
[All ETDs from UAB](#)

[UAB Theses & Dissertations](#)

1995

A Study Of The Relationship Between Site-Based Management And Parental Involvement In Selected Elementary Schools In The Southeastern United States.

Eleanor Chapman Traylor
University of Alabama at Birmingham

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/etd-collection>



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Traylor, Eleanor Chapman, "A Study Of The Relationship Between Site-Based Management And Parental Involvement In Selected Elementary Schools In The Southeastern United States." (1995). *All ETDs from UAB*. 4752.

<https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/etd-collection/4752>

This content has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the UAB Digital Commons, and is provided as a free open access item. All inquiries regarding this item or the UAB Digital Commons should be directed to the [UAB Libraries Office of Scholarly Communication](#).

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI

A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700 800/521-0600

**A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SITE-BASED
MANAGEMENT AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN
SELECTED ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN THE
SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES**

by

ELEANOR C. TRAYLOR

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Education in the School of Education in the Graduate School,
The University of Alabama at Birmingham**

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

1995

UMI Number: 9537131

UMI Microform 9537131

Copyright 1995, by UMI Company. All rights reserved.

**This microform edition is protected against unauthorized
copying under Title 17, United States Code.**

UMI

**300 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103**

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION
GRADUATE SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

Degree Doctor of Education Major Subject Educational Leadership

Name of Candidate Eleanor Chapman Traylor

Title A Study of the Relationship Between Site-Based
Management and Parental Involvement in Selected
Elementary Schools in the Southeastern United States

The purpose of this study was to examine selected districts and elementary schools within the Southeastern region of the United States that have successfully implemented site-based management to determine the role and domains of participation of parents in the decision making process and identify other common parental involvement (participation) components that have strengthened those schools and impacted student success.

Data for this study were obtained through a purposeful criterion sampling of states, districts, and schools in Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Archival data were obtained at the state and district levels and a questionnaire was sent to one elementary school principal identified by the responding districts. A cross case analysis of the data was used to report the data.

The findings indicated that site-based management is an important process of the total effort to improve schools. The role of parents in the decision-making process, at the state and district levels, has been very specifically defined so that the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school is correctly represented. Local schools are allowed to develop models of site-based management that best serve their population needs.

Domains of parental participation include: budgeting discretionary and allotted funds, policy and procedure related to discipline, curriculum development, facility improvement, fund raising projects, planning/sponsoring extracurricular activities, and adjusting local school calendar. Parents are not yet involved in personnel matters.

Traditional parental involvement elements, PTA/PTO organizations, volunteering, and advisory councils, are still the mainstay. Principals indicate that parents are becoming involved in specific academic programs at the local school. Parents are becoming more involved in the development of specific areas of the school.

The implication can be made, based on the data, that site-based management is an emerging vehicle involved in restructuring for change and parents are just now being included in the process.

Abstract Approved by: Committee Chairman Boyd Rogan

Program Director Boyd Rogan

Date May 3, 1995 Dean of Graduate School John Rader

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to express her deepest appreciation to family, friends, colleagues, and faculty who have inspired, advised, and assisted in the preparation of this study. In particular, she would like to extend her admiration and very special thanks to Dr. Boyd Rogan and Dr. Harold Bishop, co-chairmen of her dissertation committee. Their advice, guidance, and friendship have been truly invaluable. Special thanks are also extended to Dr. Charles Evans for his special counsel and aid throughout this program. Equally, her appreciation and deepest gratitude are extended to the other members of the committee, Dr. David Dagley and Dr. Cleveland Hammonds, for their helpful suggestions, encouragement, and guidance during this study.

Particular appreciation and thanks are extended to the ten women of the author's cohort. My deepest gratitude for their encouragement, assistance, belief, and camaraderie.

Finally, the author would like to express thanks to her husband, Richard, for his constant love, encouragement, patience, and sacrifices during the course of this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
CHAPTER	
I Introduction to the Study.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Purpose of the Study.....	5
Foreshadowed Questions.....	5
Significance of the Study.....	5
Methodology.....	7
Operational Definition of Terms.....	9
Assumptions.....	10
Limitations of the Study.....	10
Summary.....	11
II Review of the Literature.....	12
Introduction.....	12
Parental Involvement	12
Parental Involvement: Historical Overview.....	14
The Changing Family and Parental Involvement.....	17
Principles of Successful Parental Involvement.....	18
Parental Involvement Programs and Activities.....	22
Written Policies for Parental Involvement.....	29
Parental Involvement and Effective Schools.....	31
School Reform and Parental Involvement.....	33
School Reform/Restructuring: Definition(s) and Purpose(s).....	34
Site-Based Management and Parental Involvement.....	38
Definitions of Site-Based Management.....	39
Characteristics and Elements of Site-Based Management.....	41

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

CHAPTER	<u>Page</u>
Site-Based Management and Parental Involvement Issues.....	43
Summary.....	44
III Methodology.....	48
Introduction.....	48
Procedure.....	49
Sample.....	49
Materials and Instrumentation.....	50
Data Collection Procedures.....	51
Data Analysis Procedure.....	53
Summary.....	54
IV Results.....	56
Data Analysis.....	56
Research Related to State and District Initiatives and Legislation.....	57
Analysis of State Initiatives and Legislation.....	58
Georgia.....	58
Florida.....	60
North Carolina.....	62
South Carolina.....	63
Tennessee.....	64
Common Elements Found in State Policies and Initiatives.....	65
Analysis of District Initiatives and Policies.....	65
Georgia.....	68
Florida.....	69
North Carolina.....	72
South Carolina.....	74
Tennessee.....	76
Common Elements Found in District Policies and Initiatives.....	77
Research Related to Parental Involvement and Site-Based Decision Making.....	78

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

CHAPTER	<u>Page</u>
Data Analysis of Questionnaire Sent to Principals.....	81
Foreshadowed question 1.....	82
Foreshadowed question 2.....	86
Foreshadowed question 3.....	87
Foreshadowed question 4.....	88
Foreshadowed questions 5 and 6.....	89
Summary of Findings.....	93
V Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations.....	96
Conclusions and Implications for Practice.....	97
Recommendations.....	103
REFERENCES.....	105
APPENDICES	
A Letter to State Superintendents Letter from Dr. Wayne Teague.....	111
B Letter to District Superintendents Letter from Dr. Cleveland Hammonds Follow-up Fax Letter.....	115
C Letter to Local School Principals.....	119
D Principal's Questionnaire.....	121

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1 Common elements found in the state initiatives and legislation related to site-based management.....	66
2 Factors related to the development of local school site-based models: Categories and number of responses by principals.....	83
3 Factors related to parent participation in decision-making at the local school level: Categories and number of responses by principals.....	87
4 Domains (areas) in which parents participate in decision-making: Categories and number of responses by principals.....	88
5 Factors contributing positively to parental involvement in site-based management.....	90
6 Factors contributing negatively to parental involvement in site-based management.....	91

CHAPTER I

Introduction to the Study

Introduction

With the urgency for educational reform that is sweeping our country, it is imperative that all of the various societal constituents (educators, taxpayers, politicians, parents, businesses, communities, students) of the educational process come together in partnership for the collective goal of accomplishing academic excellence for our schools. Successful reform efforts will require commitment and energy from each component. Only through enlightened public policies will effective school reform be accomplished. These policies must establish a redistribution of power and resources (Katz, 1971). The inclusion of school-based management in the restructuring process is intended to facilitate the redistribution of power and resources as local schools work with all constituents to improve the educational process.

The issue of how to improve our educational system has long been an issue of importance before the citizenry and political structure of our nation. Beginning in 1950 and into the 1960s, there was a sustained effort to accomplish school reform based on the fear aroused with the launching of Sputnik. During the late 1960s and 1970s, school reform focused on equality (Ornstein, 1992). Beginning in the 1970s, there was a shift in reform demands from integration and compensatory education to demands for a complete restructuring process with collaboration of all the various components involved (Gittell, 1978). Fueled by reports such as American Education: An Economic

Issue (1982) and Action for Excellence (1983a), then-Education Secretary T. H. Bell's National Commission on Excellence's Report, A Nation At Risk (1983b), issued an imperative for school reform involving the raising of standards and expectations. This emphasis on standards and expectations was intended to bring about increased academic success in public education. In 1987, Bill Bradley introduced in the 100th Congress "The Family-School Partnership Act," which called for the establishment of demonstration projects to focus on the role of the family as educators and on teacher training designed to support family efforts (Rich, 1988). In 1990, President Bush and the states' governors, working together, created a policy statement about education reform, America 2000. All of the components of this reform statement recognize the importance of the family in the educational process (America 2000, 1991). Building on America 2000, in March 1994, President Clinton signed into law Goals 2000, legislation which includes a call for all schools to encourage more parental involvement (Riley, 1994). The shift was made by the 1980s and 90s from a call for educational equality reform to restructuring for academic excellence and systematic change (Finn & Rebarber, 1992; Ornstein, 1992). Whether instituted by visionary leadership or mandated by law, educational reform is still a formidable issue in public school education for the twenty-first century.

On April 1, 1993, Montgomery County Circuit Judge Gene Reese ruled that the schoolchildren of Alabama have a constitutional right to an "equitable and adequate" education. By calling for "equitable and adequate" education, Judge Reese's decision defines curriculum needs and expands beyond establishing a new system of funding. He declared that the present system of education in Alabama is unconstitutional. Because the case was not appealed, on June 9, 1993, the rulings became law.

Several "commissions" have been formed by political leaders and grassroots citizen groups to design a reform package for Alabama. Each of these reform proposals has site-based management with parental involvement as an element. These packages, along with Governor Folsom's funding proposal, went before the elected delegates for debate. Governor Folsom was not reelected in 1994. Many new legislators with diverse political agendas were elected. Presently, developing a funding package for Judge Reese, Governor James offered the opinion that Judge Reese's ruling should not stand. There are no reform packages before the new legislature at this time.

Although their roles are not always understood, state legislators are central figures in state education policy-making. Whether wrestling with substantive issues or funding issues, legislatures are critical components of any serious reform effort. While actions of a few, well-publicized 'education governors' have been more apt to catch the media's eye, there has never been a governor who enacted major reforms without the legislature's approval. In fact, the primary initiative for reform has often come from the legislative institution. (Finn & Rebarber, 1992, p. ix)

The vehicle most used in reform efforts to restructure the governance of education is site-based management. Site-based management is based on the belief that "the individual school is the most viable unit for effecting school improvement" (Goodlad, 1984, p. 36). Governance has been placed at the local school level with a flattening of the central administration.

Power distribution is a strategy that assume(s) that schools can be improved by distributing political power among the various groups who have legitimate interests in the nature and quality of educational services. Reforms that seek to reallocate power and authority among various stakeholders are based on the belief that when power is in the right hands, schools will improve. (Finn & Rebarber, 1992, p. 13)

The current move to decentralization has come mainly as a result of the failures of previous reform efforts which began as directives by state-level government or top-down mandates. Two key elements of site-based management are: (1)

that important decisions relating directly to the local school such as budget, personnel, curriculum, etc., are made at the local school level rather than at the central office level; and (2) that teachers, principals, and parents are equal partners in the decision-making process (David, 1989; Finn & Rebarber, 1992).

This paradigm shift changes the focus of parental involvement from supportive roles to partners in decision making. Site-based management, which involves parents, adds to the definition of involvement an element of participation which implies a stronger role or partnership between parent and staff in the various activities of the local school. Key among the characteristics of unusually effective schools is salient parental involvement (Levine, 1990). Parents become key participants in the changes brought about through site-based management. They are a part of the structural decentralization and deregulation of authority (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992; Finn & Rebarber, 1992).

Traditionally, parental involvement has been viewed as help at home with the teaching of social behavior and manners and help with homework or at school as a volunteer in the classroom, a fund raiser for the school, or a worker in the health room. The development of site-based management has added a new element to parent involvement, participatory governance. Site-based management provides a structure and a process for parent participation (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992). As reflected in the research on school reform, effective schools, and parental involvement, written policies should define parent involvement in the educational process. Current models of site-based management have been established for a short period of time. Some research measuring the impact of total delivery systems under this concept has been conducted; however, there appears to be a need to focus on how parental involvement impacts the success of site-based management and school improvement.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine selected districts and elementary schools in five states within the Southeastern region of the United States that have successfully implemented site-based management to: 1) determine the role of parents in the decision making process, 2) identify the domains in which parents participate in decision making, and 3) identify the common parent involvement (participation) components, other than involvement in site-base teams or councils, that have strengthened those schools and impacted student success.

Foreshadowed Questions

This study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What policies and procedures at the state, district, and local levels are in place to define and direct the involvement of parents in local school decision making ?
2. What is the role of the parent in decision making?
3. In which areas or domains (budget, curriculum, personnel, discipline, etc.) are parents involved in decision making?
4. From the principal's perspective, what factors contributed the most to parental involvement in site-based management?
5. What parental involvement program(s) was/were established in each school prior to the institution of site-based management?
6. What parental involvement methods (programs) other than site-based management models are utilized currently in the targeted schools?

Significance of the Study

Among the reform efforts of the 1990s, site-based management has received much emphasis as a means of restructuring and empowering local schools to make decisions. Restructured school governance, empowered

parents, and empowered community leaders are at the center of change related to site-based management (Finn & Rebarber, 1992). Many states have mandated site-based management as a part of their school reform efforts. However, because of the limited experience within the United States, there is little research available to measure the success or failure of the parental involvement aspect of this effort. A review of the literature indicates that there is currently a gap in the reported research related to site-based management and the role parents play at the local school level. The majority of reported research deals with the roles of the administrators and teachers. If empowerment and governance are a part of site-based management and parents are viewed as stakeholders in local school affairs, it is imperative that more research take place so that clear roles and expectations of parents can be established. Determining whether site-based management alters relationships between the stakeholders is important. This determination of parental role expectation and relationship in governance in site-based management has not yet been established through studies of multiple schools where site-based management has been established.

Local school principals are key to the implementation of site-based management. Therefore, their perceptions of parental involvement are important and, in reality, should reflect honestly the degree to which parental involvement succeeds in the local school. The actual relationship and participation of parents in site-based management is determined, in large measure, by the principal.

This study will have practical application in terms of providing information about parent involvement and school reform that may be useful to those commissions charged with designing Alabama Public School Reform. Research in the areas of reform, effective schools, and parent involvement

document the importance of parents being actively involved with the educational process throughout the public school years. There is limited empirical evidence related to site-based management and the role of parents. Published research describes, largely, single case studies related through testimonials from single individuals. This research investigated selected elementary schools from within the Southeastern region of the United States which have implemented site-based management to determine the role of parents in the decision-making process, and identified the common parent involvement components that have strengthened those schools. The results of this study could assist policy makers in designing a comprehensive parent involvement program as part of the effective school reform movement.

Methodology

This study was used to determine the role of parents in site-based management in selected elementary schools in five states in the Southeastern United States. A review of applicable literature was conducted to determine the scope of research which currently exists regarding site-based management and the issues associated with the specific topic of parental involvement in site based management. A purposeful criterion sampling research design was used to select the states, districts, and schools to be used in this study. Purposeful criterion sampling involves the selection of particular subjects which will facilitate learning a great deal about the subject being researched (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Patton, 1990). Cross-case content analysis was used to report the data gathered.

Using information from the "State Departments of Education School-Based Management Questionnaire" conducted by Drs. Herman and Herman (1991), five states within the Southeastern United States were identified as having implemented site-based management in their states. Florida, Georgia,

North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee were selected for this study. The state superintendent or commissioner of education from each of the 5 states was contacted for information related to state legislation or regulatory language related to implementation of site-based management and the recommendation of 5 district superintendents from their state to contact for information about their district's successful implementation of site-based management. Each of the 25 district superintendents was contacted to request copies of district policies and procedures and any other available materials from the district level related to the implementation of site-based management within their district and the recommendation of 1 elementary school principal within their district to contact for information about the implementation of site-based management at the local level.

The state superintendent of education from each selected state was contacted by letter to request: 1) copies of state legislation and any other regulatory language from the state department of education related to the implementation of site-based management within their state, 2) the names, addresses, and phone numbers of 5 district superintendents to be contacted for information about their district's successful implementation of site-based management, and 3) a cover letter to be used in contacting each district superintendent. A total of 25 district superintendents was contacted. Each district superintendent was contacted by letter to request: 1) copies of district policies and procedures and any other available material from the district level related to the implementation of site-based management within their district, 2) the name, address, and phone number of 1 elementary school and its principal within their district to be used in gathering further information for this research, and 3) a cover letter from the district superintendent granting permission for the researcher to contact each local school principal. Each principal was

contacted by letter to request copies of the local school's policies, procedures, and other hard data which might be used in conducting this research. Each principal was asked to complete a questionnaire, prepared by the researcher, related to site-based management and parental involvement at the local school level.

The principal questionnaire used to collect data was developed by the researcher. The questionnaire was examined by a panel of experts and analyzed for content validity. The questionnaire was also field tested in 2 elementary schools where site-based management has been implemented to determine readability, adequacy, and representativeness of each question.

Operational Definition of Terms

Reform - refers to efforts of the state or school to correct recognized deficiencies. For this study, "public school reform" was used to define mandated plans to affect long-term change in public education (Lane & Epps, 1992; Ornstein, 1992).

Effective schools - In this study, effective schools are those recognized as possessing those elements research has used to describe schools which are providing an adequate education for all students (Levine, 1990; Schlechty, 1990; Walberg & Keffe, 1986).

Parent(al) Involvement - For this study, the term parent or parental involvement was used to encompass any person or persons charged as care giver who has/have assisted in a child's educational process (Berger, 1991b; Gestwicki, 1992).

Site-based management - refers to the decentralization of public school governance. For this study, the term site-based management was used to refer to local school governance which involves some parent involvement in the

decision-making process of school governance (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992; David, 1989; Fruchter et al., 1992; Lane & Epps, 1992).

Site-based decision making - refers to the process of making decisions related to the local school. For this study, the term site-based decision making was not used interchangeably with site-based management, but refers only to the process of making decisions at the local level and may or may not include parents (Conley & Bacharach 1990; Hill, Bonan, & Warner, 1992; Malen & Ogawa, 1992).

Assumptions

The assumptions that underlie this research are as follows:

1. Each school studied has a parental involvement component in its site based management program.
2. Site-based management at each of the schools will be unique to the individual school.
3. Common elements will be found among the site-based models studied.
4. Some form of parental involvement other than site-based management is in place in each of the schools.
5. Site-based management , with parent involvement , was instituted in each school in an effort to improve the school and student performance.
6. Principals will honestly report their perceptions and responses will be individualistic.

Limitations of the Study

1. The findings of this study were applied directly to an understanding of activities and policies involving parents in public education in selected states

within the Southeastern region of the United States and cannot be generalized to other populations.

2. The selected states are within the Southeastern United States and will have been identified as having implemented site-based management; however, there are demographic differences, such as size, location of school (urban, suburban, rural), and tenure of principal, which could influence the data.

3. Reform involving site-based management is newly implemented in many schools, so some of the information may reflect initial efforts which may or may not reflect what will be final actions.

