that were taking place in the school could work in a junior high.

It was dissatisfaction with this structure that led to changes. The dissatisfaction centered on the lack of continuity and the number of students teachers had to see each day. Howell came to an awareness about the craziness of the system.

My revelation was that I can't think of any position where you would change what you are doing so drastically every fifty-two minutes as you do in classes in junior high or high school.

Such an awareness by an increasing number of teachers led to some significant changes. One teacher explained:

Brian said it was a systemic problem and we needed to break it down. We went through four or five years of different schedules and every single year trying to get to the spot where we are this year with our scheduling. Basically in junior high this year for the most part four classes are taught and they are each about an hour and a half in length. That gets us the bonding, the integration of curriculum, flexibility because we have an a.m. one and a p.m. one and it rotates every other day.

The middle school seminars helped a great deal in creating a climate where alternative ways of structuring the school day and week could be explored. It was not, however, until 1992/1993 that the structure was changed for the middle school.

The present schedule is that we have an A / B schedule for the middle school. I think the students have seventy-five or ninety minute periods. It varies from day to day. And they see a maximum of four teachers.

These changes in the structure of the school day and week were not as significant for the primary, however, because the teachers were with their

students almost all day. Nevertheless, there were considerable changes advocated for the way the primary teachers used that time with the students. As moves were made to find better ways to be involved in students' education the teachers began to feel a deeper commitment to the school. They also felt a greater determination to make the proposals work.

This commitment also developed in the board. Members of the board were kept informed about what was happening in the school. They sought to use their position to encourage such developments. One of the significant ways in which the board contributed was through the allocation of funds for ongoing training of teachers. In addition to board funds money became available from a grant that had been obtained from the federal government. The 1274 grant proposal was put together by a number of people. However, during the course of 1991-1992 Morgan was the main instigator to write a grant to obtain money so that the restructuring and retraining could be carried out. The application for this restructuring grant provided the opportunity to develop a school plan that would give some direction over the next few years. The approval of the application provided the money to allow the restructuring and retraining to take place.

As more people became involved in the change process a sense of ownership of the school became evident. There was, however, also a developing dissipation of effort and an awareness of the need to bring more unity and less stress into the change process. Morgan was aware that in recent years teachers had learned a great deal. They had been exposed to an incredible amount of material and had come to some wonderful conclusions about what should happen. He was conscious that the hectic pace of change had had some significantly negative implications. Among them was a sense of overload on the part of most of the teachers.



We know more than we are doing. We don't need to know more. We need to learn to do what we know. That's what we are trying to do next year, to restructure the calendar to allow us more time to take the knowing and turn it into doing.

It was like the teachers were dragging around a heavy travois of knowledge they didn't know how to use. It was there. They were conscious of it but they had not assimilated it. As a result it was more of a burden than a benefit.

Moreover, Morgan was conscious of the need to move the focus further away from himself. He had been a dominant force in the move to bring about change in the school. Nevertheless, he knew that change would not be institutionalized simply because he thought it should be. More people must own the changes and particularly the process of continual improvement. The structure of the school, in his opinion, must be adjusted to accommodate that new understanding.

Now it is time to focus energy. That is exactly where we are now. We can't work off Brian Morgan's agenda any more. It's too narrow. It's too scattered. It's too a lot of things and if we do there is going to be an insurrection and I'm going to get hung. So we need to develop a common mission and legitimize the agenda in the sense of having it shared and we need people to work at it much more systematically, scientifically and with less trauma.

My feelings were, and to some degree still are, that if we are too comfortable we will not change. There is a level of discomfort that is good for change but there is a level of anxiety that creates nothing. I think if you want to look at that and want to call it an anxiety meter I think many times we have been in the red. I have pushed individuals into the red.

Like many other people at the school, Morgan realized the variety and number of changes that had been made in the school had produced an atmosphere where in general people welcomed improvements and were not surprised by them. Nevertheless, a continuation of such an unfocused process would mean a loss of the energy that would come from a unified effort.

I listened to Michael Fullan from the University of Toronto speak right after we had some TQM training and the TQM says that "Ready, Fire, Aim" is a real negative approach to change. Fullan says it is the only approach at the beginning of the change process. You need to do that because if you don't "Ready, Fire, Aim" but "Ready, Aim, Fire" you will spend all your time on "Ready" and "Aim" and never get to the "Fire." We have been doing a lot of firing and now we need to do some aiming! We are absolutely right for that.

From such a conclusion Morgan and a number of other teachers began in the course of 1992-1993 to look at a way of being true to their experience while having more people involved and a more controlled development. The natural evolution of the process in which they had engaged led to Deming and some of his processes.

It came about through an introduction to Glasser. Glasser led to Deming. Deming led to the idea of continuous improvement process. We probably shouldn't call it that because TQM has other connotations. It's the idea of developing the process in a system that allows for the analysis of a system through the use of data and then to come up with alternatives and options for improvements. Glasser was the initiation, then I did a lot of reading on Deming. Then we began physically checking places where they had a process in place. The

next step was we sought out a trainer who trained our steering committee in a continuous improvement process. There were board members, administrators, teachers, classified employees and parents involved. The group was formed partially by just who wanted to be part of it. We solicited some people, a parent. I can't remember, to tell you the truth. We had already developed TQM, or CIP we call them, Continuous Improvement Process committees. There were representatives from the grade groups K-2, 3-5, 6-8, from classified staff, the board and parents. The chairpersons of each of those groups were trained in the steering committee.

It was through these smaller committees that individuals would have input to the larger TQM group. Because there were representatives from each area on the larger committee it was possible for the people to be heard. One teacher commented on the new structure as a positive step to have input. She felt it provide a pathway for ideas to be considered and also provided a safe way to discuss issues of concern.

We had a TQM meeting last Monday of six through eighth grade teachers and we talked about a variety of things. We discussed our schedule, the potential advisory program, and what the art program is going to do and who is it going to serve. We all have input. I know and the other teachers know, however, there are certain things that the administration can do legally. I could make a case that would justify what I thought. I would be listened to but there might be bigger things that take precedent. I would feel comfortable to say this is what you gain and this is what you lose with this proposal. I would state my opinion as a specialist and how I see things. I don't know that I would

necessarily get my way, but I know that at least I can state my case, not feel afraid and know I have been heard.

This steering committee was set up in December 1992 and the training occurred in January 1993. In the course of 1993 the experience of working together and always looking for ways to improve not only the school, but the way the staff worked together, led to some development in the nature of the committee. Because most of the decisions in the school had previously been made by teachers, the professionals in the school learned a great deal from having people other than teachers on such a committee. As Nesbitt commented:

It really changed how we looked at issues because we had some great people who were involved and some of them are still involved. Some of them would say: "From a parent perspective this . . . ." "From a board perspective . . . ." "From a teacher's aide's point of view . . . ." It really opened the eyes of the teachers that there were other ways of addressing situations.

The composition of this group added another dimension to the ownership of the school. In addition, the way the group operated was empowering and ensures there was a genuine sharing of both aspirations and concerns. Nesbitt remarked on this openness and the impact the way of doing things has had on the people involved.

One of the rules we have in the steering committee is that there is no rank in the room. So if Morgan says something it should have no more power than if the maintenance man says it or a parent says it, etc. I do believe that that has been stringently adhered to and we have some parents who are not afraid to speak up.

A certain way of organizing meetings had been adopted as a result of the training at the beginning of 1993. This was not strictly a TQM approach but adapted from the training to suit the school. A set of rules were drawn up and displayed at the front of the room during each meeting (Appendix C). Such an arrangement was a significant departure from the model of operating which Morgan used when he began as superintendent. He was conscious of the move he made, but saw it as one that will be better for the school. He saw the development of a common purpose evolving through the TQM process with a steering committee using Deming's concept of developing consensus. This meant

decreasing the idea of coercion, the idea of forced movement, if you will. Pushing that out of the system and supplanting it with consensus building, that's what we are doing. We are building the structure for that. It is a different structure. A completely different structure and I am a much different player in that structure than I've been in the past. I have become more and more a facilitator and a manager in the sense that Glasser talks about and less and less of, if you will, an explorer, a scout or whatever. Less and less a flag bearer and more and more a flag raiser. I'm going to raise a common flag as opposed to grabbing the flag and running out in front and saying "Charge!" to use the military analogy again. My position now will necessitate change and sometimes that is already happening. I have to sit back and think "I don't know that this is the place to go and I'm not sure this is necessarily the place to go. I know we could get there quicker if they just did it my way." Those kinds of things. I have to now say: "It doesn't matter that I think I know there is a better way to do it. It doesn't matter that I think there is a quicker way to do it." It doesn't

matter because my old way of doing it and that approach doesn't work any more.

One of the key things of the continuous improvement process is that there is no rank anymore. So it is a consensus building model. In some cases I am more of a resource than other people and in some cases I am not. I can't say: "To hell with this we are not going to do it that way."

Nesbitt adopted the same attitude and explained at some length that no rank meant no rank. If he had influence in the group it was because he was able to present some good arguments for a certain proposal. He acknowledged that because of his position he had access to some material that others didn't. As a result he was in a position to be more persuasive. When I asked him about the influence he would have on discussions on discipline his comment was :

Instead of rank what I had was more of a knowledge base, especially in the area of discipline, than others did. . . . This is one area in which I am more of an expert, if you will, and people are looking to me as the expert in this situation. . . . However, I'm telling you right now that if the next group I'm in is the library committee, I don't have the experience in that area. I would not be nearly as vocal as I have been in this discipline committee. I would be listening a lot more and looking for someone else to be leader then.

Because the school developed such a different model of operating, Morgan was hoping for a smoother process for ensuring that adults at the school were supported and less traumatized and the students obtained the best possible opportunity to succeed while at the school. A format was adopted where adults could raise issues through using the assistance request form (Appendix D). This provided a framework for dealing with issues as they

...arose by the people in immediate contact with the person with the concern. Through the teams that were established at various levels adults had access to the steering committee and received information back from it. Morgan hopes by establishing a more settled format for working on problems a certain stability in the change process will eventuate. He has certain expectations of what will be happening at the school in five years.

I would hope that the change process has evolved to a continuous improvement process. So instead of leaps and retreats, ups and downs, the emotional highs and lows, that we are on a more continuous improvement and that we have developed useful data. In a sense I hope for a much more buoyant kind of approach to life, to things, with fewer casualties. We have generated too much anxiety and too many emotional casualties among faculty. I don't think we have with the kids. It think the world we have created for kids is light years ahead of where it was, but I think we have done that to some extent at the expense of our faculty.

One of the first things the steering committee was faced with resulted from a conference Morgan had committed a group of teachers to attend. As one teacher who went to the conference remembers it:

He sent a group of teachers to a conference in Fresno for outcome-based education and we had to have some kind of framework to work from. When we came back we said: "We can not continue to just keep talking and talking and sharing. Somewhere down the line we have to make some decisions, institute those decisions and then we can change and adapt as we go along." I think that process came about really from the steering committee. They came up with the idea of the

parachute and then a group of us, myself included, worked on it this summer. Then they instituted it.

The parachute metaphor (Appendix E) was developed by the steering committee over a long period of time in order to provide some framework in which the school could work and the various committees could make decisions. One of the participants recalled the process that occurred as the parachute developed.

We sat down and said: "We don't have a mission statement. We really need to think what Mountainvista School is about. What do we hope to accomplish? What do we want to do?" That umbrella took us a long time. It turned into a parachute. It was interesting, we saw that it was the process, not so much the end product, that was important. That took us probably four or five months for us to develop. Things were modified, were brought back, examined. It was done through TQM with everyone having the chance for input, and it kept changing, modifying, etc., until we finally had what we felt was good.

While the document, with its explanation, was adopted and distributed by the steering committee, everyone recognized it was a working document. It was not set in concrete and could be further modified if it did not serve the school as well as it should. In the meantime it provided a framework in which committees could work.

When the steering committee had completed the parachute the finished product with its explanation was presented to the whole staff during the staff inservice in September 1993 at the beginning of the school year. It was well received and formed the framework for discussing proposals that would subsequently be put in place.



During my visit to the school I attended meetings of two committees set up by the steering committee. One was on fund raising and the other on discipline. Both of these were operating in the same way as the steering committee with a facilitator and the same set of rules (Appendix C). The membership of the groups was varied. There were administrators, teachers, parents and, at the fundraising one, students. All these people contributed from their own perspective and experience. Not all the members, however, were completely familiar with the approach that the administrators and some of the teachers had taken to how the school was organized and operated. The discipline committee had received a mandate from the steering committee. Nesbitt was part of that committee and recalled some of the difficulties it initially had to face.

The committee was set up to be the philosophy and procedures committee. It was stated that this would not be a rules committee. Victor and I realized early on that we needed to educate the group as to why we had done some of the things we had. One of the first bullets that I take is that we have moved too quickly and not educated everybody as to why we are doing some of these things. So Victor and I spent the first couple of meetings explaining what was going on, bringing examples of work. We had videos we brought in, we brought in different pieces of work of Glasser, of Glen to let them know that this is what the philosophy is saying, this is what we are trying to do. So once we had established that there was a real “aha” and the light went on for a lot of people as to why we are not a one bullet discipline--that is you give them one warning and then shoot them--they began to realize why we don't operate like that. They began to realize the philosophy of trying to train kids, to give them skills to

deal with problems later on in life. Once that happened we started up and were flying.

With the development of the parachute a more coherent approach to teaching and discipline emerged. The parachute became the reference point for any proposal for change. If a proposal could not fit under the parachute then teachers knew it would not be approved. A more consistent way of thinking about the school evolved with the development of the parachute metaphor. People involved with the school could see how the various aspects of school life fitted together. Certain parents I had spoken with prior to the development of the parachute harshly criticized the school for what they saw as a fragmented and disjointed approach to students. The parachute could now be used to assist people to see how there was an integrated pattern to what was being done at the school.

#### The New School

The roll at the school continued to expand in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This expansion became a cause of concern when it became obvious to all involved in the school that the facilities on the old site were significantly inadequate. Even though two relocatables had been obtained, there was still too little room for what the teachers wanted to do. In addition, the yard area was more than adequate for some four hundred students, but strikingly inadequate for over eight hundred. Something had to be done.

Before my investigation of the school began the board decided to split the school and build a new middle school on an area of land to the west of the playing fields on the lower section of the school property. The land was bought from a neighbor and work was in progress during much of the investigation. It was away from the old school site and in no way impinged on the normal running of the school for most people.

The process of deciding to build, obtaining funding, deciding on the nature of the buildings and then proceeding with the building was a complicated one. The problems associated with the number of students on the site was talked about often by teachers as well as the board members. After considerable discussion among the faculty, Morgan took the proposal to build a new middle school to the board at the beginning of 1991. The board supported the move but then had to find some way of funding the new buildings. The approach to the State of California to fund the building ended in disappointment. The only alternative they saw open to them was through the bond issue with, hopefully, some matching funds from the state. To get a bond passed a three quarters majority of voters was required. Following investigations of other districts who had proposed bond issues, Morgan brought to the board a suggestion to combine with another district in employing a consultant to assist in the passage of the bond. The board agreed with this and the consultant required a considerable amount of work on the part of a group of volunteer parents who contacted all registered voters and asked them to support the building of the new school. On November 3 1991 the bond was passed. In the meantime, however, the board had gambled on the passage of the bond and had asked an architect to begin drawing up plans for the school.

The teachers had considerable input into the design of the plant and met with the architect on a number of occasions to let him know what they wanted to do in the buildings and, therefore, what he needed to take into account in the design. In September 1991 the board approved the schematic for a six classroom arrangement with work rooms between each of the two classrooms. That was just the start, however, because the plans had to be approved by the Office of the State Architect in order to obtain matching

funding. When this approval finally came through in August 1992 the architect arranged for the plans to be put out to bid in September with construction beginning in October 1992.

While the middle school was supposed to move into the new buildings at the beginning of the 1993-1994 school year, the rain during the winter and spring had delayed progress and the date was put back to November. However, it was not until the beginning of the spring semester in January 1994 that the move eventually took place.

#### Opposition To Change

It would be dishonest to imply that the introduction of such radical changes in the school went smoothly. The new approaches cut across the underlying assumptions of most teachers. It was one thing to talk about having more time with students, how people were motivated and the best way to deal with students as they learn to take responsibility for their actions. It was another to be expected to scramble around and discover ways to do it. There were some teachers who felt there was nothing wrong with the way they dealt with students and there was no disrespect implied in the practices they used. They also argued that teachers had to be realistic with children. It was a tough world out there and the students had to learn to take the knocks along with the good things.

Some of the changes came at the time when the structure of the schedule was changed. There was a great deal of dislocation among teachers. The sense of uncertainty and stepping out into the unknown that was a source of great excitement and stimulation to some was a source of great anguish to others. Some teachers felt the students had lost respect for them and that, in their understanding of what a teacher was, they were not able to carry out their job. Others agreed and also felt there was a need to

insist the students accept responsibility for their actions and they set very high standards for what they understood that to mean. Howell recalled the regular disagreements about what it meant to adopt such an approach.

Sometimes disagreements would take place in the lunch-room and not always in formal meetings. The biggest issue was over that kids were kids and some teachers expected kids to be as responsible as adults. I can remember comments I would make: "Remember we are talking about kids here. You are talking about responsibility that some adults don't have so how can we expect kids of ten and eleven to have those responsibilities?" So the biggest arguments I remember were over self-control. Giving kids self-control. Giving kids responsibility for their own actions. I went through some transformations too in the way I interpreted self-control and self-responsibility. . . .

The self-control wasn't coming along quite as fast as some wanted and as I had hoped. We had some real big blow-ups about that, and I kept resisting the idea of going back to a more authoritarian management system probably because I felt so strongly about the fact that I didn't want to go back to the system I had five years ago because I think there is something better out there. I think we need to stick this out a little bit. I think if kids get used to our ideas about control theory, and self-control they will adopt those controls within themselves. . . . It is never going to be perfect. Discipline is always going to be a messy thing. If you try to remove yourself from discipline, it doesn't work either. You can remove yourself. Brian has this expression about pilots in bombers. You can drop a bomb on someone to discipline them. You don't have to know the person at all

and it can be very effective in stopping the immediate behavior. But what is the outcome?

In the midst of all this the core group stood fast. Morgan made it very clear that there was no way the school was going to go back to what it was: "If you are not on the train when it leaves the station, then bad luck!"

The opposition to the changes was certainly an expected but unpleasant aspect of the moves to improve what was happening at the school. The way it was dealt with was a cause of concern especially to those teachers who were in opposition. Several felt they were not given a fair hearing. They felt that Morgan adopted a particular idea, that may not necessarily have originated with him, and then simply imposed it on them without listening to their concerns about it. The bitterness that ensued made for some very unpleasant situations and led to several teachers leaving the school.

Morgan freely admits, in looking back on that time now, that he made some major blunders that have come back to haunt him. Others, however, saw what happened as a good way to kick-start the change process. Nesbitt noted rather graphically the process in those early days of change:

Brian felt that the only way to get change at first was to take some major surgery. By starting with chain saw and ripping through the middle, it made a pretty big hole in things. It's like when you are remodeling a house. Once you have made your slice you are committed. What it ends up looking like at the end is a lot different from the start.

After the chainsaw took place, he then began to say: "Well, we have the hole in the wall. What are we going to do and how are we going to get it done?" So this is where the Kathys and Kevins and

Roberts and Victors came into play saying: "Well, could we do this, or could we do that." His response was: "Great, how can I support you. Why don't you think of going to this workshop, seminar etc."

Other teachers felt the opposition and the willingness to confront issues were a source of great growth for the teachers. Howell, for instance, felt that having to work through the anger and deal with the frustrations meant that a much better solution was found than if people had not disagreed.

The long-term cost to the staff of such a major and ongoing confrontation has been significant. A deep cynicism developed in some of those teachers who were still opposed to the changes as they felt that their input was not valued at all. The result was that some of these teachers seem to be almost going through the motions at the school and doing the minimum in order to avoid getting into any difficulties, but with little real enthusiasm. When confronted with such a scenario two of these teachers admitted that they felt they had little influence in the school now and there was no use trying to raise any objections. Hence their attitude was to let things be and try to do what they had to in order to get through the year.

#### Dealing with the Pressure

The intensity of involvement of an increasing number of teachers led to considerable stress among them. The pressure to carry on the normal work within classes most of the day and then be involved in developing new curriculum or new ways of organizing students was considerable. Many of the people I spoke to commented on the pressure they felt they were under. However, most of these teachers felt it was self-imposed pressure to do the best for the students. Nevertheless, it was very real.

The administrators were not insensitive to what was happening and were concerned about the impact prolonging such pressure would have on

the individual teachers as well as on what was made available to the students. They were concerned for the teachers but were aware of the restraints within which the school had to operate.

As a way of finding a solution, in the early part of 1993 Morgan surveyed the teachers in search of ideas for dealing with this problem. What emerged from that survey was that the teachers felt they simply did not have enough time to do all the things they needed to do. The response of the administration to this survey was to go to the site council and explain that more time was needed for what the teachers needed to do. The response of the council was to suggest that "minimum days" be used to systematically address issues facing the school. This suggestion was adopted and in practice it meant that every Monday students would be sent home early and the teachers would have the released time to work on areas that needed attention. The teachers grouped to use this release time according to curriculum involvements, grade levels and teams which crossed grade boundaries.

I was present for one of these "minimum days." The teachers formed into groups on that particular day according to curriculum areas. I spent time in a group that was considering teaching reading. The group was assembled in a circle and during the time I was present interacted freely. One teacher shared some of the strategies she had found particularly successful in encouraging students to read. She showed the group how she was enticing students to provide her with information about what they were reading and what they were doing in math. There was obvious excitement in the presentation and the success she felt she had achieved in helping students keep track of their reading. Other teachers contributed from their experience and suggested other strategies they had found worked with the students they



were encouraging to read. A number of teachers took notes during the discussion. The time together provided an opportunity for teachers who had found strategies that worked to influence others to attempt something that would improve the efforts they were making.

The modification of the school program was a way to provide time for teachers to deal with issues of concern. Even in doing this, however, there were problems. Taking time out of the school week on a regular basis was perceived by some teachers as making it difficult to cover the work they needed to do. The problem, however, arose because of a lack of awareness on the part of some teachers about what was involved in the whole process. These were teachers who strongly supported the changes in the school but had not been sufficiently informed about what was involved. Nesbitt readily admitted that there had not been adequate information provided. "I went to Brian right away and said: 'We are doing something that we think is serving teachers and the two teachers I just spoke to have no idea why we are doing it.' " The problem was dealt with during the course of a teachers' meeting but highlighted one of the problems that contributed to a certain amount of misunderstanding. Nesbitt commented on this incident in this way: "It really disturbed me. If there is one thing that could be a weakness around here it is communication."

#### Parents Felt Excluded

Another area that suffered from a lack of information was the area of parent involvement in the change process. The change process evolved at Mountainvista through teachers becoming concerned about what was and was not happening at the school. The impetus came from them and the strategies for bringing about change were developed by them. There was no significant effort to involve parents in developing new approaches for the

school. The failure to face and deal with this issue was counterproductive. Because parents were not included in the processes that brought about change, nor kept informed about them, a considerable misunderstanding and resistance, bordering on resentment, built up. Many of the parents I spoke with echoed the sentiments of one parent who said: "The parents don't know what is going on and they don't understand it. There is not much opportunity for them to buy in." Another parent expressed bewilderment in this way:

I still don't know about a lot of the changes. There was no communication about them as far as saying this is the traditional way that schools have been teaching and why. I guess that is what I would have liked to have seen, an outline of that and then an outline of what the teachers believe at Mountainvista works better.

One put her thinking in the context of the impression she felt the administrators were trying to make:

They say parent involvement but I think they do things and then they tell the parents rather than asking the parents how it would affect them and what they think about it. I think that's dangerous.

Others who had access to some information were, in general, not able to put it into a context. This applied to both people who supported the changes and those who were opposed. Those parents who were familiar with the reasons for the changes and were supportive of them were more than willing to talk to other parents. One such parent mentioned that she spent a considerable amount of time explaining to parents what was happening at the school:

I get a lot of questions like: "What are they doing there, the program seems to be in chaos?" So I go on and explain to them that the traditional approach to education is not working for a majority of kids

and there are new frameworks for more group work, more projects, etc. But if they didn't ask me that question and they were depending on the school I think they would not have any idea why those changes are being made or why they are important. I think most parents are having a hard time making sense of it.

The irony, however, was that the vast majority of parents were confronted with the fact that their children loved going to school. Even though the parents did not really know what was going on at the school they could not escape the reaction of their children. Nesbitt made the point in this way: "When you take a look at the kids out in the yard what do you see? You see them happy. What happens is that the children become our ambassadors." One of the parents, who was quite perplexed when asked about what he thought was changing at the school, stated rather succinctly: "I don't have any idea what they are doing here but my kids really like coming to this school. They really learn and enjoy learning."

The students I interviewed reinforced these perceptions of the parents about students' reaction to being at the school. One student stated quite clearly: "The teachers are really friendly in ways that surprised me when I first showed up. I really like coming to this school a lot." When I asked each of the students to imagine I had given them a magic wand that would enable them to change one thing in the school, most of them could not think of anything they would want to change. Those that did think of something did so after some time and the items were generally insignificant, such as having a soda machine available. The school had obviously become a safe, welcoming and fun place for students to learn. The tragedy was that parents were not, in general, aware of what was going on or why changes were being made. As a result, they were not able to reinforce the work that was

being done at school. In many cases the students were caught in the middle with teachers and parents often being at cross purposes over ways of dealing with them.

In the latter part of the 1992-1993 school year attempts were made to rectify this serious deficiency. Morgan spoke about the attempts made by individual teachers and the school, some of which were successful but others not so.

Some individual teachers, like the seventh grade teachers this year, did a lot of mini sessions, presentations of programs. I think that kind of approach is good. We tried to encourage the growth of the parent club but we have been unsuccessful. We were hoping it could be a vehicle of not only giving us input but dispersing information.

The attempt gained momentum in January 1993 when parents were included in the formation of the steering committee. As well, a newsletter was sent to all parents in October 1993 in an attempt to open up communication between the school and home. Even so, an increasing number of people at the school realized there was a great deal of work to do to overcome the negative perceptions so many parents had about what they thought was being done at the school. In order to provide accurate information on which to make decisions for the future, plans were made to obtain feedback from parents. Morgan spoke about those plans in this way:

What we are looking at doing is getting a survey process going to allow us to contact parents to find out what they do know. So I have been on a phone tag for a week with the local State University who have a communications department who will actually do phone surveys for you. We are working on written surveys for staff and kids so we can control the dispersal and return. First of all we don't even

have the data of what the parents know and don't know in order to be responding.

The steering committee, the site council and the board were all aware of the need to better inform the parents about the details of what their children were doing at school and how they were being treated.

### Conclusion

Mountainvista school moved from being a traditional school to one where change was almost the only constant. Teachers were encouraged to experiment to find the best way of assisting in the education of the students. They sought to use an understanding of how people are motivated and learn to develop a caring and safe place for students. In such an environment the hope was that the students could learn to take responsibility for themselves and find ways to develop the abilities they had.

In the course of the past eight years, the teachers at the school have tried a variety of proposals to develop the best environment for the students. They have made mistakes and the changes have not come without considerable pain. Nevertheless, most teachers were excited by what happened and what they did. The present arrangement was considered a temporary one as experimentation continues.

There was a major difference in the way the school operated during the investigation as compared to the time when Morgan became superintendent. Apart from teachers having a great deal more autonomy in developing programs for their students, the major change was in the way the school was structured. The superintendent saw himself as a member of a group that was responsible for the policies that operate in the school. He publicly proclaimed that he would work to arrive at consensus within the group and would not override decisions that were made there. All the people

involved with the school--the administration, teachers, classified staff, pupils, parents and board members--had access to this steering committee and had the opportunity to influence in the development of policies. The development of the parachute by the steering committee provided a framework in which people at the school could see where the vision was leading them.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### WHY DID THOSE THINGS HAPPEN?

In this chapter I provide an interpretation of why the changes occurred at Mountainvista School. There was no blueprint that was followed from the beginning. Rather, there was simply a deep commitment on the part of a number of people to change what was happening at the school and the changes evolved out of that commitment. When these people initially looked at the school and decided it was time for a change, they were not sure what they wanted the school to become. What they were convinced about, however, was that it had to be something different from what it was. The motivation behind wanting to make the move was complex. There was a conviction that the students had to be the focus of attention. The school belonged to them and what was done there had to be for their benefit.

#### Overview

When Morgan and a small group of teachers reviewed their experience at the school, they were disillusioned by what was happening there. When they looked at what the students were doing in class, they wondered about the relevance of it. When they looked at the way the students were being treated and were treating one another, they wondered

about the damage being done. They were concerned about the atmosphere that existed in the school and the influence it was having on the students.

They were engaging in the process Glasser referred to as self-evaluation. Such a process was necessary to provide some rationale for moving to something else. Morgan commented on this in the following way:

The history of the change process at Mountainvista started with a title of an old Peggy Lee song, *Is that all there is?* It became apparent to me and others that our expectations for education and our role in it were out of balance with the reality of our daily professional experience. Students were going through the same types of experience that generations had before them. The problems were that, just as before, many were not succeeding and because of social changes, fewer were actually successful.

In essence, schools must be more than efficient student movement and selections systems. Hence, we embarked on a journey that continues today. This journey has become as important as the individual stops on the way. Joel Barker, the futurist, states that the process or journey can't be duplicated and it must be taken to get to the future. We had no idea of the journey that we were about to take. It is like the old boy who won't go to the doctor because he is afraid he may be sick. If we had known what the doctor was going to prescribe, we may have retained our residence in the bliss of ignorance which, in education circles, is called tradition or back-to-basics.

