

Topical Synthesis #6

School-Based Management

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The ultimate power to change is--and has always been-- in the heads, hands, and hearts of the educators who work in the schools.

--Sirotnik and Clark, 1988

INTRODUCTION

The history of American public education is characterized by periodic alternations between centralization and decentralization of power and authority (Cuban 1990; Darling-Hammond 1988; Lindelow and Heynderickx 1989; and Mojkowski and Fleming 1988). In times of greater centralized authority, large administrative structures, such as states, school districts, and school boards, maintain control over decisions regarding educational policy, budget, and operations. When the pendulum swings toward decentralization, much of this control shifts to smaller administrative units--smaller school boards, for example, and, more recently, individual schools.

During the past several years, the educational system in the United States has been evolving from largely centralized structures to more decentralized ones; and although the main expression of this trend goes by many different names, it is often called **SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT**.

To its proponents, however, contemporary school-based management is considerably more than a new name for an old and recurring phenomenon. They argue that, unlike previous approaches to decentralizing education, school-based management invokes fundamental changes. As described by White (1989):

Previous attempts to decentralize were aimed at shifting authority from a large, central board of education to smaller, local boards...replacing one form of bureaucracy with another. Past reforms avoided a transfer of power to the school site....SBM is different....it changes the entire system of district and school organization and restructures most roles in the district (p. 2).

A great many school-based management programs have been launched and are currently in

operation in districts around the country, and new ones continue to be implemented. Associated with these developments is the appearance, during recent years, of a great many articles on school-based management in both technical and popular educational publications. This proliferation of programs and accompanying literature raises provocative questions about the concept and practice of school-based management--questions such as:

- What are the terms used to denote the school-based management concept?
- How is school-based management defined?
- What kinds of variation does one see among schoolbased management efforts?
- What is the history of and rationale for implementing this type of organization?
- How do the roles of board, central office, and school personnel change under school-based management?
- What obstacles to success are commonly encountered during attempts to implement and operate school-based management?
- What attitudes toward school-based management are held by those who are involved in school-based management efforts?
- Does school-based management lead to improved student performance or other desirable schooling attributes?
- Do the findings about school-based management lead to any recommendations for those considering implementation of this approach? If so, what are they?

The present review represents an attempt to answer these questions, drawing upon findings from recent research and other educational literature.

Sixty-nine documents--books, monographs, journal articles, conference papers, etc.--were reviewed in preparation for this report. Of these, 42 provide findings from research on the nature and outcomes of school-based management efforts and are cited in the Key References. The General References section cites another 27 documents--opinion papers, project descriptions, theoretical essays, and other writings of interest.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

To designate the kind of arrangement whereby increased authority moves from the district central office and school board to the individual school, the term **SCHOOLBASED MANAGEMENT** has been and will continue to be used in this review. It is important to point out, however, that many other terms are also commonly used to specify such an arrangement. In making this point, Arterbury and Hord (1991) identify:

such terms as decentralization, restructuring, sitebased management, school-based management, participatory decision-making, school-based autonomy-- to name a few (p. 2).

To name a few more, educational writers also designate the school-based management concept by the terms decentralized management, shared decision making, school empowerment, shared governance, decentralized authority, school-site autonomy, school-based decision making, school-site management, responsible autonomy, the autonomous school concept, administrative decentralization, and school-based governance (Ceperley 1991; Cistone, Fernandez, and Tornillo 1989; Johnston and Germinario 1985; and Lewis 1989).

This plethora of terms can produce confusion until one realizes that they all point in the same direction and that:

the name is not as important as the shifts in authority that are taking place....No matter what the term...the school takes center stage in today's education reform scene (Lewis 1989, pp. 173-174).

Turning to the matter of definitions, one again encounters considerable variation: dozens of definitions for the school-based management concept are offered in the literature on this topic. These definitional differences are understandable, reflecting as they do the real variations in structure and operations found in different school-based management programs. Many writers have remarked, however, on the difficulties these disparities pose to those seeking to understand, evaluate, or compare school-based management efforts. Commenting on the profusion of terms and definitions, Kolsti (1991) writes:

School districts, scholars, and legislators repeat these various terms, but few state clearly what they mean or what they expect--how their use of these terms may differ from that intended by previous literature (p. 1).