Summary

Studies have established a rationale and framework for developing and maintaining a vital partnership among all constituents toward excellence in schools and education. More and more states are instituting, through visionary leaders or court mandate, school reform. School reform, through the decades, has come as an effort to improve the educational system and is still a formidable issue in public school education for the twenty-first century. The attitudes, current practices, and policies related to parent involvement in public schools are key elements in the planning and implementation of reform which will assure Alabama equitable and adequate education. The vehicle most used in reform efforts to restructure and decentralize the governance of education is site-based management (Hill et al., 1992; Malen & Ogawa, date). Parents have become key participants in the changes brought about through site-based management. Parents, as participants in school management, have added a new element to the traditional definition of parent involvement, participatory governance. There appears to be a need to focus on how parental involvement impacts the success of site-based management and school improvement.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the role of parents in the decision-making process in site-based management, the domains in which parents participate in decision making , and the common parent involvement components, other than involvement in site-based teams or councils , that strengthen a local school program and support student success. A review of the literature on parental involvement, school reform, and site-based management was conducted. It is the intent of this literature review to establish a framework by which leadership at the local school level is tied to all three elements in providing a quality education for children.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is “a process of actualizing the potential of parents; of helping parents discover their strengths, potentialities, and talents; and of using them for the benefit of themselves and the family” (Morrison, 1978, p.22). From research, three common themes in defining parental involvement have emerged: All children must be provided opportunities for success. All aspects of a child’s development must be addressed by the school, community, and other institutes of child support. Relationships between parents, schools, communities, and support organizations must change so that there is a shared responsibility in meeting the social, emotional, physical, and academic needs of children (Becher, 1984; Davies, 1991).

Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider (1991) identify four objectives for parent involvement. First, parents become more knowledgeable about the affairs of the school. They learn more about what students are learning at school. There is a better understanding of the problems faced by the schools. When parents are more informed about the school, they become more supportive of school efforts to improve their educational programs. Secondly, parents who are involved with their child's teacher(s) and the school administration become better prepared to help their child at home. A third objective of parent involvement is involving parents in the educational program of the school. When this occurs, the school benefits from the ideas, expertise, and human resources of participating parents. Fourth, involved parents are able to more effectively evaluate the school fairly and objectively (Gorton & Thierbach-Schneider, 1991).

A review of the literature on research in the area of parental involvement makes it possible to conceptualize the key forces behind parent involvement today, essential ingredients of an effective parental involvement program, and results which come from the establishment of policies and activities to directly involve parents in the educational process. From these studies there have emerged several circumstances which serve to motivate parent involvement. Educational and child development research underscores the necessity of an interdependence of parent, child, and school to provide quality education and social development (Gestwicki, 1992). Emerging laws and funding policies (Head Start, PL 94-142, PI 99-451, Act for Better Child Care) have served as a mandate for parent involvement. There has, at the same time, been an increase in concern and effort by communities to encourage parent involvement as a means of both improving schools and strengthening the community (Gestwicki, 1992).

Parental Involvement: Historical Overview

There has been a renewed emphasis on parent involvement in the public education of children. This emergence of renewed emphasis on parental involvement in the educational process is just that, a renewal. History provides a comparison of economic practices, social thought, childbearing practices, and educational programs (Berger, 1991a). In seeking to establish programs which are going to produce lasting effects on the developmental process of students, it is important to have an overview of this relationship through history. Eugenia Berger in Parents As Partners In Education: The School and Home Working Together (1991a) presents, in Chapter 2, an overview of family life and parent involvement. This information outlines the level and source of education, the role of parents in their child's education, and the value of childhood, historically.

In primitive cultures and into the middle ages, parents and the extended family were also the educational unit. Evidence shows that children were taught the skills, values, mores, and culture of their time by the family. Children were viewed as the future of the culture and thus held great value within the society. As cultures developed and history was recorded, there emerged a record of education. The early Greek and Roman societies believed that good care and education of the child were important for the survival of the society. Because of their importance to the continuance of the city state, children were deemed important members of society, but were objects of manipulation by the state educational system (Braun & Edwards, 1972). As early as the sixth century B.C., there were rules and regulations governing the public education of children and parental responsibilities (Hunt, 1970). During the Middle Ages, formal education was accomplished through the church and parents were responsible for teaching the skills necessary for survival within the restrictive

social order . The feudal system defined education along socioeconomic lines (Berger, 1991a).

John Amos Comenius and John Locke began the change to emphasis on the importance of parents (care givers) in the education of young children (Hunt, 1970). An environment which would allow children to learn and mature into productive adults was important. Pestalozzi and Rousseau are viewed as the molders of current parent involvement emphasis. The mother was viewed by both as the first educator of the child. The Calvinist doctrine also influenced our present view of parental involvement (Berger, 1991a). This doctrine of spare the rod and spoil the child brought about the first parent education classes designed to teach parents how to discipline their children. Learning from Pestalozze and Rousseau, Froebel's institution of kindergarten, which included involving parents, recognized parents as integral components of education. These and other writers, educators, and psychologists and their philosophies of child development and parental responsibility shaped modern thought and practice (Berger, 1991a).

Among the American colonists, education was influenced not only by the region in which they settled, but also by the overall prevailing laws which supported parental authority (Berger, 1991a). The family carried the burden of education, but religious leadership also influenced the educational process (Berger, 1991a). There emerged a plethora of publications from the United States, rather than Europe, on the subject of child rearing which consistently emphasized the important role of the mother in the educational process. Fathers, as significant in child rearing, were ignored in the literature. The emergence of organizations designed to support parents in the educational process began with Maternal Associations. In 1856, with the establishment of the first kindergarten, there emerged a movement from authoritarian to more .

gentle and persuasive manner of public education. Parent education and the role of women in education began to change following the Civil War, encouraging parents to become more involved in the public education of their children (Bruan & Edwards, 1972).

The modern parent education and involvement movement began to emerge in the late 1800s. There was a move of influence from education based on religious principles toward education based on educational theories and practices. Organizations such as The Child Study Association of America, the American Association of University Women, The National Association of Colored Women, and The National Congress of Parents and Teachers made an impact on education by emphasizing child study and parent education (Berger, 1991b). The Children's Bureau was formed in 1912, establishing the first step in government involvement in education and child care (Berger, 1991b). Following the formation of the Children's Bureau came federal publications and numerous congressional acts which have structured many aspects of parent education. With this involvement came also the initiation of both federal and local tax support and the establishment of private foundations to further parent education and cooperative involvement in public education (Berger, 1991b). In the 1940s, behaviorists added the dimension of mental health to parent education. The 1950s and 1960s brought the baby boom and the establishment of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, which gave an even more diverse approach to parent education. During this time, an advocacy for children was begun to insure their rights to a public education backed by parents, political leaders, and tax money (Berger, 1991b). The 1970s and 80s brought government and parents together for educational reforms, and social groups such as churches, civic groups, and businesses became advocates for education. Training for parents and leaders became a

way to question and find ways to assure better education. As questions began to arise among advocates, the necessity to cooperate and work together became important. Parents and schools formed partnerships to address concerns not only for academic advancement and meeting of the needs of special students, but also for social issues such as teen pregnancy, alcohol abuse, and abuse of other drugs (Berger, 1991b).

As parents and educators enter the decade of the 1990s, many factors have surfaced to add stress and create the need for closer parent-school cooperation. "Although some positive signs for change occurred, the social concerns of poverty, at risk children, AIDS, undereducated youth, drug and alcohol abuse, stress on families, environmental pollution, and homelessness continued to plague the country" (Berger, 1991a).

The Changing Family and Parental Involvement

An important education agency in every culture is the family. Here (are) to be found both formal and informal education. Parents teach their children by merely living with them in the family group. They are examples which children follow instinctively. They also teach directly by telling and showing, by praising when the children conform and punishing when they fail to measure up to the standards set by the family group. The family, is first in time, and in many ways the most important teaching agency in any society. (Frost, 1966, p. 12)

Children today are coming to public school from situations which do not fit the traditional definition of family, a mother and father and two children. The Census Bureau defines family as "two or more individuals who live together and are related to one another by blood or marriage" (Gestwicki, 1992, p. 4). Today, the extended family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, and older siblings) often make up the primary care givers. The step family today plays a major role in the makeup of family. The divorce rate has increased 700% since 1900. Today, 22% of the children born are to mothers out of wedlock. Of the single

parent families, 90% are headed by females. The poverty rate in single female homes is 34.4% (Gestwicki, 1992).

There has also been a major shift in roles. There are more females in the workplace. The role expectations of males have changed. They must share power in the workplace with females and are also expected to help at home with household chores as well as child care. With this shift in family role and expectation, understanding the family makeup and its influences can help build a more constructive and successful partnership in the education of children (Gestwicki, 1992).

Principles of Successful Parental Involvement

Goodlad (1984) conducted polls and surveys to determine what parents wanted from their schools. He found that parents do not wish to control the school, but do want more voice in school affairs. Clear communication from the school to the home concerning their child's academic progress and general welfare was desired. Parents also called for some form of accountability for teachers and principals. There was an expressed desire for more decentralization of central offices and a move to more participatory decision making at the local school level (Goodlad, 1984).

Research provides some specific principles about parental involvement, but there appears to be no consensus on the type of involvement which is most useful or the best way to design, implement, and evaluate a parent involvement program. Parent involvement programs usually are defined within one of these five categories or a combination of several categories:

1. Parenting - The basic obligation of parents is to ensure their child's safety, good health, and welfare. This involves a knowledge of childrearing skills and a knowledge of how to create a home environment that will assure student learning (Brandt, 1989; Epstein, 1987b).

2. **Communicating** - Communication is a two way process. Schools are expected to provide information concerning the development of the child. Also, parents are expected to maintain open communication with the school concerning events taking place at home which would affect the student's learning (Brandt, 1989; Epstein, 1987a).

3. **Learning at home** - Parents need to support the student at home, assist with homework, and encourage home learning (Brandt, 1989; Epstein, 1987b).

4. **Volunteering** - Parents who are involved in the on-going activities within the school on a day-to-day basis become familiar with the school staff and are able to coordinate support and learning (Brandt, 1989; Epstein, 1987b).

5. **Representing other parents** - Through involvement in a governance or advocacy position, parents can represent other parents in forming policies that affect the education of all children (Brandt, 1989; Epstein, 1987a).

Williams and Chavkin (1989) have formulated seven essential elements of parent involvement programs:

1. **Written policies** which legitimize the program and frame the context of the program.
2. **Administrative support** in providing those elements necessary to insure a successful, on-going program.
3. **Training of staff and parents** in effective parent programs.
4. **Partnership approach** between staff and parents to planning and implementing an effective parent involvement program.
5. **Communication** that is two-way, open, and frequent.
6. **Networking** with other programs to share and improve.

7. Evaluation on a regular basis to determine the value and need for improvement or change to insure a strong partnership (Williams & Chavkin, 1989).

Empirical research has yielded guideposts concerning effective parent involvement. First, there needs to be a collaborative effort between parents and schools to establish parent involvement goals (Comer, 1986; Epstein, 1987c; Chavkin & Williams, 1987). Everyone benefits from collaborative efforts (Henderson, 1988). Communication is a key element in forming collaborative relationships. In studies done by the University of Pittsburgh (Lindle, 1989), there is evidence that families, regardless of socioeconomic status, have similar preferences about school-home communications. Those communications and activities which were most favored had a personal touch which acknowledged working parent schedules, were less formal, were timely, and portrayed parents as equal partners with school in rearing their children.

Secondly, the most effective parent involvement requires that there be a variety of roles available (Comer, 1986; Henderson, 1988). Any comprehensive parent involvement program should have as interdependent components: parent advocacy or empowerment, school visitation and volunteer services, school-to-home and home-to-school communications, home learning activities conducted by parents, and emphasis on the socialization process which occurs at home (Jennings, 1992). Though these are key components of an effective, long lasting parent involvement program, involvement in almost any form by parents appears to result in measurable gains in student performance. Anne Henderson (1987) in The Evidence Continues to Grow: Parent Involvement Improves Student Achievement concludes, from a study of 35 research reports in 1981 and eighteen more in 1987, that in schools where there is a strong parent involvement program, students perform better than in schools where

there is no program. She also found that where more frequent contact was maintained between school and home, the scores were higher. Where there was assistance at home, Henderson (1987) found that there was a development of an attitude of achievement. When parents became involved, student failures and dropouts decreased and the results tended to be long term. On the one hand, research says parents want more variety in the roles they play. On the other hand, research says any involvement brings positive results (Henderson, 1988).

A third guidepost from research states that the particular kind or form of involvement did not appear to be as important as the fact that the program of involvement needed to be reasonably well-planned, comprehensive, and long-lasting (Henderson, 1988). Most parent involvement programs fall into two types, mandated or intervention (Gestwicki, 1992). Mandated programs would include those programs which are controlled by funding. The power of the program comes from the funding. These programs are viewed as necessary. They have specific directions set up under policies and guidelines. Most mandated programs involve components of classroom volunteering, parent planned activities, decision-making involvement about the direction or operation of programs, and cooperation with the staff (Gestwicki, 1992). Intervention programs usually emphasize the parent as a learner where programs are designed to increase parent knowledge about child rearing and nurturing or parents as teachers, where parents are trained to assist with learning at home in cooperation with the school (Gestwicki, 1992).

James Jennings (1992) lists the recommended components of parental involvement developed by the National Association of State Boards of Education:

- * recognize and promote the parent as the primary influence on their child
- * recognize parents as essential partners in education
- * recognize the importance of parent self esteem
- * recognize the value of parents in the decision-making process for individual children and for the total program
- * recognize and promote parent observation and assistance in the classroom
- * recognize the importance of collaboration between parent and teacher for the benefit of the child (Jennings, 1992).

It should be noted that no matter how much evidence is gathered to show the positive effects of parent involvement, it must be recognized that certain groups of students--urban, low income, minority--are vastly under represented. No matter what the definition of parent involvement used, they suffer. In many of the areas which serve these students, schools have not been successful in using parent involvement to improve academic achievement (Galen, 1991; Jennings, 1992).

Parental Involvement Programs and Activities

Generally, parent involvement programs can be identified as programs which develop around school-to-home communications, home-to-school communications, or programs emphasizing communications both ways as important. School-to-home communications are designed specifically to let parents know what they are to do at home to assist in the teaching/learning process. Usually, these deal with homework assignments, discipline policies, and directives or suggestions of things which can be done at home to make the home conditions more supportive to learning.

Clark's research (cited in Swap, 1990) found that differences in achievement were not attributed to poverty, family structure, educational background, or other demographic variables, but to the differences in family culture and nature of the parent-child and parent-school interactions. Parents of achieving students strongly encouraged academic pursuits, expected students to continue learning, set clear and consistent limits, and were involved with the school and visited school periodically. Parents of students doing poorly interacted with school only when called about some negative incident. Clear directions from the school about the social and academic skills that are needed for success and the parent's role in supporting those skills can be a welcome offering (Swap, 1990).

When the model of parental involvement is the school-to-home philosophy, the principal not only must make sure that parents are well informed about the expectations for the parent, but also must communicate clearly to the parents the philosophy and goals of the school. Expectations and policies must be clearly stated and communicated in any way needed so that parents get the message. Principals must be careful when instituting a school-to-home parent involvement program to be sure that the culture of the families does not suffer. Also, principals must support teachers working with parents, give supportive guidance, and respond to the concerns of parents (Goldring, 1986).

"Parents in Touch," a program of parental involvement established in the Indianapolis Public Schools, was designed to facilitate communication from school to home (Warner, 1991). Contracts involving teacher, parent, and child were prepared. Through these contracts parents agreed to see that their child was at school, set up a home routine, and provide a place to do homework. The principal, although not directly involved in the contract, agreed to create within the school a learning environment and fully endorsed the contracts. Three

different technical means of communication were established within the schools. These were: (a) Dial-A-Teacher, to give assistance with information about homework. It was staffed by teachers and specialists and allowed children to call in for assistance with homework. Parents could call with homework questions as well. (b) Homework Hotline was a television program designed so that children and parents could call in with homework questions and see their problems worked out on the board, and (c) ParentLine/Communicator, a computerized telephone system filled with taped messages about a variety of school information, was open 24 hours a day (Warner, 1991).

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Elementary School in Rosemead, California has developed an aggressive program designed to strengthen parental involvement through school-to-home communications (Davis, 1989). A program of "Student of the Week" and "Super Reader of the Week" was begun. When a child was selected for either of these awards, a letter outlining the reasons the child was selected was sent home. During that week a phone call, wherein the principal expressed pride in the child and discussed school matters, was made to the home. When necessary, the phone call was interpreted into the native tongue of the family. There was a constant stream of thank you notes praising parents for their efforts and support. Bruce C. Davis, the principal says, "Rather than just begging people to do for us, we build self-esteem and provide opportunities for people to have self-actualizing experiences" (Davis, 1989, p.22).

Another method or program of parental involvement involves more of a home-to-school interactive model. Within these programs, parents come to the school and are actively involved in the ongoing programs of the school (Pearson, 1990). The principal, in this philosophy, has a vital role. A school

atmosphere that makes parents feel welcome must be a primary focus. An open-door policy welcomes parents.

The principal, as the main figure in the parental involvement process, calls the shots as to whether or not parent participation will be implemented in the schools. Parent involvement in any form is desirable and principals, due to their position, control the degree of involvement within the school. (Pearson, 1990, p.16)

Goldring's research (1990) on the principal's relationship with parents suggests that this relationship can be classified along two distinct dimensions, social class and the heterogeneity of the parents. She found that in schools where there was a higher percentage of parents from a high socioeconomic status, the principal's relationship with parents involved parents providing resources for the school and less actual involvement in activities such as teaching and education. Principals in schools where there was a middle socioeconomic status heterogeneous group of parents tended to use parents in a combination of providing things and assisting in the academic process. Principals in schools where there were parents from low socioeconomic status tended to involve parents minimally in providing resources and as much as possible in the educational process of the school. Principals seem to rely on the social, cultural, and economic resources of parents in the home-to-school involvement (Goldring, 1990).

The Inupiat Eskimos in North Barrow, Alaska have demonstrated what home-to-school involvement can do. They became involved in the school because they felt that the existing educational program was effective, but they wanted the students to have the elements of historical and contemporary Inupiat Eskimo culture and knowledge incorporated into their programs. This home-to-school parent involvement led to a school system that incorporated and respected the works and views of two different cultures (Swap, 1990).

The Lake Forest School District in Horrynton, Delaware used the home-to-school model to solve the issue of effectiveness of the system in serving black students (VanSciver, 1989). As a result of their efforts, the black community has demonstrated an increased participation and support of the programs of the schools, begun an active participation in committees, and increased voter turnout on school-related issues and referendum votes. An awareness of the need to serve all students, regardless of skin color, socioeconomic background, or ability was established (VanSciver, 1989).

Perhaps the type of parent involvement which has proven to be most effective is a partnership approach which incorporates a combination of the elements of the school-to-home and the home-to-school types (Swap, 1990). This type would reflect a mutual respect and a sharing of powers in creating a successful school experience. In a partnership of school and parental involvement, goals must be clear and there must be consensus. There must be a shared sense of mission. Specific standards are set with specific indicators for success such as attendance, drop-out, suspension rates, student retention, self-esteem, and proficiency in basic skills. There is, then, a shift to expectations of success for all children from blame of parents and students for failure (Swap, 1990).