There was, therefore, a motivation to enrich the experience the students have in the school. In Morgan's opinion, and that of a number of other



teachers, something had to be done to change what was happening in the school. Morgan reacted in this way:

I knew what we were doing was not good enough. Nobody had to convince me that we had to do things differently. I almost felt like anything we were doing could be and should be improved on. So there were no sacred cows for me. I felt, rightly or wrongly, that any direction was a good direction and any change or movement was a good change or a good movement simply because it got us off a status quo. Even if it was a futile effort, it at least told us that was a path that was not worth traveling. So we could always get back to status quo, that was an easy thing to get back to because everything was pushing us back there. So I had no fear in the sense that we were going to break some ground that was going to create some problems. I really didn't see public education as anything that deserved to survive in its present makeup. I really believed that we were antiquated. We were probably never as good as people thought we were. We simply produced a product that fitted that system the students were moving to. Namely, the people who were graduating from the K-12 system were functioning in our society because our society was requiring very little of them anyway. However, as societal changes took place and the demand from the citizenry increased we could not produce the kind of citizen who could meet the demands of the emerging society.

The question was how to bring about the changes these people felt were necessary. So many underlying assumptions carried by teachers imprisoned the way the school operated. The beliefs most of the teachers had about students, teaching, learning and other activities at the school

were firmly entrenched. However, Morgan's beliefs about what should happen in schools were rather different. He did not have the buy-in to the system and so felt at ease in questioning some of the assumptions and practices at the school.

There were a group of teachers who talked to one another a great deal about what could be done. Essentially, these teachers were committed and had the support of one another so they were prepared to launch out and try some things that might improve the students' life at the school.

These attempts were initially rather haphazard. It was as if they were prepared to trust the future for their answers. They launched out on their journey, but they had no preordained direction. They came to many forks in the path along which they moved. Individually, and as a group, they had to make decisions. It was like they were on a rambling path through the woods. All they could see was to the next bend. They had to negotiate their way to that and cope with whatever they found once they turned that corner. They were never under the illusion that once they rounded the next corner they would find "the answer" that would smooth everything out for them and make life in the school a bed of roses. Everyone realized they were on a rough path and they had little idea of what might be further down that path. Some were frightened by the prospect and wanted to turn back. Others were excited by the prospects even though they knew it could mean some real uncertainties and a great deal of effort. That effort was required if they were to improve the quality of the students' experience at the school.

It was obvious to me in speaking with teachers that an important factor in why change came about was because teachers were trusted to be

professionals who knew what they were doing. The administrators emphasized that a great deal.

Many teachers remembered back to the enormous amount of work they did as changes began to be made. They felt that because they were being trusted and respected as professionals they had to produce something really worthwhile.

The battle for change was fought on two fronts. Those individuals who were wanting change and supporting one another as options were discovered and tried, were often confronted by those who opposed those changes. As well, they were fighting their own need to be reasonable about the demands the change process should make on them. This became a problem when the demands they put on themselves seemed almost overwhelming.

In order to keep the pot of change boiling, Morgan distributed research he had discovered that threw light on issues that were before the teachers. With this approach and through the use of short memos he wrote for the teachers, he challenged the thinking of teachers and stimulate them to find better ways of developing programs for the students.

Thus Morgan encouraged teachers to find better ways to help educate students. What developed was an atmosphere where teachers were encouraged to try new approaches. One teacher spoke about the main thrust of the school being "taking risks. I think that continually trying to improve what you are doing by learning more, by trying new things." This was in contrast to what was happening in many other schools. One teacher told of experiences outside the school: "What I notice about us in comparison to other schools, when I go off to a conference and listen to other teachers

talk, is that the shift here is away from big brother telling us what to do." The responsibility was placed with the individual teachers.

The challenge was taken up by many teachers, but certainly not all. For those whose security lay in the patterns they had developed many years back and were reluctant to discard, what was happening was frightening. In the early stages when those wanting change were floundering around in search of better ways to work, Morgan pushed for some of the changes in a rather aggressive way. His approach was to confront people head on, as in the case of using so many dittos. In that case, while he silenced the opposition and dominated the issue, he did not gain their support. Some of the people opposed to the changes fought to prevent them coming in and focused their attack on Morgan who vocalized many of the challenges, but was not necessarily the source of them.

Occasionally there was criticism of what was being proposed and tried in the school on the grounds that it was not adequately preparing students for high school. Morgan was scathing in his response to such criticism:

We are getting evidence that our kids are coping with high school. The other thing I say, and it is only partially facetiously, is: "Don't ask me to make students sick because we know we are sending them to a sick system." In my opinion the high school system is absolutely set up on a premise that is not friendly to kids. The idea that students are going to see seven teachers in a day for forty minutes at a pop with their subjects being fragmented, flies in the face of everything that we know about integrated learning and research. It also contradicts what we know about social development, bonding and relationships with people. People have asked me about that before

and I like to reply with Spradly's comment that the schooling experience should be defined as a preparation for life rather than a preparation for more schooling. This is especially the case if the schooling you may be preparing them for shouldn't be there anyhow. And the only thing that is worse than high school is probably college. I think if you look at it, when you go from kindergarten through to a bachelor of arts degree in the U. S. the further you get from kindergarten the further away from a quality education you get, until you get to postgraduate level where graduate classes are actually looking more like kindergarten classrooms[!]

Gradually a structure emerged that allowed more people to become involved in the change process. The steering committee became a source of even further change because it provided a framework for people in the school to have a real influence in developing policy.

#### Influence for Change

How changes came about at Mountainvista was a very complex process. At the center of the whole issue, however, was the way influence was used to encourage, entice, and persuade people to engage in a different way of doing things at the school. Just as there was a gradual evolution in the way classes were taught at the school and the way students were treated, there was also a significant evolution in the way influence was used. If people were going to change then they had, in Glasser's terms, to place different pictures in their quality world. The challenge the administrators and those advocating change faced was finding ways to influence people to replace some of the pictures already in their quality world with ones that were more need-satisfying.

Brian Morgan was a central figure in the change process that occurred at Mountainvista. He did not necessarily initiate all the changes nor was he the source of all the ideas. But he helped provide a framework, an environment in which changes could be contemplated and pursued. Because of this central position Morgan occupied, I will spend some time considering the influences that impinged on him and the ways he exercised influence himself. I will follow that with a consideration of how other people in the school used influence to effect change. In the latter section of the chapter I will discuss the influence the steering committee has had and conclude with comments on why the failure to keep parents informed was counter productive.

#### Influences on Morgan

Brian Morgan is a person with a varied background and a deep commitment to do the best for the students entrusted to his care. There were many influences on him during the course of his life that have contributed to the development of his present attitude towards education and to the process of bringing about change.

#### Influences Before Becoming Superintendent.

During his time as a student at school, Morgan developed a distinct dislike for the system through which he progressed.

I did not function particularly well in the K-12 zone. I was not what you would consider a model student. I was not comfortable in the system and felt it was not a student-friendly environment. I came into teaching with no buy-in to the system. So the willingness to change was probably greater with me than say somebody who had been a K-12 superstar, who went to college, came into teaching with a real buy-in to the system and saw it as very successful for them. I

didn't come with that bias and so in a lot of ways that gave me a license to question and move into areas most educators find sacrosanct.

Shortly after he left school Morgan was drafted into the army as a nineteen-year-old and spent a year in Vietnam. That experience had a profound impact on him and, in reflecting on it later, led him to reconsidering his attitude towards war and towards how he would relate to people. The desire to leave the army was the stimulus for moving into teaching. "The only reason I went to college originally was to get out of the army a couple of months earlier." The lack of buy-in to the system was a factor in the approach he took to his courses and to subsequent training.

After taking up a position at Mountainvista as a teacher, Morgan gradually came to realize that what was being done at the school did not seem to be working. "The way I looked at it, the school was at war with kids and the kids were at war with the school." That realization stimulated him to apply for the superintendent's position when it suddenly became vacant. He felt he could work with others in the school to improve the experiences the students had there.

#### Influences on Him as Superintendent

In his desire to improve the quality of students' experiences, Morgan was influenced by a range of things. He sought enlightenment from the research that was available; he reflected on his own experience with students and adults and he listened to the experience of other people. All these were to have significant impacts on the way he continued to develop his own thinking about schools and about change. He never reached a point where he felt he had it together. He was conscious that there were many things to be done to improve the way people at the school responded to

students. In the course of the twelve months I was doing my research in the school several initiatives began. He had locked onto the idea of continuous improvement and was always looking for better ways to do things at the school. One initiative during my time investigating the school was the emergence of the steering committee which had a significant impact on the life of the school. He continued to be open to be influenced in order to find better ways to provide for the students.

The influence of research. Morgan was a keen reader and, as a result of the credentialing courses he did in the early 1980s, he was introduced to research in education that was being done in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Some of that research began to raise questions about alternative approaches to assist in the education of students. When he completed the programs he continued to pursue the reading. The influence of this reading was, however, to open up possibilities and raise serious question about what was taking place in the school. Out of his reading came a gradually developing conviction about some of the things that should not be happening in the school.

Through continually hunting for material that provided some insight and some hope, Morgan was able to gradually develop an approach about which he became more and more definite. He critically reviewed the material he discovered and measured it against his own and other people's experience. Through subscriptions to a variety of magazines and access to various consultants who suggested materials, Morgan had access to a considerable range of research. Being challenged to explore new ideas to which he was exposed in the literature was certainly an influence on the policies he espoused and the direction the school took in finding better ways to be involved in the students' education.



The influence of experience. Another influence on Morgan was reflecting on his own experience. He had come into teaching with a very military-oriented approach.

I had a kind of Patton philosophy of leadership when you kick arse and take names and basically get things done because you have the right to, because you have the rank to. So I had a rank-makes-right kind of philosophy. That's how I did a lot of my teaching. It was the power of wills and basically I always made sure my will won.

In using this approach over a number of years, he came to the conclusion that it was not really working. The school was a war zone with the kids at war with the school. He began to recall his own experience in the army where that approach was dominant.

I began to look at what really worked in the military and what didn't work. I came to the conclusion very quickly that the only place that the Patton model will probably work is in the military because they have the final authority--they can shoot you. In many cases it didn't work even in those conditions. The quality leadership, the effective leadership that took place in the military, especially in a combat situation, was done by the development of relationships. It was that troops had trust in you, or the person in the leadership position, that you had their best interests at heart and that you had the knowledge to do what was probably right.

Several incidents in which he was involved at the school where he used his army approach in dealing with students were significant influences on him rethinking that approach. He spoke about one incident with some feeling:

When I pushed a foster child one time, he was a rough kid from the inner city, I was pulling the rank stuff and was really doing a battle

of wills. He responded just completely off the wall. He explained to me that he was going to throw me through the window and do all sorts of things to me. He wasn't big enough to do that, but the message was that my approach had put him in that position. He felt that was his only option to respond in that way. That gave me a reason to reconsider the way I was dealing with younger people, let alone with adults. So that evolution started. Just through trial and error and reading and those types of things, I realized there was a short-term life span for an administrator that lives off of that process.

Morgan's willingness to be influenced by his experience was to be a significant factor in the way the changes in the school unfolded. In more recent times he thought deeply about the way he dealt with adults. The influence of that reflection was quite apparent in the change of approach he gradually evolved. "I began to realize that the structure I had developed, and had participated in, in terms of a person of authority in relation to other adults, needed to be changed as radically as the things I was asking the adults to change between themselves and the students. . . . Looking back at the way I worked, I'm appalled by it. I call it the dark ages."

The impact of such thinking was not just cosmetic. Morgan sought to find ways of doing his job that would be in the best interests of the students and the teachers at the school. He realized that the approach he had taken early in the change process had resulted in some changes being put in place but at a cost to teachers and his relationship with them. During my investigations I asked him if he would do things differently if he were to start over again as superintendent with the experience he then had. He was adamant:

Oh yes! Much differently. What would I do? (Pause). First of all, I would spend a lot less time wielding power and trying to get my way, if you will, and trying to establish or promote my own agenda. I would focus much more on developing procedures for common agenda items and common approaches to addressing those items. I guess I would spend less time being the lone ranger and a whole lot more time developing a cavalry charge of equals.

His experience of working through the changes led him to a different approach. He was influenced significantly by looking back on the attempts he made to bring about change and what happened when he sought to ram through changes he had in mind.

The difference is that the fundamental philosophy that guided me in the past was that I knew what was right. When I came to a conclusion I knew what direction we should go in and I would get limited input and then I would expect everyone to jump on the train and ride with me as I engineered the train. That was in essence the way I used to do things and the way I used to see things. I felt it was expeditious in terms of getting things done quickly. I felt that because I was the leader, the superintendent, that was my right and therefore it was the teachers' obligation to follow along and to kick up as little fuss as possible. That was the approach, thinking we could get places quicker than if I tried to bring a group of people together and brainstorm and go through an elaborate process of arriving at a consensus and then getting everybody to buy in and even involving everyone and all those kind of things. That was how I thought. The felonious part about it is, you can't get there quicker the first way. You think you can but you can't. Firstly, you are not going to get

anywhere. You might think you get to certain destinations but you are going to bring very few with you and the process is what develops people and if you want your people developed then they have to be involved in the process.

He looked back on his attempts to ram changes through and realized that while to some degree he got his way it was at considerable cost. In some cases he won the battle, but lost the war. He was so coercive at times that he lost any chance to influence the teachers who were opposed to the change, and he built up a residue of resentment that to a certain degree still plagues him. He recalled with some regret what he had done:

I didn't realize until much later that I was at war with my staff, or segments of my staff, and they were at war with me. I boasted at one time about the issue of the ditto as a skilled move, a devious, skilled administrative move to get what I needed. In reality we got there but I think we got there less because of that move than because of a lot of other things that took place. I think the one example of saying to the person: "Well, match my research" is a fairly good method, but it didn't convince that individual. The person just went around the barn to do things a little differently.

Morgan came to see the negative impact of approaching life in the school using the war metaphor.

When I look at a war metaphor it is kind of a win/loss approach. When you go to war there is generally a winner and there is usually a loser but in reality both lose. A victorious army is still a loser because they have probably sustained tremendous casualties. I think that is why I use the war metaphor when I am talking about a school's hostile relationship with students and administrators with

staff. Often the winner really isn't the winner. What we have really done is annihilate each other, kind of like the nuclear war--who cares who won? War is probably more of a metaphor for me because of having participated in it and having glorified it before that. I grew up in our culture where from the '40s through the '60s, until Vietnam, war was a glorified thing for our youth. I read some of the early papers that I had written in probably about the third grade when we were asked what we wanted to be, and I wanted to be a marine. I remember seeing movies with John Wayne and all these shooting up Joe things. That played a very important part in my formative years in terms of just looking at life and what I wanted to be. You experience it and see the reality of it and it is different.

Morgan's conclusions based on pondering his experience with the military approach led him to reject it as a way of dealing with people. He could see that even though he had fought people over some issues and established what he wanted, that in the long run he had actually lost. What he really wanted was for those teachers to buy into a change process. What he had was those people reluctantly following some rather insignificant procedure they had been coerced to accept. Those people had not bought into any change process. If they were prepared not to oppose what was happening, they did so with antipathy and with little spirit. The outcome was that the quality of life for the students had not really been improved. Morgan realized that if he was genuine in wanting the best for the students then he had to change his approach. Even though in recent times he adopted a very different method of operating, Morgan was conscious that there were people he hurt badly who would always be wary of him.

There are people on the staff who will never trust me. I could be doing what I am doing now for the next ten years and they would probably still never trust me.

While regretful of the fact that he lost significant influence with those people, Morgan was able to examine his experience of dealing with them and allow that reflection to influence him to find a better way.

At times such reflection led Morgan to adopt approaches for which he later found confirmation in his reading. Nesbitt recalled that "even before he got into Deming he began to realize the closer you could make or have the decision to the input process, the better off you are." Being in touch with his own experience was a significant influence on the way Morgan's ideas and understanding of what was best for the school emerged. Because of the importance Morgan had in the change process, such ponderings had a conspicuous influence on the way the school changed.

The influence of other people's experience. The other factor that was a significant influence on Morgan was the experience of other people. Several of the teachers were willing to try some different approaches and to talk to one another and to Morgan about them. As a result, Morgan was continually receiving feedback on what they were doing and how it was working. His interest and willingness to support teachers who were prepared to take risks built up an atmosphere among those teachers that encouraged them to go out and try new approaches and to keep him informed about how those approaches worked. As Nesbitt reflected: "His whole philosophy was the more heads you can get involved, the more ideas you can generate, the better the possible solutions."

By getting people involved, Morgan was able to tap into the wealth of ideas and talent that existed on the staff. Howell commented on the process he observed as the changes unfolded:

I see ideas coming from Brian and being dealt out to teachers and interest flowing back in. As he deals those out he is dealing them out in memos or notes or whatever, he will get feedback and then he will open up options. For example: "There is this available to you, would you be interested in learning about reality therapy or control theory?" Then he will get feedback and he will take those people and he will start them off and that will get the ball rolling.

Through being willing to listen to the feedback from teachers, Morgan was able to pace the process of change. By allowing himself to be influenced by the experience teachers had, he was able to move the process along in a way that enabled people to come on board with less anguish. By doing that he gave up his approach of ramming change through. One of the teachers saw quite a different scenario had developed:

I see things coming to change kind of slowly. Probably slower than Brian would like to see it change, and probably slower than I would like to see it changed, but like he says: "You can't push the river." It's done by choice.

The realization that other people may change at a rate that might be different than his influenced Morgan to adopt a very different approach. In a similar way he was influenced by the experience of the administrative and classified staff in their relationships with the students. Those people interacted with the students and spoke to Morgan about some of the problems they experienced. He realized they were as much a part of the

school as the teachers. As a result he opened up the whole process of change to include them. One teacher remarked:

I have seen the administrators even more open. They are endeavoring to include all the people who work at the school, and that is not just the teachers, it includes the classified staff, the maintenance people, the custodian, the secretaries and the parents. I have seen them actively get those people more involved in the school, shaping the school with them. I've seen a tremendous effort on their part to be all inclusive.

The three areas that influenced Morgan have been separated for analysis but the way they worked in his life allowed room for no such separation. There was a blending of the three sources as he constantly looked for ways to continually improve the experience of the students. Each source of influence impacted on the direction he took and the way his thinking developed. They also had a remarkable influence on the way Morgan went about using influence in the school to help move it to be more sensitive to the needs of the students.

#### Ways Morgan Influenced

Morgan had come to the conviction, after reflecting on his experience in the school prior to becoming superintendent, that what was being done was not satisfactory and he wanted to make sure something better was put in place. "What I was pursuing was how you structure a school to meet the needs of the students."

The issue that faced him, and the others who were wanting change, was how to get other people to help develop and buy into a new vision for the school. There was considerable dissatisfaction with what had been happening before Morgan became superintendent. One teacher who was



intimately involved in the change process recalled that "when Brian became principal things were already beginning to shake and move a little bit anyway." The initial moves were tentative on the part of some of the teachers because they took some time to build up courage to face teachers who were opposed to making any fundamental change. While respecting this tentativeness, Morgan was committed to moving ahead with change. One teacher's comment highlighted the determination and courage Morgan displayed in being "willing to change the status quo regardless of the risk of criticism from those people who embraced traditional standards." This risk was real and considerable opposition developed to the moves Morgan made to encourage change.

One teacher explained why there was a split in the teachers this way: "If you take people who like change, are comfortable with change, and have probably always been changing, and put them together with a person who is fostering change, you are going to get some action." Those who didn't like change were uncomfortable with it and they vigorously opposed any moves to change the status quo. Several teachers commented that those people who strongly opposed the changes being proposed for the school also opposed change in any form. These teachers felt the problem was not so much with the changes that were being proposed for the school but rather a problem those people had within themselves in accepting anything different.

### Asking Questions

While others who wanted change were quietly going about trying some different approaches, Morgan began asking questions about what was being done at that time with students. Such questioning was a significant influence on leading people to examine what they were doing. While not

directly criticizing people, Morgan began to think aloud about some of his concerns. This was not done to entice people to adopt some plan he had already worked out. He wasn't really sure himself. Rather, it was to get them to think about what could be done--to think of possible solutions, possible directions. He used this approach to influence people to move away from the status quo where they may have been comfortable but not particularly effective. One teacher recalled how that musing by Morgan influenced him to begin examining seriously what he was doing:

Brian came in and did a teacher observation on me for yearly evaluation. It was a good evaluation and everything turned out fine. But at the end he said: "You know something just isn't right." I panicked in my mind, thinking: "What do you mean, something just isn't right?" He said: "I don't know, we are just not doing something right yet. Let's just start looking at some different ways of doing things."

### Writing Memos

By opening up the questions and providing opportunities for teachers to explore new approaches, Morgan was able to influence some to see beyond the status quo. Initially this did not result in any clear direction in which to go but rather highlighted some things he became convinced were not beneficial to the students. So he started writing. Nesbitt recalled:

Brian started putting out little notes to the staff saying he had come across something which says this and he would like to discuss it with a primary group. He would start having individual discussions. He would talk to a third grade teacher or a fourth grade teacher and say: "What are you experiencing in your class with regard to such and such? What are your feelings about it?" He would start cultivating

not only the subject matter but he also wanted to see where there was support for the change, what people were doing, what their personal feelings were on it too. He started to invite comments back.

These memos, generally one to two pages, were distributed to all the teachers and were discussed among the staff. He also copied off articles and handed them to individuals and asked them to read the article and get back to him with what they thought. One of the people who was at the school during that time recalled:

Brian would do research and then suggest readings to teachers. This is why we have a library here because he would begin asking people to begin reading this book and they would have meetings on those books and discuss them.

#### Spreading Research Findings

On other occasions he would spend time talking to a teacher about some concern the teacher had and then subsequently provide an article that might take a different approach and lead the teacher to think in a different direction. He was able to influence teachers with such an approach because, as one teacher remarked:

He backs up what he says with research and when you try what he suggests it works. That doesn't mean everything is fine. We have frustrations and we have lots of them right now. I think anybody who undergoes any change has frustrations.

Through such methods, Morgan was able to disseminate a considerable amount of research to teachers and provide some direction for them. He would elicit feedback from them and out of the subsequent discussions some initiative would emerge. He saw his role more as a stimulator. He used a variety of ways to distribute information and then encouraged

people to talk about their reflections on the material. Once he stimulated the teachers' interest he would get out of the way and allow the teachers to move ahead on what they had decided. Underlying all this was a firmly stated belief that the teachers were the professionals who had the training and experience to do the best thing for the students. He trusted them.

The distribution of material and the invitations to attend seminars were not haphazard. Morgan was very careful in his choice of people. Nesbitt marveled at the ability Morgan had to pick people and to find ways to entice them to influence others.

One thing that Brian is particularly good at is being able to size up his staff and know those people's strengths and weaknesses. He would go to key people. They might be at a certain grade level, someone you and I might not think a key person, but someone who has some influence. He would ask them if they have thought about doing this or thought about doing that. Maybe sending them to workshop and then letting that person be an ambassador.

Gradually an atmosphere developed where more people felt free to join in the discussion. Morgan was able to influence the direction of these discussions through his memos, through the strategic use of research he made available, through his willingness to listen to teachers and discuss with them the implications of what they were reading, thinking about or doing. He adopted the approach that "the more heads you can get involved the more ideas you can generate, the better the possible solutions." The challenge was to get people thinking about what they were doing. Nesbitt recalled that period in this way:

I think the copies of articles and discussion groups really began to grease the skids for the needed change. If I talk to some people and

suggest a different way of grading or something else, they are likely to come up with a defensive response because they have been doing it a particular way for years. It is different when they are given something by someone who says: "I've been reading this article and it says this or that, could you let me know what you think of it." They can step back and ask themselves why they are doing things in a particular way. They start to read. They would then often say: "Well I haven't really thought about that." That was what really started getting people to take a look around and say: "Well maybe we do need to look at this and find a better way."

The teachers were aware of the impact Morgan was having in the changes that were beginning to make inroads into the status quo. Morgan honed his approach to stimulating people to think differently when he found it worked reasonably well. One teacher recalled:

I think he became very good at doing that, giving us articles, books to read and so forth. Then getting groups together by saying: "Hey, who is interested, who wants to get involved in this Glasser group."

Howell was also aware of how Morgan spent time with teachers listening to them and subtly enticing them to think in different ways about what they were doing:

He usually has a reason for mentioning an idea to a person or having a conversation with another person because he knew the person would talk to someone else. The person in that discussion would question and come up with some different attitudes and so Brian's ideas would permeate those key individuals.

While Morgan took every opportunity to help teachers look for better ways of being involved with students, he never claimed that he was the source of wisdom. He outlined his approach as follows:

My philosophy was always to learn enough so I could help point the direction and then once someone took the lead get out of the way and let the person develop the expertise. I couldn't and didn't want to become the expert, that wasn't my role. So I kind of followed that. What I did was learn as much as I needed to about some direction in order to give us a sense that it was a direction worth pursuing. Then I would try to sell that direction to some people and if they took it on and took off with it, I got out of their way and made it possible for them to become the expert. Many of them have. We have got a staff which, in my opinion, is full of experts and I have always felt that we are better off developing an internal expert as opposed to bringing an outside expert in.

The development of such expertise was crucial in the ongoing change process that occurred in the school. Because his focus was on the students, Morgan was not at all interested in being the focus of attention. He was wanting to be a source of ideas and be a support to those who were prepared to try them. His main aim was to get teachers to accept the challenge to find better ways of educating students.

It's kind of like the farmer's philosophy. Anything that looks like it will grow you throw fertilizer on it. If it grows more you throw more fertilizer on it. So that was how I approached it. I knew I had fertile ground and I pushed as hard as I could. Where I knew I couldn't get anywhere, I didn't spend a lot of energy.

The source of the change was irrelevant to him, as long as the teachers were looking for new and better ways of teaching.

Morgan was always looking for ways to drop some pertinent question into the minds of teachers to cause them to question whether what they were doing was in the best interests of the students. In that way he was able to exert influence to bring about change in the school.

### Hiring Teachers

A strategy that had significant influence on the way change matured related to the hiring of teachers. The changes that were adopted were fragile in the sense that they needed to be supported and explored by people who were at least open to that exploration. One of the ways Morgan sought to ensure there would be a stronger possibility of such openness was to generally hire teachers who had not developed fixed attitudes towards schools. His main thrust in this area was to hire teachers new to the profession. As one teacher who had been at the school for many years reflected:

I think hiring the new teachers straight out of college meant they came without any preconceived idea of how we were going to do things here. This was their first school. They kind of had to follow what the teachers around them did and work out what the philosophy of the school was. I don't think we have hired more than one or two that have come from other schools.

By establishing a mentor program for student teachers and encouraging new teachers to find out as much as they could about what was happening at the school, Morgan sought to entice them into new ways of thinking about the school. One student teacher commented very positively about such an experience:

I would follow the class, stay with the same group of kids and so got to know Ella. However, Sharon was my official cooperating teacher and mentor and still is. I also went around to other teachers and observed while I was here in what free time I had. I got to know other teachers by doing that and was really excited about it. Just by being here and having lunch and asking lots of questions and being really curious.

Another teacher who was recruited directly from college recalled that when she first arrived in the school she was not unduly surprised by what was expected of her.

I think being a new teacher--I was fresh out of college when I was hired here--I never really felt he was going in a very different direction than what I felt we were being prepared for in student teaching.

The choice of people to come into the school and how they would become aware of what was happening there was a significant way Morgan used to promote and support the ongoing development of the change process in the school.

#### The Importance of Trust

Morgan was able to exert enormous influence in the change process because those advocating change learned to trust him. It was not that he manipulated people into a position where they would do what he wanted. Instead, he was open and honest with them and they knew where they stood with him. Many of the people I spoke to had learned through experience that he could be trusted to take the issues and deal with them. The value of experience in building up that trust was crucial. Nesbitt was strongly of the opinion that it was only with positive experience with someone that trust



developed: "When you get into a relationship with someone and you can see where they are coming from and why they are doing what they are doing, you either start trusting or not trusting them based on your experience with them." Those people who trusted Morgan felt he was open to their ideas and one teacher commented: "I never felt that if I said or did something that I was going to be hurt because of that." Above all, the teachers were aware that he was genuine in what he was wanting to do for the students at the school. He was not in the business of building a kingdom for himself. His focus was on the students. This genuineness was a notable factor in leading people at the school to trust Morgan. Nesbitt spoke about what needed to be present for trust to develop: "People have to see and feel the sincerity. They have to see and feel that you are going to listen to them. Those sorts of things are really important in building up trust." He again emphasized the influence trust can have on bringing about change when he commented: "I do feel the more people trust you and your motives the more willing they'll be to try new things on faith."

### Trust and Teachers

Morgan saw the need for people to trust him if they were going to take risks to change. He commented:

I have tried to build trust by saying "Here are the parameters in which you can work and I will do what I can to support you." I have just dealt honestly and forthrightly with people.

Because he developed a justified reputation with the people wanting change for being honest and forthright, Morgan established credibility with most of the people with whom he dealt. That included people other than teachers. Because he was himself so open to learning he was able to establish relationships with other people where both learned. By being

willing to listen and learn from others, he was able to establish his credibility with those teachers. When he offered comments to these people or offered them some reading, it was in the context of a learning environment. He was not saying he knew the answers, but rather suggesting teachers might like to take a look at some research and figure out what the implications could be for them. In that way he was able to influence them to at least consider some other options.