Lindquist (1989) concurs, noting that:

Variations of the SBM concept have emerged [and] the result seems to be confusion and misunderstanding concerning these vague and sometimes conflicting definitions (p. 404).

"A generic term for diverse activities," and "an ambiguous concept that defies definition," write Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz of school-based management (1990b, p. 298-299), further underscoring the lack of a specific meaning attached to this concept.

Researchers call attention to the many combinations of program features observable in different school-based management programs. As White (1989) puts it:

...there are numerous variations within districts and schools regarding the levels of authority, the actors involved, and the areas of control (p. 1).

For example:

- **INCREASED AUTONOMY**--the latitude to function independently to a considerable degree--may or may not accompany the increase in authority at the school site.
- **INCREASED SCHOOL-SITE ACCOUNTABILITY** is likewise a feature of some school-based management efforts but not others.
- The **POWER TO ESTABLISH POLICY** may or may not accompany the increase in the school's power to make other kinds of decisions.
- **DECISION-MAKING DOMAINS** differ enormously among different school-based management arrangements. Districts and boards may extend decision-making authority to the school in the major areas of budget and/or staffing and/or curriculum, as well as other domains.
- The **EXTENT OF DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY WITHIN DOMAINS** also differs. For example, two districts implementing school-based management structures may both allow their schools to make decisions in the area of curriculum, but one may permit substantive decisions to be made and implemented, while the other allows only relatively trivial ones.
- The **DISTRIBUTION OF AUTHORITY AT SCHOOL SITES** shows considerable variation as well. In some school-based management efforts, virtually all the increased

decision-making authority extended to the site by the district remains in the hands of the principal. In others, teachers--but not other stakeholders--join the principal in making decisions. In most cases, however, decision-making authority is delegated to councils which might be made up of noncertified school staff and/or parents and/or community members and/or students, as well as the principal and the teachers.

- Another difference across sites is the **DEGREE OF REAL POWER HELD BY THE COUNCILS**. That is, the presence of a broad-based decision-making body representing all major stakeholder groups does not necessarily guarantee that the interests of all groups are truly represented. Some principals assemble such groups and then either occupy their time with petty matters or retain veto power over their decisions.

Council members themselves sometimes contribute to excessive retention of power by the principal (or by the principal plus the teachers). Uncertainty about the extent of their authority or sheer unfamiliarity with assuming control over decision-making processes sometimes keeps councils from exercising as much authority as they have been delegated.

There are other variations as well, but this overview should serve to account for some of the confusion about what school-based management really means and the contradictory findings about the results it produces.

Given all this, what common denominators, if any, can be identified across the different definitions of school-based management?

For all their areas of disagreement, those who have generated definitions and descriptions do seem to concur with one another that school-based management:

- Is a form of district organization
- Alters the governance of education
- Represents a shift of authority toward decentralization
- Identifies the school as the primary unit of educational change
- Moves increased decision-making power to the local school site.

HISTORY AND RATIONALE

To set a context for examining the relationship between school-based management approaches and other schooling variables, the following is a brief review of the centralization-decentralization cycle in U. S. educational history and the arguments for school-based management which characterize the current decentralization movement.

Larry Cuban, in his 1990 article on the cyclical nature of educational reform efforts, points out that school systems at the turn of the century were, for the most part, small and locally operated. Unfortunately, these provincial structures spawned considerable favoritism, nepotism, and corruption, leading reformers to call for consolidation of small districts into larger, centrally controlled boards.

This trend continued until the 1960s, at which time civil rights activists and others called for educational decentralization, so that local schools could be more responsive to the needs of their communities. Though not a nationwide phenomenon, considerable decentralization did occur in response to these pressures.

The mid-1970s and early 1980s saw a large-scale effort to bring about educational improvements through federal and state legislation--another swing toward centralized, top-down organization. This desire to stimulate reform and betterment through increasingly centralized, bureaucratic arrangements was wellintentioned enough. Like centralized arrangements

generally, it was "intended to foster equal and uniform treatment of clients, standardization of products or services, and to prevent arbitrary or capricious decision making" (Darling-Hammond 1988, p. 11).