There is, in a partnership attitude toward education, a change in the curriculum to reflect the culture and background of the community. "Teaching is based on an enriched curriculum that builds on connections with the life experiences of students in their families, communities, and cultures; that stresses active learning; and that builds critical thinking skills along with basic skills" (Swap, 1990, p. 35).

If there is to be a true partnership between home and school, there must be a change in the structure of the school. There will need to be a shift to

school-based management to facilitate flexibility and to respond to the changing needs of the school and community (Epstein, 1987c). The principal would be the coordinator of the partnership. A successful partnership, with the principal as coordinator, will involve more than the school and parents. It will also draw on other resources within the community to assure that all services needed by the children and their families are provided. This involves movement to a non-bureaucratic way of serving and obtaining funds to carry out the needed program. "Successful schools draw on parents for help and advice; they seek from parents conformation of the school's high expectation for the children; they clarify how parents can help support their children's achievements" (Swap, 1990, p. 36).

The "Par-aide in Education" program, established at the UCLA laboratory school, is an example of getting parents involved in a partnership of teaching (Hunter, 1989). Parents were surveyed and categories of parents' competencies were identified: skills in hobbies, knowledge in occupations, knowledge in cultures. Teachers then modeled teaching for the parent-aides so that they could learn how to teach. Training in working with children and maintaining the necessary confidentiality was conducted. Through this program, parents became partners in teaching the children and enriching the curriculum (Hunter, 1989).

Establishing a partnership requires the principal to create an atmosphere that will foster an attitude that parents are a part of the solution, not a part of the problem. It is the principal's responsibility to assure and facilitate the success of parent involvement. There must be a feeling of mutual respect and trust. "The principal, as the main figure in the parental involvement process, calls the shots as to whether or not parent participation will be implemented in the school" (Pearson, 1990, p. 16).

The Mildred Magowan School in Edgewater Park, New Jersey established in 1989 a program called "Parents as Partners in Learning" (Galen, 1991). This program was designed to bridge the gap between traditional involvement during invited times to an expanded parental involvement. An eight step procedure was used as the framework. The principal and other district administrators analyzed the school's needs. A committee of teachers, parents, and the principal identified the needs to be addressed by parent/staff collaboration. The committee determined what training was needed for both parents and teachers to make the partnership successful. The principal followed through on the provision of training. An effort was also made to communicate the benefits of parental involvement to parents, children, and staff. Ideas for increasing involvement of parents unable to come to the school were generated through brainstorming by the committee. Ways to consistently reinforce appreciation by the principal to the staff and parents and by the teachers to parents were discussed. A decision was reached to make evaluation of the program by both parents and faculty an ongoing activity (Galen, 1991).

"Parents as Instructional Partners," a program at Conn-West Elementary School, Grandview, Missouri, addressed the discomfort parents and educators were feeling about parental involvement (Kennedy, 1990). Parents had a negative attitude and lack of skills and information. Teachers viewed parents as not important and interfering. Both the parent and teacher needs were addressed. Results of this program show parents' self-esteem increased, students' participation in school activities increased, and parents became ambassadors in the community and valued allies in the school. A warm and positive relationship has developed between parents and teachers which

increased the teachers' willingness to make home visits and work toward more parental involvement (Kennedy, 1990).

In summary, research tells us:

- * The primary educational environment is in the home.
- * Student test score improve when parents become involved.
- * Long lasting and well-planned programs of parental involvement are the most effective.
- * Parent involvement must extend beyond the elementary school years through high school.
- * Parents must be involved in the school in all areas to ensure quality education for all children.
- * Collaboration between school and home is essential (Henderson, 1987; Henderson, 1988).

“ . . . the evidence is beyond dispute: parent involvement improves student achievement. When parents are involved, children do better in school, and they go to better schools” (Henderson, 1987, p. 1).

Written Policies for Parental Involvement

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory has formulated seven essential elements of parent involvement programs. The first essential element on their list is written policies which legitimize the program and frame the context of the program (Williams & Chavkin, 1989).

Policy makers committed to restructuring as a process for change properly make policies that answer “what” questions and leave prescriptions and answers to the “how” questions to educators and parents who are closest to children and classrooms. (Finn & Rebarber, 1992, p. 91)

If parent involvement is one key to improved student performance and better schools, the administrator of the individual school is an important key to effective parent involvement. In order for principals, as the local education

authorities, to develop and enhance a home/school partnership, they must understand the need for parents to be involved in the total program of the school. Parents today want to go beyond the traditional roles and become involved in the decision-making process within their schools. To assure this collaboration, policies must be developed which recognize parents as important in the educational process (Rich, 1986). Rich (1986) includes in her guidelines to enhanced parental involvement for administrators the need for parents to be involved collaboratively in creating formal, written policies addressing the importance of parent involvement. Part of the collaboration would involve inservice opportunities for staff and parents to learn how to involve parents in decision making and allow for their input. The activities for parent involvement should come from parents, based on their interest, needs, and skills (Rich, 1986). Like all effective improvements and programs, parent involvement should be a developmental process to include parents in all levels of the educational system. To assist parent involvement, appropriate resources should be available as well (Chavkin & Williams, 1987).

Research conducted in Israel (Goldring, 1993) indicates that involvement of parents in policy making also is affected by the socioeconomic status of parents. This study indicates that high-socioeconomic-status parents are involved only to the extent the principal allows in order to maintain power. With lower socioeconomic status parents, the influence of parents in policy making tends to come through organized parent groups (Goldring, 1993).

With the precedent being set by the courts showing a reluctance to recognize parental constitutional rights and sending more and more cases back to the local district school boards and their policy statements, parents must become more involved in the policy making process (Drake, 1992; Mawdsley & Drake, 1992). Principals must become facilitators of the inclusion of parents as

part of the decision making and policy forming process (Drake, 1992). "Involvement is not an easy way to run a school. It demands planning, time, and energy. However, it is the only way to run a school if the school is run for the educational benefit of students in a democratic society" (Gilchrist, 1989, p.138).

Parental Involvement and Effective Schools

"An education of quality awakens students to the excellence inside them and provides realistic goals for what can be accomplished in their lives" (Walberg & Keffe, 1986, p. 68). Students who complete effective schools should be able to ask questions and search for answers, be competent decision makers, be able to evaluate ideas and their validity, be productive members of the job market, and possess social and communicative skills which will allow them to be valuable members of society (Gilchrist, 1989).

Administrators must view the increased need for parent involvement in the educational process not as a threat to their power, but as an opportunity to gain partners in achieving goals of excellence (Davies, 1987; Fruchter et al., 1992; Henderson, 1988). There is a circle created by the elements of parent involvement, effective schools, and school reform. There is a direct link among the three elements. "Researchers, practioners, and policymakers all have recognized the importance of parental involvement in effective schools" (Epstein, 1987b, p.133). Purkey and Smith (1983) in "Effective Schools: a review" cite parent involvement as a critical organization variable in effective schools. Moles (1982) identifies the need for district parent involvement programs for effective schools. Parent involvement is listed as one of the criteria for selecting Effective Schools Awards for improving inner city schools (Epstein, 1987b). America 2000 (1991) identifies parents as one of the four key ingredients in establishing a national policy for effective schools. Levine (1990) outlines the characteristics used to identify unusually effective schools. One of

these characteristics is a well-defined, ongoing parent involvement program. Research has established a direct relationship between parent involvement and school effectiveness.

“Schools are effective to the extent that they produce results which stays [sic] all the constituencies that must be satisfied in order to maintain the commitments and resources needed to sustain the school in the pursuit of its purpose” (Schlechty, 1990, p. 55). Insistence, persistence, resilience, and consistency are reported to be the key leadership prerequisites for success in effective schools (Levine, 1990). Administrators, district and local site, must insist that faculty, students, parents, and the community take responsibility for improving the total school (Schlechty, 1990). High standards must be set and persistence used to assure they are attained. Obstacles and discouragement must not deter the learner's resilience to move forward. There must be consistency throughout the planning and implementing of programs to improve education (Levine, 1990).

Twelve characteristics have been used to identify unusually effective schools:

- * There is a productive school climate and culture which fosters positive performance and an orderly environment.
- * Mastery learning is the focus.
- * Student progress is monitored appropriately.
- * Staff development is provided at the local school site.
- * There is outstanding leadership.
- * There is a well defined, ongoing parent involvement program.
- * Effective implementation of appropriate instruction.
- * Student expectation and requirements are high.
- * Students have a sense of efficacy.
- * Multicultural instruction is emphasized.

- * The personal development of individual students is emphasized.
- * Promotion policies are rigorous and equitable (Levine, 1990).

School Reform and Parental Involvement

School improvement can refer to any systematic effort to improve the conditions or effects of schooling. In the current context of educational reform, we define it as the systematic application of a research-based process or model in a significant, multi-stage effort to strengthen selected determinants of performance or outcomes in one or more participating schools. (Lane & Epps, 1992, p. 47)

The systematic application of a research-based process or model does not define the history of educational reform. Reform has been the method of defining what's wrong with education, and the means of fixing the problem, used by individuals, associations, events in history, public media organizations, governmental agencies (federal, state, district), educators at the university level, and state and local boards of education (Hallinger, Murphy, & Hausman, 1992). Horace Mann and Henry Barnard were the early leaders in the school reform movement calling for sacrifice to educate all and advocating compulsory attendance (Katz, 1971; MacMullen, 1990). In 1912, The Ladies Home Journal published articles critical of the quality of public education and began a crusade for public school reform (Pierce, 1987). The Progressive Education Association became a formal voice for education reform in 1919 (Pierce, 1987). In the 1930s, there began a running debate between the differing views of proponents of progressive education and basic education. The organizations and leaders of these beliefs influenced reform until the launching of Sputnik in 1957, when adequacy of public schools emphasized reform which focused on curriculum and teacher education (Pierce, 1987). These early reform initiatives were prescriptive and reflected the belief that the professional educators had become lax and that schools should be held more accountable for their outcome (Hallinger et al., 1992).

Ornstein (1992) presents an overview of seven reports on excellence in education released between 1983 and 1991. He reports that our information and technological society is demanding for the twenty-first century citizens who “can think critically and work well with verbal and numerical abstractions and complex knowledge.” (Ornstein, 1992, p. 101). These reports, says Ornstein, should serve as platforms for public discussions and agendas which deal with realism, not rhetoric of reform (Ornstein, 1992).

In the later half of the twentieth century, more than 300 state and national commissions were formed to study and make suggestions for reform. There was a shift from the focus on integration and compensatory education to demands for complete restructuring with community support and involvement (Hallinger et al., 1992). There was a recognition that only reform of the total system could effect the desired change. The need for more community control and decentralization of administrations became the focus for restructuring the system through reform (Gittell, 1978). Reform efforts must recognize that schools are serving students from diverse cultural backgrounds, who are not from traditional family structures. To be successful in accomplishing the needed school reform, parental involvement must be a key component (Davies, 1987).

School Reform/Restructuring: Definition(s) and Purpose(s)

Education reform is the response to the call for creating a school culture where the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of teachers and learners reflect a common goal of quality education (Prince, 1989). What happens when there is a dissatisfaction with the school culture and its outcomes? Reform is the response. When there are calls for change in learning outcomes and teaching, reform is needed (Prince, 1989). Reform shares a common meaning with correcting, mending, remedying something wrong, but it also implies a change

in an attempt to eliminate imperfections or form new structures. Reform is a process designed to lead to a general end (Rich, 1991).

Reform presupposes that substantial institutional deficiencies can be recognized, that much desirable states of affairs can be formulated, and that such states are potentially achievable. Reform also assures the ability to discern and assess when such states have occurred. (Rich, 1991, p. 154)

Reform effort requires commitment and energy of school personnel. The reform debate defines two kinds of reform. Restructuring or "bottom up" reform places more emphasis on the teacher leadership. It empowers the teacher to accomplish improvements at the local level (Prince, 1989). This is usually programmatic reform where curricula and programs are changed or innovative ideas or methods are introduced (Rich, 1991). Accountability or "top down" reform, on the other hand, is state-mandated and involves evaluation, curriculum design, funding, data based decision making, competency testing, and standardized testing (Prince, 1989). Accountability is usually systemic reform involving authority relationships along with the distribution and allocation of power and resources (Rich, 1991). Both types of reform require the establishment of new standards and major policy changes which alter the existing program (Ornstein, 1992; Rich, 1991). School reform is determined largely by decisions made from the political structure. The fate of public schools is clearly a product of political actions at the national, state, and local levels (Pierce, 1987).

If, by definition, reform requires change, Prince (1989) enumerates five major elements necessary. Visionary leadership is listed as the number one change necessary. Secondly, middle managers must become enablers. A third element is the establishment of a network or informed leaders: principals, teachers, parents, business leaders, elected leaders, and students. An active steering committee is the fourth key element. Centralized planning and

evaluation is the fifth element. All of these elements are needed to accomplish the necessary attitude changes among the leaders of reform. If the educational culture is to change, leaders must accomplish an attitude change.

The emphasis on bottom-up vs. top-down reform in the latter part of the 1980s and into the 1990s has added restructuring to the reform definition. Restructuring is defined as “activities that change fundamental assumptions, practices, and relationships, both within the organization and between the organization and the outside world, in ways that lead to improved student learning outcomes” (Conley, 1991, p. 12). Mandated, reform is top-down, but the restructuring process of the educational system with site-based management involves a bottom-up approach to reorganization. More recent reform initiatives aimed at restructuring emphasize a reshaping of the entire educational enterprise, not repair (Hallinger et al., 1992).

Basically, restructuring includes endeavors to (a) decentralize the organization, management, and governance of schooling; (b)empower those closest to students in the classroom (i.e., teachers, parents, and principals); (c) create new roles and responsibilities for all the players in the system; and (d) transform the learning-teaching process that unfolds in classrooms. (Hallinger et al., 1992, p. 330)

Both reform and restructuring retain as their main objective the improvement of student learning (Conley, 1991; Hallinger et al., 1992).

Kenneth Tye (1992), in his article, “Restructuring Our Schools: Beyond the Rhetoric,” discussed five important issues that must be resolved if restructuring is to succeed. His thesis is that “Restructuring U. S. education is not a simple task and that much of today’s rhetoric ignores the complexities of schooling” (Tye, 1992, p. 13). First, he says our political leaders, national and local must reaffirm the value of public education to our democratic way of life. A commitment to excellence of education for all children and a moral and financial

commitment are necessary. Secondly, Tye states there must be developed descriptive research data which define what expectations are to serve as guideposts for school practices. It is also important to determine whether these expectations and practices match. Success in restructuring rests on understanding the entity with which it is working. Next, instruction should become a site issue, not driven by state and national curriculum, state adopted textbooks, and national testing. It is incongruent to talk about decentralized decision-making and let what is to be taught and how success is measured remain centralized. The fourth issue is changing our management behaviors. Not only does this redefine state and district administration to facilitating and supporting, and local school principals, teachers and communities to making collective decisions and actions, but it makes each accountable for their part. Politicians must deliver moral and financial resources, support and facilitation from the state and district level must be accounted for, and those at the local level making the decisions will be accountable for outcomes and actions. The fifth issue is a development of focus. Each school site must develop a set of well-articulated goals to meet the needs of the students and the community served. Tye states that restructuring is the most significant and serious attempt at school reform yet undertaken, but that it is in danger of failure if these issues are not seriously considered (Tye, 1992).

Lieberman and Miller (1990) identify five building blocks of restructuring:

1. A rethinking of curricular and instructional efforts in order to promote quality and equality for all students. They call this the cornerstone because it implies the need to rethink all our current instructional practices.
2. A rethinking of the structure of the school. If there is a change in instructional beliefs, there must also be a change in how a school is operated. There will be a redefinition of roles of all school personnel. Included in this building block

would be such issues as site-based management, participatory decision making, and teacher leadership.

3. A two-pronged focus on a rich learning environment for students and on a professionally supportive work environment for adults. School-based management and decision-making are means by which a more effective learning and teaching environment can be accomplished. One must not be accomplished at the expense of the other. They are both important.

4. A recognition of the necessity for building partnerships and networks. Developing a network by which to share ideas, practices, experiences, and insights provides a frame of reference for restructuring efforts within individual buildings.

5. A recognition of the increased and changing participation of parents and the community. The inclusion of parent and citizen involvement in school restructuring is important if local schools are to meet their individualized goals (Lieberman & Miller, 1990, p. 761).

Site-Based Management and Parental Involvement

Restructuring for school and student improvement is a process, not a prescription. Site-based management has become an important part of the restructuring process. Restructuring, reform which emphasizes decentralization, grew out of reform efforts of the 1960s and 70s. From the late 1980s until present, decentralization, called site- or school- based management, is intended to bring significant changes in educational structure and practice (David, 1989). This emphasis on site-based management as a reform tool recognizes and incorporates findings from research on efforts to change and improve public schools (Lane & Epps, 1992).

Somewhat independent parts of the legal structure of education in this country clearly makes schools everybody's business. Under the system of control that has evolved, educational purpose, policy support, and practice are public business, the responsibility of all

citizens. The system enables people to be heard about educational matters at all levels of public decision-making. (Pierce, 1987, p. 42)

Although the majority of published studies and research deals with restructuring and the relationship between principal and teachers in site-based management, for the purposes of this study, this review will look at the research dealing with site-based management and parent involvement.

Definitions of Site-Based Management

Marburger (1985) states that site-based management is a school by school phenomenon and cannot be mandated from the outside if positive change is to occur.

“The purpose of site-based management is to improve performance by making those closest to the delivery of services--teachers and principals--more independent and more responsible for the results of their school's operation” (Hill et al., 1992, p. 21).

“ . . . site-based management can be viewed as a form of decentralization that designates the individual school as the unit of improvement and relies on the redistribution of decision-making authority as the primary means through which improvements will be stimulated and sustained” (Lane & Epps, 1992, p. 185).

School-based management . . . locating the power to make decisions about budget, personnel, school organization, and curriculum at the school level . . . shared decision-making . . . how the varying school constituencies--administrators, teachers, other school staff, parents, and community--participate in the process of school-level decision making. (Fruchter et al., 1992, p. 70)

“School-Based Management = Autonomy + Shared Decision Making”
(David, 1989, p.46).

Autonomy is achieved by recognizing that primary decision-making should occur at the local level and should allow those decisions to be made by the stakeholders as participatory decision makers (David, 1989).

Robertson and Kwong (1994) discuss several rationales for school decentralization, as described through a literature review, which add to the understanding and definition of site-based management. First, schools, by decentralizing, are able to motivate their stakeholders (teachers, administrators, parents, community) by making them more responsible for their own performance. The stakeholders work together to develop a school culture to foster creativity and innovation in problem solving for improved student performance. Research points out that those who are closest to the clients are best able to know the needs. Third, participatory management brings increased performance and higher job satisfaction. Fourth, decentralization which provides an elected school council that included teachers, administrators, and often parents, students, and community members brings greater participation (Robertson & Kwong, 1994).