In essence, what he was trying to do was multiply the options the teachers saw as available to them. His thinking was: if teachers saw there were other ways of engaging students in learning, of dealing with them and of structuring the school, then maybe they would come up with some better ways to assist in the education of the students. His whole attitude was that these were professional people who did have the training, the ability and the creativity to develop something better than what was then in place. He saw his task as providing the framework in which they could use their personal resources.

### Responsibility for Failure

A factor that enabled Morgan to have significant influence on encouraging teachers to introduce change was his attitude towards failure. He knew if he came down hard on people who failed and punished them for wasting money or time, then they would not be willing to experiment. Instead of taking that position, Morgan encouraged people to try new approaches. He made it very clear to them that it was his responsibility to make arrangements at the school to enable them to succeed. Nesbitt recollected that:

Brian said he would not look on trials that didn't go as well as expected as failures. There would not be such things as a failure rate.

There was no risk with teachers' evaluations or anything else. If they went out and tried something, if they were giving it a shot and if it failed and failed miserably then Brian viewed that as his problem, not the teachers' problem.

Several teachers attested to the significance of this attitude about failure in influencing people to try something new. Such an attitude reinforced, probably more than anything else, the view among teachers that Morgan trusted the teachers. He undertook to provide the framework that would enable them to succeed. Some could not believe that they were given so much responsibility and the freedom to use their creativity. One teacher, who had come into teaching after being in another profession, was astonished:

It was hard for me to believe that in fact you could go into an educational system and people would allow you the opportunity to be experimental within reason. We are not talking about anything that is so heinous or outrageous that a person of reason would never even attempt it. But, within reason, to be able to utilize your creativity to come up with a better mouse trap to use in the classroom. To hear people say that there was that opportunity out there and available was one thing. But to walk in and actually see that it was more than just words on paper or words that somebody told you, was unbelievable. It was very real. The very first time that I encountered a failure when I tried something and it didn't work, the administrators said to me: "Hey, try something else." To me that was kind of shocking because I wasn't accustomed to that. I had come from an industry where if you made a mistake there were people all over your case. So within certain reasons, as long as you did no damage to a child,

you had the freedom to take those chances and be creative. I'm a very creative person so I'm real positive about my experience here. Another teacher recalled his introduction to the school and what he found to be an amazing attitude on the part of the administrators:

They said: "Go, do the job! Show us what you can do." I really appreciated that. I was challenged. Rather than giving me a syllabus to follow verbatim, they gave me a blank sheet and told me to fill it with something. That was my dream. I could handle it. I loved it!

Such an attitude on the part of the administrators had several consequences. One was that teachers experienced the freedom to experiment with a great variety of approaches. On the other hand, however, they realized there was an enormous responsibility associated with that freedom. The result was that many teachers worked harder at Mountainvista than they had ever done before. One teacher who was hired after spending time at the school as a student-teacher recalled her first impressions when she came to the school:

I felt that this staff had a majority of teachers who worked way above and beyond what I had seen teachers in other schools do. They were given a lot of autonomy not only in how they chose to deliver the subject matter but with money and how they acquired material and things they needed for their room.

The sense of ownership that arose from being empowered was significant. A sense of mission came into teachers' lives because their commitment to the school and to the change process was evident in the influence they had in the school. One teacher commented about such empowerment in this way:

I am an important part of the wheel at this school and the direction that we are going. That means a lot to me and I will keep working hard. I think that part of the process of change that is really important is having teachers feel empowered.

Another teacher, conscious of the extra work she found she had to do, stated that there was pressure to be the best possible teacher she could possibly be. This resulted not from someone saying she had to follow a certain program according to a certain schedule. Rather, because she had put together the program she realized that if the students were to benefit from being with her then she had to create something worthwhile. "At this school we are empowered--totally, almost 100%. When I say that word I mean that you are expected to contribute to developing programs and making decisions."

Another teacher elaborated further on the desire among teachers to do the best possible thing for the students.

I think that teachers who work here really earn their money. It is never stated, but you are expected to be better than average as far as a teacher goes here. I don't disagree with that. I like that as a challenge because I don't want to be just somebody else, someone ordinary. I want to be the best that I can be. You are encouraged and expected to be that way here and it is not necessarily the administrators. It is the other teachers, it is the collegiality we have. We are expected among ourselves to be good and to be the best we possibly can.

Morgan was able to influence the development of this attitude of responsibility through trusting people to be professional, through supporting them in being that and in being interested and enthusiastic about

what they were doing. He was certainly not moving in a dictatorial manner to enforce some preordained approach with these teachers who were seeking change. Rather, he was working with them to discover the best way of operating in the school. One teacher who was particularly active in the change process spoke about him in this way:

It is not as though he is manipulating us. We are too strong for that. So I believe it is a combination of him saying: "Hey look at this stuff" and "Here it is" and sending us to workshops. I think if he had a resistant staff he couldn't do it by himself, it just doesn't work that way. I think it was his enthusiasm about it. When he talks about it I think he knows his research, and that's his job to know it. I trust his information. I think he had the idea of having the best possible school here, and it is sort of like his life mission in relation to his profession. I think that enthusiasm has rubbed off on people. I think he invited us to make a difference.

Those people who were prepared to go to conferences or to visit interesting developments in other schools were not left isolated with their new knowledge. Morgan made opportunities available for these people to report back to the other teachers and to share what they had learned. In that way he insured there was influence towards change from those conferences or visits:

He started training people and sending them off and they came back as ambassadors and he began saying: "Would you be willing to pick up this part here. Would you mind training these people over here." He thus let the peer influence take place.

Because teachers knew that there would be no negative repercussions if they tried some of the ideas that came from seminars or from other

schools, they were prepared to take the risk. Morgan's attitude toward failure of projects helped provide a framework in which teachers were prepared to take risks. In that way he was able to influence the process of change in the school.

### Creating an Atmosphere for Change

The influence Morgan exerted to bring about change through trusting people to be professional was profound. The upshot of trusting people was that they were prepared to own what they were doing and, through stimulation from others, to develop some extraordinary approaches to being involved with students. Because they felt trusted they felt free to evaluate their work honestly and work together to solve problems among themselves. For such cooperation to occur the crucial ingredient was trust (Glasser, 1994). Through enticing people to try new things and then share what they had found, Morgan helped create an atmosphere where teachers felt they had a deep investment in what happened. This sharing took place not only after something had been tried. On many occasions there was considerable discussion about the value of some new venture before it was ever attempted. Morgan commented on this sharing of ideas in this way:

The process is so democratic in most cases that an idea evolves with input from other people so that at some stage the idea is so shared that it is a common idea rather than belonging to one individual, even though it may have begun with an individual. That is where Covey says that the more minds, the better the solution. I would say that's how it works. I'm sure there is a certain expertise that is involved. People look for certain expertise from certain people. I think it is those elements more than it is position that has influence.

Morgan was able to have such influence because he was instrumental in helping to develop an atmosphere in the school where ideas could be discussed and practical strategies developed from those ideas. The importance of such an atmosphere was highlighted for him by his reading of Glasser. By coming back to the five basic needs that Glasser maintains are the source of people's motivation, Morgan was able to focus the groups in which he was involved.

I think it goes back to Glasser's basic needs even though I would not have said that a few years ago. You treat each other with respect so people feel they belong. You try to have fun as a group. You try to interact as a group and give people some sense of control. You provide opportunities so people have the freedom to choose. So I try to interact with people on a friendly, common, basic level.

Morgan was very conscious that the school had in no way "arrived" and was a model organization. He was very conscious of the need for continuous improvement. So he was always seeking to influence people to find better ways of teaching and dealing with students. As one teacher commented:

When some things comes across his desk and it looks good he shoots it out to us to see if anybody is interested. Or he will ask us to go to a conference. When I go to other schools, I hear people say: "My administrator would never allow us to do that." He has given us a lot of power to stretch and grow while keeping his philosophy and general purpose very evident.

Morgan gradually found ways to influence people open to change that protected their freedom. By not impinging on that freedom, he was able to entice teachers to look critically at what they were doing. He saw



one of his roles to become aware of what researchers were saying about education and then providing suitable materials to the teachers. He trusted them to take that material and deal with it professionally. That trust was the basis for the discussion of textbooks. Morgan kept asking questions of the teachers and enticed them to reflect on what they were doing, rather than simply going along with what they had always done.

The question was always put forth in our minds by Brian: "Are textbooks getting us what we want? Who is in charge of the curriculum? Are textbooks in charge of the curriculum or are the teachers in charge of the curriculum?" Then he would keep reminding teachers that they are the trained personnel here. They are the ones that Brian and the board have the most faith in to developing the curriculum, more faith in the teacher than in the textbook. Also, if the textbook is directing our curriculum then why do we need to have highly trained professional to deliver it.

Many of the teachers were grateful that Morgan made the effort to find research that was relevant to their work because of the pressure they felt under to cope with their work load. As one teacher expressed it:

He really reads a lot. We teachers are just so bogged down trying to get through to three o'clock that we have very little time. I might not have tried as many things as I have if he hadn't kept the reading coming. I have never, never, felt coerced (you may hear it differently from other people). He is the person who keeps the door open, keeps current stuff coming across my desk, makes it very well known that he wants change.

The willingness Morgan showed to trust the teachers seeking changes enabled him to exert considerable influence over the change process. He

developed his credibility with the teachers and their experience with him led them to be more open to what he had to offer them.

### Trust and the Board of Education

The board was a significant factor in the development of the changes that occurred. Ultimately it was the board that approved the significant changes and authorized the spending of money in the school. The board approved such things as the seminars teachers went to or the speakers who came into the school. The challenge Morgan had with the board was to ensure the members understood what was being proposed and why. He had to find ways to influence them to approve the proposals and to support the changes. It was through a long process of educating the board members that he was able to do that. There were a number of methods Morgan used to further this education. One of them was to provide background reading for members. A person at the school who was familiar with the way the board operated commented:

He gives them a load of information. A lot of backup work. He doesn't make any major moves without bringing them into it. Never would he overstep his bounds as far as the board is concerned, and he feeds them a lot of information about any proposal.

Another way was to discuss with them at meetings or individually the details of what was being proposed and the implications for the school. A glance through the minutes of the board meetings provides ample evidence that Morgan spent time at many meetings keeping the board up-to-date with developments in the school. He provided information about the challenges the teachers faced and the responses they made.

During the board meeting I attended, I watched Morgan inform the board about what was being proposed in the following month. He did this

in such a way that the board members not only found out what was going to happen but also knew why the seminar was going to be held and gained some insight into the thinking behind the move. I noted that Morgan's approach was to treat the board members as people who had a grasp of what the school was trying to do. There was no hint of condescension in the way he made the presentation to the board and the members responded very positively to what Morgan had to say to them. Howell commented to me the following day on the skill Morgan had in continuing to educate the board and keeping them abreast of developments in the school.

Brian is a tremendous educator of the school board. You saw that when you attended that meeting. He does that at every school board meeting. It's masterful the way he works. I don't think he directs the school board, but he teaches the school board. He is very good at it. He has it all worked out and he has educated them in the ways of his thinking. That was very important in bringing any change about.

Through the ongoing process of educating the board, Morgan was able to exercise considerable influence on the way the changes came about. The approach he took to keep it informed and up-to-date was part of his whole forthright manner of dealing with the board. Because the board members knew where they stood with Morgan, they developed a deep trust in his judgment. Several board members mentioned the trust they had in Morgan and expressed pride in the way the board and the administrators of the school had work together. One person commented on one of the main reasons the members of the board trust Morgan:

He's got more integrity than anybody I have ever met and the board members know that. He would never ever be dishonest in any manner. Anything he presents to the board he presents in such a fair

way, whether he is for or against it and they have enormous respect for him.

When asked whether the board merely rubber-stamp the proposals put forward by Morgan, one board member was quite definite that such a procedure was not how the board worked. However, he elaborated in this way: "I would say about 90% we rubber stamp. We do it because we trust the man. We have a track record. He doesn't lie to us and his integrity is not questioned by the board." With the board holding such an attitude, Morgan was able to exert considerable influence at the board meetings. His track-record led another board member to comment that "in terms of his integrity, I trust him. I think everyone know he walks his talk."

The board members were not naive enough to believe that everything Morgan put forward was the last word on the subject. Nor did they uncritically accept everything he said. In their experience with him the members were aware that he was not infallible. As one member commented: "there is no doubt about it, he occasionally makes mistakes but he is usually pretty willing to admit them: 'Well I thought this and it didn't work out.'" Such a willingness to be honest with the board reinforced the influence he had and increased the trust the members had in him.

#### Influencing the Unwilling

As would be expected in dealing with any large group of people, the response to Morgan's attempts to influence varied a great deal. There were some who were wanting to move faster and were out on the edge seeking for ever-better ways to be involved with students' education. There were also teachers at the other extreme who did not want to change any of the comfortable patterns they had established over the years. As well, there

were people who fell into the range of possibilities between those two extremes.

Those teachers who were prepared to try new approaches were virtually given a free hand. Morgan influenced them by the trust he expressed in them and he constantly kept in touch with them but they were really self-regulating. The teachers who were hesitant to become involved but interested were encouraged in a variety of ways. In addition to making research materials available to these teachers, one tactic Morgan used to encourage them to at least consider other alternatives was virtually to bribe them. Nesbitt recalled:

The wait and see people were encouraged to make changes. For example, what Brian did at one time was use money. A teacher could have an extra fifty dollars to spend on his/her classroom if the teacher made a visitation at any other school. Then it got down to "If you go visit so and so in room number 6." So the encouragement was to get those teachers out to see other classrooms or to a conference on this or that. Specifically it was "Get out of your classrooms and go see what is happening in the schools." So that helped with some of those people.

Besides these measures, Morgan also encouraged those teachers who were supportive of the changes to work along side those teachers who were somewhat dubious about them.

There were other teachers, however, who would not make any moves to change the way they taught and dealt with students. Morgan became much more directive and aggressive with these teachers, and on some issues made coercive decisions that impacted those people directly. As with his decision about paper for the dittos, so with the use of money for

textbooks. When a large number of the teachers had become convinced that the way textbooks had been used was not satisfactory, Morgan became very directive with the remaining teachers who refused to even consider the research on which the other teachers had based their decision. Nesbitt recalled:

Basically he said: "Well I'm not willing to spend any more money on textbooks." So even though we had the money, just saying "Next year you will be limited" forced those people unwilling to change to find something different to do.

Morgan used his positional authority to make other changes as well. In a memo (Position Paper #3 - Relating to Issues of Pink Slips, Yard and Disciplinary Program), he acknowledged: "I sabotaged the pink slip program by refusing to finance it this year. I have for several years questioned the validity of this program." Such top-down tactics built up a pocket of resistance to Morgan and the change process that became identified with him. In the early years there developed a battle of wills between Morgan and these individuals. Some teachers were not prepared to make any concessions and left the school with some bitterness. Others remained and fought a rearguard campaign. Morgan was initially very forthright and aggressive with these people in pursuing his goal to bring about change. As one person put it: "he has a kind of Hitler mentality, that it is his way or no way." In the process of pursuing this approach, he hurt a number of people. Accompanying such hurt was an unwillingness to really listen to anything Morgan had to say. He lost influence over these teachers because he had developed an adversarial relationship with them. These teachers would not look at the suggestions Morgan made or the issues under discussion. The fact these teachers associated the change process with

Morgan meant they were continually looking for ways to circumvent and counter any change. The focus of attention became who made the suggestion rather than the worth of the suggestion itself. This negative attitude on the part of teachers led to some of them reading motives into other decisions that the administrators made. As one teacher put it: "Well, the reason I got changed grade level was because I'm not in good favor with the administration."

As a result of such negative attitudes, Morgan realized that even if some of these teachers modified their thinking somewhat and were possibly ready to entertain the possibility of trying something different, because an idea came from Morgan they would reject it. He was not interested in receiving the kudos for ideas. What he wanted was for people to do things differently. So whether somebody was enticed to try something different by himself or by someone else was not an issue for Morgan. He, therefore, found other ways to influence the resisters towards change.

I could literally have given them a \$100 bill and it would make them angry and they would not accept that \$100 bill. So my job was to give somebody else the \$100 bill and let them give it to them. The change process could come through someone else and not through me.

Once the changes began to move along and have an impact on all teachers at the school, some of these reluctant teachers began to complain about the lack of stability. They protested about the difficulty they experienced in establishing any pattern to their teaching because of the constant change in what they were able to do. One frustrated teacher commented: "Well we are always changing. We never do the same thing twice. Why can't we do the same thing over again!" Another echoed the

same feeling: "There is always a lot of changes going on. We think we have got one thing under our belts and he comes along with another thing."

Morgan's initial unwillingness to take into account the fears and frustrations of those frightened teachers meant he lost his ability to really influence them. Because they didn't feel they could trust him, these teachers became very wary of any proposals for change because they identified change with him. Even when he realized his mistakes and adopted a very different way of operating, the fact they didn't trust him meant he was not able to significantly influence them.

#### The Influence of Others

While Morgan had a substantial influence on the way change came about at the school, he was the first to admit that he was not the only source of influence. During the previous administration there were teachers as concerned as Morgan about what was happening in the school. This mutual concern led them to discuss issues with one another. Morgan was part of that discussion group and one of the teachers recalled the frustration that led Morgan to decide to apply for the position of superintendent:

As I recall, Mr. Morgan said: "You know guys, we are not really doing a whole lot. We seem to be running out of superintendents and so forth. The only way we are really going to effectively make some changes is if we do something about it." So he went into administration.

That sense of commitment to the improvement of the school began with a relatively small group. They began by talking about and then trying to teach differently. Some teachers were willing to take the plunge. One teacher began "doing some very unusual things in the classroom called cooperative learning and having kids do things on their own instead of



being teacher led all the time. She was facilitating a lot of the things." Another teacher started looking into doing mathematics in a first grade classroom without using dittos and textbooks. A teacher recalled those tentative first steps:

At that time a group of us became involved in a project called Science Inservice in Rural California (SIRC). During that time I noticed a big change in myself and in some of the other teachers who were involved in that project. The goal of the project was to teach us how to teach without the use of books. So we started investigating cooperative lessons and using science lessons based on real life experiences and actually doing the science rather than reading about it out of the textbook. That project really changed the team members' lives. We went back into the classrooms and started literally throwing our textbooks out and throwing our dittos and handouts out. Then once that process started, we started looking at other teachers who were trying something different and seeing exactly what they were doing. We went from just two or three teachers trying new approaches to five or six teachers trying them. One of the things we were encouraged to do in project SIRC was to try and infect other teachers around us. Brian and Alan Nesbitt both encouraged us to share with one another when we had a really good lesson going. They also encouraged us to go into each other's classrooms while something good was going on. Leave the class with an instructional aide for a while, run down and say: "You've got to see this really neat lesson I'm doing, come and watch." So we would run down and grab a teacher, and they would see last year's class that they would have had or had had previously, having a lot of fun in

what they were doing. A lot of the problems they were having with those kids we were not having. Then we would share those ideas at lunch time.

It was the willingness to venture into new fields and to risk having others watch them that enabled teachers to influence one another. Part of the courage that was required to take that risk came from a trust that grew among those teachers. They grew to understand that they were all in the change process together and could all learn from one another. It was not that any one teacher had it together and could condescendingly tell others what to do. On the contrary, they were all aware they were treading on shaky ground and needed as much help as they could from one another.

A little later down the line we got some training in peer coaching so we started actually going to teachers and saying: "Hey, if you are interested in doing something like this, why don't we get together and I can come and watch you and you can come and watch me." So we were encouraged by Alan Nesbitt and Brian to watch each other, then help coach each other in effecting these kind of changes in the classroom. I really think that was where the ball got started. Just the encouragement from Alan Nesbitt and Brian and the program that I got involved in with this SIRC.

Through the trust they built up the teachers in this small group were able to support one another as changes unfolded. When they threw out tests they were confronted with how to adequately assess what was happening. They did not want to drift into the wilderness and simply do their own thing. They felt a need to refer to one another and to take cognizance of the impact what they were doing would have on the students and on other teachers. Their mutual concern for the students and their willingness to

ferret out research that would help them in their search for a better process proved to be a safeguard against individualistic relativism. What emerged was a deep involvement in authentic assessment. Through working with this portfolio assessment process, several teachers developed such an expertise with the approach that they have become recognized experts within the state of California.

The development of such expertise was an important ingredient in the change process. The administrators in the school were influential in providing a framework in which the expertise could develop. However, once the move was initiated the administrators stepped back and allowed the teachers who were involved in the project to influence one another. These teachers were strongly encouraged to share what they had gained and to seek to spread the influence of the innovation they had worked on. One teacher who was involved in a number of innovations explained the process in this way:

I think this is the way the administrators in the school do things. They get a few people, they train them, get them doing those kinds of things they had this vision of and leave them to it. It's then like a cancer branching out. I think that is the only way it will happen. I don't think you can force something like peer support on anybody because it can be very threatening for some people.

What became obvious to the teachers as they moved through those early changes was that a whole new approach to being a professional was emerging. The trust put in them by the administrators was significant. They could not place the responsibility for what they did with anyone but themselves. The approach of these teachers illustrated their commitment to control theory and the acceptance of motivation coming from within

people. This new attitude was well expressed in a comment one teacher made about how he viewed his position as a professional teacher in the school:

We are a race of people who want instant answers and we want them written out on a prescribed card saying do 1, 2, 3 and 4 and you will come to this conclusion. What has happened in this school is that basically we are given these vast array of tools and it is up to us as a professional to meld them into a working document for us to use. I think that is where people had the biggest difficulty in transitioning from the traditional approach to what we have here now. They are not accustomed to that. Some people, like myself and a few other, have taken that ball and run and scored numerous touchdowns with it. Others are still fumbling with it and are not sure whether they go left or right.

Those teachers who were prepared to take the risks and develop new initiatives were able to influence one another in the direction of change because they trusted each other and cooperated to develop approaches which were in the best interests of the students.

#### Teachers Working Together

I witnesses several examples of teachers working together to ensure a better experience with students. There were different ways in which the teachers did this. One way was in cooperating to work with a group of students. Another way was to cooperate in developing some project or proposal. On numerous occasions when I visited classrooms, I found either another teacher also visiting the class teacher or during the time I was there another teacher came in. In addition to these casual encounters there were a

number of occasions when teachers had organized to work together with groups of students.

One such occasion was when two teachers combined to teach students a dance from the Philippines involving stepping between two long sticks as they were clapped together. The students were arranged around the perimeter of a grassed area to the north of the main administration building. There were two third grade classes excitedly milling around the two long poles that were being used for the dance. The teachers had prepared these third grade students for the activity because there was a sense of order in the way the students approached their turn to perform. The students were organized in two lines that snaked through the areas where the sticks were. The two teachers were operating the sticks. They developed a rhythm with the students and then worked to have the students develop steps in time with the rhythm. When the students had a notion of the rhythm, the line began to move through the sticks as they were banged together. As the line moved through the sticks there was considerable encouragement by the teachers. Some students were very confident and adopted the rhythm immediately. They pranced through the sticks with great gusto and panache. Others were not as confident and obviously frightened that their ankles would be crushed if they didn't get their steps right. On two occasions students stood before the rhythmically moving sticks unable to bring themselves to put their feet between the sticks as they came apart. The teachers encouraged each of the students to think through the rhythm in their head and just try to step between the sticks. To enable the students to move across, the teachers kept the same rhythm but slowed the pace considerably. With encouragement from the teachers and the other students, both the students managed to make the move across.

Several times students mistook the rhythm and ended up with either one or two feet between the sticks when they were due to come back together. The teachers watched this closely and, while indicating that the sticks should have been coming back, did not allow them to hit the students. After having each student move through the sticks at least twice, the teachers gathered them together to talk about what they had learned and how it gave them a better understanding of the project they had been doing on a different culture.

Throughout the time I was watching two things became apparent to me. The first was that the two teachers had prepared the students extremely well for the activity and talked to each other about it as they were proceeding. Trying to have the students appreciate the dance sequence of a different culture was one thing. Another was providing the opportunity for students to gain confidence in performing such a dance. Throughout the whole time the students were moving through the two sticks, the two teachers were particularly sensitive to the way the students approached their turn. The teachers knew their students well and responded individually and with names to the efforts the students made. They complemented each other in the way they responded to students and had obviously worked together before to provide better experiences for the students. The second factor of interest was the almost complete absence of ridicule on the part of students for those who found it difficult to catch the rhythm. There was encouragement for those students but certainly no put-downs.

There were many occasions when small groups of teachers came together to develop some proposal or project. It was at these times that creativity was most evident as teachers fed off each others' ideas and

developed specific proposals. One teacher, who was involved in many such groups, recalled that the energy level in these groups was remarkable.

I think the best experiences I have had is when a group is put together that is pretty compatible, is small enough to work with one another, and works as a cooperative group. I feel really equal with Denis and Alan and Mike and Victor and Karen and a couple of other key people. When we came together to develop [a particular project] there was no hidden agenda. There were no angry people on the sidelines--it just happened. I think the camaraderie in the group was an important factor in its success. We all respect each other's intelligence and caring and we have very similar pictures of reality. It was just give and take--a bunch of people sitting together like you plan a camping trip. I think the administrators have built a foundation from day one by just subtly passing information to us about a philosophy. I think Brian started by getting materials to us and then we started talking about it. Brian kind of started the ball rolling by making sure we knew that this was going to be a school that really needed change. We have taken the ball and run with it in many situations.

We can often cooperatively write together. Denis and I started writing together on [a project] years ago using a computer on a TV so everybody in the group could see what was happening. Both of us complemented each other.

Such experiences of working together solidified the determination of those teachers to continue to bring about change and, therefore, had a notable influence on the whole change process.

### Teachers Reflecting Together

In the processes of change that occurred at the school the teachers were prepared to reflect on their experience: both past experiences and what was happening to them as they experimented. One teacher became involved in the development of better ways of dealing with students because she was able to reflect back on her own experience of going through school:

I had friends who struggled and when I look back now our grammar school was real pro the kids that could do and anti the kids that couldn't. I think now I even look back and see some of my friends who still suffer from not having a very good self-esteem. I didn't know then that that was going on and what the structure of things were. Looking at that has led me to think we need to make sure we get the kids who aren't as able to perform to levels where they can have choices.

The accumulated hours of discussion over lunch or after school, the few minutes snatched as they passed one another between classes, the moments of conferring when they visited one another's classroom all contributed to create an atmosphere where teachers were able to influence one another. In being able to discuss what they were doing, teachers not only gained new insights but they also gained confidence to continue to pursue an initiative.

The area of discipline was frequently discussed. The change to an approach where students were held responsible was difficult. The change was possible, however, because of the support teachers received and the broader understanding they gained from much discussion and sharing of experiences. One teacher who radically modified her approach found the chance to speak with other teachers and the administrators of significant



help. While she agreed with the theory completely, initially she found it difficult to know what that theory looked like in practice. Through listening and talking about what she did, some clarity appeared:

It is so important to let kids know they make choices and that they are in control of themselves. They need to realize that when they act out, it's their choice and there are consequences which we need to be clear about and follow through on. So my view has changed because when I student-taught here they hadn't started that yet. They were trying to let kids know that, but they weren't really sure where they were going. It was a great help to me to talk to people about what to do and gradually coming to some conclusions.

This willingness to wrestle with problems and allow solutions to gradually evolve was an important strategy the teachers used. While a certain expertise emerged, there was an openness to continue to learn which helped create a very supportive atmosphere among some teachers, an atmosphere that was conducive to change. Many teachers commented on the willingness of people who had acquired some expertise to share that in a non-judgmental way. Teachers who were struggling to make sense of a new approach and not having any success with it did not feel they had to pretend they had mastered it. They were made aware of the fact that even teachers who had been working with the approach for some time occasionally had difficulty with it. One teacher found the willingness of teachers with expertise to continue to be learners a great help. She expressed her views in this manner:

The administrators and experienced teachers are there as a support, as reference without any negative implications if I ask for help or say I don't really know what to do. I don't know how anybody can

feel they are completely on top of the discipline thing. I am very wary of people who have it all together and that is where those people I was just speaking about are so helpful. They know they don't have it all together and we work with one another to find some way to deal with what I bring up. There are lots of growing I need to do and I feel I'm in the best place for that to happen. I have a lot of support.

The willingness of teachers to trust each other and talk together about their experiences became a striking way in which they influenced one another to continue in the change process.

### New Teachers

One of the strategies that Morgan employed to assist in bringing about change was hiring of teachers direct from college. This meant they could be molded in the Mountainvista approach to student-centered learning. One of the difficulties, however, was how to initiate these people into the way the school operated. These new teachers needed a great deal of support to survive in the ordinary pace of school life simply because they were new into the system. They had not developed a range of survival techniques before coming to the school and some of them found it very difficult during their initial years. The challenge was to do something that would be helpful for those teachers as they settled into the school and also ensure the direction of change was sustained.

A number of teachers took up that challenge and developed some strategies that these new teachers found helpful. What the people who had been part of the change process realized, however, was that much of their own thinking and change in beliefs had resulted from wrestling with issues and problems and trying various options. It was in discussions with other

teachers and through reflection on their own experiences that new beliefs emerged. What could they do to help these new teachers understand and be open to the approaches that were developing at Mountainvista? It was not possible to impart an approach that had emerged from experience. All that could be done was open some possibilities, some directions the new teachers might find of help and support them in their own quest. Part of the solution the experienced teachers at the school decided on was to organize an initial new teachers' seminar in the summer of 1992 before the school year began and then provide peer support during the course of the year. One of the new teachers who had been excited by her initial year of teaching at the school remembered the impact of the seminar and the subsequent follow-up in this way:

Last summer we had a summer institute for new teachers put on by Kathy and Kevin Jackson. They also invited other teachers who had not been here long. So there were people like myself who had been here for a year or so and then all the teachers new for this year. We went to the summer institute. It was a week long--like Mountainvista in a week! A lot of support. It gave us a great binder. It was full of ideas and ways to do things with kids and to me that provided a lot of support. Throughout the year they have checked back individually to see how things have gone. I found that a great way to get a grip on what is happening here.