The problem, as is now widely recognized, is that highly centralized educational systems simply do not engender the desired outcomes. For one thing, they tend--like bureaucracies generally--to be impersonal and maddeningly slow moving. English's 1989 comments are typical of observations made about these drawbacks:

Highly centralized systems are easily clogged with trivia. The result is inertia, pessimism, inefficiency, cynicism, and long delays for decisions of any kind on the smallest of matters. SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT IS AN EXCELLENT ANTIDOTE TO BUREAUCRACY (p. 2).

An equally significant concern is the repeated failure of centralized structures to inspire in school personnel the prerequisite attitudes and behaviors for bringing about educational improvements. Mojkowski and Fleming (1988) echo the findings of many other researchers and writers, noting that:

...a school improvement impetus and authority emanating from outside the school does not produce the responsibility and commitment necessary to sustain consequential improvement (p. 2).

The contemporary rationale for decentralized schooling- -and particularly school-based management--has been developed partly in recognition of these problems and partly in response to research findings about more promising arrangements for improving education. The following assertions, which are commonly offered as the rationale for implementing school-based management, are drawn from the work of Amundson (1988); Burns and Howes (1988); David and Peterson (1984); English (1989); Levine and Eubanks (1989); Lindelow and Heynderickx (1989); Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990a,b); Marburger (1985); Mojkowski and Fleming (1988); Peterson (1991); and White (1989).

- The school is the primary unit of change.
- Those who work directly with students have the most informed and credible opinions as to what educational arrangements will be most beneficial to those students.
- Significant and lasting improvement takes considerable time, and local schools are in the best position to sustain improvement efforts over time.
- The school principal is a key figure in school improvement.
- Significant change is brought about by staff and community participation in project planning and implementation.
- School-based management supports the professionalization of the teaching profession and vice versa, which can lead to more desirable schooling outcomes.
- School-based management structures keep the focus of schooling where it belongs--on achievement and other student outcomes.
- Alignment between budgets and instructional priorities improves under school-based management.

ROLE CHANGES UNDER SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

What happens when a school system elects to implement school-based management in some or all of its schools? According to the growing body of implementation research, the major impact is that the roles of all educational stakeholders--superintendents, other central office personnel, board members, principals, teachers, other school staff, and often parents, community members and students--are profoundly affected. Indeed, as Mutchler (1990) reports following an extensive school-based management survey:

...school-based management and shared decision making strategies directly challenge and seek to change the complex and well-entrenched patterns of institutional and individual behavior that...have remained untouched by top-down reforms (p. 4).

Those studying and commenting on these role changes include Amundson (1988); Arterbury and Hord (1991); Caldwell and Wood (1988); Ceperley (1991); Clune and White (1988); Conley (1990); Duttweiler (1989); Harrison, Killion, and Mitchell (1989); Hord (1992); Kolsti (1991); Lewis (1989); Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990a,b); Marburger (1985); and Mutchler (1990). Their findings are as follows.

THE DISTRICT. "It is virtually impossible," notes Ceperley in her 1991 review and recommendations article, "to change significantly the role of schoollevel personnel without changing the traditional district administrative roles" (p. 7). Many writers have presented specific findings about these changes.

- **SUPERINTENDENTS.** "Experience in districts that have tried school-based management has shown that strong support from the superintendent is absolutely necessary for its proper implementation," writes Duttweiler (1989, p. 3), and virtually all writers on the subject of school-based management concur with this conclusion.
 - Superintendents communicate to the community what school-based management is and why it is desirable in order to foster shared understanding and support.
 - When school-based management begins to replace centralized administration, the superintendent's role changes from deliverer of top-down mandates to team member who encourages bottom-up change.
 - Instead of pushing for as much standardization as possible, the superintendent's new role calls for supporting the differences and uniquenesses among different schools' approaches to change and improvement.
 - Direct support to principals under SBM includes: (1) increased accessibility, (2) mutual development of growth plans with and for principals, (3) allocation of resources for planning and training at the school level, (4) arranging for training and development activities based on jointly identified needs, and (5) assessing progress and providing follow-up assistance as needed.
- **CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF.** The role of these personnel shifts from a primary focus on giving directives and monitoring compliance to serving as resources for and facilitators of school-level change efforts.