Successful school site management has three critical components. First, the district must develop, through a collaborative effort, a strategic plan for district wide decentralization. Schools cannot change established modes if central office expectations and controls remain intact. Next, site-based decision-making must be structured so that stakeholders can identify problems and the resources needed to solve them. Site-based management will lead to real changes at the school level only if it is the school system's basic reform strategy, and not just one among many. Third, principals must be responsible for allocating resources and seek additional resources to accomplish the school's goals (Conley & Bacharach, 1990; Hill et al., 1992).

This process ultimately produces a drastically new kind of public school system. Instead of a group of virtually identical schools, with

each adhering to standard mandates on policy and practice, a site-based managed school system offers a variety of schools, each based on a definite mission and instructional approach. (Hill et al., 1992, p. 23)

Characteristics and Elements of Site-Based Management

Site-based management, by definition, designates the individual school site as the primary unit of improvement and redistributes decision-making authority as the primary means by which improvement is made and sustained (Malen & Ogawa, 1992). This implies: site level stakeholders have formal authority to make decisions, there is a formal structure established involving the stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents, students, and community) directly in schoolwide decision making, and all site participants have substantial discretion in making contributions to the decision-making process (Malen & Ogawa, 1992).

In "Site-Based Management: An Experiment in Governance," Carlos and Amsler (1993) discuss the characteristics of site-based management plans.

1. Governance structure - The school's governance structure is the central element. Some schools might have one central committee. Others may have multiple committees with decision-making responsibilities that report back to a central committee for final decisions.

2. Site-based Management Council Membership - Elected by the stakeholders through open elections or nomination, the members of the council must represent the interests of all the stakeholders. Membership usually includes administration, teachers, parents, and community members.

3. Locus of Authority - This characteristic is key because it is the determining factor in whether the council has advisory or governance power. Whether decisions made by the council can be vetoed by some administrative

power or whether there is equal decision-making authority derived through consensus is a key issue in site-based management.

4. **Decision-making Jurisdiction** - District and state policies and laws as well as federal laws may dictate which types of decisions can be made by the governing councils. In some areas waivers that exempt site-based management schools from regulatory restraints are possible.

5. **Focus on Learning Outcomes** - Before any governance body begins to function in site-based management, it is important to have in place a mission which clearly delineates and directly links student outcomes with site-based management goals.

6. **Accountability/Evaluation Mechanisms** - Shared accountability brings shared responsibility. There should be an evaluation process in place to measure the effectiveness of the governance council in meeting the goals and mission of the school.

7. **Professional Development at the School Site** - Because roles and responsibilities are redefined, professional development for all stakeholders is important.

8. **Role of Parents and Community Members** - Parents can give valuable insight into how to improve schooling when given the opportunity to participate in decision making. It is important to determine the proportional makeup of parents on the governing committees. There also should be a cross sectional representation of parents.

9. **District Support** - Decentralization must begin at the district level. Forming a district-level site-based management planning team so that roles of all participants are clearly defined is important. It is important that everyone understand who has decision-making authority in what areas from the beginning.

10. Incentives for Participation - Merit teacher pay, waivers from the district and sometimes the state, and additional funding have been important incentives used to encourage site-based management (Carlos & Amsler, 1993, pp. 2-3).

Site-Based Management and Parental Involvement Issues

The paradigm shift toward restructuring and decentralization using site-based management creates the issue of how parents are to be involved in this process. The issue centers on what flexibility will be extended and what mechanisms will help the function of parental involvement work in site-based management. This paradigm shift implies a change from parent involvement which usually occurs as a matter of course to parent participation which implies a stronger role of partnership between parent and staff in various domains of decision-making. Site-based management provides a structure and process for parent participation (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992).

Davies (1987), in "Parent Involvement in the Public Schools: Opportunities for Administrators," gives some guidelines intended to minimize problems with parent involvement on councils and committees. He states that administrators must really believe that parents are willing to make and capable of making valuable contributions to the school operation. Parent participation roles should be clearly defined and articulated. Parents should know whether their participation is in an advisory or a governance capacity. Training should be provided for parents who are to be a part of the decision making teams, just as training is provided for the professional staff. Minutes and agendas should be used to keep everyone, not just parents, informed. Parents' unique talents and abilities should be recognized and utilized. With all stakeholders, including parents, rewards and recognition for the accomplishments and contributions made should be awarded frequently (Davis, 1989).

Parent apathy, a common complaint from administrators and staff, has been cited as a problem in involving parents in participatory decision making. Most professional staff tend to believe that most parents stay uninvolved unless controversial issues arise. Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider (1991) warn that parent apathy might be a symptom, not a problem. They state that administrators must diagnose the reasons for parental apathy carefully. Many parents state that the school wants them involved only in busy work, not in evaluating the effectiveness of the school or participating in decision making.

If administrators want to combat parental apathy, they probably need to provide more meaningful opportunities for parents to participate in school affairs. Most people are apathetic about taking part in a given activity unless they feel that they can make a significant contribution. (Gorton & Thierbach-Schneider, 1991, p. 541)

Likewise, parents have become more concerned about the quality of the education offered their children and have tried to become more involved. This increased involvement has been misinterpreted as over-involvement by some school administration and staff. This tends to be a judgment call and could be interpreted to mean parents are becoming more responsive and have a legitimate interest, or as interference with school management. Involving parents as a part of the decision making teams within the school focuses the increased interest (Gorton & Theirbach-Schneider, 1991).

Summary

With the urgency for educational reform that is sweeping our country, it is imperative that all of the various societal constituents (educators, taxpayers, politicians, parents, businesses, communities, students) of the educational process come together in partnership for the collective goal of accomplishing academic excellence for our schools. The purpose of this study was to look at one of these components, parents, to determine their role in the decision

making process in site-based management, the domains in which they participate in decision making, and the common components other than involvement in site-based teams or councils that strengthen a local school program and support student success.

Relationships between parents, schools, communities, and support organizations must change so that there is a shared responsibility in meeting the social, emotional, physical, and academic needs of children (Davies, 1991). Through a review of the literature on research in the area of parental involvement, it is possible to conceptualize the key forces behind parent involvement today, essential ingredients of an effective parental involvement program, and results which come from the establishment of policies and activities that directly involve parents in the educational process. Parental involvement has always been a key issue in education, but has taken many different roles over the history of civilization. Involvement has evolved from the only source of education, to direct involvement, to indirect involvement, to selected involvement, to participatory involvement. Parenting, communicating, learning at home, volunteering, and representing other parents are the categories in which most traditional parent involvement falls (Brandt, 1989; Epstein, 1987a). A collaborative effort, a variety of roles available, and involvement that is well-planned, comprehensive, and long-lasting are necessary for effective parent involvement (Henderson, 1988). Generally, parent involvement programs can be identified as programs which develop around school-to-home communications, home-to-school communications, or programs emphasizing communications both ways as important. Literature reviews cite numerous examples illustrating these programs.

If parent involvement is one key to improved student performance and better schools, the administrator of the individual school is an important key to

effective parent involvement. In order for principals, as the local education authorities, to develop and enhance a home/school partnership, they must understand the desire of parents to be involved in the total program of the school. To assure this collaboration, policies must be developed which recognize parents as important in the educational process (Rich, 1986). Principals must become facilitators of the inclusion of parents as part of the decision making and policy forming process (Drake, 1992).

Students who attend effective schools should be able to ask questions and search for answers, be competent decision makers, be able to evaluate ideas and their validity, be productive members of the job market, and possess social and communicative skills which will allow them to be valuable members of society (Gilchrist, 1989). There is a circle created by the elements of parent involvement, effective schools, and school reform. There are characteristics which can be used to identify unusually effective schools. One of those correlates is a well defined, ongoing parent involvement program.

Reform has been the method of defining what's wrong with education, and the means of fixing the problem, used by individuals, associations, events in history, public media organization, governmental agencies, educators at the university level, and state and local boards of education. Education reform is the response to the call for creating a school culture where the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of teachers and learners reflect a common goal of quality education (Prince, 1989). Reform effort requires commitment and energy of school personnel. Most reform efforts are either accountability based or restructure based. Most recent reform initiatives aimed at restructuring emphasize a reshaping of the entire educational enterprise, not repair (Hallinger et al., 1992). Both issues and building blocks for restructuring have been identified in the literature.

Site-based management has become an important part of the restructuring process. "Site-based management can be viewed as a form of decentralization that designates the individual school as the unit of improvement and relies on the redistribution of decision-making authority as the primary means through which improvements will be stimulated and sustained" (Lane & Epps, 1992, p. 185). In site-base managed schools, decentralization motivates stakeholders (teachers, administrators, parents, community) by making them more responsible for their own performance (Robertson & Kwong, 1994).

Site-based management, by definition, designates the individual school site as the primary unit of improvement and redistributes decision-making authority as the primary means by which improvement is made and sustained (Malen & Ogawa, 1992). This paradigm shift toward restructuring and decentralization, involving parent participation, centers on what flexibility will be extended and what mechanisms will help the function of parental involvement work in site-based management. Problems with parent involvement and site based management can be minimized if the school staff really believe that parents are willing to make and capable of making valuable contributions, the participation roles are clearly defined and articulated, training is provided, parents are kept informed, the unique talents and abilities are recognized and utilized, and rewards and recognition are frequent (Davis, 1989).

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine selected districts' elementary schools in five states within the Southeastern region of the United States that have successfully implemented site-based management to :1) determine the role of parents in the decision-making process, 2) identify the domains in which parents participate in decision making, and 3) identify the common parent involvement (participation) components, other than involvement in site-base teams or councils, that have strengthened those schools and impacted student success.

This study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What policies and procedures at the state, district, and local levels are in place to define and direct the involvement of parents in local school decision making?
2. What is the role of the parent in decision making?
3. In which areas or domains (budget, curriculum, personnel, discipline, etc.) are parents involved in decision making?
4. From the principal's perspective, what factors contributed the most to parental involvement in site-based management?
5. What parental involvement program(s) were established in each school prior to the institution of site-based management?

6. What parental involvement methods (programs) other than site-based management models are utilized currently in the targeted schools?

Procedure

A purposeful criterion sampling research design was used to select the states, districts, and elementary schools to be used in this study. Purposeful criterion sampling involves the selection of particular subjects that will facilitate learning a great deal about the subject being researched (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Patton, 1990). Cross-case content analysis was used to report the data gathered. According to Patton (1990), cross-case content analysis means grouping answers to the same question from different people and then searching for patterns and themes across these cases.

Sample

A purposeful criterion sampling research design was used to select the states, districts, and schools to be used in this study. Information from a survey conducted in 1991 by Dr. Jerry J. Herman and Dr. Janice L. Herman to be used in the text School-based Management: Current thinking and practice to be published by Charles C. Thomas was used to identify the states to be used in this research. A "State Departments of Education School-Based Management Questionnaire" was sent to the state departments of all fifty states to gather information about site-based management and its implementation. Responses to the questions were used to gather data concerning which states have site-based management in place. Five states within the southeastern United States were selected for this study from the data gathered. Those states selected from which to gather data were: Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

The state superintendent of education for each selected state was contacted by letter to secure the names and addresses of five district

superintendents to be contacted within their state. Each state superintendent was asked to identify five districts in which site-based management has been implemented. Each district superintendent was asked to identify at least one elementary school and principal within his/her district to participate in this study.

Materials and Instrumentation

This research study utilized archival information obtained from the state superintendents, the district superintendents, and elementary school principals to determine common elements in written policies, procedures, and processes in the implementation and continuance of site-based management at the local elementary level. The data gathered from these three sources were analyzed as documentation of ways successful site-based management programs at the elementary school level have been developed.

Using the information obtained from the state and district and information gathered from a review of the applicable literature on parent involvement, effective schools, reform, restructuring, and site-based management, a survey instrument was developed to be sent to each elementary school principal identified by the district superintendent. The principal questionnaire used to collect data was developed by the researcher. The questionnaire was developed following the guidelines of Best and Kahn (1989). This instrument was designed to gather data to: 1) determine the role of parents in the decision making process, 2) identify the domains in which parents participate in decision making, and 3) identify the common parent involvement (participation) components, other than involvement in site-based teams or councils, that have strengthened those schools and impacted student success. The questionnaire was examined by experts from Columbia University, who have conducted extensive qualitative research in the area of parental involvement, for content validity. No problems with content validity were found. The questionnaire was

also field tested in two elementary schools where site-based management has been implemented to determine readability, adequacy, and representativeness of each question. No difficulty was noted related to the readability, adequacy, and representativeness by the principals who field tested the instrument.

Data Collection Procedures

A purposeful criterion sampling research design was used to select the states, district, and schools to be used in this study.

The state superintendent of education for each selected state was contacted by letter to request: 1) copies of state legislation and any other available material from the state department of education related to the implementation of site-based management within their state, 2) the names, addresses, and phone numbers of five district superintendents to be contacted for information about their district's successful implementation of site-based management, and 3) a cover letter to be used in contacting each district superintendent. All of the state superintendents indicated that a contact had been made to each district office directly to expect the request from the researcher. A letter from Dr. Wayne Teague, Superintendent of Education for Alabama, preceded the researcher's request. Dr. Teague's letter stated, "Information from other states on parental involvement and parents' roles in site-based management will be extremely helpful as we in Alabama work toward systemic reform. The results from Mrs. Traylor's study could, potentially, benefit not only the State Department of Education, but also local education agencies and parent groups." Two weeks after this request was made, phone calls were made to those states who had not responded. Additional copies of the request letters were faxed to those states. There was a 100% response from the state superintendents' offices.

Each of the twenty-five district superintendents was contacted by letter to request: 1) copies of district policies and procedures and any other available material from the district level related to the implementation of site-based management within their district, 2) the name, address, and phone number of at least one elementary school and its principal within their district to be used in gathering further information for this research, and 3) a cover letter from the district superintendent granting permission for the researcher to contact each local school principal. Dr. Cleveland Hammonds, Superintendent of the Birmingham Public Schools, sent an accompanying letter. Dr. Hammond's letter stated in part, "Mrs. Traylor's research will be of benefit to Birmingham Public Schools as we begin implementation of site base management." Superintendents in each of these twenty-five districts were contacted by mail to secure the names and addresses of the elementary schools and principals to be used in this study. Two weeks after the request letters were sent to the district superintendents, phone calls were made to those districts who had not responded. Additional copies of request letters were faxed to those districts requesting them. In addition, the principal's instrument was faxed to those superintendents requesting a copy. In some districts the superintendent responded personally, while in other districts the request was given to the research department and the response came from that department. From several districts, either superintendents or those to whom the request had been delegated made phone calls to the researcher prior to sending information. These phone calls indicated interest in the information being gathered and offered suggestions from research findings gathered by the district or individual. One district superintendent indicated that in his small district they were just beginning to work with total quality and asked if the researcher knew of any models available which were simple and easy to follow. Another district

superintendent, after the requested material had been sent, mailed an article about site-based management with a note stating she thought the researcher might be interested. The researcher sensed an eagerness and genuine interest in supplying the requested information. There was an 80% response from the district level.

Each of the principals identified was contacted by letter to request copies of the local school's policies, procedures, and other data which might be used in conducting this research. A phone call was made to each principal prior to sending the instrument. A brief overview of the data to be collected from the instrument was given so that the principal could have some time to synthesize his/her thoughts and gather any hard data necessary in order to facilitate completion of the instrument. Each principal was asked to complete a questionnaire, prepared by this researcher, related to site-based management and parental involvement at the local school level.

Data Analysis Procedure

Cross-case content analysis was used to report the data gathered. Documents related to state legislation; state, district, and local policies and procedures; and any other documentation related to the institution of site-based management at the state, district, and/or local level were analyzed to determine common elements in written policies, procedures, and processes in the implementation and continuance of site-based management at the local elementary level. HyperRESEARCH 1.54 for Macintosh was used in analyzing and categorizing the data gathered. The results of this content analysis were reported by category of common characteristics.

The questionnaire sent to principals selected through the purposeful sampling was used to obtain data related to the role of parents in decision making, the domains in which parents participate in decision making,

contributing factors, both positive and negative, to parent involvement in site-based management as perceived by the selected principals, parent involvement programs which existed in each school prior to the institution of site-based management, and parent involvement programs which are utilized currently in the targeted schools. The data from the questions on the principal's questionnaire were analyzed in relationship to the six foreshadowed questions. Foreshadowed questions were developed to help focus data collection and help organize the analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Foreshadowed questions 1 - 6 were used to help analyze the data from questions 1 - 9 on the principal's questionnaire. Foreshadowed questions 4 - 6 guided the data analysis of questions 10 - 13 on the principal's questionnaire. Distribution graphs and narrative explanations were used to report the data.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine selected districts and elementary schools in five states within the Southeastern region of the United States that have successfully implemented site-based management to: 1) determine the role of parents in the decision-making process, 2) identify the domains in which parents participate in decision making, and 3) identify the common parent involvement (participation) components, other than involvement in site-based teams or councils, that have strengthened those schools and impacted student success. A purposeful criterion sampling research design was used to select the states, districts, and elementary schools to be used in this study. Cross-case content analysis was used to report the data gathered. This research study utilized archival information obtained from the state superintendents, the district superintendents, and elementary school principals to determine common elements in written policies, procedures, and processes in the implementation and continuance of site-based management at the local

elementary level. A questionnaire designed by the researcher was used to gather data to: 1) determine the role of parents in the decision-making process, 2) identify the domains in which parents participate in decision making, and 3) identify the common parent involvement (participation) components, other than involvement in site-based teams or councils, that have strengthened those schools and impacted student success. The data were analyzed and reported using cross case content analysis.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to examine selected districts and elementary schools in five states within the Southeastern region of the United States that have successfully implemented site-based management to: 1) determine the role of parents in the decision-making process, 2) identify the domains in which parents participate in decision making, and 3) identify the common parent involvement (participation) components, other than involvement in site-based teams or councils, that have strengthened those schools and impacted student success.

This study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What policies and procedures at the state, district, and local levels are in place to define and direct the involvement of parents in local school decision making?
2. What is the role of the parent in decision making?
3. In which areas or domains (budget, curriculum, personnel, discipline, etc.) are parents involved in decision making?
4. From the principal's perspective, what factors contributed the most to parental involvement in site-based management?
5. What parental involvement program(s) were established in each school prior to the institution of site-based management?

6. What parental involvement methods (programs) other than site-based management models are utilized currently in the targeted schools?

The data from this cross case analysis were analyzed within the three categories: state, district, and local school. Each of these categories has data unique to itself which impact the involvement of parents in the decision-making process. Research reported in the literature which connects each of the areas, state, district, and local, to the role of parents in site-based management was cited. Data gathered from each category were analyzed independently.

Research Related to State and District Initiatives and Legislation

“Policy makers committed to restructuring as a process for change properly make policies that answer ‘what’ questions and leave prescriptions and answers to the ‘how’ questions to educators and parents who are closest to children and classrooms” (Finn & Rebarber, 1992, p. 91).

Restructuring and school reform are determined largely by decisions made from the political structure. The fate of public schools is clearly a product of political actions at the national, state, and local levels (Pierce, 1987). Both reform and restructuring retain, as their main objective, the improvement of student learning (Conley, 1991; Hallinger et al., 1992).