Such moves contributed to the on-going commitment to change. The influence the teachers committed to change had on new teachers was significant. They were there to provide support. They were there to assist in sorting out difficulties. They were there to discuss further possibilities. Because these experienced people were available to the new teachers they

became trusted as allies on the road. As that trust grew so did their influence to assist the new teachers to develop beliefs about the school, about education and about students that were in line with the direction the school was headed.

### Structural Change

As the group of teachers began to gain confidence and widen the scope of the experiments they were trying, it became obvious that some structural changes would be required. Some of the changes they were pushing for began to impact on other teachers. The administrators were not only supportive of the changes but actively encouraging them. There were many occasions when teachers who were not in favor of the changes held forth very strongly against them. Initially they held sway but one teacher remembered that a change did come:

At one stage we had a very strong group of teachers who would get up and voice negative opinions and everybody would listen and not say anything. People at first would not stand up for what they believed in. I was one of those people. But after a while when we really firmly believed in what was going on, a lot of us would stand up and would say: "No that is not right, we don't believe in that." So we would not let them lead the group. It was not that Brian was putting down that group, it was more a cooperative effort by teachers who believed in what we were doing. The administrators and those wanting change just made a very strong argument for what we believed in.

The experience of being under attack was an influence that forced the group of teachers together to really develop some very clear reasons for what they were doing. The discussion that surrounded such development

had a significant influence on the bond that developed in the group as well as on the coherence of what they expressed.

The teachers who were wanting change began to have a significant influence on what was happening across the school. Their commitment to the school and their willingness to put forth a good deal of effort resulted in their having considerable influence on the structure of the school week and the program that would be followed. One observer recalled:

What they did was maintained an outward exterior that people respected, other teachers respected them and their thoughts. Ask who's on all the committees? Who are on the committees that are making a difference? Well their names were always there. Who was going to all the workshops? Who was exposing themselves to all the things? Who was coming in here and reading? They were!

Everyone in the school knew the opportunities were there but it was those who took the opportunities that had the information and access to the power to bring about change. It was these people who had the influence because they were the ones who made the proposals. Morgan was already committed to continuous improvement so he was supporting any moves in that direction. Those people opposed to any change received short shift with their negative responses. The members of the change-oriented group had a conspicuous impact on the middle school summer camps in 1989 and 1990. They were the ones who had done their homework and knew the research. They were the ones who could see what the old structure was doing to the students and why that was detrimental to them. Because they were aware of other options, these teachers were able to have influence on the development of different structures in the school.

The vast majority of the people I spoke to at the school responded very positively and quickly when I asked them if they felt they had any influence in the school. There was a sense of ownership there. Many teachers felt there were avenues they could use to make sure their views were heard. Other groups such as teachers' aides and classified staff also felt they could have an influence. One teacher expressed her ability to influence as an option she had. She could choose to influence or not, it was her choice but the avenue was certainly there. With the development of the steering committee many people felt their ability to influence was more streamlined and access to policy making was much greater.

### Caring for Students

The teachers worked together to care for the students. Because this care of students was a major focus for the teachers, many of the changes were geared towards that goal. It was because these teachers took steps to relate differently to students that the atmosphere at the school changed. The climate of the school became more relaxed and sensitive to people. As a result it became possible to do very different activities that required cooperation which were impossible before. Many teachers wanted a change from what Morgan described as students being at war with the school and the school being at war with the students. For that change to occur the teachers had to make a decision to relate to the students in a different way. Both students and teachers had to make that change, but initially the move had to come from the teachers.

I saw many instances where teachers and other adults were engaged in building up relationships with students. These people wanted the student to know the adults were interested in and concerned about them. Some of these incidents were in the school grounds while others were in classrooms.

During lunch time I was particularly conscious of how some adults worked at developing such relationships. Howell often took time to be out with the students. On several occasions I saw him involved with students in playing ball games. In this way he did things with students rather than to or for them. Such activities assisted greatly in building up trust and deepening his relationships with those students. He stated on numerous occasions that the relationships he developed with the students were a high priority for him. He wanted the students to know that as principal he cared about them. When they looked at the him he wanted them to "see someone that they can approach. Someone they can talk to and someone who is not just walking through the cafeteria to see who's bad. Someone who is not just walking into the classroom to see who he is going to get this time."

Howell understood that one of his main tasks as principal was to continue the education of adults in how to relate to students. He took every opportunity to do this.

When I have to go to classroom or when I am at recess, I want to talk to teachers, to bus drivers and cafeteria workers. What I am trying to do is to help them learn how to follow the ideas of Glenn, follow the ideas of Glasser. That is, treat kids with respect at all times. To help them see there are consequences or results to all behavior and that we should expect those results. However, I am not going to be the punisher, and I don't want them to expect that every time they bring a kid to me that I'm going to lynch him or her.

This approach was quite different from that taken by most principals. It meant that some teachers were very disappointed with the way Howell dealt with students who stepped out of line. Howell jokingly recalled: "I had one teacher tell me I should take some acting lessons because I'm not mean

enough, the kids are not afraid of me. I told that person that that is good. That is exactly the attitude that I want. I'm not going to correct anybody's behavior with threats."

This emphasis on respect for students was well summed up by one of the teachers when she mentioned that Alan Nesbitt once said, when speaking about the way to relate to students: "Use the manners you would use with your best friend at all times." I saw evidence of this respect in the classrooms, in the cafeteria and around the school.

The following incident that was related to me illustrated the care a teacher took with a student. At the same time, it showed how the teacher used the opportunity to teach the student that he had control of the choices he made:

Yesterday right when it was time to go home, I saw a little boy trying to get something that belonged to him away from someone else. He didn't get it so he pushed the boy and pushed him again and tried to kick him. And I said: "Mark, you need to sit down and stay right there. I need to talk to you." When everybody left I sat down with him and said to him: "Do you want to tell me what happened?" So he told me that he was showing two other boys a paper shape he had made, and they grabbed it and wouldn't give it back and it made him angry. So he went over and he kicked and he pushed and tried to get it back. So I said: "Well, Mark, right there in the beginning you made a choice to show it to your friend and then he took it. Right there you had another choice. You could have waited until he had finished looking at it or you could do what you did. What would have happened if you had waited." He was crying and said: "I probably shouldn't have got so angry." I said to him: "If you could



do it over again, what choice would you make?" So we talked it over. He had had some problems where he had been sitting with these boys. So I asked him what else he could do and he replied that maybe he shouldn't sit by them. So I said: "I think that might be a good choice for a while. When you come to school tomorrow, I want you tell me where you would like to sit." So this morning he came to school and we worked out where he was going to sit. I think if you had seen that you would have seen him thinking about what he did, realizing that he had control over his decisions and that he has power to do something about it today.

There were students at the school who came from very difficult homes where they were harshly treated. A number of cases of serious abuse had been discovered, and teachers were conscious that there could be others they did not know about. The people at the school wanted to ensure that at least the school was a safe place for all children. One parent, who was aware of the difficulties a number of students had at home, commented very positively on the caring attitude people at the school had taken to these students:

If school can be a safe and happy place for them, then that might be the only place they are safe and happy all day. I think that has been a school value and I think that is really nice that Mountainvista School considers that so important for kids.

That caring took some very practical forms. Teachers went out of their way to do things for and with students to create a climate of care in the school. One board member recalled the unassuming and down-to-earth caring that one teacher displayed:

I remember one of the teachers my son had at one time. One of the little girls in the school, who wasn't in his class that year, came from a rather tough family. The teacher in her own time during break would take this girl and clean her up because they didn't have hot running water at home. The teacher had a little girl at home herself, so she would bring clothes in and that kind of thing.

There were numerous other examples I observed as I wandered around the school of adults showing a real concern for students. Such an approach contributed in a remarkable way to the changes that were made. Because the students grew to trust the teachers, they became open to try some of the different approaches the teachers were suggesting. When the students were confronted with the decisions they were making, they gradually grew to take more responsibility for themselves. The process soon became a circle. Because the teachers were treating students differently, the students became more open to do different things. Because the teachers were doing different things with the students, they came to understand them better and sought to deepen their relationships with those students. As a result two-way communication was established between many teachers and their classes. This took a great variety of forms. One example was related by one teacher in this way:

I have done things with my kids where I have had them critique my lessons. I try to have them do that consistently. "What do you like about it? What don't you like about it? What needs are being satisfied here? How can it be made better? etc." Kids are kids and they are honest, straightforward and blunt about what they say. I don't think adults are prepared for that bluntness because as adults we try to water things down to protect people's feelings.

Several students believed the students could have an impact on what was done in class. One of these students put it this way: "I think teachers listen a lot to the information students give them." The trust that built up between teachers and students led one student to say quite categorically that "there is no teacher here who would ever turn you down if you wanted help." One teacher instanced this when he told me: "This morning I had a boy who got in a fight and the first place he came was to me. He didn't run away." The students felt they were cared for, that someone was really interested in them and would be of help.

Such an attitude was quite different from what students formerly thought about teachers and school. One of the teachers who was very innovative and in the forefront of bringing about change commented on the way students looked on the school. He felt this was a far cry from the war zone position that Morgan had been so concerned about:

Kids who have been here for a number of years would die before they would not come to school. It is fascinating that they will come when they are desperately ill. They want to be here. They don't want to miss out on the fun.

In addition to the work teachers did to improve the way students were treated during class, there were other efforts made to improve the way students were treated outside the classroom. One person who wanted to make changes in that area commented:

Last year I watched what was happening in the yard. It was exactly the opposite of our philosophy of the behavior the adults should use with students. So I said that this year I wanted to be a yard-person. I don't feel I can make a change unless I am out there in the trenches. So I went out there and there was a lot of opposition. I think many

people believe that if we can control, dominate and lecture these students they will be better people. I was hoping by my behavior out there to model something different, something that really worked that would change their minds. So that's the area I'm working on right now and I think I have opened a can of worms.

The upshot of the efforts the people made to relate to students in a more positive manner had a conspicuous influence on the ongoing process of change. The parents were also aware of the care the teacher had for the students. One commented:

The teachers are just so tuned individually to all the kids. If there is a problem, they spot it and do something about it rather than just shoving them through the system. They don't just talk about things, something happens.

The atmosphere in the school gradually moved away from a war zone and became a safe place where people were respected. The implications of such an attitude towards the students were far reaching. One teacher saw the development of positive relationships with students as so important that he felt it was pointless for him to try to teach any content to students if that relationship was not positive. He graphically stated his attitude in this way:

The fact is that before I can teach any academic subject to any student, I have to be able to win their heart and soul first. Until that takes place I can't teach them anything. In many schools the same people who are struggling to win the heart and soul of the child are trying so desperately to continue to shove academia down their throats, so it becomes a vicious cycle they are caught into.

Such an attitude is very akin to that espoused by William Ayers (1993) who saw teaching as a mystery, a powerful calling, in fact, a matter

of love where the center of attention is the student who is engaged by the interaction with the teacher. The scope of the teacher's role in relation to the students was considerably broadened by some teachers at Mountainvista. While there were still a small number who saw their role exclusively in terms of providers of information, most saw it as much more than that. Many teachers were aware of the difficulties some children faced at home and the lack of any real support or development of social skills. These teachers understood that to help students gain some of those social skills was an important role they could perform. One teacher understood his role as having a broad impact on students:

The most important aspect of my job is to model for the children a lifestyle. I'm not necessarily talking about the length of their hair or what kind of clothes they wear. Rather it is to model a manner in which to interact with other people. To show students that just because they are children who are younger than me that they are nothing less than I am, that they are as equal as a human being as I am. They are due as much respect as I expect them to afford me and anybody else. I think that is the most important thing. Once you can do that then other learning avenues are going to be wide open to you. Until a child realizes that there is a certain way human interaction can occur and can be successful at it, they are not going to be really open to learn. It is not something that you can write on paper and get them to learn off. You have to model it for them.

Such attitudes moved beyond the linear, single focus curriculum objectives. This was a more holistic approach where teachers and students' experiences interacted and both were enriched by the contact. Parts of people's lives were not segmented out and treated as if they existed in

isolation from their experience of living. Such an approach to teaching recognized that all activity is context bound and the context cannot be ignored. With such attitudes towards students, the teachers were able to contribute significantly to the development of an atmosphere which encouraged students to trust their teachers and assured them that they were cared for and the main focus of the school. In such an atmosphere the teachers were able to advance the process of change. Hence, one of the important influences on the change process was the improvement in the relationship between the adults and students at the school.

#### Steering Committee

As time passed and the introduction of changes became more the norm than the exception, several things became obvious to people at the school. First, many people recognized a need to somehow coordinate the changes and ensure that people were working in union with one another and not at cross purposes. Second, with an increasing number of people trying to find a better way to be involved in the education of the students, many felt a need for some common statement of purpose, some framework in which the emerging approach could be housed, something that would provide some pattern and reduce the anxiety many experienced.

Through the reading Morgan, Nesbitt and Howell did of Glasser in *The Quality School*, through their reflection on their own experience and through listening to others, they came to consider their jobs differently. They believed they could most effectively serve the students in the school through finding ever better ways to support adults. Supporting those adults who were involved with students and ensuring that students were safe and cared for became a high priority. Part of this required all the people

involved to have some avenue to have input into making decisions about what they most needed and also for them to learn what others were doing.

The framework provided by the Total Quality Management package seemed to several at the school to provide a good starting point. Morgan recalled the path that led to the training that occurred in January 1993:

It came about through the introduction to Glasser. Glasser led to Deming. Deming led to the idea of continuous improvement process. We probably shouldn't call it that because TQM has other connotations. It's the idea of developing the process that allows for the analysis of a system through the use of data and then to come up with alternatives and options for improvements. Glasser was the initiation, then I did a lot of reading on Deming. Once we had some idea of what we wanted, we began checking places where they had a process in place. Then we sought out a trainer who trained us in the continuous improvement process.

It was the development of this process of continuous improvement that enabled the changes to be institutionalized and gave the administrators and teachers a great deal more focus. There was not a complete buy-in to the TQM package but several of the strategies were deemed to be helpful for the process to which the school was committed. With such a structure in place it became possible for people in the school to find a more consistent framework within which to work.

Moreover, Morgan was aware that the role he had played in driving some changes through was not appropriate. He felt there was need for a much broader ownership of the change process so that it was not dependent on him for its existence. If for some reason he was no longer at the school he did not want the change process to die. It was, therefore, in the best

interest of the change process to move the focus of attention for change further away from himself.

The parachute (Appendix B) provided an intellectual framework for people to think about what was happening at the school. Moreover, it established some parameters within which any new initiatives would need to fit. This was considered necessary because of the increasing diversity that seemed to be occurring. Many people felt there needed to be a much clearer focus. Morgan recalled that the framework emerged in response to this need:

What the steering committee did was learn the process while they were actually doing work. What we were doing was defining what our greatest needs were. What do we really need to keep things going?

The process became established because people in the school were committed to meeting the needs of the students as far as they could. They had to find out what the most important needs were and what was the best way of responding to them. Moreover, there was a felt need for more accountability to one another for what was happening. If new initiatives were going to occur in response to some felt need, then it was likely there would be implications for people other than the individual with the new idea. Some way needed to be found to coordinate such moves. The framework that was needed was outlined by Morgan:

Once you define a need you then get people to work on that. The idea is that once you have a solution you would test it. Once you have tested it and it seems it would work on a broader basis, then you implement it.



The steering committee became the main focus of change in the school from the early part of 1993. The structure of this group provided it with a way of operating that allowed a great variety of people to have input and so influence the direction the school was heading. The establishment of this group was a significant move in distributing influence to all members of the school community. In addition, the attitude the people involved developed towards one another and the operation of the group was crucial in understanding how the group came to be so effective. Nesbitt was enthusiastic about the operation of the group.

I think it was the structure itself in that there were so many people from the school represented, such a wide and diverse representation at these meetings, all being asked to be a part of it. So that first of all, but secondly the reason why it is working. When you say there is no rank in the room, that is one thing, but when you say that and people in authority actually enable people, allow people to speak their minds freely without retribution, then in essence you are reinforcing the fact that "Yes there is no rank in the room, and yes you do have the freedom and you are as an important part of it as the people in authority."

The quality that again became obvious was trust. It was because people involved in the group trusted one another that they were prepared to venture out with their opinions and feelings. They influenced one another because they trusted one another. It was because they believed that administrators would not revert to their authority position and use coercive measures to get their way that people were prepared to say what they thought. It was because they knew other people in the group would not put them down or ridicule them that people were prepared to say what they

thought. It was because their behavior enabled them to meet their need for control over their lives, to experience choices in what they were doing as well as meet their need to belong and enjoy one another's company that being trusted provided an atmosphere where people could very efficiently meet their needs. As a result they were highly motivated to continue to pursue the change process, despite the difficulty and sometimes the pain that was involved. One of the people in that group put it very clearly:

The fact that they are firstly able to express themselves without fear of embarrassment, without fear of being criticized, without fear of being categorized, without fear of any retribution taking place. So it was those four things first of all. It is a free, safe, comfortable environment for them to come and speak their minds. Secondly, because of the diversity of the group there are so many opinions out there and so many people who see things in a different light, they are able to bring in their perspective. I think that is the biggest success thing there. You have so many people that are affected by the same issue, and they can come in with their slant on the whole thing.

With such input in such an atmosphere and working under such clear guidelines, the steering committee was able to focus the energy of the school in a more organized and coherent way. As a result more and more people were able to have influence on what was happening. People were able to have influence in the group in different ways. Expertise was certainly one resource some people brought to the group. However, several people in the group felt that as respect built for individuals they were able to have more influence. That respect was somewhat elusive when I tried to get people to be more definite about what people did to win the respect of

others. Nesbitt articulated the feelings of a number of respondents when he said:

If you demonstrate in a given situation that you are capable of maintaining an open mind, then I think from that point forward you have the respect of others. I don't care who it is. It could be a maintenance person, it could be a cafeteria worker, it could be someone on the yard, it could be a teacher, it could be an administrator. So I think open-mindedness is a big factor. If someone hasn't demonstrated that they have an open mind or a willingness to see another's viewpoint and from time to time be willing to change their own viewpoint, it is pretty difficult for people to have a great deal of respect for what they say.

Nesbitt believed that allied to this open-mindedness, however, was the almost opposite quality of conviction: "You have to show at times that you are very convicted in what you believe. It is almost the opposite of being open minded. You have to have that balance between the two."

This framework of influence was further expanded through the use of action teams. These groups were set up to deal with specific issues. During my visits to the school I attended meetings of two such action teams. One was concerned with discipline and the other with fundraising. There was a third action team to look at the development of the library which did not meet during the time of my visit. These action teams were designed to provide the opportunity for anyone who wanted to have an influence to be involved. The discipline action team, for example, was asked to provide guidelines so various sections of the school could establish rules or more refined guidelines. Nesbitt was a member of that group and explained the action team in these terms:

This particular committee was supposed to establish the discipline guidelines, the procedures for the school. What we were given before we started the task was an umbrella of what our philosophy is. We had to come up with guidelines that would fall under the canopy. We were to produce a document that would say: "This is what we believe about discipline, now from here you set up rules that reflect that belief." Our role is not advisory. It is to develop those guidelines. This is one of our first committees like this so this will be a real litmus test as far as whether this is going to be successful. We had so many different views coming in from so many different people joining the group that the meetings took on a completely different flavor.

The opportunity was open to all to be involved in those action teams. In this way the opportunity to influence was greatly broadened. While the steering committee was still in its infancy at the conclusion of the investigation, it was exerting a considerable influence on the change process. The existence of this committee and its action teams had a remarkable impact on the change process at the school because it became the funnel through which the changes became focused. It was the body that made policy for the school and, therefore, determined the direction innovations would go. When policy was formulated, it was then forwarded to the board for final approval and ratification.

#### Changing Beliefs

The changes that occurred at Mountainvista resulted from people thinking differently about what they were doing there. Initially it was a small group who were deeply committed to change and the provision of something better for students at the school. Through a variety of influences

and coincidences, the thinking of this group permeated the operation of the school. The support of the administrators in allowing the structure to be modified to cater for these changes was significant. What was of equal importance, however, was the change in thinking of other people at the school. No matter what Morgan thought, no matter what a few other teachers thought, if it was not possible to entice an increasing number of teachers to think differently about how to be involved with students and how to treat them, then change would not have occurred. One teacher put it bluntly:

It is very hard to browbeat teachers who have been a long time in the system. If people didn't want to change, you couldn't have changed the school. I think many of us were ready to listen and try something new. You would know from your experience that an administrator can say whatever he wants, but if teachers don't want to change they won't.

The interesting question is why people changed their way of thinking. Why did they change their beliefs about teaching, about dealing with students, about evaluation, etc.? The answer to any such question was difficult to obtain. What happened was that people changed the content of their quality world. They replaced some of the pictures in the quality world they had before becoming involved in the change process with ones that were more need-satisfying. There were so many influences on people at any particular time that they were often not even aware themselves what led them to adopt a particular path. Nevertheless, there were some strategies adopted at Mountainvista that certainly assisted in leading people to make a significant change in their beliefs.

In speaking with people at Mountainvista it was clear that the experience people had as students when they went through school had a big impact on the way they thought about the school and what was being done there. Yet despite having been through similar experiences some people were open to change those beliefs and some were not. Nesbitt recalled that when the administrators began to work more systematically to influence teachers' thinking, they were realistic about their prospects of success:

Some people will never change their thinking. That's inevitable. There are some people who are so entrenched in their present paradigms that they will never get out of them. . . . That probably is a very small percentage of people, I'm going to say no more than ten to fifteen percent of people. So first of all you have to go into it with a recognition of that.

Working from that perspective, the administrators and the small group of teachers began to encourage change. It was not that they had a clear path to follow. Much of the development that occurred was through trial and error. In looking back, however, the people involved recalled some of the things that helped to nudge people to a change in beliefs.

Morgan felt for some time that there was a need to create some uncomfortableness with the status quo otherwise people would continue to exist there. He wanted people to self-evaluate. His original approach was to push people into an uncomfortable position:

My feelings were, and to some degree still are, that if we are too comfortable we will not change. There is a level of discomfort that is good for change, but there is a level of anxiety that creates nothing. If you want to look at that and want to call it an anxiety meter, I

think many times we have been in the red. I have pushed individuals into the red.

When he was pushing people into the red, Morgan was attacking the framework out of which those people were working. He was attempting to highlight to the teachers the inadequacy of their beliefs and seeking to induce them to look for something better. He somewhat graphically illustrated the approach he took:

To my way of thinking, you cannot get people to buy into things until they realize that what they are doing is not necessarily the best way of doing things . . . . What I would do is purposely go about demonstrating that the status quo was not adequate. I went about convincing people that the present system stunk, that it was inadequate, that it was insufficient--all these different words. I believed that then and still believe it now.

The result of such an attack on the status quo was to create an extraordinary amount of insecurity. Because Morgan did not have any buy-in to the system as it was, he was not particularly perturbed by recognizing that it was inadequate. In one of his memos (Position Paper #4 - Outcomes) he railed against the current educational system.

We should focus on the future and remember the education system we left was 100 years old and the status quo in education is a history lesson which should be preserved, but only in historical parks, not in virtually every public and private school in the United States.

He failed to realize, however, that not all people viewed the system in that way. His surprise at this realization led him to modify what he was doing:

I think there was a lot of insecurity and in some cases I couldn't believe the insecurity I heard. People whom I considered to be

exemplary teachers were insecure. So one of the things we did was back off the evaluation process which was the cause of a lot of stress. The challenge for those wanting change was to find a way to lead people to change their beliefs while remaining within a comfort zone that was acceptable. Morgan suggested a different approach if he had that time again:

If I were to do it again I wouldn't convince them that the system stunk. I would simply try to say to them, regardless of where we are, we can improve and we must learn to improve continuously and as a result let's not talk about whether we are good, bad, or indifferent. We just know that where we are is not where we want to be tomorrow because we want to get better tomorrow. That would take care of a lot of the defensiveness that came out as a result of people thinking that I was slamming their profession and their abilities.

When Morgan realized that his derision of the system was not leading people to change their beliefs, he adapted his approach. He became aware that encouragement was a crucial dimension along with modeling. In line with that awareness he, along with Nesbitt and later Howell, began encouraging the teachers who were strongly in favor of the changes to work alongside those who were interested but perhaps wary. One teacher remarked several times that knowing other people were trying some new approach and found it worked was a stimulus to him to begin to question what he was doing. When several people began to use Glasser's approach to discipline, there were some significant challenges to other teachers. A teacher who was involved in trying new approaches in a whole range of areas spoke about sowing a seed of doubt in the minds of teachers who were wary:



I know that in some classrooms the teachers are experiencing tremendous success with the shift in paradigm thinking about discipline. They are working with the new beliefs and philosophy and having great success. Other people sitting on the peripheral are beginning to ask: "Why are the kids having so much fun in this person's class and they are not having fun in my class?" So that opens up some self-evaluation on the part of that one person who is sitting on the peripheral not wanting to change his/her paradigm.

This creation of a sense that there maybe a better way was crucial in bringing about a change in the beliefs of teachers at Mountainvista. The willingness to entertain that possibility was a necessary prerequisite for change to occur. One teacher who had been at the school many years wisely concluded:

I think you have to be open to changing your beliefs. You are not going to change other people's beliefs if they think they are right. If some teachers say that they are the best teacher there is and there is nothing that is going to change them because this is the way to do it, you are not going to change them! There is a chance they will change their beliefs if they say they are willing to look even though they say they are not necessarily going to change. If they go out and have the chance to go into other classrooms and go to workshops, they are going to come away with some ideas and think about trying some of them. If they try them and they work, then you have the start of a change taking place. So the experience of seeking something that works is important.

The strategies that were used to assist teachers to change their beliefs about the school and what was happening there involved four dimensions. First,

an attempt was made to have people consider what they were doing and to entice them to question how adequately those ways were meeting students' needs. In other words, to have them self-evaluate. Second, they were supplied with some research materials that would provide the intellectual background to new procedures they might follow. Third, they were encouraged to watch teachers who were already trying something similar and to discuss the procedures they were contemplating with them. Fourth, they were supported and encouraged to try the new procedures. It was in doing this and experiencing success in those attempts that the beliefs really began to change.

Robert Jacobs, a teacher who was deeply involved in the change process, was convinced that before any change in beliefs occurred there was a need for "recognition that perhaps there is a better mousetrap out there, and I owe it to myself to at least look at the possibility of a better mousetrap. I think that until a person is prepared to do that, s/he will never confront one's assumptions and have the ability to change them." He considered the area of self-evaluation a crucial dimension to any real change in beliefs.

You have to have that ability to evaluate yourself. Personally I feel that the most effective way that can be done is to have another person there with you. I think the best way is through peer coaching. I think that is the key to being able to override that very natural tendency of reverting back to old assumptions. We are all that way. Here I am talking in all these grand things yet I'm still human and still fallible and still make those kind of mistakes from time to time. I recognize that but the times when I am best able to overcome those is when I have someone else come in. I want a very objective person in a peer-

coaching environment. I sit down and spell out what I want them to look at. There is my intellectual component. I want that person to come and look at what I do and then let us compare that with what I think I did. Seeing such an outline on paper for me and the coach telling me what it appears like makes it is a lot easier for me to make a judgment about the assumptions I use. It is almost like taking a video camera in and videoing me doing it so that I can more appreciate how I need to change.

The move to allow someone to come in and report back in such a fashion was not readily accepted by many teachers. It was extremely threatening to most. Jacobs recognized this and was conscious that teachers "have to be able to feel comfortable with someone coming in." The crucial ingredient again was trust. Only when teachers believed that they would be safe with the person coming in that they would take the risk. Jacobs admitted they were "kind of in the toddler stage of establishing peer support. There is a core group of us who have gone through the training. So what we are doing right now is working together." The process being followed was the same as in other areas. A small group developed some expertise and would then gradually spread the message to other teachers who were interested. This modeling was an important part of leading other teachers to discover new ways of teaching or relating. The people in this small group came to realize that one important way of enticing teachers to consider new approaches was to model those approaches for them. They knew they could not force people to change their beliefs. Nesbitt illustrated that well when he remarked: "I have had people shake their heads after I have spoken about some approach, and I know they will go and close their door and do

what they want to do. They know it and I know it, but all I can do is model a different way."

The experience of the change promoters illustrates Glasser's theory that "no one can satisfy another person's needs. We all must do this for ourselves . . . what we can offer is what we believe is the opportunity; it is up to the [person] to agree that this is indeed a need-satisfying opportunity and to take advantage of it" (1994, p. 58).

This self-evaluation was one aspect that was very important and tied back to Morgan's comment about teachers being led to feel uncomfortable about their current approach. But even with this evaluation and the information about new approaches, people would not change their beliefs until they had experienced some success with the proposals. One of the teachers who was very influential in encouraging teachers to change was quite adamant about the need for teachers to experience success before they were prepared to change their beliefs:

I think for teachers to change their beliefs they have to see success. If someone makes a comment that a belief isn't right you are not going to convince an individual by that comment. Until they see the change in students in other classrooms where a different approach is being taken they won't be convinced. You can't just suggest an idea and have someone believe that idea. I changed my beliefs when I went back into my classroom, tried out a proposal that was different to what I had believed and saw it was successful. Or I got the students' comments on why it wasn't successful and changed what I was doing to meet what they were saying. I think teachers have to see it happen.