Functions typically include: (1) facilitating the development of student and staff performance standards, (2) offering technical assistance to the schools, (3) locating and providing resources materials, (4) establishing funding formulas, and (5) carrying out systemwide planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

THE SCHOOL. Under school-based management--and particularly in those settings where school-based management is accompanied by broad-based decision making--the roles of all school personnel undergo significant changes.

- **PRINCIPALS.** Under SBM, it is the role of the principal that is subject to the greatest degree of change:
 - This change is sometimes expressed as reconceptualizing the principal's role from that of "boss" to that of "chief executive officer."
 - Instead of enforcing policies made elsewhere, which inevitably sets him/her apart from the staff, the principal works collegially with staff, sharing authority with them.
 - The principal typically moves closer to the educational process, serving as an instructional manager.
 - The principal moves higher in the district chain of command, because of the increased authority and accountability that shifts to the school.
- **ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS.** The role of these people evolves toward serving as advocates with principals on behalf of teachers.
- **TEACHERS.** Teachers have often been isolated from involvement in significant decision making and from frequent and meaningful contact with one another. SBM arrangements tend to increase their involvement in these areas, often to a significant degree.

As previously noted, the decision-making domains in which teachers are invited to become involved and the degree of real power they have to make decisions differ across SBM sites. Even so, a transition to SBM typically means that teachers' involvement in decision making will broaden considerably.

- **STUDENTS.** Students have traditionally been isolated from operational and policy decisions. Under SBM, students--particularly older ones--often have influence in these areas by giving advice and input.

PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS. Parents and community representatives have generally been relatively uninformed and underutilized regarding decisions and operations. Many SBM structures not only make use of increased parent/community input, but also provide training to help them become more capable participants in the school's planning and decision-making efforts.

THE SCHOOL BOARD. Board members continue to provide general direction for the district by establishing goals and policy statements, allocating resources, and monitoring progress. In particular, the board's clear message of support for school-based management lends credibility and fosters positive community attitudes toward SBM projects. The board's role does not change as dramatically as that of some stakeholders, but its support remains vital.

As might be expected, role changes as numerous and profound as those outlined above are not likely to happen effortlessly or painlessly. School-based management problems related to changes in peoples' roles are commonplace; these are detailed in the following section, along with other difficulties encountered in implementing and operating SBM programs.

OBSTACLES TO SUCCESS

Much of the literature on school-based management is concerned with the problems districts

and schools have experienced with it. Some of these are implementation problems, some arise in connection with operating SBM structures, and still others have to do with the failure of many SBM arrangements to bring about the results desired by school and district personnel and other stakeholders.

Considerable analytical effort has gone into identifying and describing the obstacles to success with school-based management, and findings appear in the work of Amundson (1988); Ceperley (1991); Cistone (1989); Clune and White (1988); Gomez (1989); Henderson and Marburger (1990); Jenni (1991); Levine and Eubanks (1989); Lindquist (1989); Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990a,b); Marburger (1985); Mutchler (1989, 1990); Valesky, Forsythe, and Hall (1992); and White (1989).

TIME. "The greatest source of trouble is time," says Ceperley (1991, p. 8). The activities associated with school-based management "require school staff to devote additional hours each day on top of an already hectic schedule." The stress produced by these extra time demands has led to pessimism and burnout in some settings, particularly on the part of teachers.

UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS. Many schools piloting school-based management undertake too many projects and procedural changes during their first year or two of operation. The research on school-based management makes abundantly clear that full institutionalization of a school-based management process takes a long time--as long as five years or more.