Kenneth Tye (1992) states that there must be a commitment to excellence of education and a reaffirmation of the value of public education by our political leaders. Tye further states that instruction should become a site issue, not driven by state and district curriculum, state-adopted textbooks, and national testing. State and district administrations must be redefined to facilitate and support local school principals, teachers, and communities to make collective decisions and actions and hold the local schools accountable for the outcomes and actions (Tye, 1992).

Supportive policies are necessary for systemic reform (Finn & Rebarber, 1992). States must provide leadership, resources, and support to the reform efforts in schools. There must be a restructuring of the governance system. The state should provide long-range goals, but avoid dictating school curricula and activities (Smith & O'Day, 1991; Timar, 1989). There must be a balance between state accountability and local autonomy. Policy makers at the state level must establish clear expectations, an educational framework within which local programs are formed, and resources to accomplish the initiatives, and define the context in which the local school constructs its programs (Timar & Kirp, 1988). State policies must change before systematic restructuring for distribution of the decision-making process can be successful (Malen & Ogawa, 1992; Rich, 1991). Concerned with increasing academic performance, upgrading schools, and rectifying inconsistencies in resources and funding, several states began in the late 1960s and 70s passing statutes designed to decentralize decision-making to the local school and parents (Fruchter et al., 1992).

Analysis of State Initiatives and Legislation

There was a 100% return of data from the state level. Each of the five state superintendents contacted responded by sending the requested information directly or by having another department within the state department gather and send the requested information. Data gathered from each of the states were analyzed separately.

Georgia

Georgia has three state programs that encourage and support site-based management: *Schools for the Future Program*, *Charter Schools Program*, and *Next Generation School Project*. Each of these programs recognizes the

importance of placing decisions related to student learning at the local school level with those persons most closely related to the students.

The Georgia Board of Education approved Rule 160-4-9-.02, Demonstration Schools, which authorized the *Schools for the Future Program* in November 1991. This program encouraged staff members in individual schools, supported by their district, to design the best education programs they can to improve the learning of their students. This program was neither required nor mandated. It was intended to: provide an opportunity for the local school staff to look at education differently and develop a vision for education in their school, generate educational improvement at the school level, design the best educational program they can to improve the learning of their particular students, encourage schools to restructure local education to accomplish local, state and national education goals, and provide a means for obtaining waivers of state rules, regulations, and standards which inhibit proposed restructuring activities.

Senate Bill 74, *The Charter Schools Act* was passed by the Georgia General Assembly in 1993. The program was designed to be the capstone program for restructuring and renewing education programs in Georgia public schools. It is a school-based program intended to provide flexibility for the local school in designing ways to improve learning for their students and to determine how local, state, and national educational goals were met. *The Charter Schools Act* provides an opportunity for schools to redesign themselves in such areas as: how students learn, how instruction is designed and delivered, how staff is assigned, how students are placed, how funds are allocated, how the community is involved, and how rules, roles, and responsibilities for all persons involved in schooling are developed. Under Georgia School Law 20-2-255, schools may petition the state board for charter

school status as outlined by the law. The law allows local schools to choose to submit a binding performance based contract to be approved by the state and district boards of education which becomes a substitute for the state and local rules, regulations, policies, and procedures. The petition must contain documentation describing how parents of students enrolled in the school will be involved in developing the petition, implementing the improvement plan, and identifying performance criteria. The petition must also define how parents will be involved in evaluating the improvement plan. Parents must also be involved in carrying out the terms of the charter. The application must describe the governance structure described as a site-based approach to school governance and renewal. Before the petition can be submitted for approval by the district and state departments of education, it must be approved by two-thirds of the parents of students enrolled in the school who were present at a meeting called for the purpose of deciding whether to initiate the petition.

Governor Zell Miller recommended *The Next Generation School Project* to the 1993 General Assembly. This project design was begun in the 1993-94 school year. School systems or school clusters were provided the opportunity to submit grants for up to \$500,000. One of the criteria for these grants was the establishment of community collaboration for decision-making to address the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of all children and youth from infant/preschool through post secondary education which support and enhance the teaching and learning process.

Florida

Prior to the 1991 enactment of Florida's school-reform legislation entitled *Blueprint 2000 : A System of School Improvement and Accountability*, school districts had been authorized to institute site-based management on an individual basis. The philosophy of *Blueprint 2000* is that schools and school

boards should utilize advisory councils, actively involving parents, students, staff, and community representatives to evaluate progress being made in achieving the seven education goals established by the Florida Legislature. Before *Blueprint 2000*, there were a variety of approaches and degrees of implementation of site-based management. With *Blueprint 2000*, the site-based management concept, which is to return control of the local school to educators, parents, and communities, is inherent in the basis of the legislation. *Blueprint 2000* reinforces local control, gives greater freedom to design programs that better meet the needs of individual children, and gives the authority to accomplish this to those closest to the students. *Blueprint 2000* was passed by the Florida legislature in 1991 and is revised each year, by law. By provision of *Blueprint 2000*, parents serve on the Florida Commission of Education Reform and Accountability, district advisory councils, and local school councils.

As described in *Blueprint 2000*, parent/guardian involvement is intended by both the letter and the spirit of the legislation. The legislation intent is to return "the responsibility for education to those closest to the students, that is the schools, teachers, and parents." The law requires parent participation as members of each school's advisory council. Parent involvement in the learning process of their own children and in school improvement activities is necessary to the success of *Blueprint 2000*. The law requires that every effort be made by the local school to assure that parents are working partners in achieving the high standards of *Blueprint 2000*. Throughout the goals and standards defined in *Blueprint 2000*, parent/guardian involvement in local governance and decision-making is described.

Parents must be included on the school advisory council. The members of the council should reflect the ethnic, racial, and economic community served

by the school. Parents serving on the council must be elected by parents. By provision of the legislation, the school advisory councils must abide by the *Public Records Law* and *Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine Law*.

Transition System: Companion to Blueprint 2000, approved by the State Legislature June 28, 1994, is designed to "provide the transition from Florida public education's current status to full implementation of all elements of *Blueprint 2000*." Advisory Councils, including parents, play a vital role in assessment related to the local school's progress toward full implementation of *Blueprint 2000*. Existing measures of accomplishment are used to assess school and student performance while new assessment procedures are being developed to measure performance against the high standards set forth in *Blueprint 2000*.

North Carolina

The *Performance-Based Accountability Program* was established in 1989 through the *School Improvement and Accountability Act* (Senate Bill 2). Since that time, amendments have expanded the planning and accountability components, assigned more responsibility for planning and implementation at the building level, and placed increased emphases on parent and community involvement in developing and implementing both system-wide and building-level plans. *PBAP* encourages schools to include a comprehensive parent involvement program as part of their building-level improvement plans. The school systems currently are working with the Revised Guidelines effective for the 1993-96 period of the *Performance-Based Accountability Program* cycle.

The guidelines of *Performance-Based Accountability* call for principals, teachers, staff, and parents to develop school improvement plans that address the student performance goals set by the local boards of education. *PBAP* is a research based program which states that educational decisions related to

students are best made by those who interact with them every day. This is stated as the basis for the shift in decision-making and school improvement. The focus is improving student performance by using site-based management and applying the process to develop and carry out school improvement. All goals are focused on improving student performance.

The Performance-Based Accountability Program defines how the building level committees are formed. The committee must reflect the racial and socioeconomic composition of the student body enrolled in the school. Meetings are to be held at convenient times to assure substantial participation. Parents who are employees of the school system or members of the school building staff cannot serve on local school panels or committees.

South Carolina

In 1993, the General Assembly of South Carolina passed the *Early Childhood Development and Academic Assistance Act*. Under this legislation, Section 59-20-60 of the 1976 Code was amended to read,

Each plan shall provide for an innovative initiative, designed to encourage innovative and comprehensive approaches based on strategies identified in the research literature to be effective. The innovative initiative must be utilized by school districts to implement approaches designed to improve student learning and accelerate the performance of all students. Funds may be expended on strategies in one or more of the following four categories:"

One of these four categories reads, "redefining how schools operate, resulting in the decentralization of authority to the school site and allowing those closest to the students the flexibility to design the most appropriate education location and practice."

Act 135 of the South Carolina legislature is designed as a collaborative effort to improve education in the state. Interagency collaboration to improve

the delivery of services to students, involvement of the community and business sector, coordination with other programs, and site-based management are all parts of this initiative. There is a published resource guide with related research and assistance designed to assist with implementation.

Tennessee

Three governmental documents in Tennessee address site based management; *The Education Improvement Act*, *The Master Plan for Tennessee Schools*, and *The Goals 2000 Grant Application*. These three documents give authority, encouragement, and incentives to implement site- based management.

The Education Improvement Act (EIA) provides the authority for local education agencies to “initiate a program of school based decision making.” This legislation requires each local school choosing to establish a program of site-based management to have policies which specifically define implementation. Local education agency policies must recognize school-based decision-making as “a collaborative approach to planning and problem solving.”

The Master Plan For Tennessee Schools includes site-based decision making in its statement of vision for the 21st century. It envisions schools where “crucial teaching and learning decisions will be made by those closest to the action” and educators “will actively seek parents as educational partners.” Goal #7 within the plan related to local school leadership and site-based decision-making says that school leaders and systems will be prepared, be responsible for improved performance of schools and system, and implement school-based decision making. The goal encourages “systems to implement school based decision making” and encourages each “school to develop innovative school improvement programs.”

THE GOALS 2000 is a funding proposal which will make grants available to local school systems for innovative approaches. The program calls

for special consideration “to systems that propose a plan for expanding school based decision making.”

Common Elements Found in State Policies and Initiatives

Figure 1 shows the relationship between the initiatives and legislation evaluated for this research by the State Department of Education from each of the five states involved in the study and the research reported in the literature related to policy at the state level. The language used in the wording of each initiative and legislative act supports the research literature. Terms such as “design the best education programs,” “develop a vision for education,” “generate educational improvement,” “means for obtaining waivers,” “flexibility for the local school,” “how local, state, and national educational goals were met,” “how instruction is designed and delivered,” “submit a binding performance-based contract,” “substitute for state and local rules, regulations, policies, and procedures,” “submit grants,” “evaluate progress,” “return control of the local school to educators, parents, and communities,” “meet needs of individual children,” “authority to accomplish,” “assessment related to the local school’s progress toward full implementation,” “high standards set forth,” “student performance goals set,” “accelerate the performance of all students,” “funds may be expended,” “planning and problem solving,” “funding proposal,” and “a plan for expanding school-based decision making” are all indicators that the ten categories found in the research literature are part of these five states’ attempts to assure successful implementation of site-based management (see Figure 1).

Analysis of District Initiatives and Policies

Twenty-five districts, five from each of the five states identified for this research, were contacted to obtain data related to the use of site-based management within their district. Results of the data obtained from the districts

document a wide range of support for site-based management. Of the districts contacted, 80% responded to the request for information. The data gathered from the districts was discussed by cross case analysis of the districts responding and reported collectively within each state. No specific district was identified by name within a state.

Research Elements	GA	FL	NC	SC	TN
Improve student learning	X	X	X	X	X
Instruction design a site issue	X	X	X	X	X
Hold school accountable	X	X	X	X	X
Clear expectations	X	X	X	X	X
Provide for long term goals	X	X	X	X	X
Facilitate and support	X	X	X	X	X
Commitment to excellence	X	X	X	X	X
Provide resources	X	X	X	X	X
Provide educational framework	X	X	X	X	X
Define SBM context	X	X	X	X	X

Figure 1. Common elements found in state initiatives and legislation related to site-based management.

Of the responding districts, 20% indicated that although interested, their districts had not established site-based management. One district indicated that a year was spent studying the concept of site-based management in depth, but policies and procedures were never formulated. The superintendent from another district stated that personnel, financial, and instructional decisions were made centrally, with input from the local schools. Another district superintendent indicated that a framework was being established for site-based management with a completion date of June 1995.

One district reported that they were a small district who had not yet formulated policies for site-based management, that the district was working on Total Quality Education with school improvement plans, and that site-based management would be a part of that process. Districts indicated interest in this

research outcome, stating that their districts were not far enough along to supply the items of information requested.

Information gathered from the data provided by the responding districts indicated that site-based management does not stand alone, but provides a framework for the total school improvement process. All of the responding districts use site-based management as a part of a Quality Schools Program or School Improvement Program. Site-based management is the decision-making process used by the schools within these districts to assure that those closest to the students--teachers, support staff, parents, community leaders--work together to design an educational program to best meet the needs of the students who attend their school.

Policy statements provided by the responding districts include statements such as:

1. Believe education of our children is a shared responsibility.
2. It is the policy of the school district to operate schools through principles of site-based leadership and to place as much decision making as possible at the local school level.
3. Each school should establish appropriate school-based, shared decision-making councils.
4. School Advisory Councils should be established according to guidelines established by the state legislature.
5. The objective is to empower the primary stakeholders - principal, teachers, parents, community, and students.
6. Site-based/shared decision-making is a decentralized method of operating the school system within defined parameters and staff roles to maximize the effective use of resources in the best interest of the students.

7. The focus of site-based decision-making is the welfare of the students and the delivery of services to students.
8. Each Site-Based Decision Team will develop a School Improvement Plan to meet the needs of students at the local school level.
9. Site-based responsibility gives authority to make decisions, but also requires the site to be responsible for results more than management.
10. Site-based management was established because of the desire to have intense public participation.

Georgia

Georgia's three state programs, *Schools for the Future Program*, *Charter Schools Program*, and *Next Generation School Project*, encourage and support site-based management. Site-based management is neither required nor mandated by the state of Georgia. These programs recognize the importance of placing decisions related to student learning at the local school level with those persons most closely related to the students. The districts responding to the researcher's request have incorporated site-based management into their district's total program.

One district has a specific policy statement which states its intent to "operate schools through principles of site-based leadership and to place as much decision-making as possible at the local school." The objective as stated in the policy is "to empower primary stakeholders - principal, teachers, parents, community, and students." It requires that "each school establish appropriate school-based, shared decision-making councils." The policy further states that the councils must "operate within the limits of the law, school board policies,

professional ethics and budget.” Site-based management is a part of the school improvement plan.

Other material furnished by this district defined the time line for implementation of site-based management and the training available for the school leadership team. Key elements related to site-based management within this district include: allowing schools flexibility, increasing the authority for schools to select their own personnel, giving the school the ability to modify its curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of its students, encouraging teaming in decision making, establishing school site advisory committees with a key role for parents and community members, and establishing a process for seeking waivers.

The district superintendent in one of Georgia’s fastest growing districts stated that site-based decision-making fit under the umbrella of school improvement in a collaborative effort between the district and the community. In this district there is no specific policy related to site-based decision-making because the spirit of the process is interwoven through many policies. The superintendent reported that in this district there was an effort to stay away from the term site-based management and use instead site-based decision-making because teachers and parents sometimes feel the term management means the principal is in charge.

Florida

Florida’s *Blueprint 2000* is state legislation intended to return the responsibility for education to those closest to the students and require parents’ participation as members of each school’s advisory council. Not only is there mandated parent participation in the decision-making process at the local level, but also there is a collaboration between the district and the teachers’ union to work together to accomplish the mandates of *Blueprint 2000*. Several of the

responding districts have policy statements which emphasize the school advisory council. The state legislation gives specific guidelines related to the selection and involvement of parents at the local and district levels. The school advisory council's major responsibility is the writing and evaluation of the school's improvement plan.

One district contact person described site-based management as a long established process. Although some elements of site-based decision-making had been in place since 1981, with their new superintendent, site-based management "came part and parcel". "He is an advocate of site-based management and has worked to get the structure in place."

Shared decision-making is described as a bottom up approach to decision-making where the teachers, principal, students, and parents decide cooperatively. This process, the district believes, " builds a sense of ownership of school instructional goals and a stake in the future of the educational enterprise." Critical decision-making areas are defined as budget, personnel, curriculum, and scheduling. There is a procedure in place for waiver of contract language.

The school advisory committee and the school improvement team are defined as places for parent involvement in another Florida district. Although these teams are tied to school improvement, their district policy states that schools are to follow the curriculum prescribed by the district, that the principal recommends personnel to be hired, and that a detailed budget request must be sent to the area assistant superintendent for approval. There is a tier system for implementation of site-based decision making.

The policy of another district states that "the system shall establish the individual school as the unit for education accountability." Defining site-based management under school improvement and educational accountability, this

approach “will lead to changes in how we think of learning, teaching, and schools in general. By moving the truly important decision-making to the school site, the focus on what students need to know, to be able to do, and be [sic] like will increase dramatically.” In addition, the district material lists other reasons for incorporating site-based management. Site-based management is more flexible and makes it easier to handle rapid change. Local sites are better able to meet the requirements of the ultimate customer of educational services, the students and their families. Site-based management makes learning more real for students as it becomes more relevant to their individual needs and interests. School employees are more empowered to figure out better ways to do things and then do them in a high-quality way. Site-based management makes it possible to put money and resources where they will best serve students’ needs.

From the School Advisory Council Resource Guide published by one district, the role of parents and community representatives is defined as:

- Represent the views and interests of parents and the community.
- Function as members according to established procedures by making suggestions and recommendations representing the views of parents, citizens, and community organizations.
- Participate regularly in SAC (school advisory council) meetings and carry out assignments.
- Become knowledgeable about the personnel and material resources of the school community and the school’s educational program.
- Serve as resource persons for the SAC, especially in community-related matters that affect the school program, staff, and students.
- Assist in obtaining community resources to aid school improvement

- Share leadership in SAC matters.
- Link the SAC, community, and school through personal contacts, written reports, and community meetings.
- Participate in activities aimed at obtaining parent and community support and assistance with school improvement programs.
- Keep other parents and community members informed about school improvement.

Parental involvement is defined and outlined in a seven-page policy document. The policy states that the schools have a responsibility to involve parents, and parents have the responsibility to become involved in schools. All aspects of parental involvement are defined, with the conclusion that if these aspects of parental involvement are in place, parents will function as school advisors and advocates, and participate equitably with administrators, teachers, and other school personnel in the decision-making process. The policy further states that parents must “be provided opportunities for timely and substantive participation in the decision-making process.” Parent participation, training, initiative and policy evaluation are defined.

North Carolina

The *Performance-Based Accountability Program* (North Carolina Senate Bill 2), encourages schools to include a comprehensive parent involvement program as part of their building-level improvement plans. It states that educational decisions related to students are best made by those who interact with them every day. This legislation defines how building-level committees are formed. The committees must reflect the racial and socioeconomic composition of the student body enrolled in the school. It further states that meetings should be held at convenient times to assure substantial participation. Districts

responding from North Carolina vary from well-defined structure to systems just beginning the process.

One district which has had site-based management in place for some time has very specific guidelines for the School Improvement Team. The team is to be made up of the principal, representatives from grade levels, support staff, non-instructional staff, and at least three parents (one appointed by the principal and two appointed by the PTA). The parents must represent the socioeconomic make-up of the school and must not be school system employees. Teams are to determine the role of parents. The district describes site-based management as not just the change in location of decision making, but the improvement of the quality of decisions made and the increasing of stakeholder commitment to the decisions. Site-based management is defined as a process

to develop "schools of voice" that value the perspective and ideas of all stakeholders; schools that ask all stakeholders "what do we want to achieve?"; schools in which change is guided by research, practice and consensus, not by the desires of a few.