In the teachers that I do trainings with and assessment in hands-on lessons and so forth, they don't believe what I am saying

unless I bring in students' samples. Unless I can produce things that students are actually doing, I find they will not really believe it is possible.

When the opportunity to train with the Glasser model was extended to people other than teachers, some of the classified staff took the opportunity to search for a better way of dealing with students. One of them was quite enthusiastic about the way that opportunity influenced her:

My thinking completely changed. I was probably one of the most conservative thinkers a few years ago. I think what influenced me was I reading and studying a lot of Glasser's material. I watched some teachers who were using the material and I then just experimented with it and it was so good. It worked! Realizing that I can't control another person and that they are responsible for their own behavior brings a lot of freedom. So my whole way of thinking completely changed. I did a self-evaluation first and then I put it into my work. It was not that what I gained just applied here at work. It was of great help to me outside of here.

What was of particular importance to her was how she saw her beliefs change. The process for her involved getting information, talking about that information with others, watching other people use it and "then taking what I had learned and applying it to see how it works. That usually convinces me to keep going in that direction." Her beliefs gradually changed as she experienced success with the new approach. This was borne out by her experience in moving into the yard and doing duty there. Because she experienced success with the different approach, she was encouraged to continue with it. As she did that, her thinking became more

firmly committed to the new approach and her beliefs about students and ways to deal with them changed.

I thought the battle would be hard because of the feedback I had got was that it was really hard out there. Whereas in fact I have found it very good. We have a few students who are continually disrupting and causing problems but getting in there and talking to them before it happens seems to be really successful.

Thus the process that evolved through trial and error for bringing about a change in teachers' beliefs involved the four elements: self-evaluation, information on new options, modeling by teachers who were trying some new options and then teachers experiencing success in trying some such options themselves.

These elements highlight the complicated process of replacing items in a person's quality world. The behavior people were engaging in was made up of the four elements of activity or acting, thinking, feeling and physiology (Glasser, 1984). These four elements are part of total behavior and are inseparable. Thus for people to change their behavior there is obviously a need for more than a new intellectual understanding. Behavior has those four elements and the total behavior has to change. The strategies that were used to entice people at the school to change their beliefs played an important role in bringing about change at Mountainvista because they assisted people in changing the items in their quality world.

#### The New School

The new middle school came into existence as a result of considerable influence being exercised on the part of a range of people. The teachers at the school had an important influence in raising the need for the expansion of facilities. Morgan espoused this need and kept the

board informed about the implications of the lack of facilities. Through a gradual process of educating the board to the need, he worked with the members to come to the conclusion that a new school was desirable.

After the failure of an approach to the State of California to build the school directly, the board embarked on the bond issue. This was a major political move because of the three quarters majority that was required for the bond to pass. The politicking began in earnest once the decision was made to go in that direction. There had been very few bonds passed in other districts in Northern California to add to the facilities of schools. The challenge lay before the board to convince people in the county to vote in favor of the bond.

The board employed an outside agency to orchestrate the campaign. A carefully staged campaign was organized where people in the county were informed of the issues involved and asked for their support. Part of this process was gathering together a group of parents who were prepared to phone people in the county and ask for their support. Following a set procedure these parents phoned every registered voter. The outcome was that when the vote was counted the bond has passed and the board had funding to move ahead with the building of the new middle school.

The move of the seventh and eighth grades to a different site would have a considerable impact on the way the two site would operate. The possibilities for further change in the way students were treated and the way the curriculum related matters were developed would be altered by having people at two sites. It would mean each site would develop its own approach and more responsibility would be placed on the people at each site to continue the process of continual improvement. Such changes would come about because of the impact of splitting the school into two sections. I

was not able to observe these changes as the move to the new school, although supposed to occur during the course of this investigation, did not take place until after I had concluded my involvement in the school.

#### Lack of Parent Involvement

One of the major influences on children as they grow is their parents. The failure to capitalize on this influence and enlist parents in bringing about change at Mountainvista has had serious repercussions. The reasons for this failure were complicated but were related to the complexity of what was going on at the school and the resultant focus on the school site.

The attempt to bring about change at Mountainvista centered on the school site and little attention was paid to ensuring that the parents were kept informed about not only what practices were changing, but why they were changing. Morgan did not bring parents along with the changes. There were so many pressures to be faced within the school that his focus, and that of the teachers, was there at the school. Nesbitt explained the approach they took to parents as changes began to be made in the school: "We didn't ask them and we didn't inform them, we just did it. It is amazing that there has not been more backlash."

This approach ran counter to the official statement about parents' involvement with their children's education. The 1992-1993 *Student/Parent Handbook* states quite clearly that parents are a crucial ingredient in the education process:

Mountainvista School does not accept complete responsibility for the total development of its students. Recognizing that the home is still the most influential factor in the development of youngsters, we feel it is the full duty and responsibility of parents to encourage their



children to cooperate fully with the educational process and for the parents to be involved.

A price was paid for proceeding without involving the parents in the process of change. Parents received badly distorted information about what was being done at the school. Moreover, there was a complete lack of understanding on the part of most parents of the reasons for the changes. This lack of understanding did not necessarily mean that all the parents were opposed to what the school did. On the contrary, there has been considerable support for the school and most parents were very proud of the school. However, whether parents supported the changes or opposed them, in general, neither group had a real grasp of what the people employed at the school were trying to do. One commented:

We had notices from school and I'm friends with a lot of the people who work there, and they would talk about what they were going to do. But why the changes came about and who actually initiated them I don't know.

Because of this confusion, there has been considerable opposition to what parents thought was happening.

I'm probably more of the old fashion kind of person who likes more of the traditional education. I'm not very happy with this new program at the school.

This opposition must be kept in context, however, because the vast majority of parents were confronted with the fact that their children loved going to school. They, therefore, had to come to terms with this dissonance. Many of them learned to live with the ambiguity they experience. As one parent mentioned when speaking about how parents felt about the school:

On the whole they know that for their kids school is an emotional experience even more so than an academic one. They know that their kids are feeling good and for the most part are happy to come to school. That's what they relate to and they also relate to the fact that they like the teachers as people. They know they trust those individuals, even if they don't understand the system as a whole.

When pushed to explain this dissonance, the majority of parents conceded that something worthwhile must be happening at the school. If the students liked being there so much, they were obviously being cared for and doing things that were fascinating and fun. During my investigations one of the things that came through consistently from board members and parents was the real concern the teachers had for the students. While some parents strongly disagreed with a number of things the teachers were doing, no one questioned the genuine concern the teachers had for the students. One very hostile parent who was bitterly opposed to the changes, conceded that the teachers "are wonderful people. Never have I ever seen teachers care more for students than I have at this school."

The opposition to the changes among parents arose on two fronts: (1) parents who did not want anything different from what they had experienced in school themselves, and (2) parents who wanted something different from their own experience but were not sure that what was being done was best. In almost all cases their perceptions of what was happening at the school were significantly different from the perceptions the people working at the school had of what they were doing.

It was obvious that because of poor communication an inadequate influence relationship had been established between the people working in the school and the parents. Most of the people at the school acknowledged

there was a considerable amount of work to do to educate parents about what was happening at the school. One person at the school admitted that "I think we are getting better each year but I think we have a long way to go on that."

There was not, however, a deliberate attempt to exclude parents. It seemed that the amount of time that was consumed in working with issues at school meant that parents were not a focus of attention for the administrators or teachers. They were dealt with as the need arose. One parent said that even though she was critical of some aspects of what was happening at the school, she had to admit that "if there are major concerns then they are dealt with. They don't get pushed under the rug."

The changes that were made at the school were rather radical. There was a move away from textbooks, from tests, from homework, from working alone, etc. Most of what was put aside was quite central to the experience of parents when they were in school. The beliefs the parents developed about what schooling should be emerged from their own experience at school. Such radical moves away from what was sacred to them was a significant jolt. Tied to the radical nature of the moves was the lack of information about them. This lack of information led some people who were deeply interested in their children's education to be wary of the changes. They wanted to know the reasons why the old ways were put aside and what it was the new approaches would bring. If they had been given good reason for introducing the new approaches maybe they would have supported them. One of these parents expressed it this way: "I'm afraid I can't make my mind switch over because I haven't been convinced that it is absolutely the way to go."

For other parents dealing with the changes was not such a rational exercise. Many did not sit back and weigh up the arguments they had heard for and against what was being done at the school. It was simply because it was different to what they had experienced themselves that they did not know how to handle it. Many parents felt they had to maintain a dominant position in relation to their children. That position was severely questioned by what was being done at school where their children were being taught to take responsibility for themselves and not depend on adults to dictate to them what they should do. One of the people at the school commented on it in this way:

I think that these changes are found to be difficult in homes where things are very strict. Maybe in homes that are possibly not quite as strict there is more common respect between parents and children and it isn't quite so big a change. I think some parents fear the difference because we are not coming down on the kids and making them sit quietly all of the time. We are not getting anything done because we are not controlling the children.

For some parents the contrast between what happened at home and what they thought happened at school reinforced their alienation from the school and made them feel they did not have the abilities to cope with going to the school and talking about their concerns (Melaville & Blank, 1993).

The implications of the changes in the school were a cause of concern for many parents. While they were concerned about the way the school developed and the future direction in which it would go, nevertheless, their immediate concern revolved around their children. Some parents were concerned about what their children were missing or the harm they might be suffering because many of the changes were so different from what

parents were used to. Moreover, some things that were tried had not worked. The parents were not involved in the discussion leading up to the adoption of the changes and found out about them later through back-to-school nights. One parent was irate when she told me:

We were just told the changes that would be implemented. At that time I raised my hand and said: "So you really don't know if it will work?" They said they weren't absolutely sure. "So our children are guinea pigs. So what do they do with a wasted seventh grade year?" They couldn't respond. I was very frustrated with that. I felt it was a very inappropriate response because I don't feel that human beings, especially children, should be guinea pigs.

Such a response raises, of course, the age-old problem of reform. Parents want schools to improve but they do not want their children to be the ones where anything new is tried. Experiments need to be carried out but go somewhere else to find better ways to teach, to organize or deal with students. Parents want the new procedures to be used with their children only when they have proved to be worthwhile and successful somewhere else. While the teachers at Mountainvista gradually became sensitive to this feeling among parents, nevertheless, if there were going to be changes then risks needed to be taken and some parents' children had to be the guinea pigs.

The lack of information, not only about the different procedures but also the implications for the students, left parents bewildered. If tests had been the bedrock of how parents judged whether their children were gaining from being at school, then doing away with these tests caused great disruption in their thinking. Because adequate steps were not taken to

educate parents about the new methods of assessment, confusion resulted and frustration set in. One parents expressed her anxiety in this way:

There is this other worry that the kids aren't getting everything because a lot of the times we, as parents, don't have a clear sense of what we are supposed to be doing with our children in second grade. What is our goal here? What am I supposed to be trying to achieve? Is my child doing that? There is nothing to grasp. To a parent it seems a little soft. It feels as if I don't have anything to tell me where my kid is. Part of that is a little neurotic because we want to make sure our child is doing as well or doing better than anybody else's kid, so we like to measure our children against other children. But that's all we have as parents.

As Mountainvista began the process of change there were many areas of confusion. A number of people had the perception that the school was in disarray. They could not see that under the chaos was an emerging order. They only saw the chaos and drew conclusions from that. One parent expressed it this way:

The entire school system is in a state of flux, everything is poorly defined. This causes particular problems for Mountainvista parents. In traditional schools the academic program may be flawed and anachronistic but at least it is recognizable by parents. At Mountainvista that old system has been rejected outright. The parents don't really understand that. And the school is searching for better ways. The parents don't know that either. The goal of the search has not been explained. So what parents experience is a murky, undefined unease. The test scores have been low and parents don't know why. Our dysfunctional testing system has not been explained

to them. I think most parents do not yet see academic excellence and many wouldn't recognize it if it were put in front of them.

This sense of confusion was compounded in a few cases early in the change process when teachers, who were not really sure themselves about the changes being made, said some things that were exaggerated. Two parents mentioned they were aghast when a teacher told them how teachers were going to deal with their children. Fortunately, the two were wise enough to go to Nesbitt and Morgan about their concerns only to find out the teacher had misunderstood what was being proposed.

Many of those parents who wanted to know what was going on and were prepared to put effort into finding out, believed there were not even opportunities for them to do that. One parent who was very supportive of the school because she could see how her children were benefiting from being at the school expressed her regret at not being able to find out what she felt would help her understand.

The parents don't know what is going on and they don't understand it. There is not much opportunity for them to buy in. For example, if my kids are going to be molded by Glasser and Glenn, I, as a parent, have not been invited to find out what that is about. Not that many parents could come, but there has not even been an opportunity. I think that is a mistake

Some parents did not see people at the school open to the input of parents. Several parents had the perception that "some teachers don't really want to listen to parents. Some others lack skill in dealing with kids and parents." Unfortunately, that perception prevented those parents from going to the school and finding out what was happening.

Those parents who were prepared to visit the school, however, found something rather different. One of them spoke about her visits to the school in this way:

My experience is that if you have something to say, call them. Come in, sit down and talk to them and feel free to do so. They will listen to you, take it into consideration and go from there. I have never felt they didn't want the input and I have always been made to feel welcome.

Many of the teachers expressed real disappointment that parents in general did not accept the invitation to go to the school to talk to the teachers or to just be around. Some of the parents were aware of this invitation: "There is a lot of parental involvement encouraged and actually begged for. They really want you to be involved." Many teachers sent regular invitations to parent to visit their children's classes and spend time seeing what was happening. In addition, in the *Student/Parent Handbook* for 1992/93 the statement is quite clear:

*How You Can Help As A Parent.*

Become actively involved in your child's education and school activities. This can be done by visiting your child's classroom, participating in after school activities, monitoring their homework and attending school functions such as Back-To-School Night, Open House etc.

Despite all these moves, however, Nesbitt admitted that "we have not gone out and educated the parents on what we are trying to do and why we are trying to do it. I think we made a mistake there." Another person at the school regretted that parents did not feel included in the school when he said: "I think pretty much parents are outsiders looking in. That's too bad."



What the people at the school were faced with was the genuine concerns of parents who in many cases were ignorant of what was happening in the school. Nesbitt recalled the approach that was taken to deal with the questions when they arose in order to encourage parents to feel there was always the opening to ask questions:

Questions did come up about content and a lot of what parents wanted were things we had moved away from. "Well, I think my kid should have a spelling test." "My kid is never going to learn responsibility unless he has homework." That was one we heard a lot. Instead of arguing we discussed the issues behind the concerns and tried to explain why we did make the change. That was one thing we made sure that we did. We also made it clear to people that if they weren't satisfied with the product we were offering, then to come in and talk to us about it. Or if after a while they still didn't like it, we would give them an interdistrict transfer to wherever they wanted to go.

There was a growing realization among people at the school of the need to involve parents in order to have a more consistent approach to the students. One of the people at the school commented:

I'm not sure that parents understand what is happening here. There are a handful of parents who are involved in the school and work here at the school and parents who volunteer in the school because they like what is happening. I think we need a better school/parent network and that is something we have talked about at the site council. That is the element that is missing here.

Despite these negative attitudes, there was a strong feeling among parents that Morgan was able to capture:

Probably their understanding to some degree is: "It seems to be working, my kids like the school but I'm not sure what the hell they are doing!" That's probably how I would characterize it.

It was not that parents were necessarily opposed to what the people at the school were doing. It was just that they didn't know. Nesbitt's experience with the parents who have become involved with the steering committee illustrated this:

When we have parents involved, they have asked: "Could you explain exactly why this is taking place?" When we have explained they have said: "Okay, I understand now. I wish I had known that before."

Some parents had a great appreciation for what the teachers did once they understood. Several mentioned to me their admiration for the efforts that people at the school were making. One expressed it in this way:

I would say that the teachers work really hard to make it interesting for the kids. They have had some excellent training on different content areas and are really innovative teachers who are trying really hard to do the best thing for the kids. They are trying to implement the most current things in education and not just holding onto their old ways. They are willing to change.

It was obvious to me that parents wanted to be involved. There was a need in the opinion of a number of parents to build a greater trust between the school and parents and to establish a base of common knowledge (Melaville & Blank, 1993). One parent suggested that the whole process of change needed to be slowed down so that parents could be brought into the process.

I do believe they are heading in a really good direction and I think the philosophy is good and that their intentions for kids are basically

sound. There might be a few gaps in that but what I would focus on is that I would change the idea that they just get an idea and steamroll it through. When they say this is a process and it is ongoing and they need to get everybody's involvement then they should really mean they want parent involvement, they value it and will take notice of it. While many people at the school felt the need for improving communication, they were also wary about being dominated by a range of vying demands. This was summed up succinctly by one of the people at the school:

I think there has to be better communication about what is happening here. That is the link that is missing. However, we don't want parents on our backs all the time. They need to trust us but we need to provide the education for them.

Those parents who were aware of what was being done at the school were strongly supportive of the changes that were made. This was particularly obvious among the teachers who were parents with their children at the school. In many cases this involved obtaining an inter district status for them. They were obviously aware of what advantages there were in having a child at the school. One of these teacher expressed his strong opinion in this way:

I would say that this school first believes that all children are capable of learning and that everyone is pretty well equal. All kids have the right to learn and no one has the right to prevent a child from learning. I truly believe that this is a child-oriented school. I have both of my children here, they are both interdistricts. I believe very firmly in what we are doing here in enabling children to learn.

One parent expressed his strong conviction about the emphasis in the school and what teachers were trying to do:

I can't emphasize enough that this is a kids' place. It took me some time to come to this conclusion and it didn't happen at the start. Now I see the kids get involved and get excited about things and they kind of learn things when they don't realize they are actually learning.

This emphasis on meeting the needs of the students was known beyond the confines of the school community. On several occasions during the time I did research I was told very positive things about Mountainvista School in places many miles away from the school, by people who had no connection with the place. Morgan summed up the feeling many people in the wider community had about the school.

The overall impression goes back to the fact that we are a school that cares about kids, that we are not at war with kids and we are going to do what we can to meet the needs of kids. That is evidenced by the comments that are made by other people. It is evidenced by the number of kids who are trying to get into our district and many of these kids are kids with severe needs.

If parents are considered the first and principal educators of their children, then they should not only have a significant interest, but a real say in what happens to their children. This does not mean the professionals in the school don't try to influence and educate parents. The experience parents had during their own time at school influence their beliefs about school. These beliefs may need to be challenged as more appropriate ways to educate young people are explored. That this was not done as well as the parents at Mountainvista School would have liked meant the change process there did not permeate the school community as much as it could have.

Because of the very influential position parents have in the education of their children, the change process was hindered somewhat when parents were not included in the process.

### Conclusion

The changes occurred at Mountainvista because a group of people became convinced that change was necessary. They were prepared to seriously question what was happening in the school and search for new and better ways of being involved with students. This led them to investigate the research that was available and might assist them. They then simply tried different approaches and sought one another's support and guidance. The collaborative approach built up a climate of trust in the group and encouraged them to take even further risks. The support and encouragement of the superintendent was crucial in providing and allowing the development of a framework for such experimentation. The people in this group used their influence to bring about a change in one another's beliefs and those of other people at the school.

The development of the steering committee was a significant move in developing a different way of operating the school. The pattern of influence was markedly altered as a result of that group. The avenues were opened for anyone in the school community to have input into the steering committee that would determine the policies of the school.

The estrangement of some parents and their lack of understanding of what the school was trying to do hindered the change process somewhat. This estrangement could be attributed to the failure to adequately keep parents abreast of not only what was being changed, but why. The developments that were initiated in 1993 intensified the attempt to rectify this problem.

## CHAPTER SIX

### WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED FROM MOUNTAINVISTA?

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the nature of the leadership processes as they were experienced at Mountainvista School. Rost (1991) claimed that leadership is an influence relationship with change as a crucial ingredient as people develop mutual purposes. I explored the influence relationships that led to changes in the school in order to draw some conclusions about the nature of the leadership processes experienced there.

The following sections summarize the leadership processes that were evident as I observed and talked to the people at Mountainvista. This summary focuses on the strategies that were used and the procedures that were put in place. Following that is a discussion at a different level in which I consider some of the broader issues that emerged as the change processes progressed. Some conclusions about the nature of the leadership processes experienced at Mountainvista School arise out of that discussion. The chapter concludes with a few reflections on some implications and areas that need further exploration in the light of this investigation. Such exploration is needed in the ongoing investigation of leadership in organizations where significant change has occurred.

### Answering the Research Questions

The questions I asked in this study were designed to provide information that would enable me to draw some conclusions about the leadership processes that occurred at Mountainvista School. The answers to those questions are summarized in the following sections.

#### Ways Influence Was Used

People doing leadership have available to them a large number of processes. Pervading these, according to Rost (1991), must be a way of influencing that is noncoercive but where people intend real changes that reflect the mutual purposes of the people involved. I investigated the way influence was used in the school in order to examine the leadership processes that were present there. To do this I asked the question: "What were the different ways influence was used in the school?" The ways of influence I discovered are as follows:

1. The small group of people, including Morgan, who were committed to change experienced considerable peer influence. The ideas that evolved were listened to by sympathetic and concerned peers who were prepared to try different approaches in dealing with students and curriculum material.
2. Morgan used research findings to instigate a questioning of what was happening at the school and create a certain uncomfortableness with the status quo (Posner et al., 1982).
3. Morgan promised extra money for classroom budgets to entice people to look at other schools or other teachers at Mountainvista school.
4. The administrators attended themselves and sent people away on training programs and seminars to bring back new ideas and practices.

5. Morgan kept asking questions about what teachers were doing that led them to wonder about the wisdom of those practices (Richardson, 1990).

6. Morgan wrote short memos on relevant topics to focus discussion and stimulate new ideas.

7. Morgan strategically approached people to listen to their experience and to discuss with them the implications of what they were doing and reading.

8. The administrators hired teachers who had just graduated from college and these new teachers influenced the ongoing openness to change that pervaded the school.

9. The administrators were influential with their attitude to failure. They accepted responsibility for structuring the school for teachers to succeed and they trusted people.

10. Morgan used his personal resources to influence other people. Those resources included information, access to the distribution of time and money, access to other positional people, his strength of character, his credibility with people, his ability to synthesize research, his personal relationships with people and his willingness to be taught.

11. Teachers who were committed to change invited one another into their classrooms to watch what was happening and to reflect back what they saw.

12. The development of expertise in various fields provided an opportunity for some teachers to share new ideas with others.

13. Teachers worked and reflected together and in doing so influenced one another toward shared purposes.



14. Experienced teachers organized an introductory seminar for new teachers and supported those new teachers through the year.

15. The structure of the school was altered to enable teachers to spend more time with smaller numbers of students. By bonding with those students the teachers were able to be influenced by them and to consequently influence one another.

16. The adults decided to treat the students in a more respectful way and the response of the students allowed innovative activities to occur.

17. The establishment of the steering committee provided an avenue for all people involved with the school to have access to policy making. Such access enable them to influence the development of policies that issued from the committee.

18. Adults at the school enticed one another to try new approaches to relate to students and to be involved in their education. Through success in these attempts people came to change the way they thought about what they were doing. Such support in influencing one another confirmed Newton and Tarrant's (1992) findings that for significant change to occur individuals needed to be involved with other people who could offer support and assistance over time.

### Making Decisions

The influence individuals had in the school was crucial in the change process. The changes, however, came about as a result of decisions that were made. The second question I asked was: "How were decisions made to adopt the proposals to change the school?" The following is a summary of the ways those decisions were made:

1. In the early stages of the change process Morgan made decisions to implement changes in a very directive way. He decided what needed to

be done and then went ahead and implemented the decision. This was obvious with the move away from dittos and from textbooks. Later he realized that coercive approach to making decisions was not in the best interests of the faculty or the students.

2. Morgan made the decision to deal with adults who were wanting change in a way that recognized them as professionals who could be trusted to do the best thing for the students. That decision by Morgan and subsequently by the other administrators allowed and encouraged adults at the school to take risks that led to changes at the school.

3. The decision to support the change process by the judicious allocation of resources was made by Morgan and subsequently by the other administrators.

4. The decision to set up the steering committee was essentially an administrators' decision that emerged from the administrators listening to the adults at the school and taking notice of the reading they had been doing, particularly Glasser (1990). The convergence of these two led the administrators to the conclusion that some widely representative group needed to take responsibility for the change process. They, therefore, invited people who were interested in the changes taking place at the school and future directions to join together to explore what could be done. They approached some parents in order to have parent representation on the committee.

5. At the individual level, teachers decided to make a change in the way they were involved with one another. This led them to look for alternative ways of either working with students in class or relating with them. Such decisions came as a result of teachers considering research about the area with which they were involved; being challenged by other

teachers through discussion; watching other teachers using a different approach and tentatively trying some different approach themselves. Such procedures supported Guskey's (1986) findings on what enabled people to change their beliefs and subsequently their behavior. The decision to change an approach to working with students or relating with them was made by some teachers with great alacrity and enthusiasm. Others were much more tentative while yet others decided not to change. Nevertheless, the decisions made at a personal level were very significant in the change process at the school.

6. The steering committee used a consensus procedure to adopt proposals that were before the committee. Each person at the meeting had the opportunity to share his/her opinions and to persuade other people of the soundness of the proposal being considered. The structure of the meeting allowed for members of the group to explore many options without fear of retribution in any way. Such an atmosphere facilitated a genuine sharing of ideas and allowed a consensus decision to emerge. On many occasions they sought to broaden their options and examine proposals from a great range of perspectives (Fisher, Ury & Patton, 1991)

#### Changes That Were Made

The emphasis the administrators gave to the change process was to encourage the adults at the school to continually look for ways to give and find support among other adults and to improve the quality of experience the students were having at the school. The question I asked about the changes was: "What real changes were intended and what changes have been implemented?"

The attitude the administrators took toward the improvement of the students' experience at school resulted in numerous changes being made

that reflected a shift in the attitude and beliefs of the adults. It would be impossible to list all of those here. Among them would be the way individual teachers changed their beliefs and changed in the way they interacted with other teachers and with students. Some adults changed from being very isolated and independent to being part of peer support groups and involved in interdependent arrangements with other teachers. Others moved from being aggressively directive with the students to listening to them and encouraging them to take responsibility for what they were doing. This meant insisting on the reasonable consequences of the students' choices while not being antagonistic or developing an adversarial relationship with them. For a number of teachers those were major changes from their previous positions. While these changes on the part of individual adults were major shifts on their part and were the backbone of the change process, I will not list such changes here but restrict myself to the larger structural changes.

1. The intention of some teachers was to focus on developing a curriculum that reflected the interests and concerns of the local people. This intended change moved them away from the practice of following a centrally directed curriculum. To follow through on that intention, groups of teachers decided not to use textbooks. That decision was implemented by using local resources instead of textbooks and through discovering other resources that could be of use. Some teachers found the old method of assessing students created considerable anxiety, used up a great deal of time and had questionable validity. They decided to move away from what had been done to portfolio assessment. Such a move on the part of teachers, in combination with the move to be attentive to the students' needs in what was provided, allowed the students to have more say in what was happening

and how they were evaluated. The teachers were not, therefore, subject to the criticism McKnight (1989) made of students being evaluated in terms of their ability to satisfy professionals.

2. The teachers wanted students to have a positive attitude toward the work they did at school and a positive relationship between the school and the home. They, therefore, eliminated homework as it used to be required. Students were required to do homework only because the work couldn't be done at school and would enrich what was done at school.

3. The adults wanted the students to feel safe at school and to know that the adults cared about them. They wanted a change from the coercive way in which students had been treated, what Morgan referred to as students being at war with the school and the school being at war with the students. The administrators invited the adults to be involved in an educative process that challenged their assumptions about students and encouraged them to learn new ways of relating to them. As a result of being involved in this way, many of the adults adopted a radically different way of relating to students.

4. In order to provide opportunities for teachers to bond with students and increase the students' sense of being cared for, the structure of the middle school was changed. This meant the number of periods in the day was reduced and individual teachers had longer periods of time with groups of students.

5. Under previous administrators the adults were controlled and directed in a hierarchical framework where they were expected to fit into the structure that had been established. The present administrators intended to change the structure so that individuals would take responsibility for establishing the best possible experience for the students under their care.

The implementation of that change came through the administrators taking responsibility for ensuring there was a structure in place that would enable the adults to be successful in their work. This was achieved by trusting those adults to be professional and giving them the freedom and support to develop whatever they felt necessary to improve the quality of life at the school for adults and to enrich the students' experience. The administrators moved away from the patriarchy that had characterized the former administration and encouraged a mixed level involvement, as witnessed in the steering committee. There were people involved from all areas of the school: administrators, teachers, classified staff, parents and in some cases students. This mixed level education of people in an organization was advocated by Block (1993) as a way to break down the isolation of the divisions within an organization.

6. The school was divided into two sections--a K-5 and grades 6-8 and a new school was built for grades 6-8. The intended change was to provide more space and the opportunity for the two sections to develop in ways that would support adults and enable them to appropriately improve the quality of the students' experience.

7. Time was taken from the school program to enable teachers to work together and reflect on what they were doing. The intended change was to reduce the degree of stress among the teachers because of the pressure on them to perform so many activities. The provision of time was achieved by shortening the school day each Monday. The K-3 grades were allowed to go home at 12:30 p. m. and the remainder of the students left at 1:30 p. m. This gave the teachers the afternoon to work together.

### Influence Relationships

If the school is considered to be a pattern of relationships that has been established among a group of people, then influence relationships are key to the change process and, therefore, to leadership. The question I asked in regard to relationships was: "How did people in the school initiate and sustain relationships that intended real change?"