INSUFFICIENT SUPPORT FOR SITE COUNCILS. Site councils, which are the bodies concerned with planning and decision making in most SBM structures, are often given extensive responsibilities, but lack the qualifications to carry out those responsibilities. Typical problems include:

- **LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS.** Members of newly formed councils--teachers, noncertified staff, and perhaps parents and students--generally possess little knowledge of school budgets, facilities, personnel, policy issues and other matters about which they are expected to give input and/or make decisions.
- **LACK OF GROUP PROCESS SKILLS.** Council members are likewise often deficient in the skills of group decision making, conflict resolution, problem solving, and others required for effective group work.
- **LACK OF CLARITY ABOUT THEIR ROLE.** Is this council a decision-making body or an advisory one? Assuming it has decision-making authority, can it make decisions about all aspects of the school...or only about some of them? What are the mandates and other "givens" that will influence the council's work? Surprisingly often, site councils are asked to function without answers to these very basic questions.

INCONGRUENCE BETWEEN DECISIONS DESIRED AND DECISIONS ALLOWED. Not infrequently, teachers find themselves becoming disenchanted with school-based management. One commonly occurring reason is that the kinds of decisions they are allowed to make or influence are not the ones about which they care and feel knowledgeable.

Research has clearly established that teachers' desire to participate in decision making centers on the school's technical core--its curriculum and instructional program. Unfortunately, districts are often unwilling to delegate real decision-making authority to schools in these areas.

This may or may not sit well with principals, but it is almost universally frustrating to teachers. For one thing, they resent being excluded from decision areas about which they know a great

deal. Just as distressing, they often find that they are expected to use time and energy they would ordinarily spend on activities related to their teaching responsibilities for decision-making in areas they would just as soon leave to administrators.

Thus, when researchers and others ask, "do teachers want increased decision-making authority regarding school policy and operations?" this turns out to be the wrong question, since the answer is totally dependent on the particular decision area under consideration.

OTHER CONSTRAINTS ON DECISION MAKING. Schools are sometimes asked to implement programs of school-based management while continuing to function within the constraints imposed by existing federal, state, school board, district, and teacher union regulations. In these situations, school personnel sometimes find that there is very little left for them to manage.

Research has shown that increased flexibility and selective waiving of these constraints is associated with more successful school-based management efforts.

Along with insufficient time, training, and/or latitude, another obstacle frequently encountered in school-based management efforts is lack of adequate financial resources. This may take the form of insufficient release time for planning and/or insufficient resources to implement plans once they are made.

At worst, these constraints can lead school personnel to view school-based management as unreal--the "same old thing" in the guise of an innovation. And research indicates that they are right. If districts and boards do not extend considerable decision-making latitude to schools, or they fail to provide the resources to enable staff to carry out decision responsibilities, school-based management becomes:

...just another moderately helpful public relations and communications vehicle tinkering with the peripheral issues of school governance and management (Lindquist 1989, p. 414)

or, as Taylor and Levine (1991) remark even more succinctly, "only a cosmetic attempt to improve the school" (p. 394).

FAILURE TO FOCUS ON INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND STUDENT OUTCOMES.

Site participants often fail to address subjects central to their instructional program, note Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990a) and many other researchers, and such changes as are proposed are frequently not implemented. Moreover, these researchers point out that school-based management can actually **IMPEDE** the development and implementation of instructional improvements in settings where it diverts attention from teaching and learning.

The frequent failure of school-based management efforts to address the school's program of instruction is related to another--and perhaps more basic--problem. This is the tendency of those implementing school-based management to forget that it is not an end in itself, but rather a means to improving student performance through bringing about improvements in the quality of schooling. Mojkowski and Fleming (1988) speculate on the reason for this loss of perspective, pointing out that implementing school-based management is a complex undertaking:

Considerable time and energy will be required to negotiate the details of new responsibilities

and relations. There is a tendency, therefore, to place inordinate attention on the 'technology' of school-site management and forget the goal: an improving school where students learn at their potential (p. 14).

This topic will surface again in the discussion of the relationship between school-based management and student performance.