The specific parameters of site-based/shared decision-making are defined by one district. Site-based teams are responsible for following state and federal laws/regulations, Southern Association of Schools and State Accreditation requirements, board policies, administrative regulations, contracts, and goals established through the school improvement plan. The district policy defines site-based/shared decision-making as a "decentralized method of operating school systems within defined parameters and staff roles to maximize the effective use of resources in the best interest of students." The budget allocations are defined within the same policy, which states that the local school is given the decision-making power and accountability for the

majority of the budget. Parents are to be included in the budget-making process.

Site-based management has been in place for about 4 years in one district. There are no specific policies related to site-based management, but the state model as defined in the *Performance-Based Accountability Program* serves as the guideline. As many decisions as possible have been pushed down to the local educational agency. All staff-development funds and many general budget funds are handled at the local level. Each school must present a formal school improvement plan to the district. The plan must be developed by the local school advisory team, of which parents must be a part.

South Carolina

One district in South Carolina calls local governance site-based responsibility. The policy states that site-based responsibility gives maximum flexibility at the building level and emphasizes responsibility for results more than management. The policy gives authority to make decisions, but also requires the site to be accountable for decisions it makes. The design is to provide intense public participation. Sites have the authority to: define instructional approaches, modify curriculum within the confines of district parameters, schedule students and staff, manage resources, employ personnel, reassign personnel, change job descriptions, and select instructional materials. For each site team there is a four step process: 1) data - used to determine where site is and indicate direction; 2) outcomes - written in concise behavioral and visible terms. These outcomes must be measurable and defined in terms of time to accomplish. They must also be student centered.; 3) restructuring - how will the need to change be met to meet the student needs; and 4) evaluation - plan of evaluation must accompany each restructuring plan.

There is a defined 6-year implementation period for site-based management in one South Carolina district. Schools may choose not to continue at any time. There is a framework of guidelines provided for implementation. According to this district, site-based management offers more opportunities to improve learning through shared governance than other restructuring models because of the sense of ownership of those who interact with children everyday. Inservice is provided to district employees and external stakeholders.

This district has a stated site-based management philosophy which encourages principals, school staff, and communities to:

- Develop educational priorities and programs for school based on district goals and special needs of all students at the local level.
- Allocate resources to meet needs.
- Select staff.
- Select supplemental instructional materials.
- Implement staff development.
- Operate and utilize facilities more effectively.

Site-based management standards are also outlined:

- Maintain and improve student achievement and school effectiveness using district assessment system.
- Meet all appropriate auditing and compliance standards.
- Maintain clean and safe learning environments.
- Improve or maintain district and SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) standards.

Tennessee

Three governmental documents in Tennessee address site-based management. These documents give authority, encouragement, and incentives to implement site-based management.

One district responded that a modified version of site-based management was in place. The superintendent called the process "principal autonomy." He stated that principals were given the authority for all hiring of personnel and that each principal submitted a budget for instructional materials and textbooks and that money was allotted on an equitable bases. No parents were really involved in the process at this time.

School Decision Teams composed of representatives from parents, business/community members, teachers, and the principal are established in one of the reporting districts. Site-based management is defined as the "process for making decisions at the school level which best meet the unique needs of individual schools." The focus of site-based management is the welfare of the students and the delivery of services to students.

There is an application process to become a site-based managed school. A significant number of parents and a majority of the school staff should be desirous of participation. The applicant school should indicate how this has been determined. The proposal for site-based management must include: the school vision statement, plan for improving student achievement, time line for implementation, site decision team composition, and how the plan will be evaluated.

The site decision team's composition and protocol are defined. Each team should have nine to ten members with representatives from the certified staff (3 members), parents (2 members), classified staff (1 member), business/community (1-2 members), and the principal. Students may be

included. There must be an elected chairman and secretary. Decision-making must be by consensus. Minutes must be kept. Each team should develop by-laws, codes of conduct, and guidelines for the team. Inservice for the process is provided by the district.

Each site decision team must develop a school improvement plan to meet the needs of students at the local school level. Site decision teams have the authority to develop and implement curriculum pursuant to local, state, and federal requirements. Waivers may be applied for in this area. The team is involved in staffing both for administrative and classroom positions. The team may recommend staff, but have no control over personnel expenses. The district policy states "Funding should be provided to meet identified school improvement plan goals. Each SDT (site decision team) should have the authority to prioritize and allocate all available funds to meet the unique needs of the local school."

Common Elements Found in District Policies and Initiatives

Listed below are common elements related to site-based management which occur across the districts :

1. If no specific policy statement related to site-based management is in place, state guidelines are followed or the elements of site-based management are incorporated within other district policies.
2. In every district, site-based management is defined under school improvement and educational accountability.
3. Time lines for implementation and inservice are important elements of establishing site-based management.
4. Site-based management is a collaborative effort between the district and the community.

5. When terms other than site-based management are used, they are well-defined and relate to specific concerns of the district.
6. Both the selection process of parents who will serve on the decision-making teams and their roles on the teams are well defined.
7. Specific parameters and team responsibilities are identified.
8. Areas of authority are identified and defined.
9. In every reporting district the focus of site-based management is defined in terms of student welfare and delivery of services to students within that district.

Research Related to Parent Involvement and Site-Based Decision Making

Site-based management is proposed to decentralize school control and create shared decision-making with increased power and influence of parents and others (Cairns, Molberg, & Zander, 1983; Guthrie, 1986). The fundamental premise of involving parents in decision-making at the local school is that the channels of communication between the family and school would improve and that students would learn more as a result of increased parental interaction with the school (Gorton & Theirbach-Schneider, 1991).

Administrators must view the increased need for parent involvement in the educational process, not as a threat to their power, but as an opportunity to gain partners in achieving goals of excellence (Davies, 1987; Fruchter et al, 1992; Henderson, 1988). There is a circle created by the elements of parent involvement, effective schools, and school reform. There is a direct link among the three elements. "Researchers, practioners, and policymakers all have recognized the importance of parental involvement in effective schools." (Epstein, 1987b, p.133).

Concern about who our public school students will be during the 21st century, we well as [sic] worry about the barriers to learning they will face, has increased emphasis on reaching out to parents and families and involving them in effort to improve future students' academic achievement. (Fruchter et al., 1992, p. 6)

Dorothy Rich (1985) identified three interconnected areas in which family-school involvement has important impacts regardless of a family's economic level or ethnic/cultural background. The first area is focusing support on the home. This helps parents create an environment at home that supports and aids student achievement, both academic and behavioral. Secondly, Rich recounts the research which supports the fact that there is a direct link between parent involvement and student gains. Third, we must make parents powerful partners in their children's education by involving them in the ongoing process of schooling. Epstein (1987c) also found in her research that when schools involve parents, social class and educational level of the parents tend to become less important factors. But, she points out, schools must be committed to parent involvement and work hard to improve involvement of all parents.

Site-based management is an effort to empower participants at the local level to positive change. Levine and Eubanks (1992) state that site-based management and an effective school framework working together are more likely to provide success. They conclude that "site-based management may become a plausible approach for bringing about widespread school reform throughout the 1990s" (Levine & Eubanks, 1992, p. 79).

Site-based management, by definition, designates the individual school site as the primary unit of improvement and redistributes decision-making authority as the primary means by which improvement is made and sustained (Malen & Ogawa, 1992). This implies: site-level stakeholders have formal authority to make decisions, there is a formal structure established involving the

stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents, students, and community) directly in schoolwide decision making, and all site participants have substantial discretion in making contributions to the decision-making process (Malen & Ogawa, 1992).

The paradigm shift toward restructuring and decentralization using site based management creates the issue of how parents are to be involved in this process. The issue centers on what flexibility will be extended and what mechanisms will help the function of parental involvement work in site-based management. This paradigm shift implies a change from parent involvement which usually occurs as a matter of course to parent participation which implies a stronger role of partnership between parent and staff in various domains of decision making. Site-based management provides a structure and process for parent participation (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992).

If site-based management includes parents as part of the decision making body of the school, principals must become managers. They must initiate, establish, and maintain a school climate which makes shared decision making non-threatening (Meadows, 1990). Principals often cite parental apathy as a problem when discussing parental involvement. However, according to Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider's studies (1991), parent apathy may be a symptom, not a problem. "If administrators want to combat parental apathy, they probably need to provide more meaningful opportunities for parents to participate in school affairs. Most people are apathetic about taking part in a given activity unless they feel that they can make a significant contribution" (Gorton & Thierbach-Schneider, 1991, p. 541).

Davies (1987) gives guidelines for minimizing problems with parent involvement in the decision-making process. Principals must view parents as valuable contributors. The role of the parent in the decision-making process

should be well defined. Parents should understand whether they will be acting in an advisory or an authoritative role. To be effective participants in the decision making process, parents must be well trained. Minutes and agendas should always be kept. The special talents and abilities of parents should be recognized and utilized. There should be frequent recognition and rewards for parent participation (Davies, 1987).

An old Chinese Proverb describes the true essence of involving parents in the decision-making process at the local school level, "Tell me, I forget. Show me, I remember. Involve me, I understand."

Data Analysis of Questionnaire Sent to Principals

The Principal's Questionnaire, Parental Involvement and Site-Based Management, was sent to principals from each of the fifteen responding districts which indicated that site-based management was in place within the district. Ninety-three percent of the principals responded by completing the questionnaire. Responses were received from principals from all five of the participating states. One hundred percent of the principals from the five participating districts in Florida responded. In addition to returning the questionnaire, principals sent materials such as a letter to parents explaining what site-base management was designed to accomplish within the particular school, copies of memoranda reporting results of meetings and projects, copies of material used to inservice parents and staff on the decision-making process, copy of a report of accomplishments and needs list sent to stakeholders, copy of minutes and by-laws, and copies of forms used to document meetings and activities.

The majority of the responding principals were principals in suburban schools. Two principals identified the school as urban and another identified the school as other and added resort. The school enrollment ranged from 730

to 1100 students, with an average school enrollment of 887. All schools, except one, served grades kindergarten through five. The school faculty and staff size ranged from 70 to 90 with an average faculty and staff size of 78. Principals reported that a site-based management program had been in place in the school between three and six years, with an average of 4.3 years. The average tenure reported by the responding principals was 6.6 years, with the shortest tenure given as 3 years and the longest tenure given as 15 years.

The questions on the Principal's Questionnaire were designed to gather data related to the foreshadowed questions. The answer choices were designed to allow principals to select responses which related to their specific site-based management model. Principals were asked to mark all applicable answers to each question.

Foreshadowed question 1

Questions 1 - 6 of the Principal's Questionnaire are designed to gather information related to the first foreshadowed question: What policies and procedures at the state, district, and local levels are in place to define and direct the involvement of parents in local school decision making? Figure 2 shows the factors related to the development of the local school site-based model. The categories and number of responses reported are from the principal's questionnaire. These categories relate to initiatives, policies, and procedures which are reflected in the literature on site based management and those reported in the data analysis of the state and district initiatives, policies, and procedures. Each category is affiliated with a corresponding question on the principal's questionnaire (see Figure 2).

Question number 1 on the principal's questionnaire was designed to gather data related to how the model being used at the local level was developed. Principals were asked to indicate the model of site-based

Model developed:	Inservice provided:	Inservice topics:	Ratio and parent selection determined by:	Parent selection made by:
<u>3</u> through state legislation	<u>8</u> yes <u>5</u> no	<u>10</u> SBM defined	<u>5</u> State/district policy	<u>2</u> Principal appointment
<u>2</u> by district for site implementation	Source: <u>3</u> State <u>6</u> District	<u>9</u> Communication <u>12</u> Shared decision making	<u>7</u> Task(s)	<u>2</u> Teacher recommendation
<u>9</u> at local site with district support	<u>6</u> Local	<u>11</u> Team building <u>4</u> Conflict resolutions	<u>4</u> Principal <u>1</u> Other parent organizations	<u>8</u> PTA/PTO elections <u>3</u> Nominating committee
Parents serve on:		<u>7</u> Change	<u>3</u> Other:	<u>10</u> Volunteering
<u>12</u> School governance council		<u>2</u> Other:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher site committee • building leadership team 	<u>3</u> Other:
<u>10</u> Schoolwide committees/teams		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consensus building • trust building • coalition of Essential Schools 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTA president • PTA appointment • School Improvement Council

Figure 2. Factors related to the development of local school site-based models: Categories and number of responses by principals.

management used in their school as being developed through state legislation, by the district for site implementation, or at the local site with district support. Sixty-four percent of the responding principals indicated that the model used was developed at the local site with district support. Two principals indicated that the model used was developed through state legislation at the local site with district support. Two principals indicated that the model used at the local level was developed by the district for site implementation and did not indicate that there was any local site participation in developing the model used. This finding is not consistent with the literature reported in this study, as well as with the initiatives and policies from the states and districts used in this study, that those who are the closest to the situation should develop a model which will meet the needs of the school, students, and parents.

Questions number 2 and 3 were used to collect data related to whether inservice was provided for parents who were to be involved in the decision making process, who provided the inservice if it was provided, and what subjects the training included. Although more principals reported inservice being provided for parents, 58% yes, 42% no, there is only a small margin of difference. Of those indicating the provision of inservice, three indicated that inservice was provided by the state, seven that the district provided the inservice, and six that inservice was provided by the local school. The five areas which the majority of the principals indicated as being included as inservice topics for parents were: shared decision making, site-based management defined, team building, communication, and change.

Question number 4 obtained data related to the placement of parents on committees, teams, or governance councils. Sixty-four percent of the responding principals marked both schoolwide committees/teams and school governance council. Two principals marked other and gave the names, PTA

Executive Council and PTA board. Two of the principals marking schoolwide committees/ teams and school governance council also checked other and included names: Magnet Advisory Council, School Renewal Committee, Building Leadership Team, Media Advisory Council, and Priority Objective Committee.

Question number 5 was used to determine the means by which the ratio of parents to staff was determined. In response to this question, more than one answer was chosen by four of the responding principals. Several of the answers were followed with qualifying statements such as "site need and availability," "according to the task," "district groups/district guides." The method indicated most often, singularly or in combination with other methods, was determination of the ratio of parents to staff on site-base teams by the task(s) of the team. One principal marked only by state or district policy. Three principals marked other and indicated that the method of choice was "by the teacher site committee," "by the School Improvement Council elections," and "determined by the Building Leadership Team." One principal indicated that currently there was only one parent representative, but did not indicate how that parent was chosen.

Responses to question 6 indicate how parents are chosen to be a part of site-based management. All of the responding principals except one indicated that this selection process involved more than one method. One principal marked only volunteering. Only one responding principal did not mark more than one method of choice. The one principal who marked only one response marked by having equal vote. The methods of choice most often marked were PTA/PTO elections and volunteering. Only one principal indicated that the parent representatives were chosen by principal appointment and only one

principal indicated that the parents representatives were chosen by teacher recommendation.

Foreshadowed question 2

Questions 7 and 8 of the Principal's Questionnaire are designed to collect data related to the second foreshadowed question: What is the role of the parent in decision making? The two questions asked how parents participate in decisions made in site-base teams and the amount and type of parent participation in decision making (see Figure 3). In response to question 7, the two ways most often marked that parents participate in decision-making are through a consensus process and by giving advisory opinions to principal or others who make the final decision. There was an equal distribution of choice in question 8 when principals marked the amount and type of parent participation in decision-making from the three choices, is the same regardless of the area of decision(s) to be made, varies from team to team, and is determined by the area in which the decision is to be made.

The majority of the principals responded to these two questions with only one answer for each question, establishing interesting combinations such as:

1. When decisions are made in site-based teams, parents participate by having equal vote with other members in majority vote and the amount, and type of parent participation is the same regardless of the area of decision(s) to be made.

2. When decisions are made in site-based teams, parents participate through a consensus process, and the amount and type of parent participation varies from team to team.

3. When decisions are made in site-based teams, parents participate by giving advisory opinions to principal or others who make the final decision, and

the amount and type of parent participation is determined by the area in which the decision is to be made.

4. When decisions are made in site-based teams, parents participate by giving advisory opinions to principal or others who make the final decision, and the amount and type of parent participation in decision-making is the same regardless of the area of decision(s) to be made.

<u>Parents participate:</u>	<u>Amount and type:</u>
<u>9</u> through consensus	<u>5</u> is the same regardless
<u>8</u> by equal vote	<u>5</u> varies
<u>7</u> by giving advisory opinions	<u>5</u> determined by the area in which decision is to be made

Figure 3. Factors related to parent participation in decision-making at the local school level: Categories and number of responses by principals.

Foreshadowed question 3

Question 9 on the Principal's Questionnaire asked principals to mark all areas in which parents participate in decision making. This question was used to gather data to answer the third foreshadowed question: In which areas or domains (budget, curriculum, personnel, discipline, etc.) are parents involved in decision making?

Figure 4 shows the number of responses marked by principals for each of the listed areas. There were no other domains or areas listed by the principals. One principal marked sponsoring fund raising projects and extracurricular activities and added the comment, "primary contribution" and marked curriculum development, budgeting of local school discretionary funds, policy and procedure related to discipline, and making facility improvements as domains where parents have "informal" participation. The areas or domains receiving

the most response were: curriculum development, budgeting of local school discretionary funds, budgeting of total funds allotted to the local school, and policy and procedure related to discipline. The domains or areas of school calendar, fund raising projects, facility improvement, and extracurricular activities received fewer responses, but were indicated as areas of participation in decision-making by more that one half of the responding principals. The domains or areas in which principals reported the least amount of parent participation in the decision-making process were: principal selection, professional staff selection, support staff selection, and textbook selection (see Figure 4).

<u>Domains of participation</u>	
<u>4</u>	Principal selection
<u>3</u>	Professional staff selection
<u>0</u>	Support staff selection
<u>1</u>	Textbook selection
<u>11</u>	Curriculum development
<u>12</u>	Budgeting of local school discretionary funds
<u>8</u>	Budgeting of total funds allotted to the local school
<u>11</u>	Policy and procedure related to discipline
<u>9</u>	Adjusting local school calendar
<u>11</u>	Sponsoring fundraising projects
<u>11</u>	Making facility improvements
<u>10</u>	Extracurricular activities

Figure 4. Domains (areas) in which parents participate in decision making: Categories and number of responses by principals.

Foreshadowed question 4

Questions 10 and 11 of the Principal's Questionnaire are designed to gather data related to foreshadowed question 4: From the principal's perspective, what factors contributed the most to parental involvement in site-based management? These two questions elicited principal perceptions related to the factors which have contributed to the success of parental

involvement in decision-making and the factors which have made involving parents in the decision-making process difficult at the local school.

The factors enumerated by principals as contributing the most to parental involvement in site-based management collectively present the concepts of unity, trust/sensitivity, openness, communication, interest, and support. The principal comments cited in Figure 5 are listed in descending order according to frequency of response to question 10 on the principal questionnaire (see Figure 5).