Many different relationships existed in the school that enabled it to function reasonably smoothly. Most of these related to the managing of the school and ensuring the smooth running of the organization. Those were not the relationships I examined. I was researching leadership, which is an influence relationship that intends real change. The means for establishing and sustaining such relationships were as follows:

1. The administrators took a deep interest in what people were doing that would lead to change. They sustained those relationships through their use of research literature, through asking astute and probing questions about what people were doing and the impact of these behaviors on other adults and on students, through accepting responsibility for adults' failure, through using their access to time and financial resources to provide opportunities and/or training for adults to develop a new way of thinking or new skills.

2. Morgan established influence relationships with the board members through being honest and straightforward with them. He not only kept them informed about what was happening at the school, he also educated them in the reasons for the changes that occurred. Through such means he was able to sustain a relationship with the board members that enabled him to work with them to intend real change.

3. The adults initiated influence relationships with one another through sharing what they were doing and being a resource for others. Through the peer support network the teachers were able to sustain an on-going relationship with one another that led to real changes in the experience students had at school. They sought to create an atmosphere where people could meet their needs in an efficient way.

4. Some parents were able to become involved in relationships that intended real change. This was during the latter part of the investigation when some parents were invited to become members of the steering committee and the action committees of that steering committee. The relationships were initiated by the administrators who recognized the need to have parent input. The relationships were sustained through those parents being accepted as a vital part of the change process at the school. This was displayed through people at the school listening to what parents had to say during the meeting and encouraging them to feel free to say what they wanted the people at the school to hear. Through encouragement and training these parents became active and valuable members of the committees and were able to enter into processes that intended real change for the school.

#### Sustaining Change

There were many change proposals put forward. Some became spectacularly successful and contributed significantly to the improvement of the students' experience at the school. Others were "flash-in-the-pan" experiences that did not add anything of any significance to the life of the school. The question I asked in regard to changes was: "How have changes been sustained?"



The nature of the changes that were introduced had a great deal to do with their sustainability. Poorly conceived changes that did not really address the needs of the adults or students or did so in a way that caused excessive difficulties in implementation did not generally survive. Changes that survived were changes that addressed the needs of the adults and students and were strongly supported by adults. The changes were sustained in the following ways:

1. The administrators supported the changes and allocated time and money to enable adults to be educated and trained to carry out the proposals contained in the changes. They understood the control theory that provided a framework for making sense of what was happening.

2. The board members supported the changes in authorizing the funding of programs for educating adults. They also continued to be interested in the developments and eased the way for ongoing adult involvement.

3. The adults advocating change were prepared to support one another. They talked to one another and showed interest in efforts others made. This peer support was a significant factor in sustaining the changes. Part of this support was the willingness of these people to trust one another with their fragility as they explored alternative possibilities.

4. The responses of students were an important factor. When students were no longer at war with the school but looked on school as a place where people cared about them and were prepared to help them, then their attitude was a great encouragement to adults to find ways to sustain these approaches of interacting with the students.

5. More important than any individual change was the attitude toward change on the part of the adults. If the adults were open to the

continuous improvement process, then they were looking for ways to ensure the changes were sustained and furthered. If people were frightened by change and wanted to remain with one routine irrespective of how valuable it was to adults or students, then the possibility of changes being sustained was considerably less. Through the peer support and the encouragement of the administrators an increasing number of adults became convinced about the value of always looking for ways to improve. With the development of such an attitude, the changes were more likely to be sustained.

6. The creation of the steering committee provided a framework for the ongoing establishment of the change process. The committee was the group that created policy in the school which was then ratified by the board. Through the working of this group the changes were understood by many more people and supported by their efforts.

#### Fundamental, Not Cosmetic, Change

Strategies were put in place to bring about and sustain changes at Mountainvista School. The changes were a central part of the leadership that was done at the school. Behind them, however, were influence relationships of considerable complexity that were linked together by a common goal or purpose. To understand the complexity of those relationships, it is necessary to probe a little deeper below the surface of the strategies and to examine what enabled the strategies to succeed.

Morgan reflected and analyzed his past to see how it related to the leadership process and the changes he intended (Foster, 1986b). The changes he made in his own way of relating to people bear testimony to the analysis he did and the openness he had towards the change process. He realized the importance of facing up to the harm that certain approaches

were doing. Morgan began as superintendent with enthusiasm and gusto absolutely determined to change things at Mountainvista. Whitney (1994) emphasized the importance of acknowledging the need for change before any change will occur. Morgan was very aware of the need for change in the school and set about changing the mystique by making problematic the way things were done. He knew the importance of thinking differently in order to act differently. Eisner (1993) spoke directly to this point when he wrote: "Our conceptual life, shaped by imagination and the qualities of the world experienced, gives rise to the intentions that direct our activities. Intentions are rooted in the imagination. Intentions depend upon our ability to recognize what is, and yet to imagine what might be" (p. 7).

Morgan was determined to have people recognize what was happening at the school and to entice them to imagine something better. Hence his emphasis on research and exposing people to new ways of thinking and behaving. In his search for these new ways, Morgan was not locked into any one approach. His focus was on what was best for the adults and students at Mountainvista. Writers like Glenn and Nelsen (1989), Hart (1983), Nelsen (1987) and Smith (1986) had a significant influence on laying the groundwork for further changes. It was William Glasser, however, who had a major impact. His writings and training sessions provided a framework in which adults could begin to think differently about themselves, other adults and students and then receive training that would enable them to deepen that thinking and subsequently behave in a different way. Control theory provided an understanding of how people are motivated that enabled the change-agents to find a way through the morass of conflicting pressures and uncertainties. Through accepting that people chose behaviors to meet their basic needs, the promoters of change

were able to adopt strategies that left the responsibility of those behaviors with those people. This was particularly the case with conflict. The anger a person had was theirs. It was something they were choosing and, therefore, something for which they were responsible.

Nevertheless, even though the school became part of the consortium that Glasser established, there was no slavish following of Glasser's approach. The advocates of change were always searching for ways to improve life at the school and so expanded beyond what Glasser proposed. This was illustrated in the development of the steering committee where the TQM approach was used as a basis for organizing the group but was adapted to suit the needs of the people at Mountainvista. As Capper and Jamison (1993) pointed out, there are dangers in simply adopting the Deming approach in total. However, there are aspects of the approach, if used selectively, that can be of considerable value. It was this selective approach that the people at Mountainvista adopted.

Morgan's aim in providing information and research findings was to disrupt the usual ways the people in the school looked at the activities in which they were engaged. He wanted them to ask significant questions and to look in a new way at what they did. The people had to find a new language to talk about what could be done. While not focusing on this issue of finding a new language in as direct a way as Cremaschi-Schwimmer did in Skalbeck's (1991) study, Morgan in fact was instrumental in encouraging the formulation of a new vocabulary that enabled change to evolve at Mountainvista. This vocabulary was instrumental in moving the focus of discussion beyond modifications of the system the present administrators inherited to dealing with major issues facing not only the school but society at large.

### Dealing with A New Paradigm

People at the school who began to use different language called into question some of the assumptions that they and others had used for so long. What Morgan and those proponents of change wanted fitted into a much larger picture. Morgan wanted to reconstruct people's preferences so that a better way was devised to be involved with each other and with students (Lindblom, 1980).

Morgan was aware that the system of education he came through, and that still dominated the state and country, was not serving students well. It was not preparing them for life in the twenty-first century. He was conscious that there would be a new paradigm in place when those students were adults and making their adult contribution to the world. It was obvious to him that what the school was perpetuating was grossly inadequate as a way of preparing students for this world of the new century. He believed that a crisis was occurring in the culture of the society at the end of the twentieth century and that a transformation is underway. Many authors agree with him and are promoting ways to help organizations to ease the transition into the new era (Nirenberg, 1993). There is a paradigm shift occurring that was not being addressed by the educators in most schools. There are many aspects to this shift and Mountainvista School attempted to move in a direction to deal with some of these, a direction that seemed to be indicated by research. One direction was in relation to time and Howell spoke about that aspect in this way:

The whole industrial age of our society is based on time. Before that age agriculture wasn't based on time, it was based on getting the job done. You didn't succeed if you only fed seventy percent of the cows. You didn't get a "C" if you only fed seventy percent of the

cows. You didn't get a "C" if you only planted seventy percent of your acreage. You failed. But it wasn't thought of like that. You worked until the job was done. The industrial age came along and you finished work when the whistle went and you punched your time-clock. I think that is changing now and I think that whole age was an aberration and now we are moving into the information/technology age when you keep working until the work is done. So I see a classroom needs to be structured so that kids have projects that are meaningful to them and will last a long time and will give them time in the structure to finish the project. It takes a completely different way of thinking. We are still stuck on the fact that we get paid on time. We come to work on time and we leave on time. That is really a hang-over from a time-clock mentality from the industrial era.

The paradigm shift that was alluded to here is not some minor adjustment in a pattern of doing things. It is a fundamental reorientation of a value system or a revolution of consciousness. Such a shift requires facing the crisis of the culture and accepting the need for transformation. Facing that crisis requires honesty, integrity and courage. It is one thing, however for people to face the crisis individually and adapt their behavior in line with a new way of thinking, it is another to transform the institutions to align them with the new consciousness and to protect them from the damage of continuing in the old mental model (Nirenberg, 1993).

The implications of this shift for the people at Mountainvista School meant moving beyond the isolationism and absolute authoritarianism that used to characterize the school. The move was necessary because those approaches originated in the very culture that is in crisis and more of the

same would only deepen the crisis. The old approach with its focus on individualism lacked a shared vision which made people more vulnerable to a collapse of meaning. It failed to put forward a "coherent and internally consistent world view" (Eckersley, 1993, p. 12). To enter into this shift, therefore, was a major undertaking by the people in the school. They had to courageously face what would no longer do and confront the dualism that was part of the old system with its divisiveness, elitism, isolationism and exclusivity (Fiand, 1990).

Part of this process required a willingness to allow for a genuine "gestalt shift in the whole way of seeing [their] relations to one another so that [their] behavior patterns [were] reformed from the inside out" (Bruteau, 1971). The nature of the changes proposed at Mountainvista essentially called for people to work from the inside out. The changes required people to be part of the process to develop common values and then to work out of those values. The motivation was to come from the inside. There was not going to be some external, coercive strong-man imposing a pattern of behavior. Rather, what was wanted was that people would become convinced about the proposals and then begin to work from a different frame of reference, a different mental model of what the school could be. There were concerted efforts by people at the school to face the challenges of the new paradigm by working to match their skills and interests. In committing themselves to meet those new challenges the people found they could cope with an increased complexity which provided them with energy and direction for further transformation (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993).

### Values Were at Stake

It became obvious to people at Mountainvista that the paradigm shift presented some real difficulties. One that surfaced was that the change process was essentially a values confrontation within people. The people at the school wanting change were confronting the values that directed their lives and in their reflection decided some of those values needed to be changed. Values are what inform people of what to do and what not to do. They provide the guidelines for people in personal and social aims as well as in moral conduct and competence. These values were expressed in the beliefs the people at the school had about what means and ends were desirable or undesirable, preferable or not preferable (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). The challenge those people wanting change issued for themselves and others at the school was to re-examine some of those values and change them.

The prospect of such re-examination was frightening to many people at the school and highlighted Nisbett and Ross' (1980) findings that beliefs are highly resistant to change. Nevertheless, because an environment evolved where it was safe to do so, many of these people were enticed to re-examine their values regarding school, students, teaching, etc. The culture in the school evolved to incorporate different perspectives that would support people as the journey of change progressed. That emerging environment placed a great deal of emphasis on being genuine, on being honest with self, colleagues and students. Part of this genuineness was the development of competency in a new approach to working with one another, to teaching or relating to students. It would have been dishonest for people promoting the changes to commit themselves and others to something they had no capacity to perform. Hence there was considerable



emphasis placed on acquiring the competencies needed to follow through with the changes. These developing competencies were part of the process of individuals becoming genuine and contributed to the credibility of those promoting change. Other people could see that those advocating a different approach in a number of areas were walking their talk. Such an appreciation assisted the development of credibility of the change promoters among the hesitant.

In the midst of the change of beliefs, however, was the realization on the part of people at the school that some beliefs are very deep set. Most found that some beliefs were not able to be completely changed. One of the reasons for this is that the beliefs stem from what people installed in their quality world, the things that were really important to them. The earlier items were installed there the more difficult it was to change the belief. The need-satisfying pictures in people's quality world became part of the value filter through which they perceived their world. If a picture was in people's quality world for many years there was a build-up of a huge memory bank of experiences that passed through that value filter. Replacing that item in the quality world would be very difficult and cause a great deal of dissonance. There was, therefore, always the possibility of people reverting to behavior that reflected the old beliefs. The pictures that people had installed in their quality world early in their life held a significant influence on their behavior. Gossen (1993) was sympathetic to such reverse movements and claimed that complete replacement of long-held beliefs was very difficult.

While conscious of this difficulty in replacing beliefs, there was a growing confidence among those promoting change in their ability to meet the challenges that lay ahead of them. This belief in their own capabilities

motivated those people to continue in the process. Because they experienced success in what they were doing in using the skills they learned, these people were very willing to branch out and try further changes. This confidence, however, did not lead to a swaggering arrogance. The mutual trust that built up among those developing changes kept them open to recognize the shortcomings, weaknesses and limitations that surrounded their attempts at change. It was in this quest for change that a number of people discovered something more about themselves. That discovery was an important part of establishing credibility with themselves and with other people at the school.

When people at the school were able to establish shared values, it was possible for them to act independently and interdependently (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). They didn't need the detailed framework of close supervision to ensure their direction. Instead they had a sense of ownership in the school and together were pursuing a common purpose. The consensus and agreement around shared values provided those people working for change with the power to effect these changes (Pfeffer, 1992). Because there were shared values in that group, they coordinated their activities much more efficiently and achieved joint action with less difficulty.

It was in the development of the parachute that common values were expressed in a visual and coherent way. The process of developing that parachute provided a sense of ownership on the part of people involved. It was much more a process of seeking some expression of what values were shared than it was of telling people what was or was not important. That process was critical because it was only when people believed those common values that those values resulted in value-driven behavior.

The administrators assisted people at the school to evolve shared values and then to develop the capacity to act on those shared values. They provided the resources and other organizational support that allowed the people in the school to put their abilities to constructive use (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). Out of this activity a sense of community developed and a great deal of mutual respect. This process increased enormously the credibility of the adults at the school in the eyes of the students. Gone was the war that existed between the teachers and students. That was in general replaced by the sense so many students spoke to me about of being cared for, of adults being looked on as people who would never refuse to help a student. It was the kind of relationship that Glasser (1990) advocated as a necessary ingredient in creating a quality school. In such relationships both students and adults were able to meet their needs much more effectively. This did not mean there were no problems at the school. But it did mean there was an atmosphere of care in which those problems were faced.

#### A New Disposition

Many of the prescriptive dictates of previous administrators were a reminder to people at the school of a way of thinking that emerged from the industrial paradigm and these dictates revealed a dualistic mindset. What was central to such a mindset were the rules of what ought to be done, the regulations that surrounded the day and encased life at the school into a tight, highly structured format. What the changes did was focus on the people who made up the school. Instead of tightly regimenting the life of the school into *doing* activities, the changes highlighted *who* the people were and *how* they were adults in whatever role they had at the school. This emphasized working at school as a way of *being*--a disposition--and left the whole rule and regulation aspect as a secondary feature of school

life. The sense was that the rules and regulations would flow from the disposition the people at the school had towards the school. If these rules and regulations did not flow from that disposition, then there would be no real energy or motivation to carry them out. They would simply become perfunctory obligations that had to be followed. If the only way these rules and regulations were followed was through imposition from a higher authority, then they had lost the ability to be life-giving. People promoting change at the school wanted rules and regulations that evolved from the changes to provide a framework that helped develop an environment that would be energizing and facilitating. They did not want a series of barriers that prevented creativity and response to needs. They wanted the rules to provide a shape to enable people to live out their particular role in the school, whether that be student, teacher, administrator, classified staff or parent, and use the abilities they had to be of benefit to other people at the school and to students.

People were aware that a variety of gifts were available there at the school. That did not make those people who were gifted in some area superior. It simply meant the school was richer because those gifts were available to the school. The attitude that was promoted was that people were equal in being worthwhile individuals who had something to contribute to the school. Obviously, to be gifted in an organization of equals did not mean that everyone was equally gifted (Fiand, 1990). The challenge was to find complementary ways for those gifts to be used. Through the efforts at peer coaching, cooperative learning and similar activities, moves were made to facilitate that complementarity. That was obviously contrary to the dualistic approach of people always on the lookout for ways to prove they were the "greatest."

The implications of that new approach were far reaching. It required the administrators to let go of much of the power that had previously been ensconced in the positions they held. It encouraged teachers to share their insights and spectacular successes with others, with the likelihood that someone would use what they had discovered. It required teachers to let go of an attitude that may not have valued classified staff as equals. It required the development of a sense that all people at the school were equals with different abilities to contribute.

What was wanted was a disposition, not just adherence to a practice. That disposition could not come about through external authority or imposition. The move had to come from within. For people to work out of that disposition, a certain authenticity was required. It was hard to fake. Authentic change in the quality of life for the students at the school could only come from changes in the beliefs people at the school had about reality. The beliefs those people held about school, about each other, about students, about learning, about teaching, etc. needed to change if real, substantial change was to occur. It was through the influence of those who had made that shift that others were enticed to examine and develop new beliefs in the ways outlined above.

The dispositions of the promoters of change centered on a much more vague consideration than the rules and regulations that had been imposed during previous regimes. These people were aware that the legalistic and dualistic approach that had characterized the school was only maintained through coercion of fear or guilt. They knew the atmosphere that existed in the school under that approach had not been conducive to growth for adults or students. What these people did was work from some vision, a sense of direction, some disposition towards the school. It was out

of that awareness of the direction in which they believed the school should go that their energy flowed. They were not firm or rigid about what the school could be. Rather they were moving in a trust-filled way into possibilities and so had no desire to ever "arrive." They had embarked on a journey and, as MacIntyre (1984) outlined, what enabled people to gain a sense that their lives were intelligible and meaningful was seeing themselves as part of a narrative that was unfolding. Such a trust-filled approach led without difficulty to a desire by these people to continually improve the quality of life at the school. There was then a natural progression to some strategies that would enable them to achieve that goal. In their search the format for the steering committee was formulated. The motivation for the strategies arose from within. It was not something that was imposed and unrelated to their common purposes. In such circumstances the disposition the people had to the school was the main factor in the changes in the way policy was formulated. The action was authentic because it arose from within the people, they owned it and it was a sign of their integrity, not something they did automatically, were coerced into or carried out because they had been manipulated.

Several people at the school mentioned the change in their beliefs, or their disposition towards being in the school, was sometimes surprising. At times they were conscious of having moved in their understanding and that some insight led to a different disposition towards the school. Such dispositions did not come about through imposition or consensus. They emerged from insights that were discovered in honest discussions with sympathetic others or through experiences the people had. They could not, however, be willed or resolved by persuasion or decree (Fiand, 1990). The problem that was apparent was that leading people to new insights and

different dispositions was not entirely a logical, linear and predictable undertaking. Something of the synergistic was required. Something that was more messy than an imposed regulation. This confirms Rosenblum and Louis' (1981) study that change is a complex process mediated by both the rational and nonrational aspects of the functioning of the organization. It also links with Glasser's (1984) idea that behavior is not just a result of an intellectual decision. Behavior is a complex mixture of the four elements of activity, thinking, feeling and physiology. While changing one of these influences the others, it does not follow that simply changing one will automatically bring about the desired change in behavior. Sometimes people had to wait patiently as others wrestled with new information, new feelings of fear and uncertainty, new ways of relating with other adults and with students. Such procedures were not usual in schools and there were times when considerable sensitivity was required by those promoting change as people came to terms with the new experiences.

What became obvious in the course of the investigation was that those people who had developed a positive disposition to the change process were much more influential. They were not locked into a particular way of doing things and so they were open to consider alternative approaches. They would easily enter into reciprocal influence relationships that were intending real change. That is, they were prepared to become involved in the leadership dynamic more willingly than those people who were working from rules and regulations. The outcome of entering into the dynamic was that those people acquired a definite sense of ownership in the school and increased their confidence in being able to work with others to improve life at the school. In other words, being part of the leadership dynamic added to their autonomy and value as individuals (Rost, 1991).

They were people who had placed new items in their quality world and were consequently using a different filter in which to perceive the world. Individuals made the decision about what they put in their quality world. No one else could do that. They alone chose what was in their quality world. Because of this individual, unique decision, there was no complete consensus of what was quality. That would be impossible. What happened was that a growing number of people chose to put an increasing number of similar things in their quality worlds.

#### Challenges in Making the Shift

Understanding the deeper implications of the changes that were proposed helps to explain why the proposals that emerged from Morgan and the advocates of change led in some cases to such acrimonious opposition. Parts of people's world view, their values, were being called into question, and many were unwilling to enter into a process that was so alarming to them. Their meaning-making mechanisms were breaking down under the onslaught of so much material that caused considerable dissonance (Zullo, 1982). The changes proposed at the school called for more than some adaptation of a timetable or the implementation of a new subject. Rather, they required a fundamental shift in the way people were involved in the school. This meant people had to change their thinking and behavior in relating to administrators and other adults, in relating to students, and in the provision of experiences for students that would contribute to their education as citizens for the world of the twenty-first century. This was difficult and in such circumstances people who are afraid tend to resist and cling to what is safe for them by becoming rigid, mistrustful and extremely critical of those shaking their world. However, if an organization in the midst of this cultural crisis clings to stagnation,



unwillingness to grow and intransigent conservation of the past for the sake of tradition, then it will not mature and will instead move into regression and decay (Fiand, 1990). It is important for an organization to be aware of the past but it can not afford to allow itself to be lost there.

Such a shift was not easy and provoked many heated exchanges among people at the school. Yet for those teachers who were more comfortable with entering into the change process, the empowerment they encountered was an enlivening experience.

This empowerment came from the administrators being prepared to let go of their power positions and share their power. The administrators took responsibility for providing a structure that would allow adults to be successful and so empowered those people. They strove to manage the organization of the school to give the adults opportunities to gain knowledge; they provided them with time and opportunities to improve their skills and capabilities as professionals. Ironically, by the action of letting go of their positional power the administrators were more influential than if they had used the dominance of their position to push their point of view. Such an understanding is consistent with views held by Foster (1986a) and Kanter (1983),

Those people caught up in the day-to-day activities of the school were often too close to the reality with which they were dealing. The administrators nudged such people towards a different view of how adults could work together and support one another. They also prodded them to consider new ways of how students could be taught and how to relate with them. Through the use of research and appropriate readings, the administrators helped people reframe their understanding of the school. They also assisted in the mobilization of insights and interpretive abilities

to find creative ways of reshaping situations that were unsatisfactory for the adults and students at the school (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Morgan, 1993).

The outcome of mobilizing insights led people to feel empowered to make changes. This awareness that they could do something about what they considered unsatisfactory in the school liberated the potential of the people's consciousness and enabled them to make and shape the world of Mountainvista School (Freire, 1970). Because a number of people at the school were prepared to catch sight of the ideas, assumptions, attitudes and other social constructions that had fashioned their life at the school, they were able to break those modes of thinking and create new mental models (Senge, 1990). From such new models emerged changes in the world of the school. One of the new assumptions was that everyone at the school had within them the potential to understand and transform their world. This assumption challenged the taken-for-granted ways of thinking that locked people into a sense of being disempowered. It also helped people discover and reshape themselves and their world in ways that recognized the importance of other people and particularly of the students. The understanding of control theory that many people had developed enabled them to approach the changes with a sense of being responsible for their own behavior and providing more conducive opportunities for others, particularly students, to do the same.

The realities that impinged on people as they went about their work at the school were individually and collectively a construct of the people at the school. The pattern of relationships that existed had resulted from decisions people had made. That pattern could, therefore, be changed by the people in those relationships making different decisions. The process of

change was one of mobilizing people to tap into individual and collective imagination to construct a new reality that provided meaning for adults and so enabled them to better support one another and better serve students (Morgan, 1993). The working of the individual and collective imagination of the people wanting change resulted in them asking totally new questions about what was possible (Land & Jarman, 1992). It meant that people replaced items in their quality world and found more need-satisfying behaviors.

### Processes Underlying Change

The advocates of change were looking for more than superficial, cosmetic modifications. They wanted substantial change in line with Argyris' (1982) double-loop learning. What they were concerned about could not be addressed through superficial modifications. The challenge was to produce substantial change.

### Substantial Change Was Sought

The way they sought those changes was through reframing the context of the school. Reframing the relationship between adults and students resulted in critical changes in the operation of the school. People at the school looked at one another in different ways. They were no longer enemies of one another. Those wanting change, therefore, helped people see the boundaries of their perspective and, within the limits they discovered there, opened new windows through which the people could find different ways of seeing and so develop new ways of behaving (Morgan, 1993).

The initial problems that faced the group wanting change seemed substantial and almost overpowering. Several individuals, however, were not cowed by the enormity of the task ahead of them. It was because these

individuals developed their own theories to explain their present situation and were prepared to share those with one another that they empowered each other into action. Such a support system was crucial in sustaining the changes and is aligned with Sarason's (1982) findings on the vital role such support plays in any change process. In the last analysis, the changes at Mountainvista School occurred because of the attitude of mind that led some people to think differently about the school and to write the realities they wanted to realize. Their ability to imagine something different provided them with the stimulus to tackle the problems that loomed before them. Inherent in such an undertaking, however, was the courage to face the enormity of the task and persevere. To launch out into the unknown without really having a clear idea where the journey would take them required courage. To continue on the journey when the opposition mounted and people wanted to turn back required courage. Above all, to seek to reframe people's understanding of what the school was and could be required courage.

Morgan illustrated that courage in his commitment to the change process. Taking risks, being intrepid and bold were a few ways he let people know what his values, interests and vision were for the school. He walked his talk and fought for those concerns he believed were right for Mountainvista.

### Creating Meaning

The activities of those advocating substantial change were a cause of considerable disruption to some people's world views. There was uncertainty and fear about what was happening at the school among some people. These people found it difficult to see the meaning in the confusing onslaught of changes. The development of the parachute and the activity of

the steering committee provided a remarkable framework for creating meaning in the school. Frankl (1959), reflecting on his ghastly experience in a concentration camp, claimed that people's main concern in life was "not to gain pleasure or to avoid pain but rather to see a meaning . . . in life" (p. 115). He found that if people developed meaning-making-mechanisms that enabled them to find meaning for their lives then they survived. It was only through each person making meaning that these people were able to withstand the chaos and find a way out.

At Mountainvista there were occasions when opportunities were not provided for people to have sufficient information to be able to know the "why" of what was going on. When the administrators recognized this and provided such opportunities, they were, in fact, giving voice and form to the people's search for meaning and, therefore, made the work in the school purposeful. The common purposes, or the meanings associated with these, served as a reference point for people at the school. When the people at the school saw meaning and were aware of and committed to common purposes, they meandered through the seeming chaos and still made decisions that were consistent with those purposes. It was meaning that people were seeking, and those people in the school who were best able to articulate the purposes and proposals that contributed to that meaning were the ones who exercised most influence on the direction the school took.

The real danger the advocates of change faced was the deep desire of most people to have certainty. They saw that in order to have continual improvement there was a need to stay comfortable with uncertainty, to be able to live with ambiguity. In the midst of the confusion and ambiguity, they assisted one another to take sure steps conscious that reality changed shape and meaning because of what they did.

In the midst of difficulties and chaos at times, Morgan kept hope alive by talking about positive images of the future and engendering positive thoughts about improving the experience the students had at the school. It was in the process of establishing the need for change and discussing with one another the problems they needed to face that people at the school discovered hope. Through honest discussion with one another they began to see further possibilities for change and gained the energy to continue. The provision of hope by the administrators and other people involved was an influential factor in the change process. The way Morgan and the other administrators worked in support of changes reinforced the findings of, among others, Berman and McLaughlin (1978) and Fullan (1982), who pointed out the importance of support from the people in authority positions for change to be initiated and sustained.

#### The Importance of Information

A crucial element in the process of enabling people to see meaning in the confusion they experienced with the changes and of establishing a new vocabulary that would enkindle hope was the distribution of information. Information about research, about the experiences other teachers had and the consolidated wisdom of people's thinking. Morgan believed that knowledge was the fulcrum for influencing people, negotiating conflict, empowering and changing their lives. He saw that providing information allowed people to organize their worlds in a different way because of the insights they gained. From those insights arose different practices and subsequently different structures. He strongly held the view that the function of information was revealed in the word itself: *in-formation* (Wheatley, 1992). Thus the fuel for new life in the school, new practice,

new structures came from the supply of information in as many ways as possible.

What happened at Mountainvista School was that information bred information. When information about research was disseminated, it led people to try something different and supply more information back to the administrators and to other people at the school. Those who were intrigued went to seminars or to other schools. Other workshops were organized for people to come to the school and share new approaches. While some saw chaos in what was done, out of that chaos came an extraordinary amount of information through which came a new and different order. One of the roles the administrators had in the process was constantly supplying nourishing information that would assure the health of the process. This was a very significant way in which the administrators exercised influence over what happened at the school. By supplying nourishing information they assisted in facilitating the school remaining an alive and responsive organization. A certain resilience built up through the constant supply of information to the people working in the school. Such resilience enabled people in the pattern of relationships that was the school, to learn to live more comfortably with the ambiguity and complexity that came to characterize the school.