STAKEHOLDER ATTITUDES TOWARD SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

Several researchers addressed the subject of the attitudes toward school-based management held by those who have been involved in SBM efforts. Some of these-- most notably the attitudes of teachers toward certain types of decision-making responsibility--have been touched upon. Findings about attitudes are cited by Arterbury and Hord (1991); Brown (1987); Chapman (1990); Conley (1990); Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990a,b); Peterson (1991); and Rosenholtz (1985).

- **SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS** generally perceive their schools as being more responsive under decentralized arrangements, with responsiveness defined as the ability to adapt resources and procedures to student needs.

However, enthusiasm for SBM on the part of school staff has been shown to decline if the practice continues over a significant period of time and few or no improvements are noted in working conditions or student outcomes.

- **PARENT AND STUDENT** satisfaction with the schools has been shown to increase under school-based management.
- Surveys of **PRINCIPALS** have consistently shown a high degree of satisfaction with the move to school-based management, even though they also say that their workload has increased.
- **TEACHERS**, as previously noted, want to be able to make or influence decisions regarding curriculum and instruction and have often reacted negatively to participation in decision-making about organizational matters that bear little relationship to the classroom.

However, teacher surveys also reveal that the decision areas in which teachers feel most **DEPRIVED** are those that address the "STRATEGIC/OPERATIONAL INTERFACE, the interaction between the school and the classroom....decisions about how children are assigned to classes, how teachers are assigned to classes, and how students are disciplined and promoted" (Conley 1990, pp. 542-543).

- **SITE COUNCIL MEMBERS**, whether they are teachers, noncertified staff, parents, community members, or students, express resentment (1) if allowed to make decisions only about trivial matters, or (2) if their decisions have only very minor impact on school policy and operations, or (3) if they are told they are a decision-making body, but then have their decisions vetoed by the principal.
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*** SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE ***

The ultimate measure of the value of school-based management will be the outcomes observed in students who attend site-managed schools. As expressed by Arterbury and Hord (1991), "site-based decision making should be explicitly considered as a means to increased learner outcomes" (p. 7).

Researchers examining the relationship between SBM and student performance--particularly achievement--include Arterbury and Hord (1991); Collins and Hanson (1991); Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990a,b); B. Peterson (1991); D. Peterson (1991); and Taylor and Levine (1991). Their reports go beyond discussion of what they have found to include probable reasons for those findings.

Thus far, researchers have identified no direct link-- positive or negative--between school-based management and student achievement or other student outcomes, such as attendance. In some settings, student scores (on standardized or local tests) have improved slightly, in others they have declined slightly, and in most settings no differences have been noted. "In sum," noted David Peterson (1991), "research as a whole does not indicate that site-based management brings consistent or stable improvements in student performance" (p. 2).

Reasons identified for this lack of impact on student performance echo observations made elsewhere in this review and include the following:

- Those reports that do claim beneficial impacts on achievement are generally flawed, failing to specify the order in which events took place or to distinguish between SBM and other possible causes.
- Student outcomes can be most powerfully impacted through improvements in curriculum and instruction, and school-based management efforts have often failed to address these areas of schooling.
- Improving student performance is not a stated goal in most school-based management efforts, and thus decisions are often made without student outcome goals in mind.
- There is no standard definition of school-based management. It appears that SBM structures which are positively related to student performance may be cancelled out in the research base by forms of SBM which are negatively related or unrelated.
- Some so-called school-based management arrangements are in reality merely variations on traditional hierarchical models rather than an actual restructuring of decision-making power.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING AND OPERATING SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT EFFORTS IN DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

While school-based management programs in the aggregate have not been found to improve student outcomes thus far, researchers and other writers have pointed to the positive correlation between SBM and improved student outcomes in some settings. They contend that some forms of SBM have great potential for improving student performance.

The following are research-based recommendations which are offered to those who are considering implementation of school-based management structures in their schools and districts. They are drawn from the work of Amundson (1988); Arterbury and Hord (1991); Caldwell and Wood (1988); Ceperley (1991); David (1989); Duttweiler (1990); Henderson and Marburger (1990); Jenni (1991); English (1989); Levine and Eubanks (1989); Lewis (1989); Malen and Ogawa (1988); Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990a,b); Mojkowski and Fleming (1988); and White (1989).