Those factors cited by principals which made involving parents in the decision-making process difficult included the concepts of personal agendas/factions, mistrust, lack of commitment, time, and lack of understanding. The principal comments cited in Figure 6 are listed in descending order according to frequency of response to question 11 on the principal questionnaire (see Figure 6).

Foreshadowed questions 5 and 6

Questions 12 and 13 on the Principal's Questionnaire are designed to gather data related to foreshadowed questions 5 and 6: What parental involvement programs(s) were established in each school prior to the institution of site-based management? and What parental involvement methods (programs) other than site-based management models are utilized currently in the targeted schools? The words prior and currently were in bold print to help distinguish the two questions on the questionnaire.

The data reported related to programs established in each school prior to the institution of site-based management group programs into three basic categories: parent organizations, volunteering, and advisory councils. All principals responding reported having either a PTA or PTO organization. All principals responding reported having some volunteer program in place. Some

PRINCIPAL COMMENTSCOMMON CHARACTERISTICS

	UNITY	TRUST	OPENNESS	COMMUNICATION	INTEREST	SUPPORT
Improved communication - their willingness to speak, ask questions, and give opinions.	x	x	x	x	x	x
Open door policy-a school that welcomes parent participation.	x	x	x	x	x	x
Parents interested in doing what is best for the students.	x			x	x	x
Community spirit.	x	x	x		x	x
Time-the longer they are involved, the greater the support they have given.		x	x	x		x
Trust built among all shareholders.	x	x	x	x		
Parents are provided meaningful involvement.	x	x	x	x	x	x
A school very open to suggestions from parents.	x	x	x	x	x	x
Parents are listened to.		x	x	x	x	x
Openness and receptive responses from school personnel.		x	x	x		x
Parents are more knowledgeable and sensitive to what is happening to maximize learning and deal with problems.		x			x	
Parents have valuable insight into what works and what doesn't.		x	x	x		x
Educational professionals view parents as partners who share in the responsibility of teaching.	x	x	x	x	x	x
An educated, sophisticated parent group.				x	x	x
Terms of involvement are specifically defined.		x	x	x		

Figure 5. Factors contributing positively to parental involvement in site-based management.

<u>PRINCIPAL COMMENTS</u>	<u>COMMON CHARACTERISTICS</u>				
	A	B	C	D	E
Obtaining a real commitment for continued service and active involvement.		X	X		
May not have background or experience to prepare parents to make informed decisions.				X	X
Getting teachers and parents to work as teams, particularly because of time involved - scheduling convenient times.	X		X	X	
Teacher resistance to sharing "power" newly acquired.	X	X			
Few parents have hidden agendas.	X	X			X
Sometimes parents do not consider the total school program - hard to see the big picture.	X	X	X	X	X
Individual parent agendas.	X	X	X		
Power struggles.	X	X	X		X
Finding parents who are able/willing to give us the needed time.			X	X	X
Seeking a variety of parents, not just same ones.	X	X	X	X	X
Retraining new members.	X		X	X	
Working parents not as easily involved.			X	X	
Sometimes unnecessary information is requested to make decisions.	X	X			X
Wanting to be a board or committee of policy making rather than advisory.	X	X			
Breakdown of trust.	X	X			X
Teachers afraid to speak up in front of parents.	X	X			X

A - PERSONAL AGENDAS
 B - MISTRUST
 C - LACK OF COMMITMENT
 D - TIME
 E - LACK OF UNDERSTANDING

Figure 6. Factors contributing negatively to parental involvement in site-based management.

principals defined the volunteer programs: resource speakers, student mentors, fund raisers, coordinator of special projects, media helper. Three principals responded that parents served in advisory positions prior to the institution of site-based management. One responded that parents served in advisory positions and two identified the areas as school improvement council and media advisory council.

Responses to question 13, parent involvement programs other than site-based management which are utilized currently, demonstrated a broadening of parent involvement. The three areas, parent organization, volunteering, and advisory, were included in these responses. As well as these three areas, principals listed names of councils, and programs which are currently available for parent involvement. One principal responded, "SDM (site-based decision making) is all encompassing. Parents are involved every step of the way."

Other responses listed include:

Collaborative Management Leadership Team

School Improvement Council

Parent liaison to grade level team planning

Business Education Partnership

School Renewal Committee

Family Math Meeting

Study groups with parent focus

Guidance groups

Magnet Advisory Council (Reviews technology plan and makes recommendations for change/additions.)

Media Advisory Council (Makes recommendations for purchasing books, videos, and other equipment.)

Parent training through Community School

Parent/faculty committees to facilitate: technology, home/school communication, citizenship, and research and innovative practices.

Summary of Findings

The responding participants in this research were administrators from the state, district, and local levels of public education. Data from each level related to involving parents in the decision-making process of site-based management were analyzed independently. Each of these administrative levels has data unique to itself which impact the involvement of parents in the decision-making process. Archival data furnished from the state and district levels and responses by principals on the Principal Questionnaire were used to gather data for this research.

Data analyzed from the state level indicates that, in each of the five states, site-based management is supported and encouraged. The stated intent from each state, whether through legislative action or written initiatives, is to place decisions related to student learning at the local school level, with those persons most closely related to the students. Comprehensive parental involvement is encouraged. Local school improvement plans are tied to parent involvement in all five states. Principals, teachers, staff, parents, and community leaders are encouraged and/or mandated to work together to develop school improvement plans that address the student performance goals. All goals are focused on improving student performance. States documents provide specific guidelines for establishing school councils to assure parent involvement reflective of the population make-up of the local school.

As with the state documents, the district policy, procedures, and initiatives indicate that site-based management is not to stand alone, but to provide a framework for the total school improvement process. Data analyzed from the responding districts indicate that education is a shared responsibility. Site

based management establishes a decentralized method of operating school systems by empowering the primary stakeholders to make decisions that are best for the welfare of the students and the delivery of services to the students. Specific parameters are defined by districts for establishing school improvement teams and procedures to be followed in the decision-making process. As do the state documents, district documents define site-base management as a collaborative effort intended to improve schools and educational accountability.

Analysis of the data reported by principals on the principal's questionnaire indicate that site-base models are most often developed by the local site, which is consistent with the research. Though the literature states the need for inservice opportunities, the responding principals document only a small margin of difference between those providing inservice and those not providing inservice. Most principals indicate that parents serve on schoolwide teams/committees and councils. The task of the team was cited as the method most often used to determine ratio of parents to staff on teams/councils. Committee and team members most often are chosen by parents volunteering and PTO/PTA elections. According to the responding principals, parents most often participate in decision-making through a consensus process or by giving advisory opinions to the principal or others who make the final decision. Principals indicated equal distribution of choice in the amount and type of parent participation regardless of the area, from team to team, or the area in which the decision is to be made. The areas of domain in which parents are most often involved in the decision-making process, as reported by the responding principals, are curriculum development, budgeting of local school discretionary funds, budgeting of total funds allotted to the local school, and policy and procedure related to discipline. Those factors which contributed the

most to parental involvement in site-based management collectively present the concepts of unity, trust, openness, communication, interest, and support. Those factors which make involving parents in the decision-making process difficult include the concepts of personal agenda, mistrust, lack of commitment, time, and lack of understanding. The areas of involvement most often reported by principals as being in place prior to site-based management are PTA/PTO organizations, volunteering, and advisory councils. With the use of site-base management these three modes of parental involvement remain in place with the addition of specific teams and committees organized to facilitate operation of the local school.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to examine selected districts and elementary schools in five states within the Southeastern region of the United States that have successfully implemented site-based management to: 1) determine the role of parents in the decision-making process, 2) identify the domains in which parents participate in decision-making, and 3) identify the common parent involvement (participation) components, other than involvement in site-based teams or councils, that have strengthened those schools and impacted student success.

This study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What policies and procedures at the state, district, and local levels are in place to define and direct the involvement of parents in local school decision making?
2. What is the role of the parent in decision making?
3. In which areas or domains (budget, curriculum, personnel, discipline, etc.) are parents involved in decision making?
4. From the principal's perspective, what factors contributed the most to parental involvement in site-based management?
5. What parental involvement program(s) was/were established in each school prior to the institution of site-based management?
6. What parental involvement methods (programs) other than site-based management models are utilized currently in the targeted schools?

The target population was chosen using a purposeful criterion sampling research design. The five states, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee, were used to gather data from the state level. Recommendations from the state superintendents of each of the five states were used to collect data from districts within each of the states. Requests for information were sent to a total of 25 district superintendents from the five states. Archival data were received from the state and district superintendents. Recommendations from the district superintendents were used to collect data from local school principals. The instrument used for collecting data from the principals was the Principal's Questionnaire, Parental Involvement and site based Management. The survey instrument was sent to a total of 15 local school principals from the five states.

Given the exploratory nature of this study, a cross case analysis of the data was interpreted with descriptive statistics. The findings from this analysis were provided in a previous chapter. This chapter gives the conclusions drawn from the findings of the investigation, implications obtained from the conclusions, and recommendations made for further related research effort.

Conclusions and Implications for Practice

The conclusions presented in this chapter, it should be noted, are applicable to the population from which the administrators who participated in this study are a sample. This research has been viewed from the beginning as being exploratory and descriptive in construction. A thorough search of the literature revealed no other studies designed to examine through cross case analysis site-base management at the three levels of public school governance: state, district, and local. The implications presented in this chapter are drawn from the detailed findings and conclusions of the study in an attempt to provide for clearer understanding of legislation, initiatives, policies, procedures, and

processes needed to provide meaningful participation of parents in the governance of the local school.

From the analysis of the data it can be concluded that site-base management is an important process which is a part of the total effort to improve schools, meet the needs of the students at the local level, and provide delivery of services to those students. There has been a paradigm shift from parental involvement as defined in traditional terms of helping the student, volunteering, and assisting with fundraising to meaningful participation in the process of making decisions which affect the total operations of the local school.

Site-based management is a connecting management model, not a disconnecting vehicle. The necessary components are described through the state and district policies and initiatives. How these components are used to develop a site-based model should be a local school decision. Though freedom is given through site-based management, there are ties to the state and district through prescribed guidelines. There is freedom with guidelines and obligations to assure fulfillment of the expectations of the local participants, as well as the state and district policies and guidelines.

This study was undertaken to determine the role of parents in the decision-making process, identify the domains in which parents participate in the decision-making process, and identify the common parent involvement (participation) components, other than involvement in site-based teams or councils, that have strengthened those schools and impacted student success.

The role of parents in the decision-making process, at the state and district levels, has been very specifically defined so that the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school is correctly represented. Some district policies define the specific ratio of parents to be involved on site-based teams. In Florida, the mandated guidelines from the state are followed by the

local school in determining the parent makeup of the site-based council. In other states, though site-based management is not mandated, the guidelines established by the state related to the role of parents in the decision-making process must be followed if the local school chooses to participate in the site based management process. As indicated by the data, although the state and district policies give specific guidelines, the individual schools have the opportunity to design the model of site-based management which will best meet the needs of that school and its population. Principals must be knowledgeable of state and district policy guidelines so that the model developed by the local school is structured accordingly. Principals must also be knowledgeable of their individual school's needs so that a model of site-based management can be developed to accommodate these needs as well as state and district guidelines.

At the local school level, the data provided by the principals responding have been used to construct a profile of the role of parents in the decision making process. Parents participate most on school governance councils and/or schoolwide committees or teams. Most often, the ratio and selection of parents are determined by the task(s) to be performed. Parents are most often selected to participate in the decision-making process by PTA/PTO elections or by volunteering. No specific method of participation emerged as being used more often than another. The responding principals showed even distribution when describing how parents participate. Nine responded through consensus, eight responded by equal vote, and seven responded by giving advisory opinions. This is significant because, from this study, it cannot be determined whether parents actually participate in the governance process or are viewed as giving advisory opinions. Responses to the amount and type of participation did not clarify this. Five principals responded that the amount of participation by

parents is the same regardless of the decision to be made. Five principals responded that the amount of participation varies from team to team. Five principals responded that the amount of participation is determined by the area in which the decision is to be made. It appears that parents are chosen by parents or volunteer to serve as part of the decision-making process, but the method and amount of participation are still determined situationally. Principals should be prepared to define specifically how and how much parents are to be allowed to participate in the decision-making process. Though the make-up of the council/team is determined by state and/or district guidelines, this does not guarantee consistent or equal voice in the decisions to be made.

The domains over which local schools are given control varies from state to state and district to district. Specific guidelines are issued by some states and districts related to established laws and policies. Some states and districts offer waivers from adherence to these laws and guidelines. Local schools must apply for waivers. Some districts give partial control over domains, but refer the local school back to the district for final decisions. Responding principals identified seven domains in which parents participate in making decisions. Budgeting of local school discretionary funds, policy and procedure related to discipline, curriculum development, and facility improvement are domains where parents had no input prior to the institution of site-based management. Prior to site-based management, many principals didn't have control over these domains. Other domains in which principals indicated site-based input are sponsoring fund raising projects, budgeting of total funds allotted to the local school, planning/sponsoring extracurricular activities, and adjusting local school calendar. Budgeting of total funds and adjusting calendars represent two domains new to local school governance. The domains of sponsoring fund raising projects and planning/sponsoring

extracurricular activities are areas in which parents have traditionally participated. Domains in which principals reported little or no parent involvement in decision-making were principal selection, professional staff selection, support staff selection, and textbook selection. These domains relate to personnel issues, and large allocations of monies with textbook selections.

The implication can be made from these data that there are specific areas in which administrators feel comfortable allowing parent participation. From the responses, the areas of budgeting, policy, and curriculum are more related to the concept of site-based management as it pertains to improving instruction, while the areas of fund raising, extracurricular activities, and calendar planning are more the traditional definition of parental involvement areas. Parents are not yet involved in personnel matters. Involvement of parents has been recognized and encouraged to a certain extent. There are still areas of governance in which educators are not willing to involve parents. If school improvement is the goal, parents who participate in deciding curricula issues should also be involved in selecting textbooks and personnel to facilitate this improvement. State and district levels should develop guidelines by which parents can be involved in these two areas under existing laws and policies or develop new laws and policies to allow parental involvement in personnel and materials selection.

Identifying common parent involvement components, other than site-based teams or councils, that have strengthened those schools and impacted student success was the third purpose of this research. From the data, traditional parental involvement elements are still the mainstay. PTA/PTO organizations, volunteering, and advisory councils were the parent involvement components in place prior to the institution of site-based management. These three categories remain in place with site-based management teams. The other

areas in which parents are involved that were cited by principals indicate that parents are becoming involved in specific academic programs at the local school. Involvement in grade-level planning, participation on technology, media, library, math, study, training, community and citizenship, and guidance teams and committees implies that parents are becoming more involved in the specific emphases and development areas of the school. Beyond helping with home work, volunteering in the classroom or office, and assisting with fundraising, parents should be invited and encouraged to participate in the daily operations and instruction of the school or taking the initiative to place themselves in positions to become involved.

Based on the data gathered from the state, district, and local levels, the implication can be made that site-based management is an emerging vehicle involved in restructuring for change and parents are just now being included in the process.

From the principal's perspective as reflected in the data, those factors which contribute positively to parental involvement in site-based management are unity, trust/sensitivity, openness, communication, interest, and support. Those factors which impact negatively parental involvement in site-based management are personal agendas, mistrust, lack of commitment, time, and lack of understanding. The positive factors are controlled, in large measure, by the principal. The principal should work to create a school environment where parents sense unity, trust the educators, feel open to make suggestions and criticisms, communicate with teachers and staff as well as with one another, become interested in the day-to-day workings of the school, and are willing to support the total program. Negative factors are controlled largely by parents. When parents have personal agendas, have a lack of commitment, cannot find the time to be involved, and lack understanding, mistrust will hinder any

involvement. Principals are the key to involvement of any kind in the local school. Mandates can be made, policies written, initiatives given, and guidelines established, but if principals do not want parents involved, they will not be involved. Training principals to be sensitive to parents' need and desire to be involved in meeting the needs of their own child is important and impacts the overall operation of the school. Training all participants in areas of conflict management, time management, and the daily school operations is needed to create mutual trust and understanding.

The data collected and the results presented in this study suggest a need for additional research in the area of parental involvement in the site-based management process.

Recommendations

Management of education through local school governance has been recognized as the best method of developing a school improvement plan, assuring that the educational needs of the students are being met and that schools are accountable. A major goal of this research was to provide information relative to parental involvement in site-based management.

As indicated earlier, there is little data available to document how parents are being involved in the governance of the local school. Single case studies which relate to one isolated situation will not give an overall picture. It is recommended that more cross case studies be conducted to add to the body of data collected from this study.

Data supplied by principals on the principal's questionnaire indicate that individual schools and districts need to conduct objective surveys to assess their progress in site-based management. Even if the progress is less than hoped for, reporting the data helps schools learn from mistakes and successes of other situations. The data supports the concept that each site should develop

the model of site-based management which best serves that individual school's needs. However, further research into ways to share the good practices in site based management could facilitate schools just beginning the process.

Site-based management is the structure used to involve parents in the process of writing and implementing school improvement plans. Further research to investigate these elements of restructuring and creating effective schools could facilitate total school improvement and instruction.

Schools have a responsibility to involve parents. Participatory decision-making is a parental involvement element that needs additional study.

REFERENCES

- AMERICA 2000: An education strategy. (1991). United States House Document. Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.
- Becher, Rhoda M. (1984). Parent involvement: A review of research and research and principles of successful practice. Washington, DC: National Institute of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 247 032).
- Berger, E. H. (1991a). Parents as partners In education: The school and home working together (3rd ed.). New York: Merrill.
- Berger, Eugenia H. (1991b). Parent involvement: Yesterday and today. The Elementary School Journal, 91, 209-219.
- Best, John W., & Kahn, James V. (1989). Research in education (6th ed.). Inglewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.
- Bogdan, Robert C., & Biklen, Sari Knopp. (1992). Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Brandt, Ron. (1989). On parents and schools: A conversation with Joyce Epstein. Educational Leadership, 47, 24-27.
- Braun, S. J., & Edwards, E. F. (1972). History and theory of early childhood education. Worthington: Charles A. Jones.
- Cairns, J., Molberg, L., & Zander, B. J. (1983). Decentralization of decision making in public education: An overview of school based management. St. Paul: Cassal.
- Caldwell, Brian J., & Spinks, Jim M. (1992). Leading the self-managing school. London: The Falmer Press.
- Carlos, Lisa, & Amsler, Mary. (1993). Site-based management: An experiment in governance. Policy Briefs. Washington DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 356 522).