There were a number of people, however, who were fearful of the complexity and the seeming confusion that developed. What the promoters of change wanted people to do was stand back and see the larger picture: the way the school fitted into society and what society would be like in the next century; the way the areas of the school fitted into the whole picture of the school; the way the classes fitted into the picture of that section of the school and the way the individual student fitted into the class. By taking

in the whole picture, the promoters of change obtained a new appreciation of what was required to be involved in the larger picture. Their aim was not so much to control the details of a linear way of seeing the school but rather to try some new approaches and see what happened. In doing this they were trying to intuit how the school worked in order to interact with it in a more harmonious way (Briggs & Peat, 1989). The intent in all this was not to arrive at a final set of variables that enabled the administrators to eventually control the school in new ways they thought appropriate. Rather, the intent became to understand and have a deep respect for the web of activity and relationships that made up the school. Thus the information was distributed as widely as possible and the activity and developing relationships that evolved from that sharing of information allowed for the unexpected and surprising to emerge. Many of the people promoting change relished the unpredictable and sought surprises because they believed that surprises were the only way to discover important principles that directed their work (Wheatley, 1992). They were not so concerned with having all the details beforehand. They were willing to step out on the dance floor and allow the music to engage them as they moved freely with their discoveries.

Those surprises occurred, for example, through breaking down barriers between subject areas and opening networks of people to new experiences and new possibilities. Innovations arose out of the ongoing exchanges as people crossed boundaries. Through these innovations further information was generated and fed back to people who were then able to arrive at additional innovations. This process enabled the people wanting change not only to entice others into the network, but also to help generate a desired future for the school that included all sections of the school



community. From this process arose the mutual purposes that eventually became tentatively enshrined in the parachute.

In this process of renewal the people in the school engaged in the use of information in two ways. One way was to create new information and the other way was to feed the information back on itself (Wheatley, 1992). The change promoters established formats for doing both these by bringing people together in a variety of different formats. These formats were designed to remove the constraints of narrow mandates and socially constructed intimidation. The establishment of the steering committee was a good example of avoiding the intimidation of position by dispensing with rank during the meetings. In doing this these formats had the potential of generating a great deal of information. Furthermore, the conflicts that surrounded many of the moves for change generated considerable information.

The administrators were not afraid to allow people to pursue the implications of information they had, even though it caused some dissension. The ambiguity that resulted from the pursuit of new approaches was unsettling for some. The change advocates, however, became the facilitators of disorder. They stirred things up and were always looking for better ways of supporting adults and serving the students. The "intellectual capital" they generated was substantial, and it arose from breaking through the layers that had become associated with the school. The pattern of relationships that existed in the school prior to Morgan becoming superintendent was very hierarchical. At the end of this investigation the pattern had changed substantially. What had unfolded was an interweaving of processes and an exchange of information that was not dependent on the position a person occupied. Information and influence moved in complex

and diverse ways throughout the pattern of relationships at the school. When Morgan spoke about the way ideas were dealt with and altered he said: "The process is so democratic in most cases that an idea evolves with input from other people so that at some stage the idea is so shared that it is a common idea rather than belonging to one individual, even though it may have begun with an individual."

An image for such a position is well described by Zohar (1990) when he wrote about quantum physics and described the relationship that exists among electrons: "The whole will, as a whole, possess a definite mass, charge, spin, and so on but it is completely indeterminate which constituent electrons are contributing what to this. Indeed, it is no longer meaningful to talk of the constituent electrons' individual properties, as these continually change to meet the requirements of the whole" (p. 99). By enabling the people in the school to relate in a similarly fluid and open a manner, the administrators helped establish an environment that was conducive to unending change. The different language that became associated with the change process was really different metaphors that more appropriately not only spoke about the new pattern of relationships that emerged, but assisted in their emergence. Foster (1986b) considers such an examination of language crucial because probing language structures can unmask distortions that imprison people in vicious cycles that have no winners.

### Changing Metaphors

Metaphors so completely permeate the use of language that people often fail to recognize that they are using metaphors. What is important to remember is that the metaphor does not just reside in the words that people use. Rather, most importantly, metaphor inhabits the thought. People know

unconsciously, and virtually automatically, many basic metaphors that help them understand life. Writers or speakers rely on people knowing such basic metaphors in order to connect issues they raise to the life-experiences of their readers or listeners (Lakoff & Turner, 1989). Thus a metaphor is a tool where people use one object or idea to create a new perspective on another (Smith, 1988). When an inventive writer or speaker is able to take a well-structured concept and use it to help people understand another concept, then new light is thrown on this second concept.

"The availability of conventional metaphors makes them powerful conceptual and expressive tools. At the same time, however, they also have power over us. Because they can be used so automatically and effortlessly, we find it hard to question them, if we can even notice them" (Lakoff & Turner, 1989, p. 65).

To study metaphor is to be confronted with the hidden aspects of one's own mind and one's own culture. Metaphor is anything but peripheral to the life of the mind. It is central to our understanding of ourselves, our culture and the world at large.

The use of metaphor has been well documented as a fundamental way in which people structure their relationships with the world (Brown, 1977; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Ortony, 1979; Schön, 1979; White, 1978). People use metaphors to construct and embellish meaning and to develop their own theory and knowledge in a great variety of ways.

It is not possible to understand the leadership processes at Mountainvista School without understanding the change of metaphors that occurred. The metaphors that were used to talk about the pattern of relationships that was Mountainvista School prior to the change process

being initiated were very hierarchical. That was how the people understood what a school was.

By using concepts that researchers and other writers developed, the administrators, and other advocates of change, used language to lead people at the school to take ideas that were associated with one area of meaning and extend it metaphorically to another. For example, the administrators were able to entice people at the school to use images that allowed them to consider the reality of their world in a new way through their use of language Glasser developed for speaking about control and responsibility. By exposing people to the understanding of needs, total behavior and quality world, the administrators provided these people with the opportunity of choosing new ways to think about themselves, others and the task before them. As a result of thinking about adults and students differently, the adults who were supportive of the changes began to relate to them in a different way. Adults began to show a real concern for the students' needs and for one another's needs. In Glasser's terms, these adults had put the students and other adults into their quality worlds. One of the consequences that flowed from doing this was that students began to put those adults into their quality worlds. The outcome was vastly improved relationships between the two.

Most people at the school were not aware of the metaphorical way in which they used language. They saw their reality as being much more real and concrete than it actually was. The community of the school was not a concrete reality. It was a pattern of relationships that had been established over years of existence. As such, it could only be spoken about in a metaphorical way. Although not necessarily overtly acknowledging this, the administrators used language and different strategies to move people to

use different metaphors to think about the school. They intuitively realized that all knowledge resulted from an interpretive process and, therefore, sought to find new metaphors to think about the process through which knowledge was created. Knowledge in this sense was not so much something that was objective and "out there," as a capacity and potential that a person could develop. By enticing people to use their creativity and imagination to find new ways to think about creating something better for adults and students, the administrators promoted the power of each person in the school to create a new school.

The metaphors that people used provided different insights about the school, about other adults, about students, about course content, etc. By using a particular metaphor they configured the world they dealt with. The brilliance of the way the administrators worked at Mountainvista School lay in not imposing an authoritative statement on the "way things are going to be done," but in putting the problem of interpretation with the individuals who were the "knowers." By doing that, the administrators did not impose their understanding of the school on others. Rather, they encouraged people to develop the art of recognizing what each situation meant for them and to be aware of the biases and assumptions from which they worked. In this way the administrators avoided being locked into a new blind alley. They recognized that any particular proposal or strategy was inevitably a partial response, incomplete and distorted. While a certain proposal was possibly suitable as an interim measure on the road to further development, the administrators were not prepared to cast any procedure or practice in concrete. Nothing was sacrosanct. Anything that was being done could be questioned to see if a better way could be found. The process of continuous improvement sought to help people at the school "develop

ways of seeing, thinking, and theorizing that can improve their ability to understand and manage the highly relativistic, paradoxical and changing character of the world with which they have to deal" (Morgan, 1993, p. 282).

By providing some tools to help develop these skills, the administrators contributed significantly to the change process. When people at the school thought and theorized about what had happened and what should happen, they sought to find theory that gave meaning to what they were doing. They worked from Lewin's (1951) position that there is nothing so practical as a good theory. When the people formulated a theory to grasp what they could do to better the experience of the students, it was a good theory to the extent it provided that insight.

What Morgan and the other advocates of change did was "read" and "write" the school's life. Through the use of different metaphors they created different insights and made different behaviors possible. They created meaning in the school for people by investigating the multidimensional nature of the school. There were always many ways to interpret what happened at the school, and they were open to find ways to capture insights so they could gain and share a fuller understanding of the school. At any time it was possible to have numerous accurate story lines regarding the school since the people were ordering reality and that process was always governed by the frameworks of the readers and the interests being served. By reading the life of the school, these people were in a better position to then write the story and to influence the way it unfolded.

Through the use of research, through attending conferences and seminars, through sharing ideas and experiences, the people at

Mountainvista began to use a different language. They developed metaphors and symbols that enabled them to establish verbal bridges in their relationships with one another and therefore came to share a comprehensive meaning of what they created at the school (Caroselli, 1990).

The reconstruction of the preferences of adults at the school was a pervading and seductive process. It was through becoming immersed in the life of the school with the urging to always be looking for better ways of being involved with other adults and with students, that adults interested in change began to absorb the atmosphere of change in the school. Their old attitudes and beliefs were whittled away, and they found themselves adopting new ones that made more sense to them in the context of the challenges they encountered. Thus, as Louis et al. (1984) found, when the proposed change meshed with what the teachers' considered usable knowledge, they were willing to take the risk and to try a new approach.

#### Training People to Be Competent

It was impossible for the adults to do what they did not know how to do. It was essential, therefore, for the people in the school prepared to change to first gain an understanding of a new way of thinking. With that they then needed to gain some skills so they could walk that talk. Part of this process was strengthening the people's competence as well as their confidence (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). Such a process empowered people. The administrators' attitude toward failure was a significant factor in not only building up people's confidence, but in enticing them to experiment and share their experiences together. Such activities helped create a common understanding of what was being done, a shared set of values, and a commitment to those values. Toffler (1990), while speaking about

industry, made an observation that can equally apply to the experience of people in the school at Mountainvista when he said: "The old smokestack division of a firm into 'heads' and 'hands' no longer works . . . the knowledge load and, more important, the decision load, are being redistributed. In a continual cycle of learning, unlearning, and relearning, workers need to master new techniques, adapt to new organizational forms, and come up with new ideas" (pp. 210-211). The moves were made at Mountainvista School to provide opportunities for people to learn, unlearn and relearn in an effort to find new ways of being a school and being of greater service to the students who attended. In addition to the individuals learning, the administrators wanted the school to become a learning institution (Senge, 1990). The training in reality therapy and control theory was a crucial factor in providing adults with the competencies they needed to put their new understandings into practice.

One of the implications of providing people at the school with further education and training was that the process of change became unpredictable. The administrators did not know what would result from sending someone on a development seminar. Because of how someone was challenged during a seminar, for example, the person sent from the school could come back with a whole new way of providing opportunities for students to be involved in discovering history. The implications of providing opportunities were not under the administrators' control. The administrators' attitude was not tied into specifics, that was the responsibility of the professional teacher. The administrators were concerned with improvement and providing opportunities for adults to gain knowledge and skills to promote that improvement.



### Politics and Change

The use of information was crucial in bringing about the changes as was creating new metaphors. People needed to be competent in order to be credible in a new system. However, there was a need to do something as a result of the insights and training that were gained. In moving beyond the lengthy discussions into the realm of making a difference, the change agents had to become political. Any organization is so complex that there are always many factors at work in the relationships that exist in that group of people. It is essential that those wanting change know the political landscape and become involved in it. Policy is not arrived at simply through a calm, logical, positivistic sequence of steps. Policy arises out of individuals interacting together. To that interaction those people bring all their assumptions, their agendas, both hidden and overt, the pressures of their daily life, their particular awareness of the implications of taking certain positions, etc. For policy to emerge from such a gathering requires more than a logical process. Politics is inevitably at work and those who are politically astute are able to exert influence in ways that facilitate the formulation of policies. This does not necessarily mean anything unethical is involved or that people are being manipulated in inappropriate ways. It means that the politically astute are able to bring their personal resources into play to persuade other people of the value of a certain position.

At Mountainvista School there was considerable political activity. Morgan was aware of the need to negotiate, bargain, entice and work with people in order to move the change process along. His dealings with people reluctant to change illustrated his political activity.

Part of the political agenda that Morgan followed was creating a level of trust, respect and integrity with other people at the school and the board. The administrators developed an increasing sophistication politically. This applied not only regarding activity within the school but also their involvement outside it. For example, the activity surrounding the establishment of the new school revealed the skillful use of influence by the administrators, particularly Morgan. He was able not only to guide the project through the board discussion and the subsequent dealings with the Office of the State Architect, but also to deal with the architect and those associated with supplying specific equipment for the new school. During these negotiations Morgan used his personal resources to move the project ahead to achieve the common purposes of the people at the school. These resources included: his knowledge of what the teachers wanted in order to continue to proceed with the changes that had occurred; his contact with legal and technical people who could alert him to important issues in the negotiations; his ability to confront conflict and not be cowed simply because the other party became angry; his willingness to listen to the arguments of the other party and his graciousness in welcoming people to the site and enabling them to feel at ease. By the use of these personal resources Morgan was able to build influence relationships with a large number of people who had an impact on what happened in the building of the new school.

Morgan's proposal to engage the consultants to help orchestrate the passage of the bond issue to provide money for the new school was one incident that illustrated the political activity surrounding that project. The way the group of parents was organized to make phone contact with every

voter was a significant political act to influence the outcome of the bond issue and made it possible for the school to be built.

Morgan was able to use conflict as a way of moving people to consider other alternatives. He used a variety of methods to challenge the underlying assumptions and socialized values of those people who were hesitant or reluctant to change. In the early days some of these led to considerable conflict. Such conflict forced Morgan, but also all those supporting change in the school, to think through even more carefully the implications of what they were doing.

With experience and the passage of time Morgan developed a highly honed political sophistication. This was evident when he challenged other teachers but held to the convictions that he formed with the group promoting change. He knew that with a few of those opposed to the changes there was little chance that a direct approach from him would result in anything more than a straight-out rejection. He, therefore, had someone who was more acceptable to these people talk about the ideas with them. The source of the ideas was not the issue. The main objective was to entice those teachers to consider other options for relating to students and offering them opportunities to learn. As Nesbitt mentioned on several occasions, Morgan knew just how to approach people and what to say that would intrigue them and lead them to think in a different way. Such approaches also led those people to talk to still other people about what they were thinking.

Moreover, the administrators developed a political astuteness when they used the resources of the school that were available to them to further the cause of change. Those resources were multiple. There were the obvious ones of money and time. Both of these were used to provide

opportunities for people to obtain exposure to new ideas and practices or gain training in particular skills that assisted in the change process. Block (1993) claimed that few things symbolize more what is important in an organization than the allocation of money. This was borne out at Mountainvista where the education and training of adults were given a high priority in the allocation of money. There was also the resource of trained people and the willingness of these people to use the expertise they had to assist in the spread of a culture of change. The administrators, along with these people with expertise, used this resource in a very political way to influence those people who were wary or hesitant. By mobilizing the expertise of some teachers, the administrators focused the agenda for change and spread the front on which the moves were made. In this way it was not just the administrators who were advocating change nor were they the only source of ideas for new approaches or practices. Other people at the school became promoters of change and themselves became political in influencing the reluctant.

The other area where Morgan was politically active was with the board. He developed a manner of working with the board that gave him extraordinary influence with the members of the board. His sway with the board members was demonstrated in his use of knowledge, as he always made sure that he had a good grasp of the issues he raised with them; in the credibility he built up with them; in the thoroughness with which he informed them and the respect he showed for each individual.

The administrators, however, did not politicize the parents in support of the changes. They were contending with issues at the school site and they did not put energy or time into using resources to focus the parents' commitment to their children in ways that would have furthered

the change process. This was a major drawback in instituting change in the school community and politicizing the community in support of the school. This was in contrast to Cremaschi-Schwimmer, in Skalbeck's (1991) study, who politicized parents in such a way that they became a significant factor in bringing about change at Lincoln Preparatory School. She developed strategies to bring parents into the culture of the school that led to their open commitment to their children's education. By harnessing that commitment she enabled them to have a major influence in the change process at Lincoln.

#### Implications of the Changes

The nature of the change process at Mountainvista could not happen without some significant implications for the experience of people at the school. The whole atmosphere at the school was transformed as the changes took hold and became embedded. The processes of bringing about change as well as the content of the changes were contributors to that atmosphere. Key to the change process were the new ways adults with investment in change found to relate to one another and to the students. This led to a deeper commitment to the other adults and to students and the development of a community spirit at the school. The people who were prepared to enter into this process were faced with becoming more authentic in their relationships and more honest in their communication with others. In this way they built up their credibility with both the adults and students at the school, thus enabling them to have more influence in the way the journey of the school unfolded.

#### Changing Relationships

The new pattern of relationships that developed between adults and students was obvious to anyone who examined the change in the atmosphere

at the school. The new relationships were only possible, however, because adults who were advocating changes had developed different relationships among themselves and became concerned about what was happening at the school. They had replaced some of the items in their quality world and as a result they were viewing things differently. These adults developed a genuine concern for each other and what could best assist them in their work. The common purposes were eventually articulated in the formation of the parachute (Appendix E). These purposes became the simple governing principles of the school. Within these guiding principles people in the school were expected to devise ways of being together and supportive of one another, involved in the students' education and relating to students. The hope of those who constructed the parachute was that it would provide a clarity about the purpose of the school and the direction in which it was heading. By maintaining a broad focus on the school rather than taking detailed control, the creators provided the opportunity for flexibility and responsiveness. Thus, the steering committee, into whose hands the parachute was entrusted, was in a position to shape the school through concepts rather than complicated rules or structures. In a gesture of trust, the people at the school believed it was possible for order to arise in the school when something as simple as a clear core of values and vision were kept in motion through continuing dialogue. (Wheatley, 1992). Such an approach required adults at the school to operate as authentic individuals with each other and with the students. Part of this for the administrators meant being open to be taught. They developed the ability to listen and be guided by others while not being overly dependent on them or threatened by them. The administrators possessed enough autonomy to use their creativity without excluding the external influences that supported growth

and had relevance to improving the quality of life at the school (Burns, 1978). In allowing the dialogue to occur and empowering adults the administrators gave up some of their power when people had choices that blended with the core values and vision. Block's (1993) proposal of offering choice and building capability among staff is reflected in what happened at Mountainvista.

### Getting Commitment

An essential element in the change process was developing a culture in the school that supported the process. Morgan aroused other people's interest and commitment through supportive questioning of what was happening. He instilled a desire for continual improvement. The professionalism he expected of everyone, including himself, was part of the cultural landscape that evolved. The professionalism extended from the service provided for the students on the buses, in the cafeteria, in maintenance of the grounds and buildings to the way adults related with one another and to students and the academic format of the school's program. It was most evident in the trust the administrators displayed in the adults at the school. They were simply given responsibility for what they did in the school. This professionalism was a striking development in the unfolding of the changes at Mountainvista. That trust was the lubricant for individual and organizational change at the school (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). Those people willing to take risks knew they were safe with the administrators, knew they would be treated fairly, would not be embarrassed, harassed or punished for following some proposal. Glasser (1994) elaborated on the importance of trust in establishing an atmosphere in an organization to be characterized by quality. He emphasized the importance of adults being trusted to evaluate their own work and to

constantly improve what they were doing. Creativity was crucial in this mix at Mountainvista where the trust had been established and then together the advocates of change took the opportunity to develop new and exciting opportunities for the students to learn.

It was obviously in the administrators' best interests to be trusted by the people in the school. Their ability to have influence in moving changes along was greatly increased because the people at the school moving change along knew the administrators were reliable, that they could count on them. Because the administrators were prepared to allow themselves to be known by the other people, were prepared to put themselves on the line and take a position on issues, they became known as genuine people. Even if people disagreed with them, those people knew what individual administrators thought and why. That didn't mean the administrators never changed their mind. On the contrary, if people could advance a case that showed that an approach different from that being promoted or supported by the administrators would better serve the students, then the administrators were willing to consider it. That flexibility also added to the credibility of the administrators in the eyes of the people promoting change because they could see an openness to outside ideas and not just a closed circle of superiority. In general the people at Mountainvista were engaged in a common purpose of improving the experience of adults and students at Mountainvista. They were part of what Burns (1978) called the collective leadership whereby leaders appeal to the motivational wants and needs of followers; followers in their turn respond through reciprocal influence. In that way leaders and followers are bound together in a symbiotic relationships through which they achieve intended change. Such a change in shared norms was vital if there was going to be a change in the culture of



the school (Sarason, 1990). At the same time, however, the individuality of the adults was prized. In the midst of the collective leadership there was respect for the unique contributions individuals could make. The change agents thus avoided the negative implications of the highly cohesive group where group-think detracted from the contributions individuals could make (Janis, 1982).

### The Community of the School

Mountainvista School was a pattern of relationships that substantially changed in its constellation. The metaphor that was used to speak about the school altered in enabling change to occur. While the metaphor of community was not used frequently, the sense of community was very evident. With the realignment of relationships in the school there were many more opportunities for people at the school to have input. There developed among the change promoters a focus on commitment, obligations and duties that the people at the school shared. What evolved was a sense of collegiality that depended less on pressure imposed from organizational arrangements that forced people to work together, than on an internal commitment. Because the people at the school established ties with one another through their interdependence, their mutually adopted obligations, etc., they bonded together (Sergiovanni, 1994). That bonding in some cases became one of friendship where there was a shared recognition of and pursuit of a good. The sharing was essential and primary to the development of community at the school. The friendship there was that referred to by Aristotle, a friendship not so much focused on affection, although that was there, as on a common allegiance and a common pursuit of goods (MacIntyre, 1984). This common allegiance and pursuit was evident at Mountainvista. There was a common quest to bring

about change, to establish new patterns of relationships and create new ties. There was also a developing understanding of what it meant to commit themselves to each other and to the students at the school.

Through efforts to work together and be open to develop common values, the people at Mountainvista began to build up a sense of community. Such a sense had considerable impact on the development of the relationships that enabled the leadership dynamic to emerge. Many studies have highlighted the importance of community on the relationship that develops between leaders and collaborators (Tjosvold, Andrews, & Jones, 1985).

The developing sense of community had several consequences. One was that people involved in advocating change lost the fear of "losing" to other people at the school. Another was their drive for personal power-over diminished. This opened up possibilities for considerable cooperative work and a willingness to act responsibly on behalf of the common good. The commitment to shared values was witnessed not so much in grand statement the people assembled, as in the everyday activities in the school, the policies that were followed and the programs in which students were engaged.

The activity that contributed substantially to the development of a sense of community was the willingness of some people at the school to inquire together. The debate that emerged from those inquiries forced people to face up to what they thought was important. The inquiry led to conflict but it also promoted a greater understanding of what people really held to be important. The sense that developed in the school through people being willing to enter into the inquiry process was that all were learners and all could be teachers. It was a choice that individuals had to make. By

choosing to enter into the inquiry process, the administrators relinquished their bureaucratic role. They chose to be free to experiment and take risks, to fail, free to be themselves and acknowledge they did not have the answers. They wanted people at the school to join them on the path to discovery that inquiry opened up and to enter into genuine dialogue on what was best for the adults and students at the school. Such dialogue was possible only when the administrators were open and entered into the adventure of shared responsibility for the welfare of the school.

#### Credibility.

The above discussion highlights the complexity of the processes that occurred at Mountainvista School. Because advocates of change could see beyond the immediate modifications or adjustments that so many schools have made, they were confronted with open-ended questions. Many were aware that the values of the old industrial paradigm centered on a functional and efficient world where to be good or successful meant they had to succumb to the values of toughness, of logic, of certainty, exclusivity, ambition and power. Their rebellion against those values and their willingness to embrace mystery, inclusivity, compassion and vulnerability meant they were confronted with serious questions of what those values meant in practice. The courage they showed in seeking to answer those questions led them into areas they had not contemplated. They grasped the paradigm shift in which their culture was engaged and were prepared to step into the unknown. Those who were able to center on a clear core of values were able to develop a disposition that provided them with a framework in which to experiment with changes and allowed them to exert considerable influence on the unfolding narrative of the school.

The advocates of change, who included the administrators, worked hard to find new ways to relate with one another and with the students as well as finding better ways to be involved with the students' education. Their ability to think in different ways about those relationships and to have control theory as the framework for doing this greatly enhanced the richness of their experience together. They developed ways of interacting that were need-fulfilling. What enabled them to enter into new relationships and develop a sense of community was that they grew to trust one another and as a result felt they could take risks, not only in being honest with one another but in their projects and involvements with students. The more these people did this the more they built up their credibility with themselves as authentic people, with their colleagues as trustworthy and reliable co-workers and with students as adults who were genuinely concerned about them.

#### Some Conclusions

The investigation of the change process in this study revealed the complexity of that process. Because the advocates of change were interested in more than cosmetic change I was able to examine the substantive (real) changes that were made. That examination shows that for such changes to occur the people involved had to think differently about what they were doing. For their way of relating to each other and to the students to change, the adults had to think differently about themselves, their colleagues and the students. This meant that it was not possible for such change to occur unless people's beliefs, and even their belief system, underwent a significant change. The people concerned had to replace some of the items in their quality world. Those people who became the most important change agents were able to make that change in beliefs and move to a point

where they were not so much controlled by rules but directed by a disposition towards themselves, their colleagues and the students. Making such belief changes was difficult and was the cause of considerable anxiety for many individuals. Yet without it the changes would have been superficial.

Another factor that emerged was that influence played a major role in bringing about the change in beliefs and consequently the real changes that were intended. The influence that was crucial was characterized by noncoercion. This was so important because it left people with the freedom to disagree, to oppose, to critique, to support or inquire further and still remain part of the influence relationship. The lack of negative consequences for being involved in the process encouraged people to risk being genuine. Because people could enter into reciprocal relationships they were able to take turns in moving projects forward and were encouraged by such opportunities rather than competing with one another. Thus people who were willing to enter into influence relationships and thus move the school in a particular direction were enhanced personally by those relationships. Their experience of being in the school was enriched and their willingness to engage in further influence relationships was greatly encouraged. As trust developed among the change agents their enjoyment in being together increased. They enjoyed the exchanges that enriched their lives because their needs were met. Creativity became more available to these people because they felt they were in control and were being treated in a mature and supportive way. In such a supportive atmosphere the promoters of change were prepared to try creative ideas because they felt trusted by the administrators who understood creativity.

Yet another conclusion was that courage was required throughout the process. The change agents were out on the edge of new ventures with little idea of what might unfold. They needed to be clear about their core of values but they then stepped out into the unknown. This was not a popular or very defensible stand yet they were convinced the move to a new paradigm required such an adventure and they took the plunge. Courage was required to take that risk but it was also required to face the ire of those opposed to any change, to face the misunderstanding of those who wouldn't or couldn't grasp what was being done, to creatively search after better solutions that fitted their core values, to become vulnerable with colleagues in being honest about what they were doing, to hold the direction when failure confronted them and to seek to spread the good news when opposition was entrenched (Bray, 1994). Courage was also required to deal with the almost inevitable conflict that occurred when fundamental change was proposed. The resistance to change in underlying assumptions causes people to fight to preserve the security they associate with those assumptions. Conflict will almost inevitably occur when some people are making proposals that will call those assumptions into question.

#### Leadership at Mountainvista School

The above discussion covered some of the areas of change at Mountainvista School. The way the people there came to relate to one another, bring about change and search after common purposes revealed an affinity with the thinking behind Rost's (1993) definition of leadership. The definition states that: "Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (Rost 1993, p. 99). The moves used during the time of my investigation by those people wanting change at Mountainvista School

illustrated how this definition worked in practice. Rost (1993) insisted there were four elements to this definition that were essential for the process to be called leadership.

1. The relationship is based on influence. The relationships associated with the change processes that developed at Mountainvista allowed for movement of information and influence across boundaries established under the old paradigm. For example, there was no rank in the room during the steering committee meetings. People at those meetings were free to use their personal resources to persuade others to their point of view. As was amply illustrated elsewhere in this document, the attitude taken by administrators towards failure helped provide an environment in which influence could be used and where the relationships were noncoercive. In a caring and encouraging atmosphere people were invited to use their personal resources to promote their ideas and provide evidence to support them. They were also asked to listen to other people and seriously critique what was being proposed to search out what was best for the people at the school. The ways of persuading people were manifold and definitely reciprocal. Personal influence exercised by people at the school flowed in many directions throughout the complex networks of relationships that existed there (Burns, 1978). While there was a definite rational dimension in the structure of the meetings that were held, there were also other political factors involved such as the enticements that were available for people who were prepared to branch out into something new.

2. Leaders and their collaborators are the actors in this relationship. There were many instances I observed, and many more I was told about, where a variety of people had a significant influence that moved the group of people in a certain direction. This did not mean they were coercive in their

influence. It meant they had marshaled their resources and were able to use those resources to influence the group and lead it in a certain direction. On other occasions or on other issues, I noticed those same people being influenced by someone else who had marshaled their resources to have more influence. These people were not necessarily the administrators, although on a number of occasions the administrator present did have more influence, not so much because of the position he held, but because of the resources he was able to muster. His position, obviously, was one of his resources. Because of that position he had access to material that supported his proposal which others probably didn't have. However, there were numerous occasions when I saw people from a great variety of positions in the school community have such an influence in a group that they were able to move the group decision in a certain direction. There were many actors taking part in the dynamic of leadership as it played out in the school. Thus the leaders and collaborators exchanged roles as different opportunities arose (Burns, 1978).