RECOMMENDATIONS TO STATES. States have considerable power to help school-based management arrangements to succeed through providing real support of the concept and practice:

- Encourage districts to utilize school-based management as a means for improving student performance and overall schooling conditions.
- Make clear to superintendents and central office staff that schools will require considerable authority and flexibility to be able to engender real improvements.
- Be available to provide training, research-based information, and on-site assistance to help in the school-based management implementation process.
- Take advantage of opportunities to move away from highly regulated, compliance-driven services and accountability processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS. School-based management structures cannot succeed without the commitment and support of the superintendent and central office staff. Research indicates that districts can increase the likelihood of success of SBM by taking the following actions:

- Communicate to all educational stakeholders in the district what school-based management is and why it is desirable to implement this organizational structure.
- Make certain to communicate to stakeholders--when school-based management is implemented and continually thereafter--that it takes a long time for this approach to be fully implemented and to begin demonstrating significant and large-scale changes in schooling outcomes.
- Assess schools for climates amenable to implementation of school-based management.
- Work with schools and school communities to understand the ways that stakeholder roles will change and assist them to make these changes.
- Encourage schools to choose a manageable number of activities during the implementation phase of schoolbased management.
- Delegate real authority to schools to make decisions and plan and carry out improvement activities; require that this increased authority be in the hands of a site council with representatives from all key stakeholders in the school--principal, teachers, noncertified staff, parents, community representatives, and students.
- Designate someone in the central office to oversee the implementation and operation of school-based management efforts. One of this person's responsibilities should be to assure that site councils are actually able to exercise the authority delegated to them, rather than being dominated by the principal.
- Provide information and training to school site councils, including:
 - Clear guidelines about their role and the extent of their authority
 - Content knowledge about student and overall school performance, policies, programs, budgets, facilities, personnel, local and state regulations, and other areas in which they will be expected to make or influence decisions
 - Skills training in group processes, such as problem solving, decision making,

conflict resolution, etc.

- Provide other needed resources, such as assuring time and financial support for planning and carrying out improvement activities.
- Encourage and support norms of collegiality and collaboration at the school level.
- Increase schools' latitude for decision making through helping them to have state and local regulations waived as appropriate.
- Involve teacher union representatives in early discussions of school-based management. When the benefits to teachers are understood, unions have shown willingness to be flexible about contract constraints.
- Assist schools to evaluate and modify their SBM structures and school improvement plans based on continuous review of program activities and their effects.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SCHOOLS. The way that school-based management is supposed to function at the school site is usually specified to some degree by the district. The principal continues to have considerable influence over SBM operations, however, and is advised to pursue a form of SBM that has the following components:

- Help staff and community members to understand what school-based management is; emphasize that it is a means to the end of improving student outcomes through improving instruction and other schooling functions.
- Become familiar with the literature on school-based management so as to capitalize on what is known about successful approaches and to avoid or minimize common pitfalls.
- Redouble efforts to reach out to parents and community members and seek their involvement in this restructured form of school governance.
- Communicate broadly the willingness to share power, both nominally and in fact. Model the process of experiencing a change in one's role.
- Help staff and community members to understand the role changes called for by school-based management and help them to evolve into these new roles.
- Have the site council function as a true decisionmaking body, not merely an advisory one. This may already be a district requirement, but its reality needs to be reinforced at the school site.
- Reinforce the district message that full implementation of school-based management and realization of change in student outcomes takes a long time--five years or more. Underscore that SBM is not another short-term project, but rather a fundamental change in the way schools function. Move incrementally, seeking a balance (as Mojkowski and Fleming recommend) between "revolutionary practices" and "evolutionary pace" (1988, p. 13).
- Involve the teaching staff in making substantive decisions about the school's technical core--the curriculum and instructional program.
- Involve teachers in making substantive decisions in areas at the interface between school-level and classroom-level operations; these include student and teacher class assignments and promotion and discipline policies and operations.
- Encourage and support norms of collegiality and collaboration through designating time for group planning and learning activities.