- Chavkin, Nancy I., & Williams, David L., Jr. (1987). Enhancing parent involvement: Guidelines for access to an important resource for school administrators. Education & Urban Society, 19, 164-184.
- Comer, J. (1986). Parent participation in the schools. Kappan, 67, 442-446.
- Conley, David T. (1991). Restructuring schools: Educators adapt to a changing world. Trends & Issues. University of Oregon: ERIC.
- Conley, Sharon C., & Bacharach, Samuel B. (1990). From school-site management to participatory school-site management. Phi Delta Kappan, 71, 539-544.
- David, Jane L. (1989). Synthesis of research on school-based management. Educational Leadership, 46, 45-53.
- Davies, D. (1991). Schools reaching out: Family, school, and community partnerships for student success. Kappan, 72, 376-382.
- Davies, Don. (1987). Parent involvement in the public schools opportunities for administrators. Education and Urban Society, 19, 147-163.
- Davis, B. C. (1989). A successful parent involvement program. Educational Leadership, 47, 21-23.
- Drake, D. D. (1992). Move beyond problem-centered contacts. The School Administrator, 47, 23-24.
- Epstein, J. L. (1987a). Parent involvement. What research says to administrators. Education and Urban Society, 19, 119-136.
- Epstein, J. L. (1987b). Toward a theory of family-school connections: Teacher practices and parent involvement. In K. Hurrelmann, F. Kaufmann, & F. Losel (Eds.), Social intervention: Potential and constraints. New York: DeGruyter. (pp. 121-136)
- Epstein, J. L. (1987c). What principals should know about parent involvement. Principal, 66, 6-9.
- Finn, C. E. & Rebarber, T. (Eds.). (1992). Education reform in the '90s. New York: Macmillan.
- Frost, S. E. (1966). Historical and philosophical foundations of western education. Columbus: Merrill.

- Fruchter, Norm, et al. (1992). New directions in parent involvement. Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development. (ERIC Document Services No. ED 360 683).
- Galen, H. (1991). Increasing parental involvement in elementary school: The nitty-gritty of one successful program. Young Children, 24, 18-22.
- Gestwicki, Carol. (1992). Home, school, and community relations: A guide to working with parents (2nd ed.). Boston: Delmar.
- Gilchrist, Robert S. (1989). Effective schools: Three case studies of excellence. Bloomington: National Educational Service.
- Gittell, Marilyn. (1978). Urban School Reform in the 1970's. Education and Urban Society, 1, 9-20.
- Goldring, E. B. (1986). The school community: Its effects on principals' perceptions of parents. Educational Administration Quarterly, 22, 115-132.
- Goldring, E. B. (1990). Principal's relationships with parents: The homogeneity versus the social class of the parent clientele. Educational Administration Quarterly, 22, 115-132.
- Goldring, Ellen B. (1993). Principals, parents, and administrative superiors. Educational Administration Quarterly, 29, 93-117.
- Goodlad, John I. (1984). A place called school. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Gorton, Richard A., & Thierbach-Schneider, Gail. (1991). School-based leadership: Challenges and opportunities. Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown Publishers.
- Guthrie, J. W. (1986). School-based management: The next needed education reform. Kappan, 68, 305-309.
- Hallinger, Philip, Murphy, Joseph, & Hausman, Charles. (1992). Restructuring schools: Principals' perceptions of fundamental educational reform. Educational Administration Quarterly, 28, 330-349.
- Herman, Jerry J., & Herman, Janice L. (1991). State departments of education school-based management questionnaire. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama.
- Henderson, Anne T. (1987). The evidence continues to grow: Parent involvement improves student achievement. Columbia: National Committee for Citizens in Education.

- Henderson, Anne T. (1988). Parents are a school's best friend. Phi Delta Kappan, 47, 148-153.
- Hill, Paul T., Bonan, Josephine, & Warner, Kelly. (1992). Uplifting education set schools soaring with site-based management.. The American School Board Journal, 179, 21-25.
- Hunt, D. (1970). Parents and children in history. New York: Basic Books.
- Hunter, M. (1989). Join the "Par-aide". Educational Leadership, 47, 22-23.
- Jennings, James M. (1992). Parent involvement strategies for inner-city schools. NASSP Bulletin, 76, 63-68.
- Katz, Michael B. (1971). School reform: Past and present. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Kennedy, Carole. (1990). The ups and downs of school and parent relations. The School Administrator, 47, 22-24.
- Lane, John J. & Epps, Edgar G. (Eds.). (1992). Restructuring the schools: Problems and prospects. Berkeley: McCutchan.
- Levine, D. U. (1990). Update on effective schools: Findings and implications from research and practice. Journal of Negro Education, 59, 577-584.
- Levine, Daniel U., & Eubanks, Eugene E. (1992). Site-based management: Engine for reform or pipedream? Problems, prospects, pitfalls, and prerequisites for success. In John J. Lane & Edgar G. Epps (Eds.), Restructuring the schools: Problems and prospects (pp. 60-82). Berkeley: McCutchan.
- Lieberman, Ann, & Miller, Lynne. (1990). Restructuring schools: What matters and what works. Phi Delta Kappan, 71, 759-764.
- Lindle, Jane C. (1989). What do parents want from principals & teachers? Educational Leadership, 47, 12-14.
- MacMullen, Edity Nye. (1990). In the cause of true education Henry Barnard and nineteenth-century school reform. New Haven: Yale Press.
- Malen, Betty & Ogawa, Rodney T. (1992). Site-based management: Disconcerting policy issues, critical policy choices. In J. J. Lane & E. G. Epps (Eds.), Restructuring the schools: Problems and prospects (pp. 185-205). Berkeley: McCutchan.

- Marburger, Carl L. (1985). One school at a time. Columbia: National Committee for Citizens in Education.
- Mawdsley, R. D., & Drake, D. (1992). Commentary: Involving parents in the public schools: Legal and policy issues. Educational Law Reporter, 76, 299-312.
- Meadows, B. J. (1990). The rewards and risks of shared leadership. Kappan, 71, 545-548.
- Moles, O. C. (1982). Synthesis of recent research on parent participation in children's education. Educational Leadership, 40, 44-49.
- Morrison, George S. (1978). Parent involvement in the home, school, and community. Columbus: Merrill.
- National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1982). American education: An economic issue. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983a). Action for excellence. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983b). A nation at risk: The imperative of educational reform. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Ornstein, Allan C. (1992). The national reform of education: Overview and outlook. NASSP Bulletin, 76, 89-101.
- Patton, Michael Quinn. (1990). Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications.
- Pearson, N. L. (1990). Parent involvement within the school: To be or not to be. Education Canada, 30, 14-17.
- Pierce, Truman M. (1987). Imperatives of lasting public school reform. Auburn: Truman Pierce Institute.
- Prince, Julian D. (1989). Invisible forces school reform versus school culture. Bloomington: Phi Delta Kappa's Center on Evaluation Development and Research.
- Purkey & Smith. (1983). Effective schools: A review. Elementary School Journal, 83, 427-542.
- Rich, Dorothy. (1985). The forgotten factor in school success: The family. A policymaker's guide. Washington DC: Home and School Institute.

- Rich, Dorothy. (1986). Schools and families: Issues and actions. Washington, DC: NEA Professional Library.
- Rich, Dorothy. (1988). Bridging the parent gap in education reform. Educational Horizons, 66, 90-92.
- Rich, John Martin. (1991). Rationales of educational reform. Urban Education, 26, 149-159.
- Riley, Richard W. (1994). Families come first . Principal, 74, 30-32.
- Robertson, Peter J., & Kwong, Sophia S. (1994). Decision making in school-based management leadership councils: The impact of council membership diversity. The Urban Review, 26, 41-55.
- Schlechty, P. C. (1990). Schools for the twenty-first century. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Smith, Marshall S., & O'Day, Jennifer. (1991). Putting the pieces together: Systemic school reform. New Brunswick: Consortium for Policy Research in Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 343 215).
- Swap, S. M. (1990). Parent involvement and success for all children: What we know now (Report No. PS 018990). Boston: Institute for Responsive Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 321 907).
- Timar, Thomas. (1989). The politics of school restructuring. Kappan, 71, 265-275.
- Timar, Thomas B., & Kirp, David L. (1988). State efforts to reform schools: Treading between a regulatory swamp and an English garden. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 10, 75-88.
- Tye, Kenneth A. (1992). Restructuring our schools: Beyond the rhetoric. Kappan, 74, 8-14.
- VanSciver, J. H. (1989). Not a gray issue. Educational Leadership, 47, 13-16.
- Walberg, Herbert J., & Keffe, James W. (Eds.). (1986). Rethinking reform: The principal's dilemma. Reston: NASSP.
- Warner, I. (1991). Parents in touch. Kappan, 72, 372-375.
- Williams, D. L., & Chavkin, J. F. (1989). Essential elements of strong parent involvement programs. Educational Leadership, 47, 18-20.

APPENDIX A
Letter to State Superintendents
Letter from Dr. Wayne Teague

Eleanor C. Traylor
5483 Bull Run Dr.
Birmingham, AL 35210
(205) 956-3008

October 20, 1994

Dr. Barbara S. Nielsen
State Superintendent of Education
South Carolina Department of Education
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Dr. Nielsen:

As a principal in the Birmingham Public Schools System, I believe strongly that site-based management with strong parental involvement is necessary if we are to meet the needs of today's students. Because of this belief, my doctoral research is designed to collect data from five states, which have been identified through previous research, as having implemented site-based management with parental involvement. The purpose of this study is to determine the role of parents in the decision making process in site-based management, the domains in which parents participate in decision making, and the common parent involvement components, other than involvement in site-based teams or councils, that strengthen a local school program and support student success. I believe that the findings from this study can be of great benefit to the state of Alabama in restructuring its educational system.

To facilitate this study, it will be necessary to obtain a copy of any materials developed at the state level, from the state legislature and/or the Department of Education, which are used by the districts to implement site-based management.

In addition to published materials from the state level, I would ask you to identify five(5) districts within your state, giving the name of the district superintendent and his/her address, which have successfully implemented site-based management. To facilitate gathering this information, I would like to request from you a cover letter to be sent with my letter to each of these district superintendents. These five districts will be asked to furnish any district materials used in the district implementation process and to identify one (1) elementary principal to be contacted to participate in completing a research questionnaire.

Please return the requested information in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. Please contact Eleanor Traylor at (205) 929-8165 or (205) 956-3008 if you have questions concerning this study. A summary report of the findings from this study related to site-based management and parental involvement will be sent to you and each of the district participants at the conclusion of the study.

In summary the requested information includes:

1. Copies of state level materials, both legislative and State Department of Education, used in implementing site-based management in your state.
2. The names and addresses of five (5) District Superintendents who have successfully implemented site-based management within their districts.
3. A cover letter from you to be sent to the selected District Superintendents with my requests for further data giving permission to conduct this study.

Many thanks for your cooperation in this research project.

Sincerely,

Eleanor C. Traylor



PO Box 302101
Montgomery AL 36130-2101

STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
GORDON PERSONS BUILDING

WAYNE TEAGUE
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION
"PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN ALABAMA'S SCHOOLS"



50 N Ripley St
Montgomery AL 36104-3833

October 14, 1994

Dr. Barbara S. Nielsen
State Superintendent of Education
South Carolina Department of Education
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Dr. Nielsen:

Ms. Eleanor C. Traylor, a doctoral student at the University of Alabama-Birmingham, will be contacting you regarding permission to secure data from South Carolina on parental involvement and site-based management. As you know, these are timely topics for policymakers and other stakeholders in public education.

Information from other states on parental involvement and parents' roles in site-based management will be extremely helpful as we in Alabama work toward systemic reform. The results from Mrs. Traylor's study could, potentially, benefit not only the State Department of Education but also local education agencies and parent groups. Please give these factors full consideration as you review Mrs. Traylor's request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wayne Teague".

Wayne Teague
State Superintendent of Education

WT/pa

APPENDIX B

Letter to District Superintendents

Letter from Dr. Cleveland Hammonds

Follow-up Fax Letter

Eleanor C. Traylor
5483 Bull Run Dr.
Birmingham, AL 35210
(205) 956-3008

March 10, 1995

Dr. James E. Holloway, Superintendent
Calhoun City Schools
700 West Line Street
Calhoun, Georgia 30701

Dear Dr. Holloway :

As a principal in the Birmingham Public Schools System, I believe strongly that site-based management with strong parental involvement is necessary if we are to meet the needs of today's students. Because of this belief, my doctoral research is designed to collect data from five states, which have been identified through previous research, as having implemented site-based management with parental involvement. The purpose of this study is to determine the role of parents in the decision making process in site-based management, the domains in which parents participate in decision making, and the common parent involvement components, other than involvement in site-based teams or councils, that strengthen a local school program and support student success. I believe that the findings from this study can be of great benefit in restructuring our educational system.

To facilitate this study, I have requested and received information from Dr. John Rhodes relative to the development of site based management from the state level. A part of my request to Dr. Roger's office was that he identify five districts in Georgia in which site based management had been successfully implemented. He recommended Calhoun City Schools as one of the school systems in Georgia which has successfully implemented site based management.

From the district level, I am requesting copies of district policies and procedures and any other available material from the district level related to the implementation of site based management within your district. If there is a person, other than yourself whom I may contact for further clarification after reviewing these materials, would you please include that person's name and phone number. Also, I am requesting that you identify one elementary school principal from your district that I might contact to complete a survey instrument related to the role parents play in site based management at their school.

Please return the requested information in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. Please contact Eleanor Traylor at (205) 929-8165 or (205) 956-3008 if you have questions concerning this study. A summary report of the findings from this study related to site-based management and parental involvement will be sent to you and to the principal at the conclusion of the study.

In summary the requested information includes:

1. Copies of district level policies, procedures, and any other materials related to the implementation of site based management at the district level. The name and phone number of an alternate contact person at the district level, if applicable.
2. The name and address of one elementary principal who has successfully implemented site based management at the local school level.
3. A cover letter from you to be sent to the selected elementary principal with my requests for further data giving permission to conduct this study.

Many thanks for your cooperation in this research project.

Sincerely,

Eleanor C. Traylor

Birmingham Public Schools 118

P.O. Box 10007 • Birmingham, AL 35202 • (205) 583-4600

Cleveland Hammonds, E.D.D.
SUPERINTENDENT

January 19, 1995

Mr. Octavio J. Visiedo
Dade County Schools
1450 N.E. 2nd Avenue #403
Miami, Florida 33132-1308

Dear Dr. Visiedo,

Mrs. Traylor's research will be of benefit to Birmingham Public Schools as we begin implementation of site based management. I hope that you can provide the needed information for this important research.

Thank you, in advance, for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Cleveland Hammonds



Schools for the Future

APPENDIX C

Letter to Local School Principals

Eleanor C. Traylor
5483 Bull Run Dr.
Birmingham, AL 35210
(205) 956-3008

March 20, 1995

Mr. Charles Stoudenmier, Principal
Spann Elementary School
901 South Magnolia
Summerville, South Carolina 29483

Dear Mr. Stoudenmier,

As a principal in the Birmingham Public Schools System, I believe strongly that site-based management, with strong parental involvement, is necessary if we are to meet the needs of today's students. Because of this belief, my doctoral research is designed to collect data from five states, which have been identified through previous research, as having implemented site-based management with parental involvement. The purpose of this study is to determine the role of parents in the decision making process in site-based management, the domains in which parents participate in decision making, and the common parent involvement components, other than involvement in site-based teams or councils, that strengthen a local school program and support student success. I believe that the findings from this study can be of great benefit in restructuring our educational system.

During our phone conversation earlier, I outlined the information which will be most helpful in providing for this study. Enclosed you will find a copy of the Principal's Questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed self addressed envelope. As discussed by phone, any other material such as school team guidelines, meeting minutes, etc., which you feel could be beneficial to this research, would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your time and willingness to assist in this research. As a fellow principal I certainly understand that "one more thing" requires extra effort. Thanks for your help!

Sincerely,

Eleanor C. Traylor

APPENDIX D
Principal's Questionnaire

PRINCIPAL'S QUESTIONNAIRE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT

Site-based management (SBM), by definition, reallocates decision making authority. It implies that the principals, teachers, parents, students, and community have formal authority to make decisions, that there is a structure established, and that all participants have true power of choice in making contributions to the decision making process (Malen and Ogawa, 1992).

Please check those choices which best relate to your site-base management model. More than one choice may be checked for each statement.

1. The model of site base management used in your school was:

- Developed through state legislation
 Developed by the district for site implementation
 Developed at the local site with district support

2. Inservice training was provided for parents.

- Yes No
 If yes, identify the source of the inservice:
 State
 District
 Local school
 Other _____

3. Inservice training included:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SBM defined | <input type="checkbox"/> Team Building |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Resolution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shared Decision Making | <input type="checkbox"/> Change |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please list) | |
- _____

4. Parents at your school serve on:

- Schoolwide committees/teams
 School Governance Council
 Other _____

5. The ratio of parents to staff on site base teams (committees, Council, etc.) is:

- Determined by state or district policy
 Determined by the task(s) of the team
 Determined by the principal
 Determined by other parent organizations
 Other _____

6. Parents are chosen to be a part of site base management by:

- Principal appointment**
- Teacher recommendation**
- PTA/PTO election**
- Nominating committee**
- Volunteering**
- Other** _____

7. When decisions are made in site base teams (committees, Council, etc.), parents participate:

- Through a consensus process**
- By having equal vote with other members in majority vote decisions**
- By giving advisory opinions to principal or others who make the final decision**
- Other** _____

8. The amount and type of parent participation in decision making :

- Is the same regardless of the area of decision(s) to be made**
- Varies from team to team**
- Is determined by the area in which the decision is to be made**
- Other** _____

9. Parents participate in decisions related to which of the following areas:

- Principal selection**
- Professional staff selection (teaching faculty)**
- Support staff selection (aides, custodial, lunchroom)**
- Textbook selection**
- Curriculum development**
- Budgeting of local school discretionary funds**
- Budgeting of total funds allotted to the local school**
- Policy and procedure related to discipline**
- Adjusting local school calendar**
- Sponsoring fundraising projects**
- Making facility improvements**
- Extracurricular activities**
- Other** _____

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Your school would be classified as:

- Urban**
 Suburban
 Rural
 Other _____

2. The school enrollment is _____. The grade levels include _____.

3. The number of faculty and staff at your school is _____.

4. Your school has had a site based management program for _____ year(s).

5. Your tenure as principal at this school has been _____ year(s).

6. The district allots \$_____ to your school for inservice and other expenses related to site based management each year.

7. The district provides annual inservice for parents new to site based management.

_____ Yes _____ No

8. There is an assessment program for evaluating site base management. Check all that apply.

_____ Provided by:
 _____ State
 _____ District
 _____ School

_____ Required by:
 _____ State
 _____ District
 _____ School

9. I would be willing to participate in a phone interview with the researcher if clarification or additional information is needed concerning parent involvement in site based management.

_____ Yes _____ No

If Yes, Name _____

Phone number (_____) _____

**GRADUATE SCHOOL
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM
DISSERTATION APPROVAL FORM**

Name of Candidate Eleanor Chapman Traylor

Major Subject Educational Leadership

Title of Dissertation A Study of the Relationship Between Site-Based Management
and Parental Involvement in Selected Elementary Schools in the South-
eastern United States

Dissertation Committee:

<u>Boyl Rogan</u>	, Chairman	<u>Keith R. DeLoach</u>
<u>Charles W. Travis</u>		<u>Orlando J. Jaramila</u>
_____		<u>David W. DeLoach</u>
_____		_____
_____		_____

Director of Graduate Program Boyl Rogan

Dean, UAB Graduate School Jean Hodder

Date May 3, 1995