What was also obvious was that people who were not playing a major influential role in a group were still involved. They were critiquing, examining, supporting or opposing the proposal or issue at hand (Neville, 1989). They were not passive spectators to the process. The role they were playing in the dynamic was as crucial as that of the leader at that time.

Yet this interaction when people were influencing one another to bring about change was not their sole preoccupation. They were busy people who were juggling many activities during the course of the day or week. Only a small portion of their time was involved in relationships set on influencing others to bring about change. Thus leadership was



something people engaged in as occasions arose, or, as Rost (1993) claimed, it was episodic.

3. Leaders and their collaborators intend real change. There was no question that what the advocates of change at the school were wanting was substantial change. In the efforts they made they intended to bring about changes that would transform the face of the school. Through an ongoing process of education and training, people at the school were challenged to consider more than cosmetic change. They were asked to move away from the safe, predictable, linear, mechanical and quantitative world they had known and to learn to live with ambiguity. Within that ambiguity there was a great deal of fluidity and unpredictability.

4. The changes the leaders and their collaborators intend reflect their mutual purposes. The efforts made at Mountainvista School arose from the concerns various people at the school had about what was happening to adults and students there. What those advocating change wanted was to install a process that would enable continuous improvement to occur. The reason for wanting such a process installed was to allow people at the school the opportunity to always seek after something better for everyone at the school. Ultimately their common purpose was to improve the quality of the experience students had at the school. To enable this to happen, adults had to feel safe, supported, competent and knowledgeable. The changes that were made reflected that common purpose. That did not mean all the changes were good for the adults or the students. Some of them were eventually recognized as failures and even harmful for the students or the adults and were discarded. The point is that I am not looking at the worth or value of the changes, but at the processes that were in place to bring them about. The involvement in the leadership dynamic at

Mountainvista school was not a matter of the administrators manipulating the group of adults to achieve a preset goal. Instead, the people worked together to evaluate the goals they considered important and sought to establish the conditions that were helpful to achieve those goals (Foster, 1986b).

Working from this new approach was hard for the people at the school. Many of them expended a great deal of energy on bringing about change and while they found it exciting and energizing, they were also aware of the cost involved. It was a messy and difficult business for adults to challenge underlying assumptions and fossick around in search of better ways to be involved with one another and with students.

#### Implications

The conclusions mentioned above indicate that change in beliefs, use of noncoercive influence relationships and courage are significant factors in enabling substantive change to happen. If people in a school are serious about such change then there are certain educational processes, structural changes and long term financial and time commitments they will have to make.

One of the key issues that arises out of this research is the need for people to change their beliefs if significant change is going to occur in an organization. They need to replace items in their quality world. The importance they attached to some idea or practice has to be replaced by something that is more need-satisfying. In other words, some of the things they believe in have to change. This study shows that for people to change their beliefs there are four important elements. Those wanting change in a school will have to educate people there to see the inadequacy of their current approach. They will need to provide opportunities for them to

explore alternatives, have the chance to work with someone who has had some success and be encouraged and supported as they try the new approach. Above all, the people in authority positions will need to trust their colleagues and encourage them to take risks. Without that fundamental change in their way of thinking, people will continue to behave in ways that emerge from their beliefs. They may adopt some different practices but these will be fads in the way Sergiovanni (1994) speaks about such practices where there is a change in behavior without a corresponding change in theory. Such practices are short lived and in many ways are disruptive if not damaging. On the painful, slow and anxiety-ridden path that people may be required to walk in order to change their beliefs they must find supportive and understanding mentors and fellow travellers. The administrators in a school can play a vital role in developing such a supportive environment. If people do not change their beliefs about themselves, other people and the pattern of relationships that make up the organization then the changes will be cosmetic. Fundamental change will only occur when people's beliefs change.

In addition, if those in authority positions want real change they will have to move down from their dominant position and become involved in reciprocal influence relationships that intend real change that reflect the mutual purposes of those involved in the school. An atmosphere will need to be developed in the school which encourages people there to take responsibility for the life of the school. The adults' ability to influence must be, and seen to be, real. For administrators to simply go through the motions of pretending to gather people's opinions and then do their own thing will be disastrous. It will be a betrayal of trust. Individuals involved in the change process will need to be genuine, authentic people who are

honest with each other and prepared to become vulnerable in establishing and pursuing common purposes.

It is dishonest for people to be expected to adopt a completely new approach to relating to one another and to students as well as being involved in a new way with students' education, if they have not been given the competencies to do those tasks. Those wanting substantive change will have to allocate money and time to enable people at the school to acquire these competencies. As Block (1993) stated so clearly, the allocation of money is a clear sign of where priorities are placed, so if people are serious about change and entering into the leadership dynamic then they need to show their priorities are real.

This research was carried out in a small rural district with one school. The implications of this research for large school districts with many schools would be that change has to occur at the local level. Superintendents have to entice the people in authority positions in schools to genuinely accept the option for change. If there is not that support at the local level and hence establishing the change process as a priority, then directives from on high will be of little value. Because real change will only occur when people change their thinking and beliefs, administrators at the district level have to work to inveigle those in a positions to establish priorities and allocate resources at the local school level to self-evaluate and see the need to change. These people have to set up influence relationships with the principals in schools in the same way that principals have to be involved in such relationships within their schools.

For people in depressed, inner-city schools this research shows that it is possible to bring about change by making the school a safe, warm place for people to be. By welcoming students and creating an environment that

is need satisfying for them, people in a school can be put into the quality world of the students and so become people who can have influence. The students need to know that adults care about them, that teachers will be available to help them. For some students school may be the only time in their day when they are not afraid of adults. In such an atmosphere a student can learn the competencies for taking more control of their lives.

By establishing priorities and allocating resources, even limited resources, according to those priorities, it is possible to build up competencies within the adults at the school to bring about change. The key factor is, however, that some adults have to change their beliefs about what is possible in a school and then entice others to explore possibilities with with them for the school.

At the same time, this study shows that enticing parents to somehow become involved in improving the school can contribute to the wholistic experience of the students. By not including the parents Mountainvista created considerable misunderstanding that made for a more difficult time for the students. With the school saying one thing and parents or guardians saying another the students were left in the gap. If school and home could work together it would make for a much more satisfying and need-fulfilling experience for the student.

#### Future Directions

In this investigation I became aware of areas that I touched on very casually that have significance for doing leadership in an organization. I took a wide focus in the study. In attempting to provide an overview of what happened over a significant period of time at Mountainvista, I was not able to investigate areas that deserve a great deal more attention. I focused to some extent on what impact changing metaphors had on the change

process at Mountainvista. However, there is a whole area of study around that topic that needs much more exploration. What became obvious to me was the need to examine how the use of language enables people to have influence in doing leadership. It was one of the factors that I considered but the emphasis I was able to give it was cursory. I have argued that for substantial change to occur in an organization people must change their beliefs. An important element in enabling them to do so is changing the metaphors they are using. The people who make up the organization must first realize that when they are speaking about the organization they are speaking in metaphors. Second, they need to examine the suitability of the metaphors they are using and then, if need be, find new metaphors that will more adequately touch the heart of the organization. There is need to explore in greater depth those processes. This is important for the study of leadership because change is such a crucial part of that process.

The use of metaphors obviously has a role in enticing people to change their beliefs, but there are other factors that were uncovered in this study that deserve further investigation. This study revealed the four phases that led to change in beliefs but further study of those phases would provide a much richer understanding of that complex process.

I examined a school where people had adopted a way of thinking and a pattern of behavior that was influenced by William Glasser. The change in the school, I argue, is in part, due to the change in the behavior of the adults towards one another and towards the students. The way people at the school changed their way of thinking about how human beings are motivated and how they relate to other human beings had an impact on what they then chose to do. These people replaced items in their quality world that enabled them to meet their needs in more satisfactory ways and

provided an atmosphere where other people met their needs. There are areas of investigation related to the role control theory plays in providing people with a framework for developing new behaviors. The new behaviors in which people engaged helped create an atmosphere in which people at the school felt safe, more trusted, cared for, supported, etc. This sense of trust and security in the midst of ambiguity is reminiscent of Starratt's (1993) discussion of the need for organizations to restore a basic sense of trust and ontological security. Many of the activities that contributed to the creation of this atmosphere were not part of the leadership dynamic. They were management activities that ensured there was current good order. However, such an atmosphere provided a much more conducive environment for influence relationships to develop which would bring about real change that reflected the mutual purposes of the people involved. There is a need for further study on the relationship of management activities in an organization to the development of the leadership dynamic. I would argue there is a very close connection between the way an organization is managed and the possibility of the leadership dynamic emerging.

During this study I became more conscious that the very nature of the study is value laden. The questions I was investigating, the questions I asked interviewees, the decision to note this activity rather than that, to take this document rather than that, to select this section of an interview rather than that, etc., all presupposes a frame of reference that is somehow tied to what I think ought to be (Foster, 1986b). Such a discussion obviously links back to biases, but it implies more than that. I was conscious that the very fact I was in the school asking questions and writing observations meant the school was changed because of the investigation. Several people I

interviewed mentioned that answering the questions I asked them caused them to think about what had happened and what they were doing in a way that they hadn't done before. Some gained insights as a result of such discussion and mentioned they would rethink some of the things they were doing. Thus it was not possible to study the school as it "was" because the very act of examining it changed it. This reinforced for me that everything I did in the school was value-laden. It would be interesting to examine the values such research embodies. It would also be fascinating to examine what values circumscribed the decisions made at the school. The decisions adults made were all based on some value. The administrators decided to support this proposal rather than that, to allocate money to this project rather than that, to ask an adult to go on this course rather than that, etc. All such decisions are based on a set of values. Such issues are not simply part of a theoretical, abstract discussion. They are played out in the daily life of the school and in the day-to-day activities of the classrooms. The study of values in the leadership dynamic would be a worthy area of study.

Central to the leadership dynamic is the influence relationship. This study examined the influence relationships that brought about change in the school but there are many aspects of those relationships that deserve further investigation. One area that would reveal interesting conclusions would be an investigation of the way people used their personal resources in influencing others in the organization.

The change process at Mountainvista began in a rather coercive way and was initially sustained by the authority of the superintendent insisting on policies. The fact he later changed his way of operating doesn't alter the fact of how he started. An important area of investigation in organizations undergoing change would be examining how changes in organizations are



initiated. While Morgan claimed that if he was starting over he would do things very differently, he said that from a point when the change process was well developed. The question remains whether the change process needed that initial forceful jolt to start the ball rolling.

Because of the way change was pushed through initially at Mountainvista a considerable amount of conflict was evident. An area of investigation would be to examine the place conflict plays in the change process within organizations. It seems conflict is almost inevitable because real change is going to shake the foundations people have used and will severely question their assumptions. Such activities are uncomfortable and threatening to people. However, can change be brought about with a minimum of conflict or should change agents instigate conflict as a necessary part of the process to entice people to change their beliefs?

The influence parents can have in facilitating change in a school is an area that needs considerable investigation. At Mountainvista they were not included in the process but if Strike's (1993) comments are taken seriously their participation is vital for democracy to be enhanced by what the school is seeking to do. How parents can best contribute to a change process that moves a school to meet the needs of students as they move into the next century is worthy of further study.

While this study provides some insights into the leadership processes that occurred, it raises many issues that need further investigation in order to flesh-out the emerging practice of leadership as the new paradigm unfolds.

### The Research Process

In the above discussion I have outlined some of the limitations of this study. One of the things I learned in doing this study was the complexity of

the influence relationships that lead to significant change. The scope of this research was too wide to allow me to examine in detail these complexities. I learned that the way people enter into noncoercive influence relationships varies considerably. Researching this through the interviews I did was inadequate to provide an in-depth study.

I found that because my approach to this study was so broad in looking at leadership across the school over an extended period of time, I was not able to follow up in detail areas that were intriguing for me. If I was doing a follow-up study I would limit my research to examine the workings of the steering committee. That group has become the funnel for change at the school and the policies that are developing there will have a significant impact on the future direction of the school. I would want to investigate the leadership dynamic in that group and to see how the influence relationships develop there and how the members of the group intend real change that reflect their mutual purposes. I would examine the process of establishing those influence relationships, the way the mutual purposes evolved and the how the relationships are sustained as real changes were considered. In addition to interviewing each of the members I would spend time at a number of meetings watching what happens and noting how influence is used and how people respond to that influence. Such an approach would allow me to delve into the workings of the committee and examine in more detail the strategies they employ in those relationships. It would also allow me to triangulate the information from the interviews with the observations and the minutes of the meetings.

By limiting the number of people I interviewed I would be able to return to respondents and conduct follow-up interviews. I found in the current research that returning to people after the first interview was a

very rich experience and provided some very valuable information. Much of the first interviews seemed to be concerned with discovering the parameters of the interview and establishing trust. I found the subsequent interviews were much more open and I was also able to check out impressions I had gained in transcribing the first interview.

The experience of doing this research taught me the need to be careful about drawing premature conclusions. While all conclusions are subjective, I found that it was so important to "hold [any] conclusions lightly, maintaining openness and skepticism [while I was in the process of the investigation] inchoate and vague at first, then increasingly explicit and grounded" (Miles and Huberman, 1984, p. 22). This was impressed on me when I drew initial conclusions during my first visit to the school on the basis of, from this perspective, very little evidence and was forced to modify them significantly with further evidence I gained in later visits. It was through continually seeking to identify my biases that I was forced to look at the evidence before me to draw conclusions, rather than simply taking what I expected to happen.

### Conclusion

This research reinforces how complex, messy and difficult it is to do leadership in an organization such as a school. There are so many people involved with a great variety of agendas, bringing vastly different life experiences and assumptions, possessing diverse abilities and competencies and coming together to be involved in the education of students. To establish a pattern of relationships among such a group of people that is going to enable all to be fruitfully engaged in a way that is life-giving to themselves and the students is a tall order.

The real danger people in a school face in coping with this difficult task is to establish a rigid structure for such relationships and then hold inflexibly to it. What people need to always keep in mind is why the school exists. A school exists to assist in the education of students. The focus for what adults do at the school should, therefore, be on what will best serve the students. Because of this everything at the school should be open to examination to see if it is serving the students needs. One of the key ways the administrators can serve the students is through ensuring those adults who are directly involved with the students have the skills, competencies and resources to meet the needs of the students. They need to ask is there a better way in which the adults at the school can be supported in their task of assisting the students with their education.

If people at the school take such an approach it is necessary for them not to become imprisoned in a structure. They need to be continually asking the question: "Is there a better way?" They should ask that question about everything in the school. Nothing should be excluded. Such an approach requires people to be comfortable with change and with being involved in and committed to the change process. It will mean their beliefs will be questioned and, if real change is to occur, then those beliefs will have to change. It also means that leadership, as understood in this study, is a real possibility. Because people would be looking to improve the experience of students at the school they would be wanting to explore different avenues to find such improvements. If they discovered something they thought would be beneficial, they would want to influence other people at the school to adopt a proposal and move the school in a particular direction. They would enter into influence relationships with people at the

school to bring about change that reflected the purpose of improving the lived experience of the students at the school.

The way administrators managed the school would have a significant impact on the alacrity with which people would enter into the leadership dynamic. If the administrators were open and supportive of the change process then other people in the school could have the courage to risk becoming involved in the leadership dynamic. Those people who did become involved could have a variety of roles at different times, be they leaders or collaborators, depending on the way they used their personal resources. The outcome for those people who became so involved would be a greater commitment to the school, an enhanced sense of ownership and an increased awareness of their own importance in the life of the school. A bond would develop among the people involved and they would find other adults would personally support them in their ventures. As such people sought after common purposes they could move in the direction of a disposition towards their involvement in the school rather than be locked into a set of rules. They would develop a core set of values that would guide their activities. With the development of such a disposition they would experience a freedom to experiment within the framework of the common values. This is part of what happened at Mountainvista School.

What I have developed in this chapter illustrates that through a process of trial and error, the people at Mountainvista School stumbled into a way of doing leadership that reflects very closely the theory expounded in chapter two of this document. The definition of leadership articulated by Rost (1993) seeks to capture the essence of what leadership will be in the postindustrial paradigm. In their attempts to improve their ways of working together and the education they made available to the students at

Mountainvista School, the advocates of change there began to do leadership that reflects this new understanding. In so doing they sought to move the school into a position where it could respond to the needs of students as they move towards the new century. What society will require of schools in the future is unclear. However, because many people at Mountainvista School are open to the change process, they will be able to respond to the needs as they evolve.

Schools will be one organization that will be markedly different as the details of the new paradigm unfold. In many ways what seems to be emerging as the characteristics of the new paradigm will mesh admirably with the nature of a school. Because a school is a nurturing place for both adults and students, the emphasis in the emerging paradigm on inclusion and compassion will enhance the ability of the school to respond to the needs of the students. The emphasis on being open to mystery, of living with ambiguity, of people risking vulnerability and an awareness of interdependence will bring a new vitality to schools. The overriding emphasis will be on an holistic approach. A sense of wholeness, needed by people to understand and relate genuinely with others, will replace the dualistic separation and segmentation of people's lives. Thus in seeking to respond to a student at a particular time, it is not sufficient for an adult to take the incident in isolation from the rest of what is happening in a student's life. In the same way, if advocates of change are wanting to change their own or other people's beliefs, it is important to be aware that when a teacher is in a classroom it is impossible to separate out the beliefs s/he has about the students there from the whole framework of beliefs that influence the rest of his/her life. The teacher is there as a whole person and that is how s/he relates, not as some fragmented portion of a person.

The schools of the future will be most able to contribute to the education of their students if the people working in them are open and responsive to the change process. Teaching is about being thoughtful, about caring and about being committed to students. If the students know in their hearts that the teachers deeply cares about them then they can see mistakes a teacher makes in the light of that disposition. However, no matter how proficient in delivery of subject matter a person might be, if s/he lacks compassion, thoughtfulness and commitment to the students, the technique will not compensate for the lack. Because it is not possible to know in detail what the needs of students in the future will be, schools will be missing the mark if they go into that future with a detailed content-oriented framework with pre-packaged answers and smoothly oiled delivery processes. Content cannot be the main focus. The rapidity with which content changes makes such a focus irrelevant. A significant problem many schools have is having ready-made answers and not being really sure what the questions are. The focus now and in the future must be on a process that will allow people in a school to respond to the needs at the time and empower the people to find the most suitable response. If people in a school enter into the leadership dynamic where they can experience a sense of ownership for the school, where they can enter into reciprocal relationships and have influence on the direction in which the school is moving, where they can be part of the process for developing and enacting common purposes, then the school and each individual will be enriched.

Such involvement is obviously not just restricted to schools. Any organization can experience such a process. If an organization is viewed as a pattern of relationships among the people involved then leadership is done by the people in the relationship as they influence one another to

bring about change that reflects their mutual purposes. The experience of doing leadership can produce a sense of ownership in the organization and deepen a person's commitment to it. In many ways while it is messy and paradoxical, leadership can be a need-satisfying experience for people prepared to risk involvement. Moreover, such involvement will offset the withering of the spirit within people who have been subjugated by the industrial paradigm. The new paradigm will bring many difficult and painful challenges that people will be forced to face as a new constellation of values begins to hold sway.

Within this paradigm shift the new understanding of leadership holds out hope to organizations seeking to overcome the ravages of the industrial model. It can bring people together to jointly work to create a more just and loving world and is open to the surprises arising in people's lives. It precludes a cookbook approach because it relies on people being free within themselves and so having integrity, on people taking responsibility for their actions, and on people making a commitment to seek after common purposes. With such a combination the possibilities for creativity in bringing about change are exciting and the source of great hope. (Bray, 1994, p. 147)



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## APPENDIX A

### Consent Form - Participant

You are being asked by Peter Bray, a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at the University of San Diego, to participate in a study of the leadership process in an elementary school. The following is an agreement for the protection of your rights in this study.

1. The purpose of this study is to examine the nature of the leadership process in use as a school undergoes change.
2. One source of data will be gathered through the use of interviews. These interviews will be audio taped with your permission. Your interview will be transcribed verbatim. Some time later you will be given a copy and asked to review and amend any statements so that they accurately reflect your point of view.
3. If any quotes from your reviewed interview are used in any part of the study your comments will be anonymous.
4. Your participation is completely voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time without risk of penalty.
5. Please ask any questions you may have at any time during the study.
6. There is no agreement, written or verbal, beyond that which is expressed in this consent form.
7. Little risk, discomfort, or expense is expected as a result of participating in this study.

I, the undersigned, understand the above explanation and on that basis give consent to my voluntary participation in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Location

Consent Form - Participant's Position Named

You are being asked by Peter Bray, a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at the University of San Diego, to participate in a study of the leadership process in an elementary school. The following is an agreement for the protection of your rights in this study.

1. The purpose of this study is to examine the nature of the leadership process in use as a school undergoes change.
2. One source of data will be gathered through the use of interviews. These interviews will be audio taped with your permission. Your interview will be transcribed verbatim. Some time later you will be given a copy and asked to review and amend any statements so that they accurately reflect your point of view.
3. If any quotes from your reviewed interview are used in any part of the study, your comments may be attributed to you in your position and you will not be named. It is possible that there may be findings that you may not like arising from the study.
4. Your participation is completely voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time without risk of penalty.
5. Please ask any questions you may have at any time during the study.
6. There is no agreement, written or verbal, beyond that which is expressed in this consent form.
7. Little risk, discomfort, or expense is expected as a result of participating in this study.

I, the undersigned, understand the above explanation and on that basis give consent to my voluntary participation in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Location



Consent Form - Student Participant

You are being asked by Peter Bray, a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at the University of San Diego, to participate in a study of the leadership process in an elementary school. The following is an agreement for the protection of your rights in this study.

1. The purpose of this study is to examine the nature of the leadership process in use as a school undergoes change.
2. One source of information will be gathered through the use of interviews. These interviews will be audio taped with your permission. After the interview what you say will be written out from the tape. Some time later you will be given a copy of what was said and you will be asked to read through it. You can then change, add or take out any statements so that what is written is what you mean.
3. If any quotes from your reviewed interview are used in any part of the written study, you will not be named.
4. Your participation is completely voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time without risk of penalty.
5. Please ask any questions you may have at any time during the study.
6. There is no agreement, written or verbal, beyond that which is expressed in this consent form.
7. Little risk, discomfort, or expense is expected as a result of participating in this study.

I, the undersigned, understand the above explanation and on that basis give consent to my voluntary participation in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Location

Consent Form - Parents of Students

You are being asked by Peter Bray, a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at the University of San Diego, to grant permission for your child to participate in a study of the leadership processes in an elementary school. The following is an agreement for the protection of your child's rights in this study.

1. The purpose of this study is to examine the nature of the leadership processes in use as a school undergoes change.
2. One source of information will be gathered through the use of interviews. The students' views of what has and is happening at the school are important as the school exists for their benefit. Permission is being requested for your child to be interviewed to provide that students' view. My interest is not in the personal views of your child, but in what a student has to say. These interviews will be audio taped with your permission and after the interview what was said will be written out from the tape. Some time later your child will be given a copy of that written record and she/he will be asked to read through it. She/he can then change, add or take out any statements so that what is written is what is meant.
3. If any quotes from your child's comments during the interview are used in any part of the study, those comments will be anonymous and only attributed to a student and not to your child.
4. Your child's participation is completely voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time without risk of penalty.
5. There is no agreement, written or verbal, beyond that which is expressed in this consent form.
7. Little risk, discomfort, or expense is expected as a result of participating in this study.

I, the undersigned, understand the above explanation and on that basis give consent for my child to my voluntary participation in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of child

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX C

### Ground Rules for the Steering Committee

1. This is a safe zone.
2. No rank in the room
3. Everyone participates, no one dominates
4. Help us to stay on track
5. Listen as an ally
6. One speaker at a time
7. Be an active listener
8. Agree only if it makes sense to do so
9. Keep an open mind
10. Maintain confidentiality
11. Have fun
12. Spelling doesn't count
13. Start on time and end on time.

**APPENDIX D**  
**ASSISTANCE REQUEST FORM**

**SITUATION**

Submitted By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted \_\_\_\_\_

1. Identify the situation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are the ramifications?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your suggestion to improve this situation?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

-----

**RESPONSE**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

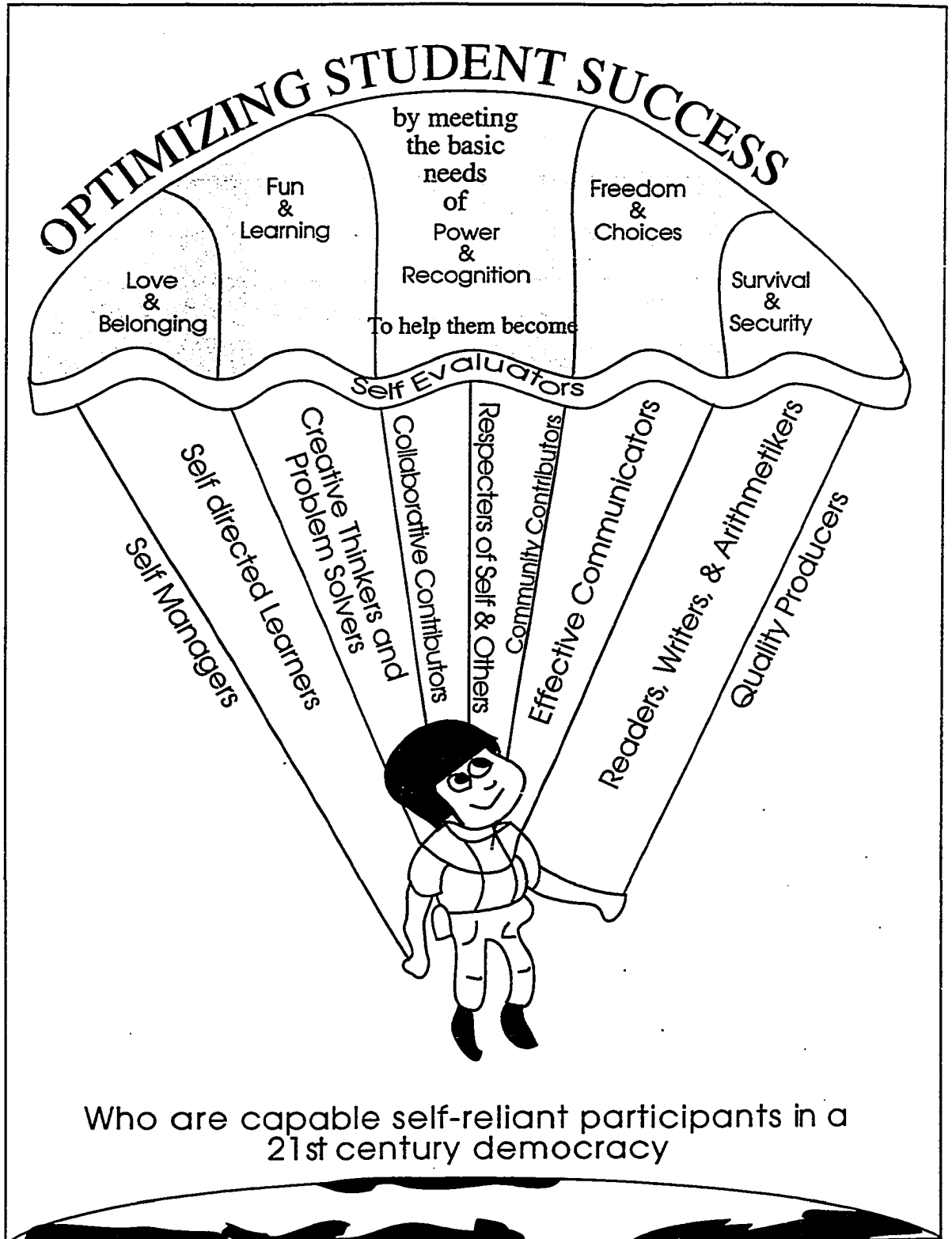
Action taken:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Employees: Submit to immediate supervisor.  
Parents: Submit to the Office.

APPENDIX E

The Parachute



### Explanation of Parachute

- #1 This parachute graphically symbolizes our mission as an educational institution. The canopy represents the overall mission statement's goal which is to successfully support and land our students into the twenty-first century. The parachute is sewn together through the Continuous Improvement Process.
- #2 Any successful mission must involve the process of plan, do study, and act. Our goal is for all students to experience success: academic success, social success, individual growth, and responsible behavior. In essence, it means both the affective and the cognitive domains.
- #3 Each panel of the parachute represents a basic need of all people. These needs are integral because all human behavior is an attempt to meet one or more of these needs. Therefore, we must consider these needs when we are designing, planning, and delivering curriculum to a student.
- #4 One of the overall functions of our school is to teach students appropriate and responsible ways to behave. The fringe on the parachute which is self evaluation, is a key to developing responsible and capable people. The students must be able to assess their own performance in the areas noted lower on the parachute.
- #5 The suspension lines are the connection between the students and their basic needs. These lines represent the identified outcomes the student should meet in order to succeed in the 21st Century.
- #6 The guide ropes, of which the students have complete control, are the quality of work they perform and self management. These two outcomes are critical to the development of our students' ability to do quality work, and the ability to honestly assess their work and behavior. With hands on the control lines, students will learn to make necessary and appropriate changes in both their work and behavior. They will steer themselves toward responsibility, and become highly productive, ethical citizens.
- #7 The landing zone is a 21st Century democracy. It is the mission of the school to insure this landing is successful for all students and the above outcomes are reached. Our educational practices should be based on sound educational and child development principles.