Researchers, theorists, and practitioners agree that an approach to school-based management which places real authority in the hands of broadly representative stakeholder groups, and then assures that those groups receive the training and resources they need to exercise that authority well, has immense potential for improving schooling governance, operations, and outcomes.

In a 1988 school improvement article, Henderson and Lezotte quote John Chubb, a senior

fellow at the Brookings Institution, whose recent large-scale school study led to this same conclusion. Chubb writes:

The more control a school has over those aspects of its organization that affect its performance--the articulation of its goals, the selection and management of its personnel, the specification of its policies-- the more likely a school is to exhibit the qualities that have been found to promote effectiveness.

KEY REFERENCES

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Duttweiler, P. C., and Mutchler, S. E. "Harnessing the Energy of People to Improve Schools." INSIGHTS ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PRACTICE, Special Combined Issue (Summer 1990). (ED 329 021)

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Etheridge, C. P., and Hall, M. L. THE NATURE, ROLE AND EFFECT OF COMPETITION, COOPERATION, AND COMPREHENSION IN MULTIPLE SITE IMPLEMENTATION OF SBDM. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL, April 1991.

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Reviews literature on site-based management to clarify relationships between SBM and other school improvement concepts, outline SBM structures and roles of participants, identify implementation practices and issues, and describe the evolution and potential outcomes of SBM approaches.

Levine, D. U. "Creating Effective Schools: Findings and Implications from Research and Practice." PHI DELTA KAPPAN 72/5 (1991): 389-393.

Draws upon the effective schooling research of the 1970s and 1980s to provide a set of guidelines for those interested in undertaking school improvement projects.

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SCHOOLS: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS, edited by J. J. Lane and E. G. Epps. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan, 1992, 61-82.

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Canada and Australia. Concludes that SBM has generally failed to meet its stated objectives. Also reported in Malen, et al. 1990b.

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Mutchler, S. E. "Eight Barriers to Changing Traditional Behavior: Part One." INSIGHTS ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PRACTICE 18 (March 1990). (ED 330 058)

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Presents results of a survey of 46 principals in schools using school-based management. Responses concerned the nature of decision making in schools, school improvement, and problems related to SBM.

White, P. A. "An Overview of School-Based Management: What Does the Research Say?" *NASSP BULLETIN* 73/518 (1989): 1-8.

Discusses school-based management--its objectives, typical structures, potential benefits, and limitations and offers guidelines to those who wish to implement site-based management structures in their schools.

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Conley, D. T. "Lessons from Laboratories in School Restructuring and Site-Based Decision-Making: Oregon's '2020' Schools Take Control of Their Own Reform." OSSC BULLETIN 34/7 (March 1991): entire issue.

Discusses the activities engaged in by schools that are recipients of grants from the State of Oregon for school improvement and professional development in 1990-91.

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Kelly, T. F. "Five Ways to Make Your Schools Effective." THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR 47/2 (1989): 26, 29.

Cites and discusses five principles which have been identified in relation to effective schools participating in New York's Comprehensive School Improvement Planning process.

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Outlines the rationale for and history of the move towards school-based management, describes typical SBM structures, and offers guidelines for those considering implementing SBM in their districts.

Mitchell, J. E. "Share the Power." AMERICAN SCHOOL BOARD JOURNAL 177/1 (1990): 42-43.

Offers a list of experience-based recommendations to school board to assist them in fostering school-based management efforts in their districts.

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Argues that the reluctance of school staff to get involved in site-based management and decision making comes from (1) a fear of trying new things, (2) lack of training, and (3) fear that staff's ideas and proposals will be blocked by principals, superintendents, boards, or others.

Moses, M. C., and Whitaker, K. S. "Ten Components for Restructuring Schools." THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR 47/8 (1990): 32-34.

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Describes the structure for decision making adopted by this Akron, Ohio high school. Major components include a Faculty Senate, a Curriculum Council, and long- and short-term goal-setting cycles.

White, P. A. RESOURCE MATERIALS ON SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT. New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Policy Research in Education, Rutgers University, September 1988.

Cites contact people, provides program descriptions, and offers an annotated bibliography of print resources on school-based management. Most information is from the 1970s and early 1980s.

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